



## The Iowa Compatriot

The Journal of the Iowa Society, Sons of the American Revolution

Dec. 23, 2021

*We the descendants of the heroes of the American Revolution, who by their sacrifice established the United States of America, reaffirm our faith in the principles of liberty and solemnly pledge to defend them against every foe.*

### Wreaths Across America at Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines, IA

IASSAR Color Guard Commander Mike Rowley led the Wreaths Across America event at Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines, IA on December 18, 2021. After welcoming those in attendance and acknowledging the beautiful sounds of bag piper Dawn Baldwin, he introduced Ganesh Ganpat, Des Moines Parks and Recreation supervisor, to give instructions about placing wreaths. After a moment of silence, Rowley explained that there were over 1,000 wreaths to be placed this year. A goal for future events is to have a wreath for all 1,283 veterans buried in the cemetery. After thanking individuals, businesses, and organizations that had made donations, the Colors were posted, led by Sirmichael Carrington Williams-Thomas of Boy Scout Troop 178.

Special wreaths were laid for each branch of service. Special Forces Retired Sergeant Major Donald L. Pugsley laid a wreath in memory of those who served and are serving in the United States Army. Kristine Firestone, the mother of naval recruit Christian, laid a wreath in memory of those who served and are serving in the United State Navy. Marine veteran Jeremy Dirksen, who joined the United States Marines Corps in 1996 as an Aviation Support Specialist, laid a wreath in memory of those who served and are serving in the United States Marines. Air Force veteran Ron Rittle laid a wreath in memory of those who served and are serving in the United States Air Force. Ron Ward, Parks Manager, laid a wreath in memory of those who served and are serving in the United States Space Force. Army veteran and retired Des Moines firefighter Bob Niffenegger laid a wreath in memory of those who served and are serving in the United States Coast Guard. Army and Iowa National Guard veteran Scott Rowley laid a wreath in memory of those who served and are serving in the United States Merchant Marines. Marilyn Rittel, whose father was a POW in WWII, laid a wreath in honor of the 93,129 United States servicemen and servicewomen from all branches of the service whose last status was either POW or MIA.



Volunteers laid over 1,000 wreaths, saying the name of the veteran aloud as each wreath was laid. The ceremony was concluded with the sounding of Taps by Sgt. David Krcil of the 34<sup>th</sup> Army Band. Iowa SAR members Rick Hickman, Jerry Greenfield, Ron Rittle, Bob Niffenegger, David Rowley, Scott Rowley, and Mike Rowley were in attendance for the event.

*Mike, Scott, and David Rowley at Wreaths Across America in Woodland Cemetery*

## Wreaths Across America at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery in Van Meter, IA



Iowa SAR member Don Richardson and his daughter Sarah Richardson (SPC IA National Guard) joined a large group of volunteers to remember the veterans who were buried at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery in Van Meter, Iowa. The December 18, 2021 Wreaths Across America event had its largest turnout in 14 years. The ceremony included a speech by Patrick Palmersheim, the Wreaths Across America location coordinator for the Iowa Veterans Cemetery. After the speech, volunteers laid wreaths on the graves of veterans while saying their names. Volunteers placed 3,943 wreaths, enough for every headstone in the cemetery. For more photographs of the 2021 Wreaths Across America event at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery, please see [www.adelnews.com/picture-gallery/news/2021/12/18/photos-wreaths-across-america-iowa-veterans-cemetery/8954770002/](http://www.adelnews.com/picture-gallery/news/2021/12/18/photos-wreaths-across-america-iowa-veterans-cemetery/8954770002/).

## Presenting Flag Certificates

The Flag Certificate, authorized in 1987, is presented to individuals, companies, and government agencies that fly the United States flag for patriotic purposes only. It is not to be given to any commercial enterprise that obviously flies it for advertising purposes.

Any member of the Iowa SAR can present a flag certificate. The certificate has a line in the lower left corner for the name of the appropriate organization to be engrossed. It also has a line for the president to sign, and a line for the Flag Chairman to sign. If you would like to know more about presenting a flag certificate in your area, please contact Doug Frazer.



## Remembering IASSAR Member Bob Anderson

Robert (Bob) Ray Anderson of Norwalk passed away on May 8, 2021 at The Village in Indianola at the age of 83. Bob was born in Goldfield, Iowa in 1938 to Morris and Florence Anderson. Bob was the oldest of four children and grew up and graduated from high school in Clarion, Iowa. In 1960, Bob married his high school sweetheart and love of his life Karen Veldhouse. They were blessed with three daughters – Kristen, Michele, and Sonja.

After graduating college, Bob joined the U.S. Army and was posted to Kagnew Station in Asmara, Ethiopia as a Military Policeman. He attained the rank of sergeant during his 3 years in the military and was proud of his service. After his time in the Army, Bob returned to Iowa and worked for Farm Bureau insurance for more than 25 years.

Bob enjoyed fishing (like his mom), hunting, and especially traveling the world with his wife, his daughters, grandchildren, sister Pat and brother-in-law Ron, and his wife's French classes. His greatest joy was spending time with his family who loved him deeply.

## Your IASSAR Board of Managers

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*Let us remember our obligation to our forefathers, who gave us our Constitution,  
The Bill of Rights, an independent Supreme Court, and a nation of free men.*