



Senator Jason Crowell – Serving Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry, and Scott Counties.

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Veterans Day

Honoring Those Who Represent Freedom



The All Missouri Veterans Memorial at the Missouri State Capitol features a limestone colonnade, terraced waterfall, reflecting pool, and eight black marble posts forming a path called the “Veterans Walk.”

November 11th is Veterans Day - a day to honor and pay tribute to the nearly 25 million veterans who have served and who continue to serve the United States. The holiday was originally known as Armistice Day in celebration and remembrance of the Armistice, or truce, which was signed on Monday, November 11, 1918,

ending World War I. The following year, President Woodrow Wilson issued an Armistice Day proclamation, declaring that “To us in America, the

reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory.”

At the time, World War I had surpassed all other wars in terms of its level of destruction. It was thought to be the war to end all wars and when the truce that brought down the curtain on the war was finally signed, the entire world rejoiced. Americans continued to acknowledge the courage of WWI veterans on each November thereafter, and in 1938, Congress passed a bill officially designating November 11th as the day to “be dedicated to the cause of world peace and ...hereafter celebrated and known as Armistice Day.” Nearly two decades later, after World War II ended, several communities renamed Armistice Day as Veterans Day to honor all veterans who had fought in American wars. On May 24, 1954, Congress followed suit and officially changed the name to Veterans Day.

Official national ceremonies for Veterans Day take place at Arlington National Cemetery, our country's most historic military cemetery. The cemetery is located in Arlington, Virginia, just across the Potomac River from Washington D.C. Ceremonies take place at the Tomb of the Unknowns, which represents the brave missing and unknown service members of four different wars. The tomb is engraved with “Here rests in honored glory an American soldier known but to God,” and inside lies the remains of one unknown American soldier from World War I, World War II, and the Korean Conflict. Remains from an unknown Vietnam soldier were also in the tomb until 1998 when they were exhumed, and after DNA testing, determined to be of Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie, who was shot down near An Loc, Vietnam in 1972. Lt. Blassie's family has entombed his remains near their home in St. Louis.

At 11:00 A.M. eastern time on Veterans Day, a color guard representing all military services – Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard – executes the formal salute with a rifle, called “Present Arms,” at the Tomb of



the Unknowns. This is the military’s collective way to show respect for all the unknown dead from America’s wars. To symbolize our nation’s tribute to those who died in war, the President, or his representative, places a wreath on the tomb followed by the playing of “Taps.”

Veterans are courageous men and women who chose to potentially sacrifice their lives in order to install social and political equality in various parts of the world. Each of them has a story to tell. Cape Girardeau is home to a State Veterans Home where 150 veterans reside. I encourage you to take time and visit with them.

I am humbled by those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and I would like to pay tribute to the members of the military from Southeast Missouri who lost their lives in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

Staff Sergeant Charles R. Sanders, Jr. of Charleston: April 6, 2005

Sergeant Robert G. Davis of Jackson: August 18, 2005

Specialist Blake W. Hall of East Prairie: August 21, 2005

Corporal Jeremy R. Shank of Jackson: September 6, 2006

Staff Sergeant Bradley J. Skelton of Gordonville: February 6, 2008

Sergeant Adam J. Kohlhaas of Perryville: April 21, 2008

This Veterans Day remember those who are currently serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world. These future veterans continue our nation's proud tradition of fighting for the freedom that our forefathers secured for us.

Contact Me

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: jcrowell@senate.mo.gov or visit me on the web at <http://www.senate.mo.gov/crowell>.

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