



VETERANS

MEANING OF VETERANS DAY - NOVEMBER 11

Every year on November 11, Veterans, military members, and those who truly honor our US military gather to honor comrades that are no longer with us. While many people realize that Veterans Day is a day to honor our Veterans, few realize the historical significance behind the day.

Veterans Day originated as Armistice Day and marked the end of hostilities of World War I that occurred at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month. In 1919, President Wilson commemorated the first Armistice Day to acknowledge all the military that lost their lives in the first 'Great World War.' The day was originally set aside to honor the Veterans of World War I with a day of parades, ceremonies, and remembrances as well as a pause in activities at 11:11 a.m. on the day. In 1938, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (President of the United States) made Armistice Day a legal federal holiday for all to acknowledge.

After World War II and during the Korean War (still active), Congress recognized a need to expand the meaning of the day to recognize all of our Veterans and not just those of World War I. In 1954, the word "Armistice" was replaced with "Veterans" as a way to formally include all Military Veterans of all American wars in this day of remembrance.

This Veterans Day gives DeKalb County residences and all Americans the opportunity to celebrate the bravery and sacrifice of all U.S. veterans. In the City of DeKalb, the American Legion Post 66 Honor Guard will honor Veterans with a formal ceremony at the Community Clock at the corner of 1st and Lincoln Hwy (IL #38) in downtown DeKalb. The guest speaker will be DeKalb Mayor Jerry Smith (US Army veteran).

Over the past 24 months, the City of Dekalb with help of the Dekalb Amerian Legion and DeKalb Elks have increased awareness of the respect for Veterans by providing a variety of Veteran acknowledgments within the city. In the downtown area, there are 60 "DeKalb Hometown Heros" banners honoring these DeKalbites that have served in one of the five branches of the US Military. There are reserved 'parking spaces' for Veterans in the downtown area as well as select business locations throughout the city. This past summer the City of Dekalb paid special tribute to our Veterans by re-branding Locust Street from 1st to 4th Streets as "Honorary Veterans Way" with special signage. Local businessman John Pappas added an American Flag and 5 military branch flags at the corner of 1st and Locust in DeKalb.

DeKalb's Mayor Jerry Smith has branded the City of DeKalb as northern Illinois' 'Most Veteran Friendly City.'

*Michael Embrey, USAF Veteran/American Legion Historian/Bugler
DeKalb Elks Member - 25 Year Member*



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