

# THE DENTON COUNTY VETERAN

May/June 2006



Denton County was established by the Texas legislature on April 11, 1846

County Judge Mary Horn, Commissioner Cynthia White, Precinct 1;  
Commissioner Sandy Jacobs, Precinct 2; Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell, Precinct 3;  
Commissioner Jim Carter, Precinct 4

**Serving the Veterans of Denton County**

## Memorial Day— Observed May 29, 2006

### Remember To Fly Your American Flag In Tribute To Our Fallen Heroes

#### A Brief History of Memorial Day

Originally called Decoration Day, Memorial Day is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service to our country. It was first widely observed on May 30, 1868, to commemorate the sacrifices of Civil War soldiers, by proclamation of General John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization of former sailors and soldiers.

During the first national celebration, General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, after which 5,000 participants helped to decorate the graves of the more than 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers who were buried there. This event was inspired by local observances of the day that had taken place in several towns throughout America in the three years since the Civil War. By the late 1800s, many more cities and communities had begun to observe Memorial Day, and after World War I, it became an occasion for honoring those who had died in all America's wars.

Memorial Day is celebrated at Arlington National Cemetery each year with a ceremony in which a small American flag is placed on each grave. Traditionally, the President or Vice President lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. About 5,000 people attend the ceremony annually.

In 1971, Congress declared Memorial Day a national holiday to be celebrated on the last Monday of May. Several southern states, however, have an additional, separate day for honoring the Confederate war dead: January 19 in Texas; April 26 in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi; May 10 in South Carolina; and June 3 in Louisiana and Tennessee.

## In Flanders Fields

By: Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD (1872-1918)  
Canadian Army

IN FLANDERS FIELDS the poppies blow  
Between the crosses row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.  
We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.  
Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.



## Flag Day—June 14, 2006 Remember To Fly Your Flag

### **The History Of Flag Day**

The Fourth of July was traditionally celebrated as America's birthday, but the idea of an annual day specifically celebrating the Flag is believed to have first originated in 1885. BJ Cigrand, a schoolteacher, arranged for the pupils in the Fredonia, Wisconsin Public School, District 6, to observe June 14 (the 108th anniversary of the official adoption of The Stars and Stripes) as 'Flag Birthday'. In numerous magazines and newspaper articles and public addresses over the following years, Cigrand continued to enthusiastically advocate the observance of June 14 as 'Flag Birthday', or 'Flag Day'.

On June 14, 1889, George Balch, a kindergarten teacher in New York City, planned appropriate ceremonies for the children of his school, and his idea of observing Flag Day was later adopted by the State Board of Education of New York. On June 14, 1891, the Betsy Ross House in Philadelphia held a Flag Day celebration, and on June 14 of the following year, the New York Society of the Sons of the Revolution, celebrated Flag Day.

Following the suggestion of Colonel J Granville Leach (at the time historian of the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the Revolution), the Pennsylvania Society of Colonial Dames of America on April 25, 1893 adopted a resolution requesting the mayor of Philadelphia and all others in authority and all private citizens to display the Flag on June 14th. Leach went on to recommend that thereafter the day be known as 'Flag Day', and on that day, school children be assembled for appropriate exercises, with each child being given a small Flag.

Two weeks later on May 8th, the Board of Managers of the Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution unanimously endorsed the action of the Pennsylvania Society of Colonial Dames. As a result of the resolution, Dr. Edward Brooks, then Superintendent of Public Schools of Philadelphia, directed that Flag Day exercises be held on June 14, 1893 in Independence Square. School children were assembled, each carrying a small Flag, and patriotic songs were sung and addresses delivered.

In 1894, the governor of New York directed that on June 14 the Flag be displayed on all public buildings. With BJ Cigrand and Leroy Van Horn as the moving spirits, the Illinois organization, known as the American Flag Day Association, was organized for the purpose of promoting the holding of Flag Day exercises. On June 14th, 1894, under the auspices of this association, the first general public school children's celebration of Flag Day in Chicago was held in Douglas, Garfield, Humboldt, Lincoln, and Washington Parks, with more than 300,000 children participating.

Adults, too, participated in patriotic programs. Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, delivered a 1914 Flag Day address in which he repeated words he said the flag had spoken to him that morning: "I am what you make me; nothing more. I swing before your eyes as a bright gleam of color, a symbol of yourself."

Inspired by these three decades of state and local celebrations, Flag Day - the anniversary of the Flag Resolution of 1777 - was officially *established* by the Proclamation of President Woodrow Wilson on May 30th, 1916. While Flag Day was celebrated in various communities for years after Wilson's proclamation, it was not until August 3rd, 1949, that President Truman signed an Act of Congress designating **June 14th** of each year as **National Flag Day**.



## **A Statement from the Department of Veterans Affairs**

May 22, 2006

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has recently learned that an employee, a data analyst, took home electronic data from VA, which he was not authorized to do. This behavior was in violation of our policies. This data contained identifying information including names, social security numbers, and dates of birth for up to 26.5 million veterans and some spouses, as well as some disability ratings. Importantly, the affected data did not include any of VA's electronic health records nor any financial information. The employee's home was burglarized and this data was stolen. The employee has been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of an investigation.

Appropriate law enforcement agencies, including the FBI and the VA Inspector General's office, have launched full-scale investigations into this matter. Authorities believe it is unlikely the perpetrators targeted the items because of any knowledge of the data contents. It is possible that they remain unaware of the information which they possess or of how to make use of it. However, out of an abundance of caution, VA is taking all possible steps to protect and inform our veterans.

VA is working with members of Congress, the news media, veterans service organizations, and other government agencies to help ensure that those veterans and their families are aware of the situation and of the steps they may take to protect themselves from misuse of their personal information. VA will send out individual notification letters to veterans to every extent possible. Veterans can also go to [www.firstgov.gov](http://www.firstgov.gov) or [www.va.gov/opa](http://www.va.gov/opa) to get more information on this matter. This website is being set to handle increased web traffic. Additionally, working with other government agencies, VA has set up a manned call center that veterans may call to get information about this situation and learn more about consumer identity protections. That toll free number is 1-800-FED INFO (333-4636). The call center will be open beginning today, and will operate from 8 am to 9 pm (EDT), Monday-Saturday as long as it is needed. The call center will be able to handle up to 20,000 calls per hour (260,000 calls per day).

Secretary of Veterans Affairs R. James Nicholson has briefed the Attorney General and the Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, co-chairs of the President's Identity Theft Task Force. Task Force members have already taken actions to protect the affected veterans, including working with the credit bureaus to help ensure that veterans receive the free credit report they are entitled to under the law. Additionally, the Task Force will meet today to coordinate the comprehensive Federal response, recommend further ways to protect affected veterans, and increase safeguards to prevent the reoccurrence of such incidents. VA's mission to serve and honor our nation's veterans is one we take very seriously and the 235,000 VA employees are deeply saddened by any concern or anxiety this incident may cause our veterans and their families. We appreciate the service our veterans have given their country and we are working diligently to protect them from any harm as a result of this incident.

**For Local Help**

Denton County Veterans Service Office

1505 E. McKinney St. #183

Denton, TX 76209

940-349-2950

Fax: 940-349-2951

Monday through Friday

8:00 am to noon

1:00 pm to 5:00 pm



IF YOU ♥ YOUR  
FREEDOM  
THANK A VETERAN

WE'RE ON THE WEB AT  
[www.dentoncounty.com](http://www.dentoncounty.com)