



# The



# Kettle

# Moraine

# Marine

April 2011 Serving the Kettle Moraine area since 2005

Vol VII Issue 4

Commandant: Jim Ramage Kettle Moraine Det, MCL#1203 Editor: Jason Waier



**RECLAIMING  
OUR HERITAGE  
June 4-5, 2011**

Annual Veteran Tribute Event and  
Timeline of American Military History  
at the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center  
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for the  
“Reclaiming  
Our  
Heritage”  
event at the  
Zablocki VA  
Medical  
Center in  
Milwaukee.**

**Be sure to  
check it out  
before it is  
too late!**

**Our next Meeting will be held: 9am, Saturday April 16th, 2011!  
It will be conducted at the Trenton Town Hall, located at 1071 State Hwy 33 East, West Bend.  
Hope to see you there!**

## Newsletter Highlights

*Cover: Reclaiming Our Heritage 2011*  
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### 2011-2012 Detachment Officers

**Commandant**  
Jim Ramage  
(262) 242-9823

**Sr. Vice  
Commandant**  
Danny O'Toole  
(262) 255-3514

**Jr. Vice  
Commandant**  
John Stern  
(262) 297-1325

**Judge Advocate**  
Charlie Keller  
(262) 389-0333

**Adjutant**  
Paul Schlieff  
(262) 338-4911

**Paymaster**  
Roger Cross  
(262) 675-6965

**Chaplain**  
George Wujcik  
(262) 338-8426

**Sgt at Arms**  
Bill Wallace  
(262) 338-3525

**Historian**  
Jason Waier  
(262) 623-1417

**Public Affairs**  
Jason Waier  
(262) 623-1417  
John Fleischman  
(262) 626-1156

**Honor Guard Cmdr**  
John Stern  
(262) 297-1325

**Color Guard Cmdr**  
Jim Ramage  
(262) 242-9823

**Newsletter Editor**  
Jason Waier  
(262) 623-1417

**Flag History Team**  
George Wujcik  
(262) 338-8426

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Apr	16	0900	Swearing in of Officers, Regular Monthly Det Meeting
May	23	1900	Detachment Monthly Meeting held at MPTC in West Bend
Jun	4-5		Reclaiming Our Heritage Positively Patriotic Weekend at the Zablocki VA Center in Milwaukee
Jun	13	1400 & 1500	Flag History Event at Cedar Bay Ridge Complex in West Bend
Jun	20-26		Marine Week St Louis
Aug			Seventh Annual Fisher House Golf Outing in Menomonee Falls
Sep	10		Second Annual House of Harley/Fisher House Benefit Ride in Milwaukee

### NEWSLETTER INFO

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*THE KETTLE MORaine MARINE* Newsletter is normally published prior to monthly scheduled meetings for the information and use of Detachment Members. Articles and letters are invited but the Editor retains the right to edit any submission. Submit typed materials or photographs marked for the Newsletter to the Editor by the first Monday of the month using either e-mail: jwaier@charter.net or snail mail to 2235 Sylvan Way Apt #6 West Bend, WI 53095. Annual donation for ads is \$100 for a single block and \$175 for a double. Half or full page ads are also available.

Editor: Jason Waier (262) 623-1417

See the Newsletter and other Detachment info at [www.ketmordet.com](http://www.ketmordet.com)

  
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**Kettle Moraine Detachment 1203, Marine Corps League**  
**Minutes of Meeting Held March 19, 2011**  
**17 Members Present**

The meeting was held at the Trenton Town Hall, West Bend, Wisconsin. The Commandant called the meeting to order at 0900. Sergeant at arms posted the colors, and the Chaplain opened the meeting with a prayer, the bible is open.

**Roll Call of Officers**

Commandant: Jim Ramage present	Paymaster: Roger Cross present
Sr. Vice Commandant: Danny O'Toole present	Chaplain: George Wujcik present
Jr. Vice Commandant: John Stern present	Sergeant at Arms: Bill Wallace (ex)
Adjutant: Paul Schleif present	Historian: Jason Waier present
Judge Advocate: Charlie Keller (ex)	

**Other Members Attending**

Steve Chantelois, John Fleischman, Carl Heiman, George Kaczmarek, John Krause, Gil Lucka, Fritz Montag, Barry Oelerich, Hugo Straub and Ken Unertl also attended the meeting. At this time I would like to thank Barry for filling in for Bill Wallace, our Sgt at Arms who was on vacation, and he did a fine job. Well-done Barry, and thank-you!

**New Members and Guests**

There were no guests, new or prospective members in attendance.

**Reading of the Minutes**

A motion was made by John Krause with a second by Jason to accept the minutes as they were published in the newsletter. The motion passed.

**Election of Officers**

With last month's minutes accepted and approved, the detachment got down to the business of the election of officers. As you may recall, a by-law change had been mailed to all detachment members for approval or disapproval, the change being that the Commandant, Senior Vice and Junior Vice could serve in their positions for four years instead of two. We currently have forty-two active paid-up members in the detachment, which means for the by-law change to pass a simple majority of 22 votes was needed. The by-law resolution failed until it was determined that two members of the detachment had not returned the mailing. The two members were in attendance and voted to approve it, thereby passing it but just barely, just one vote! I find it unfortunate that with 42 of these change forms being mailed to all active detachment members, with them being stamped where people could simply sign and return it, not even having it cost a penny we only mustered 24 of the forms returned.

At this point ballots were cast for election of officers. After all ballots were cast, a motion was made by Jason to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Steve Chantelois and it passed. At this time the adjutant and Senior Vice counted ballots for election results. The meeting was then called back to order by Jim Ramage and the results announced. Your officers for the coming year will be Jim Ramage, Commandant, Danny O'Toole, Senior Vice, John Stern, Junior Vice, Charlie Keller, Judge Advocate, Paul Schleif, Adjutant, Roger Cross, Paymaster, George Wujcik, Chaplain, Bill Wallace, Sgt at Arms, with Jason carrying on as our Historian. I would like to give special mention at this time to Gil Lucka, who was also willing to serve as an officer, the only other person who stepped forward to do so. That means a lot to all members of the detachment, thank-you Gil!

**Paymasters Report**

It's been a quiet month in the detachment financially. Once again our newsletter advertisers have been keeping us going, please remember to support these people and their businesses when you have the opportunity, thanks!

Some of the items on the report included postage for the bylaw change forms, office supplies for Eagle Certificates to Paul Schleif and newsletter. In addition the minutes of the meeting reflect that Roger our paymaster was reimbursed for three Cabelas gift cards to be given to Eagle Scouts. We will likely be moving our finances from Chase bank soon. A motion was made by Jason and seconded by Hugo to accept the paymaster report, and the motion passed.

**Chaplains Report**

No members ill or in distress at this time. George also reported that there have been two scholarship applicants who submitted essays for the detachment. The applicants will read their essays at a future meeting, should be very nice!

***Continued on Page 7***

# Illegal Immigrants Arrested in Uniform

March 23, 2011

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO -- At first glance, the white van seemed full of clean-cut Marines in uniform -- not necessarily an unusual sight near the Border Patrol's desert checkpoint along Interstate 8.

But a plainclothes Border Patrol agent who had served in the Marine Corps wasn't fooled, especially when the driver didn't know the birthday of the Marine Corps -- something every Marine is taught.

Another agent later noticed that passenger Jose Guadalupe Ceja Jr., a suspected smuggler, didn't seem to understand English, and he and the driver both had nametags reading "Lopez."

A closer look revealed 13 of the people were actually illegal Mexican immigrants and two were suspected U.S. smugglers trying to make it through the checkpoint in camouflage fatigues.

It was a shocking new tactic even for migrant smugglers known to go to great lengths -- from stuffing illegal immigrants into the trunks of cars to transporting them in vehicles painted to look TV news trucks and Border Patrol vans -- to dodge authorities patrolling the border.

But the use of Marine disguises appears to be one of the first cases of smugglers and immigrants posing as U.S. military.

Former Marine Capt. David Danelo, a senior fellow at Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia who has authored a book about the U.S.-Mexico border, says smugglers had the unfortunate luck of running into well-trained Border Patrol agents with military experience.

"Should we punish these guys by sending them through four years of

basic training?" he joked about the suspects. "The troubling reality and the real question here is, has this ever succeeded before? That's an answer we just don't know."

Indeed, the brazenness raised a host of troubling, still unanswered questions: How did they get the uniforms? Were the uniforms only to trick immigration authorities or did the immigrants have more serious, military intentions?

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service -- the investigative arm of the Navy, which includes the Marine Corps -- has teamed up with the Border Patrol to find out.

"If people are pretending to be Marines for criminal reasons, we'll want to know why," said Ed Buice, spokesman for the Navy's investigative arm, known as NCIS.

"I'm sure they were hoping agents would just see military people in a white van with government plates and just wave them through," Border Patrol spokesman Michael Jimenez said.

The immigrants and smugglers weren't that lucky.

A criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court in San Diego said the van with a government plate caught the eye of a Border Patrol agent identified only as S. Smith who was driving an unmarked vehicle down the interstate on the night of March 14.

The van with the words "U.S. Government, For official use only" on the license plate seemed suspicious. What's more, one of the numbers reflected light differently when Smith's headlights shined on it.

Smith called his colleagues at the nearest checkpoint and told them to do a close inspection of the van when it arrived. He followed and asked the driver during the inspection where they were headed. "Joint Service Base" was the answer.

Smith didn't buy it, especially after seeing one of the numbers on the license plate of the van had been changed from a 0 to an 8.

Another agent, identified only by his last name Robinson, also a former Marine, noticed other anomalies: Some of the group were wearing desert camouflage uniforms and others were wearing urban camouflage uniforms.

He asked Ceja directly if he was a Marine, and he admitted he was not, according to the complaint.

Agents later tracked down Guadalupe Garcia, another smuggling suspect, who was apparently scouting out agents, at a checkpoint outside Jacumba, Calif., according to the complaint. Marine Corps insignias were found under a passenger seat in his car, authorities said.

Arturo Leyva, another suspect, told authorities he had been asked to smuggle drugs by a man he met at a bar in the border town of Calexico but had backed out, the complaint said. Authorities say he later ran into the man at a bar across the border in Mexicali and agreed to smuggle immigrants.

From there, the men and immigrants went to a trailer park, where a man arrived with a military style duffle bag full of uniforms, the complaint states. The man coached Ceja on how to talk to the Border Patrol and say they were coming from Yuma Air Force base.

It was unclear where the uniforms had been obtained. Marine Capt. Brian Block at the Pentagon said the official attire is the property of service members who buy it when they enter the military and it's up to the individual to keep track of it after they are discharged, but "You can go into just about any Army-Navy store and pick up old camies if you want to, especially in the San Diego area, where there is a lot of military," he said.

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# Report from USS Ronald Reagan

Date: Sunday, March 27, 2011, 9:44 AM

All,  
Just thought I'd send an update from life today on USS Reagan. Some of you have seen of this and some haven't. Its been quite a week. Many challenging times, avoiding radioactive plumes and contamination in the environment both air and water. Sailors here are happy to help in such a trifold disaster but its also been pretty scary at times for us too. I think all the rad we've seen is safe low levels but we do hear of high levels now and again.

Since we are a nuclear carrier we have all the requisite devices to measure radiation in the environment and keep the ship safe, however, not sure the chain of command ever considered having to use these devices in a situation quite like this. Literally, our chain of command was the resident experts on things nuclear until task forces started to get set up and organized.

We had a rough time trying to figure out where to go at first but have nestled into an area north of Sendai that saw much damage and is also a safe distance from the reactors at Fukushima.

We found many people at first, 10-20 landing zones, then the past few days were quieter and today we found more people that needed to be rescued.

The helos and airplanes go out and look at the country looking for people with cameras and stuff. Japanese are really smart at disaster preparedness. The displaced people that need help write sos on the ground in big fields or drop lots of stones on the ground in an helo pad shape or spell out S O S . Then the helos know there are people nearby that need help so they land and look and bring back supplies. Many, many Japanese have been helped in this way. I'm guessing they are without power but yet they inherently know to do this.

When the helos land on the ground the

Japanese come out and stand in a perfect line and help the helo guys unload all the goodies out of the helo in an assembly line as fast as possible. They have been ever so respectful, patient and humble. They are such an amazing people. Even in this horrible time, they maintain such respectability.

My friend who is a helo pilot told me tonight that as they were taking off after unloading supplies, a man got down on his knees and prayed to the helo guys (like a buddhist praying motion). Other Japanese have all waved, clapped, and given many types of thanks to our helo squadrons.

I saw pictures tonight from the helo's and airplanes. The pictures are amazing. I've never been to Japan but its so beautiful, the mountain sides are breathtaking and the ocean on the northeast coast is SO BLUE! There is a lot of destruction in the pictures. Towns just wiped out and houses remaining where the water stopped. I also heard the Japanese had a lot of water walls to help protect them from tsunamis and this helped in many locations but not all of course. I haven't had much time to watch the news and all we get is cnn so these pictures today were unique to me.

Today at sea I saw a LOT of trees in the ocean. It looked like a lumber yard, logs and trees everywhere. Many trees have the root systems attached. I swear, I'd bet money that chunks of land lifted up from the seaside with the trees attached because some of the trees stick straight up and down out of the water as if they are solid in ground (but the water depth is 1000-2000' in those spots. The ocean is littered with connex boxes, I've seen soooo much debris out here, I wish we could have blown some of it up so that at least they weren't hazards to navigation.

There are media from the NYTimes here today so maybe there will be more news about us coming.

The guys on the flight deck have been

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working so hard, its really cold outside, they have to wear overboots over their boots to protect from contamination and they return back into the skin of the ship through the foc'sle which is now a decontamination station. I've heard that line lasts an hour to get through. If your clothes or boots are too high then they take them from you and issue you new gear. Fibers and clothes hold radiation moreso then hard surfaces and so I think some things like halyards and lines may have to be thrown away. Our 'lookouts' have been inside the pilothouse almost this entire time now and believe the island structure has some contamination on it. My forecasters stopped launching weather balloons.

My team has been working so hard and sleeping so little and giving everything they've got. The forecasts for the helos are paramount and CAG is definitely concerned for his guys. The captain has told me repeatedly to keep him abreast of the winds and call him anytime when we will be 'downwind' from the reactors. There are people making 'plumes' models of the air and sea, some are good, some are great, and some are not. Its all very complicated. And the jets, well, they haven't really been flying so who knows what will happen with them.

When this is all over I intend to travel back here and find a place in the country that is clean and safe to be and enjoy everything this beautiful country has to offer.

Yesterday everyone dontated supplies from their personal stashes. I'm hoping we do that again.

All for now, sorry if this email is kind of choppy just wanted to pass along the latest.

Peace,  
LCDR \*\*\*\*\*  
USS RONALD REAGAN

## Report of Officers and Committee Chairs

In order to expedite the regular monthly meeting, all Officers and standing committee chairs are afforded the opportunity to provide their input to the Newsletter by the first Monday of each month. Members are also welcome to submit something. This will enable all Members to review items of interest and reduce discussion at the meetings. Additionally, it provides any Member who is unable to make it to a regular meeting, the opportunity to remain abreast of current Detachment activities. Any submission may be edited and use depends on available space.

### Commandant Jim Ramage reports:

Gil and I attended the Spring Conference Saturday 3/26/11. The conference was very informative and our new Dept. Paymaster seems to have it all together. I still need to contact him about our incorporation status, which I am working with Roger Cross on. Steve Stockwell from Northshore Detachment has offered to try and help with our sponsoring the Spring Conference next year. Steve said he just doesn't have the manpower or funds to share the assignment. It was brought up by most of the detachments that they have the same situation as we have. It is difficult recruiting the younger Marines and getting involvement of members, except for the same older members who are always there and wearing out. Several of the detachments are passing out the calling cards on cars and pamphlets. The Mitchell Red Cloud Jr. detachment has good luck and participation with having shooting meets, several detachments were interested in starting up shooting meets. The turn out for the conference was better than last one but there still detachments that don't participated with the Department. Detachments that do show up only have 1 or two members show up. It would be nice to have more show up and we can alot of issues settled 1st hand instead of waiting for minutes to see what someone else has asked. Gary (State Commandant) will be at our swearing in of officers at this coming up meeting. Gary promised to be there I just need to remind him. I still need to find ways to get to other detachments in our

District. I dropped off 2 cases of coffee to Dan Crawford at the VA Hospital. I spent \$82.00 of my fund I can spend without prior approval. Dan was thrilled and other detachments have jumped in to help. See you all at the meeting

Jim Ramage

### Jr. Vice Commandant John Stern reports:

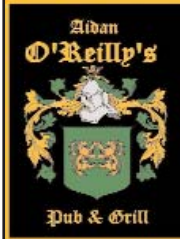
#### Honor Guard:

The Honor Guard was activated 30 & 31 March 2011 for the funeral of Marine Irvin Blanchard. If you recall Marine Blanchard was one of four Marines that the detachment, in conjunction with Panera Bread, sponsored on a Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. (See December 2009 Kettle Moraine Marine for pictures and article). Marines participating in Marine Blanchard's funeral and burial were: Cross, Heiman, Montag, Oelerich, and Stern. Since its' inception the detachment's Honor Guard has rendered military honors for 32 veterans throughout Ozaukee and Washington counties.

#### Support the Troops Packages:

1 package weighing 11 pounds 13 ounces was mailed on 31 March to Pvt. Don Silva. Pvt. Silva's name has submitted by Marine Fleishman on behalf of Pvt. Silva's mother. To date the detachment has sent 706.7 pounds of items to servicemen and women currently serving in harm's way. Marines, I respectfully ask that all of you solicit names from clergy, friends, and family to which the detachment can show their support. Remember I need ALL of the following information before sending packages: Name and full address of recipient. Name and relationship of person originating the request. And finally an e-mail address to determine rotation date and any personal needs.

Respectfully submitted,  
John W. Stern

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### Adjutant Charlie Keller:

Thought you would like to know that Charlie was hit by a car while walking home from his volunteer job at the Chamber of Commerce on March 25th.

A lady admitted that she did not see him even though he was in the crosswalk of a four way stop intersection. He has a broken tibia.

The area that is crushed was the left side of the head of the tibia known as his knee. He had surgery on March 28th to have a plate and screws in the bone. He will be non weight bearing for ten weeks. Oh Boy.....They are going to transfer him to a Rehab Center as he will have to learn how to take care of himself with one leg. He is lamenting that he will have to change how he works at the Farm. It has been a learning experience for both of us. We are so lucky that he is still alive. Only going up from here.

All the nurses love him as he does everything they tell him to do and never complains. Let's see what PT and OT bring.

Love to all, Kay Keller Don't forget the prayers.

### George Wujcik reports:

Flag History has a gig for June 13th at 2:00 and 3:15 located in the Cedar Bay complexes. It is a long way off but has been confirmed in E mail and written letter. More info as the time grows nearer.

George Wujcik

### Historian/Editor Jason Waier reports:

"Thank you" to all the Members that showed up for last months elections! It is once again an honor to help lead the Detachment. This will however be my last. It has also been a long run working on the Newsletter and is time for someone else to give it a fresh perspective. *December will be my last issue as Editor of The Kettle Moraine Marine*, please contact me if interested in taking over.

Semper Fi  
Jason Waier

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**Correspondence Received or Delivered**

The Masonic Lodge in Hartford sent an extremely nice letter to George in appreciation for our service and things we do in the community. Our detachment recently did a flag history presentation for them. In addition they sent us a check for fifty dollars. In addition after our detachments presentation a beautiful cake was served with coffee. Just the way people spoke of it I was sorry to miss it!

We also received a letter from Judy and Michael Mason stating their appreciation for our veterans and the work our detachment does, an extremely nice letter along with a donation for five-hundred dollars. Thank-you so much for your generosity and philanthropy! Letters of appreciation will be sent to these folks.

Fundraising: We have dates for rose sales at West Bend Wal Mart this coming summer. The dates will be June 10th-11th, July 8th-9th and August 12th-13th.

**Unfinished Business**

Little League teams are just beginning to form up in Allenton, Jackson and Kewaskum where we will be looking to sponsor teams this summer. Allenton is \$100 per team, Kewaskum is \$100 per team, and Jackson is \$200 per team. A motion was made by Jason and seconded by John Fleischman to donate that amount toward each organization. The motion passed.

**New Business**

As some of you may recall we are organizing the spring conference for the State MCL in 2012. We were originally supposed to be doing this together with North Shore Detachment. They have notified us that they will no longer be working with us on that project so we'll just handle it ourselves. We need to check out facilities for two nights, more information will be coming as time goes by.

**Good of the League**

Plans continue to move forward for Veterans Day at the county fair this year on July 20th and it should be an excellent opportunity for us to showcase our detachment.

**Meeting Closed**

With no further business to conduct, the Commandant gave the order to close the meeting at 0953. The Sergeant at Arms retired the colors and the Chaplain gave the closing prayer. The Senior Vice Commandant thanked all members for attending and asked that they secure new members. The Marine Hymn was sung in closing the meeting. The bible is closed.

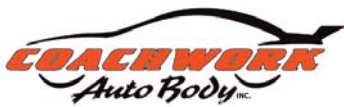
Respectfully submitted by:  
Paul Schleif, Adjutant

**Support the Troops- Notes from the front lines**

**John Stern,**  
*Thank you very much for what you and the Marine Corps League are doing for the troops deployed. Most of the items you listed are all things that I and or my battle buddies could put to good use. Only the hand sanitizer and phone cards stood out as things I'm really not in need of. Our medic hands out hand sanitizer by the case and we do not have regular access to phones on our FOB. The only other item I'm really in need of is Deodorant. The address my mother provided you with is correct. Again I would like to thank you and the Marine Corps League.*

**Pvt. Donald Silva**

Pvt. Silva:  
Just a note to let you know that a care package weighing 11 pounds 3 oz. was shipped to you on 31 March. I included two cans of AXE deodorant per your request. Enjoy and I'd appreciate acknowledgement of receipt.  
Semper Fi  
John Stern



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## Camp American Legion

The American Legion, Department of Wisconsin and Camp American Legion have been very busy over the winter months meeting with and building strong collaborative working relationships with veteran's groups and organizations throughout the state.

Like ours the mission of these groups is helping injured and disabled veterans. For most, their primary focus is with OEF/OIF, Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans.

These new relationships will bring to camp this season: U.S. Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment which provides recuperation and convalescence for severely wounded, ill and injured Marines and their families. It provides facilities and access to medical care and assists them as they return to active duty or civilian life.

*Camp American Legion is having our first ever USMC Wounded Warrior Regiment Week, May 30-June 5.*

### More about Camp American Legion

Camp American Legion serves approximately 400 injured and disabled veterans each summer. If you are a veteran who could use physical therapy, good food, fresh air and peaceful rest, investigate a stay here. American Legion members provide the money to operate Camp American Legion, but you do not need to be a Legionnaire to qualify. All you need to be is a veteran and a resident of Wisconsin whose physician certifies that you require rest and recuperation to aid in your recovery from an operation, illness, or other affliction.

Today, the camp accommodates amputees, veterans who have had strokes, and those suffering from

arthritis, nervous conditions, and Parkinson's disease. A caregiver, spouse, or family member is required if the veteran needs assistance with daily routines or care. The camp does not have a physician or nurse on staff, but in the case of an emergency, a local EMT rescue unit is available.

Camp American Legion is located seventeen miles North of Rhinelander, Wisconsin, on Oneida County Trunk Highway D, midway between Highways 51 and 47. The Camp is in the American Legion State Forest on the shores of Big Carr Lake. It is adjacent to the village of Lake Tomahawk. Minocqua and Woodruff are only a few miles away

## Wisconsin Veterans Secretary Resigns

(MADISON) – Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Ken Black submitted his letter of resignation to the Wisconsin Board of Veterans Affairs, effective April 1.

"I am honored to have led Wisconsin's Department of Veterans Affairs over the past 17 months," Black said. "It has been a sincere privilege to serve the men and women who sacrificed so much for this nation, and I want to thank the veterans community for this opportunity."

Black served as the Secretary since November 24, 2009, when he was appointed by the Wisconsin Board of Veterans Affairs. Previously Black was the Deputy and Acting Secretary and the Division Administrator for the Division of Veterans Benefits. Black served twenty-two years on active duty with the United States Army.

Black also thanked those he has worked with to improve the lives of veterans and

their families in Wisconsin. "It has been a privilege to work with the staff at the Department who dedicate themselves to serving our veterans."

"It is absolutely essential, especially at a time when we have troops in the field, that we do everything possible to support our military personnel and our veterans," Black said. "Wisconsin has a historic tradition of progressive action to support our veterans, and I know that the veterans community will continue to work collaboratively to protect that legacy and better serve our veterans."

Under the Board's Rules of Procedures, Deputy Secretary Donna Williams becomes the Acting Secretary. She currently serves as the Deputy Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs. Ms. Williams, a combat veteran, retired from the United States Army at the rank of Colonel after 29 years of service. She has served in numerous leadership positions from Platoon Leader to Brigade Commander. Ms. Williams is a graduate of the Army Command and General Staff College, Air Command and Staff College, Joint Forces Staff College and the Army War College. Additionally, she has completed Airborne and Air Assault Schools. Ms. Williams received her Bachelor's Degree from Ripon College as a Distinguished Military Graduate and her Master's Degree in Business Administration from Golden Gate University.

The Board of Veterans Affairs looks forward to working collaboratively with Acting Secretary Williams when she assumes her new duties on April 1st, as well as the Department's dedicated staff in our continuing mission of serving the veterans of Wisconsin and maintaining Wisconsin's comprehensive veteran's benefits and programs in a cost-effective manner.