



**HOSPICE-VETERAN PARTNERSHIP**  
**of Indiana**







# Hospice Veteran Partnership of Indiana

Quarter 4 Partnership Meeting

December 3, 2025

10:00 am to 11:30 am EST

9:00 am to 10:30 am CST







# Agenda

**10:00 – 10:05am: Welcome**

Melissa Marquardt, LSW/ HVPI President

**10:05– 10:20: Luke's Wings**

Mackenzie Yaede / Family Communications and Logistics Coordinator

**10:20 – 10:30: Partner Spotlight**

Kyle Pitts/ Heart to Heart Marion

**10:30 – 11:15 am: Pinning Ceremonies**

Liz Davis, LCSW / HVPI Vice President

**11:15am – 11:30pm: VA & HVPI Updates**

Melissa Marquardt, LSW/ HVPI President

Angie Bray / HVPI Partner Engagement Coordinator

**11:15am – 11:30pm: 2026 at a Glance & Closing Remarks**

Melissa Marquardt, LSW/ HVPI President



# Luke's Wings

MacKenzie Yaede

Family Communications and Logistics  
Coordinator

<https://lukeswings.org/request-a-flight/>

**O: (202) 735-5471**

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## Our Mission

Luke's Wings provides emergency travel planning services and airplane tickets for the families and loved ones of wounded, ill, and injured service members, Veterans, and fallen officers, during hospital recovery and rehabilitation.



# History & Impact of Luke's Wings

## Founded to Bridge the Gap

- ★ Founded in 2008 after realizing the **government provides only 3 flights** for family to visit after a service member is critically injured.
- ★ Families were often **quitting jobs or leaving children with caregivers** to remain by their loved one's sides throughout their recovery.
- ★ Luke's Wings was created to **bridge that gap** by providing **complimentary airfare** so loved ones can travel back and forth during recovery, without facing that financial burden.

## Keeping Families Connected

- ★ Flights allow families to stay **connected emotionally, physically, and mentally**.
- ★ We support **military hospitals, VA centers, and hospice facilities** nationwide.

## Our Reach & Recognition

- ★ Since 2008, Luke's Wings has provided **over 17,000 flights** to military families in need.
- ★ We are recognized nationally by the **White House Joining Forces Initiative** and **Delta Air Lines SkyWish Partnership**.





# Five Transportation Assistance Programs







# VETERANS IN HOSPICE TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## ★ Who We Serve

- Loved ones of Veterans in Hospice Care
- Veterans from all generations, including World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, and beyond
- Families who may live far away and face travel or financial challenges

## ★ What We Do

- Provide complimentary flights so families can be bedside during a Veteran's final moments
- Coordinate travel logistics quickly and efficiently to minimize stress on families
- **Ensure 24/7 support** through our emergency flight line for urgent travel requests and continuously monitor application submissions

## ★ Why It Matters

- Keeps families together during the most critical and emotional moments of life
- Honors Veterans' service and sacrifices with dignity and respect
- Gives families the chance to create meaningful, final memories
- Supports hospice staff by helping ensure family presence at the bedside



www.lukeswings.org



# Requesting a Flight

## Visit our Website

- ★ Visit the Luke's Wings website to begin your flight request process with ease.

## Request a Flight Section

- ★ Head to the 'Request a Flight' section to provide the necessary details for your flight request:

<https://lukeswings.org/request-a-flight/>

## Fill Out Information

- ★ Provide detailed information, including traveler details, assistance needs, and flight preferences with as much detail as possible.
- ★ Include proof of service along with the required hospice-related documentation.

## Submit and Await Confirmation

- ★ Once you've submitted your flight request, the Luke's Wings team will follow up with confirmation and next steps.





# No Service Member Spends The Holidays Alone

**From Veterans Day through New Year's, Luke's Wings is providing free flights for wounded, ill, and injured service members and Veterans—and their loved ones—so they don't have to spend the holidays alone.**

## **Who is Eligible?**

- ★ A service member who has been wounded
- ★ A Veteran facing a critical or chronic illness
- ★ A service member or Veteran receiving long-term medical care or rehabilitation
- ★ A Veteran in Hospice Care

***If Travel Isn't Possible – We'll Bring Family to the Hero***



# Partner Spotlight



Kyle Pitts  
Heart to Heart  
Marion, IN



WE HONOR VETERANS





# Pinning Ceremonies

Liz Davis, LCSW

Indianapolis VA Palliative Care Coordinator

Al Kozimor, United States Navy Veteran

Indianapolis VA Palliative Care Volunteer







# Pinning Ceremonies

Liz Davis, LCSW

Palliative Care Coordinator

Roudebush VA Medical Center

December 2025



# Objective

- Ensure every person on today's call knows how to facilitate a pinning ceremony!



# What is a Pinning Ceremony?

- The ceremony honors our Veterans for their military service. Typically, Pinning Ceremonies are reserved for Veterans nearing the end of their life.
- The ceremony is an opportunity for volunteers and staff to honor for family members and is an opportunity their family to participate in the experience.



# How to Approach a Pinning Ceremony

## **Keep it Simple**

Follow a script.

Participants are encouraged to engage each pinning in a way that honors the uniqueness of both the veteran and themselves.

## **Be Flexible**

Schedule Pinning Ceremonies with advance notice whenever possible.

Be aware Staff and volunteers could be called upon to participate in urgent same day Pinning Ceremonies.

Priority should be given to conducting Pinning Ceremonies when family can be in attendance.



# Optional Script

Introduction.....	Pinning Coordinator
Opening Prayer (optional).....	Chaplain or Trained Volunteer
Branch of Service Poem.....	VA Staff Member
Thank You For Sacrifices Made.....	Veteran Presenter
Presentation of Certificates.....	Veteran Presenter
“Honor To Serve With You” Pinning.....	Veteran Presenter
Military Salute.....	Veteran and/or Family
Closing Prayer.....	Chaplain or Trained Volunteer



# Introduction

- The Pinning Ceremony Coordinator will welcome everyone and state the purpose of the Pinning Ceremony.



# Opening Prayer

- Chaplain or Trained Volunteer will provide an invocation with respect to the veterans known religious/spiritual preference.
- Always screen Veteran ahead of time to confirm if prayer is desired/clarify spiritual preferences.
- Can also incorporate scripture or spiritual readings.



## A Time for Everything

There is a time for everything,  
And a season for every activity under the heavens;  
A time to be born and a time to die,  
A time to plant and a time to uproot,  
A time to kill and a time to heal,  
A time to tear down and a time to build,  
A time to weep and a time to laugh,  
A time to mourn and a time to dance,  
A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,  
A time to embrace and a time  
to refrain from embracing,  
A time to search and a time to give up,  
A time to keep and a time to throw away,  
A time to tear and a time to mend,  
A time to be silent and a time to speak,  
A time to love and a time to hate,  
A time for war and a time for peace,

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8



# Branch of Service Poem

- To be read by VA or hospice staff member.
- Branch specific poems.
- Providers are welcome to read any writings which may be meaningful to the Veteran.



There is discipline in A Soldier you can see it when he walks,  
There is honor in A Soldier you hear it when he talks.  
There is courage in A Soldier you can see it in his eyes,  
There is loyalty in A Soldier that he will not compromise.  
There is something in A Soldier that makes him stand apart,  
There is strength in A Soldier that beats from his heart.  
A Soldier isn't a title any man can be hired to do,  
A Soldier is the soul of that man buried deep inside of you.  
A Soldier's job isn't finished after an 8 hour day or a 40 hour week,  
A Soldier is always A Soldier even while he sleeps.  
A Soldier serves his country first and his life is left behind,  
A Soldier has to sacrifice what comes first in a civilian's mind.  
Because I am a civilian - I am saying this to you.....  
Each time I see A Soldier I remember what they do.  
A Soldier is the reason our land is 'Home of the free';  
A Soldier is the one that is brave protecting you and me.  
Because you are a Soldier - I am saying this to you.....  
Thank God for EVERY SOLDIER Thank God especially for you!  
Adapted from the poem by Angela Goodwin ~



# Veteran Thank You



- Have a Veteran present step forward and read:

*“My name is (rank, name, service branch) and I would like to thank you for the personal sacrifices you made when you decided to serve. You endured hardships and were willing to risk your life to maintain our freedom”.*



# Presentation of Certificates



- Have a Veteran present step forward and read:  
*“My name is (rank, name, service branch) and on behalf of the Richard L Roudebush VA Medical Center and the We Honor Veterans program, I am honored to present you with several tokens of our appreciation. Those who served in the years before me inspired me to serve my country. I thank you for what you did in the service of our great nation. This honor, which we extend to you today, is a symbol of our nations everlasting promise to remember your sacrifices. On behalf of grateful nation, thank you”.*
- Have a team member present a certificate of appreciation.



# Pinning

Have a member of your staff read the following while another person places a pin (American flag, we honor Veterans or something else you all design) on the Veteran.

*“This pin, which identifies you as a veteran, is but a small way in which to remember what you did on the behalf of a grateful nation”.*





# Military Salute

- Have a Veteran staff member or volunteer conduct the military salute.
- Salute will be rendered by all Veterans present.  
Optional script:

*“The military salute is a universal symbol of honor and represents the might of our great nation. The military salute is a privilege reserved for Active Duty and Veteran personnel. All Veterans present are invited to salute you on my commands which will be”:*

*“Veterans Attention”*

*“Present Arms”*

*“Order Arms”*

*“You may return our salute if your health permits. “*

*“Thank you for your service.”*





# Sharing of Veteran's Story



- The Veteran should be extended an opportunity to share his or her military story.
- Make sure the Veteran is notified PRIOR to the ceremony that they will have an opportunity to “share their story”.
- Make sure they understand this is optional.
- If the Veteran is unable to speak, invite the family to share on the Veteran's behalf.
- This is also an opportunity for staff to share things they have learned or enjoyed about the Veteran.



# Closing Prayer and Additional Considerations

- If appropriate, close ceremony with a prayer and thank everyone for coming.
- Our Veterans are unique. Please screen your Veterans/family's ahead of time to ensure the ceremony reflects their preferences and values.
- Photographs may be taken with permission.
- Zoom/virtual participation of family strongly encouraged!



# Advice from the Veteran Volunteer



Al Kozimor  
Navy Veteran





# Pinning Ceremony September 30, 2025

William Roundtree  
U.S. Navy Veteran

<https://youtu.be/agHw4Q2WrRM?si=4ew9ZJxL1UFv6YEB>



# Community/Hospice Pinning Ceremonies

How do you all recognize/honor Veterans?



# HVPI and VA Updates

- HVPI Leadership Team Updates
  - Welcome Lexi Harris, Director of Operations at Cornerstone Caregiving, Kokomo!
- Food Assistance For Veterans
  - Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF) “Operation Emergency Food” (will post link on our website)
- 1<sup>st</sup> Pinning Ceremony at Northern Indiana Health Care System (NIHCS) CLC





H  PI



# 2026 At a Glance

- **2026 HVPI Partnership Meeting Dates and topics**
  - March 4<sup>th</sup> – VA Benefits and Resources geared towards social workers
    - Gun locks, food resources, homeless resources, home care, nursing home, burial benefits.
  - June 3<sup>rd</sup> – Moral Injury / Benefits of Story Telling with Dr. Lightfoot
  - September 9<sup>th</sup> – Suicide Prevention
  - December 2<sup>nd</sup> – Indy VA Chief of Palliative Care Dr. Fettig presentation
- **All Meetings in 2026 will be 10-11:30 a.m. via Teams**
- **Additional Events Partners are encouraged to participate in:**
  - June 24<sup>th</sup> – Serve Meal at Veteran's House
  - December – 4<sup>th</sup> Annual HVPI Holiday Drive



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## Leadership Team

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