

EAGLE STUDENT VETERAN NEWSLETTER

812-464-1857



USI.EDU/VETERANS



www.facebook.com/studentvetsatusi



Stay Informed

Find out about events involving the Student Veteran campus community by following us on GroupMe, Facebook and Engage!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Patriot Gala

Saturday, November 1

C.K. Newsome Center – Presented by ECHO Housing and Community Development, this benefit event will feature a host of fun featuring casino games, dinner and cash bar, dancing and a special guest appearance by Mayor Terry.

Evansville Thunderbolts – Military Appreciation Nihit

Friday, November 7 – 7p.m.

See Flyer in this Newsletter! The Thunderbolts will honor all military veterans with discounted tickets.

250th Marine Corps Ball

Saturday, November 8

USI Campus – Griffin Center 10:00
This month's presenter is on VA Home Loans

Four Freedoms Veterans Parade

Saturday, November 8

Held on Franklin Street, this parade honors veterans of all era's with a wide range of presentations

USI SVA Veteran Day Lunch

Saturday, November 8

Free lunch at campus venues offered by Sodexo and the SVA. See article inside for details.

VETERANS DAY



HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

Program Spotlight

SVA TEAMS UP WITH SODEXO TO HONOR VETERANS

For the 12th year, USI Student Veterans Association and Sodexo have teamed up to honor our veterans.

Sodexo will offer one FREE meal to all current and former military at one of their venues.

At the Loft, veterans can receive their entrée, three sides and one drink. At all other venues, the veteran will receive their entrée, one side and one drink. This offer is limited to one ticket per veteran and applied to the veteran only.

"This is a great way to honor our veterans on campus and will allow them to participate in the free meals without having to leave campus and classes to attend" said Joel Matherly, Director of the USI Veteran Military and Family Resource Center.

Students can receive their tickets for the meal at the student desk in front of the Loft in the University Center West, 2nd Floor on November 11, from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. This is limited to one per student while supplies last. The offer is only good on November 11, 2025 and open to all veterans and dependents on VA Educational Benefits.



Staff Feature

From Student to President

– Jody Keen, Evansville Living, October 2025

Looking out over the crowd gathered in Liberty Arena on Oct. 16, Cory Bridges thought all the pomp and circumstance was nice, but perhaps a bit overdone for his “Little League coach.” The punchline? That coach was his father, Steven, and the pomp celebrated the longtime University of Southern Indiana employee’s inauguration as the college’s fifth president.

Known for his sense of humor, Bridges didn’t let his son crack the day’s only joke: Standing at the podium to deliver his inaugural address, Bridges said that the ceremony felt like “an academic wedding, and they told me that I was the bride.”

Bridges, who was hired by USI as a staff accountant after earning his bachelor’s degree in 1989, rose in the ranks to Vice President for Finance and Administration before being named interim president in July 2024 upon Ron Rochon’s departure to assume the presidency at California State University, Fullerton. USI’s Board of Trustees announced Bridges as Rochon’s permanent successor in April 2025. Rochon was on hand Oct. 16, along with prior presidents Ray Hoops and Linda Bennett, to invest Bridges as USI’s fifth president.

The inauguration program acknowledged USI’s significant role in the region – such as a musical performance of a medley of songs representing Indiana, Kentucky, and Illinois – and nodded at the Bridges family’s faith. Running throughout was an undercurrent of pride at a USI graduate and fellow employee being named president, with salutations and remarks from Faculty Senate Chair Kyle Mara, Board of Trustees Chair Christina Ryan, Master of Ceremonies and Marketing and Communication Vice President Kindra Strupp, and more expressing praise for Bridges’ teamwork, leadership, and work ethic.

Bridges’ inaugural address illuminated his upward path. The son of a farmer, Bridges is a first-generation college student. “This university was built to serve students like me: first-generation, limited resources, seeking an affordable education close to home, working while studying, and committed to making a difference in their own community,” he said. “... I came here with purpose, and today is the pinnacle of that decision.”

The Henderson, Kentucky, native called himself a proud West Sider who admires USI’s grit and determination. “USI continues to shine as a beacon of grit, hospitality, and creativity,” he said. “... Together, we will build, we will serve, and we will thrive, all on purpose.”

Club & Activity Corner

Eat Great, Giveback to SVA at Hacienda!

The USI Student Veteran Association (SVA) is working with Hacienda Westside to participate in the giveback program.

Hacienda will giveback 20% of each item purchased at the westside store (5440 Pearl Drive) on November 11, 2025. All patron’s must present the coupon below (either physical or picture) to their waitstaff for their purchases to be considered in the giveback amount.

Can’t make it that day? You can still support the USI SVA program by purchasing a gift card from now until November 11th. That gift card can be used at any Hacienda location, but can not be used on the same night it is purchased.

Come join us and celebrate Veteran’s Day by helping our SVA students.



Group: USI Student Veteran Association

Date: November 11, 2025

Location: Hacienda West - 5440 Pearl Drive

You must receive this token from your organization prior to your event. Distribution of this token on Hacienda property will disqualify the organization from receiving any proceeds.

Don't have time to eat out? Pick up a Hacienda gift card or Fiesta-to-go order. They count towards the fundraiser.

Restaurant Phone Number 812-422-2055

GIFT CARDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED TO MAKE A PAYMENT FOR YOUR PURCHASE WITH THIS TOKEN

"The willingness of America's veterans to sacrifice for our country has earned them our lasting gratitude,"

– Jeff Miller



Staff Feature

USI Sets Annual Hoops for Troops Appreciation Basketball Game



On January 24, 2026, the USI Student Veteran Association will offer FREE tickets to all veterans and military on our campus and in the community for the 11th annual "Hoops for Troops - Military Appreciation Basketball Game".

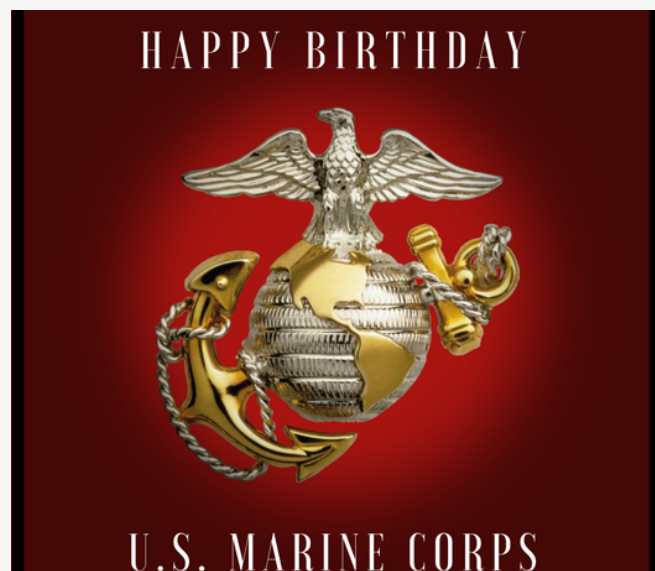
The Screaming Eagles will take on Western Illinois University in the "Southern vs. Western Battle" in the Screaming Eagles Arena. The game times are 1:00 p.m. for the women and 3:30 p.m. for the men.

"This is something we look forward to doing every year.

"While we would like to see more of our community come out to support the teams, it's just a fun day to see everyone within the veteran community", said Joel Matherly, Director of the Veteran Military and Family Resource Center.

The event is open to veterans of all eras and includes up to five (5) tickets for all guests. Tickets can be picked up the day of the game at the veteran ticket window in the PAC.

"We hope that the veterans will come out so we can expand on what we can offer to our campus and community", said Matherly.



Veteran's On-Campus

Veteran Faculty Member 'Deploys' to Help Africa

United States Air Force Veteran and USI Faculty Member Erin Parchman, Assistant Professor of Respiratory Therapy, is continuing her mission to help others both locally and around the world.

She will share a reflection of her recent humanitarian and research trip to Ghana, West Africa during a Lunch and Learn session at the Kinney College of Nursing and Health Professions.

The event will be held on October 30 in the Lower Level of the Health Professions Building, Room LL0050 from noon to 1 p.m.

From helping newborns breathe to building global partnerships, Parchman will share powerful stories and insights from her work.

Research Abroad
LUNCH & LEARN

Join Erin Parchman, Assistant Professor of Respiratory Therapy, as she shares highlights from her recent humanitarian and research trip to Ghana, West Africa.

- ▶ THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30
- ▶ NOON - 1 P.M.
- ▶ HEALTH PROFESSIONS 3127

Bring your lunch!

Scholarship Opportunity

Local veteran parade honors service members

The Four Freedoms Veterans Parade will roll down West Franklin Street Saturday, November 8, 2025 to honor our local heroes from 2 - 5pm.

Parade registration starts at 10:30 a.m. Saturday in the corner lot of the Lloyd and St. Joe.

The parade will feature military equipment and vehicles from years past, with veterans from several wars in tow - some throwing out candy for the public.

"It does show us veterans that our sacrifices were worth it to the people of this country, and I think that's important for us to know. I know a lot of times we feel like we're alone with a lot of the things we deal with," added Lynch.

If you would like to watch the parade there is no cost and please show up at the times above. If you want to register to participate as an individual or an organization please complete the form below. Line up starts at noon on the 11th and everyone must be in line no later than 1:30 p.m. When arriving join the next open spot and our registration team will come to you for the paperwork.

For more information, visit <https://ffvparade.org/the-four-freedoms-veterans-parade/>



Community supporters wave to veterans as they watch the annual Four-Freedoms Veteran's Parade on Franklin Avenue in Evansville. This year's parade will happen on November 9th and start at 2 p.m.

National Veteran News

Three Things to Know

American Legion, October 2025

1. President Donald Trump said Saturday that he has directed the Defense Department to use "all available funds" to ensure U.S. troops are paid Wednesday despite the government shutdown, a short-term fix that will not apply to the hundreds of thousands of federal workers who have been furloughed. Trump said in a social media post that he was acting because "our Brave Troops will miss the paychecks they are rightfully due on October 15th." The president's directive removes one of the pressure points that could have forced Congress into action, likely ensuring that the shutdown - now in its 11th day and counting - extends into a third week and possibly beyond. But no similar action seems forthcoming for federal employees also working without pay while thousands are now being laid off during the lapse in government operations. The White House budget office started the layoffs on Friday.

2. As the federal government shutdown continues, some Tricare medical providers are being told their claims for services for military families may not be paid until government funding is restored, according to contractors, advocates and the Tricare.mil website. It's not clear why those claims are delayed or why the money isn't available now to pay claims for that care, as the Defense Department's shutdown guidance specifically exempts private-sector care under Tricare from the shutdown's effects. "You can't tell providers to keep seeing people free of charge," said Kristi Cabiao, CEO and founder of Mission Alpha Advocacy, an organization that works to improve quality of life for military families with special needs. "I thought this was an entitlement. I'm really concerned for our families."

3. The U.S. military is moving forward with plans to build a dedicated facility in Idaho to train pilots from Qatar, an important U.S. ally in the Middle East, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth announced. Hegseth, who made the announcement during a visit by Qatar's defense minister, said the facility to be built at the Mountain Home Air Force Base would "host a contingent of Qatari F-15s and pilots to enhance our combined training, increase the lethality, interoperability." The arrangement is not unusual. Pentagon officials noted that similar facilities have been set up for other allies for decades, and the Idaho base already hosts a fighter squadron from Singapore.

National News

End the government shutdown, Legion and other VSOs demand

American Legion Government Affairs Executive Director Mario Marquez was among 10 speakers at an Oct. 14 press conference calling for Congress to immediately end the federal government shutdown.

"You swore an oath to serve Americans – on the same flag our troops defend with their lives," Marquez said during the press conference, organized by Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA). "That oath does not expire when politics get hard. Reopen the government and pass legislation that pays our troops so we never have to do this again. Protect those who protect you. When you fail to keep your promises, you fail the very people who make this nation worth serving. It's time to stop the excuses. It's time to end the shutdown."

Now in its third week, the shutdown is having an impact on military families, veterans, federal workers and of course military personnel. President Trump has ordered the Pentagon to pay servicemembers, which were due to miss their first paycheck on Oct. 15.

During the previous government shutdown, which began in late 2019, Marquez saw the ramifications firsthand as he was serving in Okinawa, Japan, as the Senior Enlisted Leader for the Marine Corps' largest overseas combat force.

"I saw commanders deal with the fallout from the shutdown – ensuring combat readiness on the front line of America's national security, while preserving the morale and welfare of the 35,000-person force," he recalled. "When Congress failed to act, mental-health, behavioral-health, and other quality-of-life programs took the hit. What I learned during that earlier shutdown is that it was the people who paid the price for political failure. And it's easy to understand why Congress makes these choices – they're not the ones looking servicemembers and military families in the eye when delivering the bad news."

In addition to The American Legion and IAVA, speakers from a collection of veterans service organizations and other organizations that support veterans reiterated the call to open the government and pay the military.

Marquez also pointed out that veterans' programs have also been halted. For example, graves are going unmaintained, transition and career counseling has been paused, and suicide prevention funding has been delayed.

He sought to reassure servicemembers, veterans and their families.

"You have carried this nation on your backs. You have kept faith with America – even when America's leaders could not keep faith with you. We have your back and will not stop fighting for you."

ECHO HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT'S
1st Annual Patriot Gala
 PRESENTED BY **BCS**
BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS SOLUTIONS

COMING HOME TO CASABLANCA

Join us for an unforgettable evening as we honor the Veterans and First Responders who selflessly serve our community. Step into the elegance and charm of Casablanca, where you'll enjoy a delightful dinner, thrilling casino games, a silent auction, inspiring awards, music, and dancing. Don't miss this night of celebration, gratitude, and glamour—all in support of those who have given so much. Here's to you, our Heroes!

Saturday, November 1, 2025
CK Newsome Center

VIP TICKETS	STANDARD TICKETS
Entry @ 4:30pm	Entry @ 5:30 pm
\$150 / person	\$100 / person
\$225 / couple	\$175 / couple
\$800 / table of 6	\$500 / table of 6

Casino | Cash Bar | Dancing | Special Guest: The Honorable Mayor Stephanie Terry | Raffle | Dinner | Awards

NOMINATE A HERO
 ★ Valor ★ Unity
 ★ Honor ★ Patriot
 Scan QR Code to Nominate:

SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE
 TRY YOUR HAND @ THE CASINO
 ★ Poker ★ Craps
 ★ Blackjack ★ Roulette

Questions? Contact Kim at kim.armstrong@echohousing.org

VETERANS COLISEUM PRESERVATION FOUNDATION EVENT
Inaugural Gala:
IN THE MOOD
 NOVEMBER 1, 2025, 6-10 PM
 OLD NATIONAL EVENTS PLAZA
A 1940s-INSPIRED CELEBRATION!

TICKETS FOR VETERANS \$75.00
 PAY BY CASH OR CHECK
 VANDERBURGH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE
 1 NW MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., BLVD. ROOM 305
 EVANSVILLE, IN 47708

BIG BAND & SWING MUSIC
GOURMET FOOD & COCKTAILS
SILENT AUCTION

STUDENT VETERAN ASSOCIATION
MEETINGS:
FIRST MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH
12:00 - 1PM (1300)
VETERANS LOUNGE - ED0114
 OPEN TO VETERANS, CURRENT MILITARY, AND DEPENDENTS



Veterans Affairs News

VA Services During the Shutdown – What to Expect

As you may be aware, funding for some government agencies, including portions of the Department of Veterans Affairs, expired at midnight this morning. President Trump opposes a lapse in appropriations, and on September 19, the House of Representatives passed, with the Trump Administration's support, a clean continuing resolution to fund the government through November 21. Unfortunately, Democrats are blocking this Continuing Resolution in the U.S. Senate due to unrelated policy demands.

During the current lapse in funding, the vast majority of VA benefits and services will continue uninterrupted, but the government shutdown is not without consequences to VA. Here is what you need to know:

The following critical Veterans care and assistance programs will be impacted by the government shutdown:

- VA will not provide Veteran career counseling or transition assistance program activities.
- The GI Bill Hotline will be closed.
- VA regional benefits offices will be closed.
- VA will cease public affairs and outreach to Veterans.
- VA will not permanently place headstones or maintain the grounds at VA national cemeteries.
- VA will not process applications for pre-need burials.
- VA will not print new presidential memorial certificates.

Thankfully, the government shutdown will not impact the following VA services:

- Veteran health care is not impacted. VA Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, and Vet Centers will be open.
- VA benefits will continue to be processed and delivered, including compensation, pension, education, and housing benefits.
- Burials will continue at VA national cemeteries. Applications for headstones, markers, and burial benefits processing will continue.
- The Board of Veterans' Appeals will continue decisions on Veterans' cases.
- VA Contact Centers (1-800-MyVA411) and the Veterans Crisis Line (Dial 988, Press 1) are open 24/7.

National Veteran News

U.S. Navy Celebrates 250 Years of Service to Our Nation

American Legion, October 2025



U.S. Navy veteran Yogi Berra played American Legion Baseball before a Hall of Fame career with the Yankees. (Image via American Legion Archives)

The U.S. Navy celebrated its birthday on Oct. 13. In 1775, a naval force was established by the Continental Congress to aid in the conflict with the British. Some prominent figures found themselves in interesting places and jobs during their time in service.

Yogi Berra: The Major League Baseball Hall of Famer (and American Legion Baseball alum) put his nascent career with the Yankees on hold to serve in the Navy during World War II; he was a gunner's mate on USS Bayfield on D-Day.

Tony Curtis: The actor also served during World War II; he watched the 1945 signing ceremony in Tokyo Bay via binoculars from USS Proteus. He later used the GI Bill to take acting classes.

John Coltrane: The saxophone legend enlisted on Aug. 6, 1945, just before the end of World War II; stationed in Hawaii, he played in a base swing band and made his first recordings there.

Nancy Kulp: During World War II, the actress best known for "The Beverly Hillbillies" joined the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) in 1943 after graduating college, rising to the rank of lieutenant, and left in 1945.

Jesse Ventura: the former professional wrestler and former governor is also a veteran of SEAL Team 12, Underwater Demolition, in the Vietnam War period.

Zach Bryan: the young country singer with three Billboard Top 10 songs to his credit is a Navy "brat" born on Okinawa who continued the family tradition by serving seven years, including as an aviation ordnanceman. He was deployed to Bahrain and Djibouti, and received an honorable discharge in October 2021 to pursue his music full-time.



WELCOME HOME PARADE EVV19

Welcome Home Our Heroes

Have you ever wanted to say, "Thank you for my freedom!" Here is your chance!
We need your help to gather others & come give our Veterans a
Welcome Home they'll never forget!

SATURDAY, OCT. 25, 2025
EVANSVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT

PLANE ARRIVES APPROX. 7:45PM CST
PARADE WILL START APPROX. 8:30PM CST

BRING YOUR AMERICAN FLAGS, SIGNS, BANNERS, AND AS MANY PEOPLE AS YOU CAN!

ARRIVE EARLY TO GET A GOOD SPOT!!!



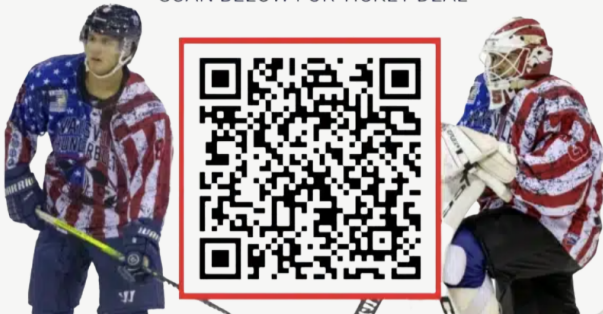
Anchor Industries with entrances off HWY 41 & HWY 57 Follow INDOT Directional Signs

➤ PLEASE NOTE, Updates will be provided via HFSI Facebook page.
➤ No personal chairs or coolers can be brought into the airport



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7 @ 7:00 PM FORD CENTER

Join the Evansville Thunderbolts for a night to honor all branches of the military for their hard work! A discounted ticket of \$12 (goal zone) or \$17 (center ice) will be available for purchase to all Military personnel & up to 5 people with proof of identification!
SCAN BELOW FOR TICKET DEAL



GIVE US A CALL AT 812-422-BOLT (2658)

Local Veteran News



Honor Flight of Southern Indiana Prepares for Upcoming Flight – Oct 25th

Diane Shaw, HFSI Newsletter, October 2025

The preparation for EVV19 is underway! Veterans, Guardians have been interviewed, and their medical records are updated. Most Guardians have gone through the HFSI guardian training class. The HFSI medical team has assessed the documents and given Veterans & Guardians the all clear approval. Bus captains have their assigned Veterans & Guardians and are ready for Meet & Greet and Flight Day! (86) Veterans are vetted and ready for EVV19, with (6) alternates on stand by in case someone is unable to fly on Oct. 25th. We never want to have empty seats on our chartered American Airlines plane.

Volunteers: We are always looking for individuals who want to make a difference in the lives of local Veterans and serve this great organization. If you are interested, go to our website www.honorflightsi.org, click on the apply now button, and select the drop down link for volunteer application. You will receive sign up genius emails when volunteers are needed. Several events are coming up when we will need volunteers!

Community Support: Our non-profit 501c3 organization relies on the generosity of our community. The support we receive makes it possible for us to provide the ultimate Honor Flight experience for our Veterans, Guardians, and their families. Ways of supporting the missions; participate in Operation Mail Call, purchase something from our Wish List, attend the Hero's Welcome Home Parade on OCT. 25th, be a parade escort, and donate your time or money. More details are available on our website, www.honorflightsi.org.

Veterans: If you know a Veteran who has NOT signed up for their FREE Honor Flight, please sign them up ASAP. If your Veteran is already in our database and their contact information or health information has changed, please call our phone answering line to update their information. You can also email your information to us. If your application has already been submitted, please don't submit another application.

HFSI contact information:

phone ~ 812-297-4136 email ~ database@honorflightsi.org

Communication: Stay up to date with HFSI through the following ~ FACEBOOK, WEBSITE, INSTAGRAM, and NEWSLETTER. Share our information with others.

812-464-1857



ENGAGE.USI.EDU/ORGANIZATION/SVA



USI.EDU/VETERANS

250th Marine Corps Birthday Ball

Legend has it that on 10 November 1775 Samuel Nicholas was commissioned by the new government of the fledgling United States to "stand up two battalions of Marines" to serve onboard US Navy ships. Nicholas went to Tun Tavern in Philadelphia and organized the first 100 of the "few good men" who became Marines. Our Birthday Ball in Evansville celebrates the birth of our Corps. For 250 years young people have stood up, raised their right hands and sworn to defend our nation against all enemies.

Saturday, November 8, 2025

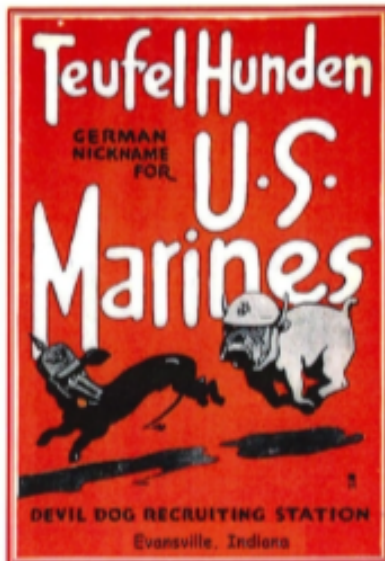
Evansville Country Club
(3810 Stringtown Road)

5:30 until Midnight Dinner,
Dancing, Cash Bar

Special Guest Speaker Major
David Westmeyer Marine
Helicopter Pilot

Tickets \$50/person

(Table sponsorships available see
website address below)



Join us for the 250th
Anniversary of the birth of the
United States Marine Corps.

For more information or to purchase your
tickets contact:

David Jones – office (812) 802-5807
or cell (812) 483-1276

Or go to www.mclivercities1090.com



Requested attire:
Semi-formal
to Formal

EVV19 Parade Escort Applications
Now accepted at www.honorflightsi.org



**CALLING
ALL
STUDENTS
6TH - 12TH
GRADE**

HONOR FLIGHT
SOUTHERN INDIANA

NEEDS YOU!

Be The Difference



EVENT DATE - SAT. OCTOBER 25TH

- Flight arrives at 7:45pm CST
- Parade begins at 8:15pm CST
- Parking at Anchor Industries with bus shuttles to the airport starting at 6:30pm CST
- Escort Registration begins at 7:15pm CST
- Times are approx. & subject to change

Hoof Beats for Heroes



Where: Warehouse 410

When: November 15th

Doors open at 5:30

Line Dancing at 6—Live music at 7

Featuring Sam Hahn

and Tailgate Revival!!

Food trucks, half pot, and silent auction!!

STEVE'S
UNIK-N-SOUP



VMS
VANDERBURGH HUMANE SOCIETY

HELP FOR HEROES

The Vanderburgh Humane Society's newest program offers assistance to veterans with pets in the Evansville region. Pets enrich our lives and benefit our mental health, and we're here to help veterans and their pets stay happy & healthy - together at home!

AVAILABLE SERVICES:

- Dog & cat distemper vaccines
- Flea & tick prevention
- Spay/neuter assistance
- Microchip with national registration
- Pet food assistance
- Assistance with appointment scheduling, forms, & transport when available, etc.

CONTACT INFO:

Wende McKinney
Director of Operations
w.mckinney@vhsilifesaver.org
(812) 426-2563 ext. 220

Leave a voicemail for a call back.

SCAN HERE
FOR MORE INFO!



A VETERANS COLISEUM PRESERVATION FOUNDATION EVENT IN THE MOOD

★ AN INAUGURAL GALA ★

NOVEMBER 1, 2025 ★ 6 - 10PM
OLD NATIONAL EVENTS PLAZA

A 1940'S-INSPIRED CELEBRATION!

HELP US HONOR OUR VETERANS AND SUPPORT THE PRESERVATION OF THE VETERANS MEMORIAL COLISEUM.

BIG BAND &
SWING MUSIC

GOURMET FOOD &
COCKTAILS

SILENT
AUCTION



VETERANS COLISEUM.ORG