

The Highground Veterans Memorial Park is looking forward to 2016, with a year full of ceremonies, events and exhibits honoring our veterans, those currently serving and ensuring that we never forget the sacrifices which have been made. A highlight of 2016 will be Operation Persian Gulf Welcome Home and the Dedication of the Persian Gulf Tribute – July 19-25, 2016.

**Operation Persian Gulf Welcome Home** is a week-long event honoring all those that served in the Persian Gulf region, including Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Iraq & Afghanistan. To create an important event of this magnitude and length requires a great deal of dedication and support. Costs are kept as low as possible, but there are still significant expenses that cannot be avoided ranging from nationwide publicity to spread the word to all Persian Gulf veterans; booking of the Wall of Remembrance; providing food for the “army” of volunteers; providing valuable PTSD support and books free of charge to veterans and numerous other items. This event will provide a vital service to veterans and families that are now experiencing great difficulty with many issues after the veteran’s return to civilian life. With your help, we can reach out with an event that not only honors their return, remembers those who did not return, but most importantly provides a central informational resource and help to resolve the many issues with which our veterans of all eras are struggling.

Volunteers are Needed From Now until the End of Operation Persian Gulf Welcome Home! Help is needed in the areas below and more:

**24-Hr Watch of Wall and Tribute during July 19-25.**

**Color Guard Units** are needed for the Arrival of the Wall of Remembrance on July 18<sup>th</sup> – approx.. 6:30pm and each day for ceremonies from July 19-25. **Rifle units** are also needed for each ceremony July 19-25.

**Car Parking**

Veterans to help other veterans in signing the Big Maps of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Afghanistan & Vietnam

Ceremony assistance

Family Day helpers

...And More!...

**Together, we can Remember our Fallen, Honor our Veterans & Families and Provide the Assistance and Information to Heal and Move Forward!**

Thank you,



Theresa Hebert

Volunteer/Events Coordinator

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# OPERATION PERSIAN GULF WELCOME HOME

HONORING & REMEMBERING THOSE WHO SERVED IN  
DESERT SHIELD, DESERT STORM  
OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM,  
OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

## JULY 19—25, 2016

AT THE HIGHGROUND VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK  
W7031 RIDGE RD, NEILLSVILLE WI 54456



July 18 - Escort In of **"WALL OF REMEMBRANCE"** from Madison, WI

July 19 - Opening Ceremony

July 20 - Desert Shield & Desert Storm Recognition Ceremony

July 21 - Operation Enduring Freedom Recognition Ceremony

July 22 - Operation Iraqi Freedom Recognition Ceremony

July 23 - **DEDICATION DAY OF PERSIAN GULF TRIBUTE**

9:30am - Persian Gulf Honor Stone Ceremony

6:00pm - **PERSIAN GULF TRIBUTE DEDICATION CEREMONY**

7:00pm - **"MADISON RISING" CONCERT**



July 24 - Family Day

**FREE Bouncy Houses, Games, Picnic & Outdoor Movie!**

July 25 - Candlelight Closing Ceremony

5-STAR Sponsors:

MDRT-MILLION DOLLAR ROUND TABLE

Wisconsin Public Radio

Adler-Clark Electric Community

Marshfield Masonic Lodge #224

Hardee's

Rock n' Roll to Go Plus!

3-STAR Sponsors:

Phanuef-Vanasse Amer. Leg. #111

4-STAR Sponsors:

VVA #639 Lucinda Zimmer

Old Abe Chapter WI 101st ABN Assn

John Tollefson Memorial

Marjorie Short Lee Anderson

Chilson Subaru

Citizen's State Bank of Loyal

Edgewood College

Sunrise Exchange Club of Eau Claire

Al Muth Harley Davidson

Willis -Chapel Amer. Leg. #306

The  
**Highground**

[www.thehighground.org](http://www.thehighground.org) 715-743-4224  
[highgrnd@tds.net](mailto:highgrnd@tds.net)





## Overview as of 3/7/16

### Operation Persian Gulf Welcome Home –( July 18 - escort) July 19 – 25, 2016

There is a very important, exciting event happening in July, 2016 for military personnel that served in the Persian Gulf region (Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Iraq and Afghanistan) and all those that support these veterans. During July 19 – 25, 2016 The Highground Veterans Memorial Park (W70321 Ridge Rd, Neillsville WI 54456) will host “Operation Persian Gulf Welcome Home”. This 7-day event will honor these veterans, those who lost their lives in the Persian Gulf region and the families of those who served. This is an event for all Persian Gulf veterans across the country, not only Wisconsin. It will be a week of Military Reunions, Healing, Recognition and Remembrance. Below are some of the items that are scheduled and help that is needed. Updates will be posted on The Highground’s website, Facebook and in upcoming newsletters as other scheduled events get confirmed.

#### Monday, July 18 – Escort of The Wall of Remembrance to The Highground

The “Wall of Remembrance”, a nationwide traveling memorial wall honoring all who have lost their lives and all who served in the Global War on Terror (Desert Shield, Desert Storm, OIF, OEF, OND) and all citizens and emergency personnel who lost their lives during the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 will be on display at The Highground for the entire week.

The escort will start in Madison at the Harley Davidson of Madison, 6200 Millpond Rd, Madison WI 53718. Registration from 7:30AM – 9:00AM. The escort will depart from the Harley Davidson of Madison location at 9:00AM.

(A limited number of rooms have been reserved at the Magnuson Grand Hotel (3510 Millpond Rd, Madison WI 53718) near the Harley Davidson of Madison for the night of July 17<sup>th</sup>.)

The escort route will be approximately 245 miles long, with breaks and a lunch stop at the Willis Chapel American Legion Post #306 in Green Lake, WI. The escort will travel through the Tomah VA and make stops at the Mauston Harley-Davidson and the Black River Falls Harley-Davidson (Al Muth). The escort is timed to enter The Highground around 6:30PM

For more information and to sign up for the escort, contact June at The Highground. 715-743-4224, [highgrnd@tds.net](mailto:highgrnd@tds.net).

#### Tuesday, July 19 – Opening “Welcome Home” Ceremony

Speaker – Neillsville Mayor Steve Mabie

Media Reception

#### Wednesday, July 20 – Desert Shield / Desert Storm Ceremony

Speaker: James Liedtka - Desert Storm veteran

#### Thursday, July 21 – Operation Enduring Freedom – Afghanistan

Speaker: Brian Barth – OEF veteran

#### Friday, July 22 – Operation Iraqi Freedom – Iraq

Speakers – Shane Dawson, Father Conrad Targonski – both veterans of OIF

Music – Keith Pulvermacher performing during and after the ceremony

#### Saturday, July 23 – PERSIAN GULF TRIBUTE DEDICATION DAY

Wisconsin’s tribute to those who served in the Persian Gulf, “The Bootprint” will be formally dedicated on Saturday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>. “The Bootprint” is a permanent, major tribute at The Highground honoring all who served in the Persian Gulf region (Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Afghanistan) from Desert Shield to present day. It is a



large outdoor tribute which, like all Highground veterans tributes, is available for veterans and families to visit 24/7 at The Highground. Features of this tribute include concrete Jersey and Texas Barriers, which along with Honor Stones, form a symbolic shape of a military footprint in the sand. The Persian Gulf Tribute is located on the Eastern slope of The Highground's plaza, making it visible from the plaza but at the same time offering quiet and solitude for those who enter the tribute for reflection and remembrance.

9:30AM - Persian Gulf Honor Stone Ceremony

1:00PM – Dedication of Tribute Benches & Barriers

**“Walk for the Fallen” with Being There-Reaching Out**

Time TBA - Blood Center Blood Drive in the Learning Center

6:00PM – Dedication of The Persian Gulf Tribute

**Speakers – Governor Scott Walker (requested)**

**General Dunbar (requested)**

**Celeste Kaufman – mother of Charles Kaufman (KIA Iraq)**

Ten “Quilts of Valor” will be presented to veterans.

**MADISON RISING**, one of the nation's premier patriotic rock bands, will perform after the dedication ceremony. Their performance will begin about 7pm at The Highground.

**Sunday, July 24 – Women in the Military & Family Day**

**Morning – Non-denominational Sunday Service**

**Speakers: Maggie Mae**

**Lori Dawson – wife of a Desert Storm veteran & mother of an OIF veteran**

**Maggie Mae**, a country singer and mother of a daughter who served in the Persian Gulf and received two purple hearts for her service, will be performing in the afternoon. There will be many family activities, including inflatables and games for kids and an evening movie on a large outdoor screen!

**Monday, July 25 – Candlelight Memorial / Closing Ceremony**

**Speaker – Brian Jopek (father of Ryan Jopek – KIA Iraq)**

(Sandy Hautamaki will be a speaker during the week – TBA – mother of Ryan Cantafio KIA Iraq)

**Other aspects of the week of The Welcome Home will include:**

**“Tribute to the Fallen” – Photo display by David Wick**

**Missing Man Table ceremony**

**Battlefield Cross Ceremony**

**“Fallen Angel” Tribute Truck**

**Ryan Jopek's (KIA OIF) truck, “Walter”**, will be displayed. Ryan, of Merrill, WI, was restoring the truck and after he was killed in action, his father finished the restoration & it has traveled to honor all those KIA.

**The Highground's Big Maps (20' x 24')** of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Afghanistan & Vietnam for veterans and Gold Star families to sign.

**Field of Flags** – The Highground will display a Field of Flags. A flag will be put up for each of the WI men & women KIA in the Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Iraq & Afghanistan. These flags can be sponsored for \$40 and the name of your post, chapter or group will be noted on the flag. Additional flags can be sponsored

for \$40 in honor of any service member from any era. These flags will be tagged and on July 26<sup>th</sup>, these flags can be picked up or shipped (with an additional \$8) to you.

**Military Displays, Veterans Reunions,  
364 military boot display by Being There-Reaching Out  
Photography Services,  
Counselor on grounds daily from the Vet Center  
Kara Frame, photojournalist  
Military & Patriotic Vehicles on display and more.**

**A central part of the Persian Gulf Welcome Home will be the recognition of the assistance that many Persian Gulf veterans still require as they return to a civilian life. The Highground's Plaza will be filled with information and displays on PTSD awareness and counseling, employment, education, healthcare, housing assistance and many other staffed informational tents for veterans and families to find the help and resources that they may need. Many veteran's organizations will have information at The Highground.**

**Generous sponsors who are already helping make this event a reality are: The Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT), Wisconsin Public Radio, Adler-Clark Electric Community, Citizens State Bank of Loyal, Marshfield Masonic Lodge #224, Sharp Photo / Fast Signs of Eau Claire, Wisconsin Public Radio, Sunrise Exchange Club of Eau Claire, Al Muth Harley Davidson, VVA 639, Edgewood College-Military & Veterans Services, Lee Anderson, VVA #351, John Tollefson Memorial Fund, Lucinda Zimmer, Marjorie Short, Chilson Subaru, Willis-Chapel American Legion #306 (Green Lake), 101<sup>st</sup> Old Abe Chapter WI 101ABN, Rock N' Roll to Go Plus, Phaneuf-Vanasse American Legion #111.**

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