



August 1, 2016

Dear Residents:

On September 16th at approximately 11:30 a.m., the Michigan Vietnam Veteran Traveling Memorial will be passing through Westphalia. Inscribed on the Memorial are the names of over 2,600 brave Michigan soldiers that were lost in the war or are listed as POW/MIA. The name of our own native son, Robert Joseph Thelen, appears on the Memorial. Robert was killed in action on February 21, 1971 in the Binh Dinh Province of Vietnam and is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery here in Westphalia.

The Memorial procession will be escorted by the Patriot Riders Motorcycle Club and will begin at the Portland VFW Post. It will proceed through Eagle on its way to Westphalia. The procession will come into the Village on North Westphalia Street proceeding through the stop light, pass by St. Mary's School and then circle back to West Main Street on its way to the Pewamo-Westphalia High School. After a stop at the high school, the procession will continue through Pewamo on its way to the Fowler. The Memorial will then be setup for display at the Fowler/Westphalia/Pewamo VFW Post 3733 which is located at 126 North Maple Street in Fowler.

The Memorial display hours at the VFW Post in Fowler are Friday from 3:00 to 9:00 p.m., Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. (with a special flag raising and acknowledgement ceremony at 11:00 a.m.). Sunday hours are from 9:00 a.m. to noon. There will be a refreshment tent and many historical artifacts from the Vietnam war. I'm sure there will also be many of our local veterans there for us to thank in person for their service.

In honor of our Vietnam veterans, and all veterans, please be sure to fly your flags as the procession passes through town. If possible, come to the downtown area to pay tribute and acknowledge the sacrifices made by all of these brave soldiers.

The PW football game on September 1 will be dedicated to our local veterans as will the Fowler football game on September 26th. What a great example of acknowledgement and respect by our young people. Please come out and support the teams and veterans at these games.

We have many veterans in our area and we truly appreciate all they have done to help preserve our freedom. One of them, Ben Heiden, recently gave a talk at the Westphalia Historical Society on his experiences while serving in Korea. Thank you Ben for your service and sharing your experiences. The WHS current display is a salute to our local veterans. It is very well done, so be sure to stop and check it out if you have not done so already. Thank you to the WHS for doing such a great job on the veterans display.

Thank you all veterans for your many sacrifices on behalf of our county and its people.

Respectfully,

Dean Kohagen, President
Village of Westphalia