



Marion County Board of County Commissioners

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MARION COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES RECEIVES STATE AWARD

Immediate Release

MARION COUNTY, Fla. (Nov. 6, 2009) – More than 46,000 veterans call Marion County home. When these men and women need help obtaining their much-deserved Veterans Administration benefits, an eight-person team at Marion County Veterans Services can help, free of charge. They can help veterans apply for healthcare, education, widow's and burial benefits as well as home and small business loans. They can even assist veterans with filling-out forms to replace coveted lost awards, such as the Purple Heart or Bronze Star.

On Tuesday, the Florida Veterans of Foreign Wars recognized the hard work and dedication of Marion County Veterans Services, presenting the department with the 2009 Service Office of the Year award in the large county category. "This award symbolizes our dedication and service to the men and woman who served in the United States Armed Forces," said Jeffrey Askew, Director, Marion County Veterans Services. "We are here because they were there. Their sacrifices will not be forgotten."

Kenneth A. Thie, Director, Department of Florida, VFW Veterans Service and W. Benny Bachand, Adjutant/Quartermaster, VFW Florida presented the award, recognizing the "competence, commitment, candor, courage and caring demeanor" of Marion County Veterans Services. Thie and Bachand also highlighted Marion County's success in helping veterans receive more than \$91 million in new and reoccurring VA compensation, pension and education benefits in the last year alone.

Marion County Veterans Services is a department of the Marion County Board of County Commissioners. If veterans or their family members have questions about their benefits, they should call 352-671-8422 or visit in person at 2528 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala (located next to Marion County Public Library Services Headquarters-Ocala).

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