



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Kalamazoo County Honors Veterans with a Ceremony at Rose Park

KALAMAZOO, Mich. – The Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department's Veterans Service Office, in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Kalamazoo-Sunrise and support from the Veterans Events Committee, invites the community together to pay profound tribute to its heroes who have served and sacrificed for the nation this Veterans Day at the 2023 Kalamazoo County Veterans Day Ceremony.

2023 Kalamazoo County Veterans Day Ceremony Details

Date: Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023, 2 p.m.

Location: Robert L. Cook Veterans Memorial Plaza at Rose Park
(Near the intersection of East Michigan Avenue and King Highway)

“Veterans Day has always been a cherished day for the Kalamazoo County Veterans Service Office staff,” said Lauren King, Veterans Service Office Supervisor. “We exist to serve and honor our veterans. Taking Veterans Day to celebrate prior service members and acknowledge the sacrifice they have made to ensure the safety of our country is an extension of what we aim to do every day. It is a pleasure to co-sponsor the Veterans Day ceremony with the Sunrise Rotary as a small thank-you to Kalamazoo’s nearly 13,000 veterans.”

The program includes powerful speakers like Gary Easterling, the Director of the American Legion Department of Michigan, as well as music provided by the Kalamazoo Pipe Band Prof. Scott Thornburg and Grace Kalafut. The ceremony will also feature honor guards from the United States Marine Corps and the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety.

Western Michigan University ROTC’s “Boomer” will be present to announce the festivities, including the 2023 Veteran of the Year award. This year's recipient, Robert "Bob" Hencken, stands as a symbol of dedication and unwavering contributions to the community. A United States Marine Corps veteran with an honorable discharge, including a Purple Heart, Bob has been a pillar of strength on the Kalamazoo County Veterans Affairs Committee since January 2017, serving several terms as chairman.

“Bob has been such an essential member of the Veterans Affairs Committee over the past five years,” said King. “With his leadership and advocacy, the VSO has made leaps and bounds in the pursuit of providing veterans with the best services and assistance possible. He paved the road forward for the office, and his contributions are priceless.”

For additional information about the event, please contact Ben Hackett at 269-373-5361. To learn more about the Veterans Service Office, please visit <https://www.kalcounty.com/hcs/veterans/>.

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