

October 4, 2007

*Prepared for ...*

## **United Veterans Legislative Council of Minnesota**



*The following is an "internal" Department of Veterans Affairs memo that has been approved for public posting ...*

### **EchoTaps 2007**

In 2005, nearly 700 brass players from 30 states gathered in upstate New York to perform the military bugle call *Taps*. Buglers performed a continuous cascading version of *Taps* over a 42.2 mile path between the Woodlawn National Cemetery in Elmira, NY and Bath, NY. Later, at the Bath location, the players performed *Taps* en masse. The project, called EchoTaps, involved 2,200 volunteers and attracted national media coverage.

A national program is being planned that will stage EchoTaps at each of the 123 National Cemeteries across the United States. At each location organizers will perform a tribute based on operation plans for any number of buglers, from 10 to 1000.

The purpose of EchoTaps is to raise awareness of National Cemeteries, celebrate the 60th anniversary of VA Voluntary Service, increase volunteer participation, increase the number of buglers available for military burial services and increase exposure of the VA Voluntary Service program.

A practice run will be held November on Veterans Day 2006 with the actual program being held on Armed Forces Day 2007. For further information on the EchoTaps program contact your local VAVS Program Office.

Richard A. Wannemacher,  
Acting Deputy Under-Secretary for Memorial Affairs, VACO



### **EchoTaps Worldwide 2007**

<http://www.ehotaps.org>

### **VA Voluntary Service *EchoTaps* Worldwide Page**

<http://www1.va.gov/volunteer/spotlight.html>

### **Bugles Across America**

<http://www.buglesacrossamerica.org>

### **EchoTaps - Minnesota ... Fort Snelling National Cemetery**

<http://home.att.net/~militarysalute4/index.html>

### **Military Salute Reference Forum**

<http://militarysalute.proboards45.com/index.cgi>

The program is subject to change as we receive additional information from the VA and the Director of Fort Snelling National Cemetery ...

## **EchoTaps Worldwide**

**Armed Forces Day - May 19, 2007**  
**Fort Snelling National Cemetery - Minneapolis, MN**

*Ceremony is Free and Open to the Public*  
*Families and Friends of Volunteers are encouraged to attend*

### **Program**

*Staging to begin at 10:00 a.m.*  
*Ceremony to begin at 11:00 a.m.*

#### **Call to Order**

Appropriate Bugle Call or fanfare by the Band

#### **Welcome by Master of Ceremonies (MC)**

Introduction of the Band and Band Director

Introduction of Chaplain

#### **Invocation**

#### **MC announces the *Parade of Colors***

MC recognizes the Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad

MC recognizes each of the Color Guards representing the five Branches and the Minnesota National Guard

#### **Band begins playing *The National Emblem March***

Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad leads the Parade of Colors

Military Color Guard units follow FSMRS in DoD Order

Service Organization Color Guard units follow Military Color Guard units around right side of audience and proceed into Assembly Area #4, taking positions on left side of street, extending towards Kraus Avenue

All remaining Color/Honor Guard units follow Service Organization Color Guard units (in the order they signed-up) and proceed into Assembly Area #4, taking positions on right side of street, extending towards Kraus Avenue

As the Service Organization Color Guard units move forward, the Patriot Guard Riders (each holding an American Flag) simultaneously proceed 2 x 2 around left side of audience and proceed into Assembly Area #3, taking positions on right side of street, extending towards Kraus Avenue

Pipers and Buglers follow Patriot Guard Riders (in the order they signed-up) and proceed into Assembly Area #3, taking positions on left side of street, extending towards Kraus Avenue

Band completes playing *The National Emblem March* when all Pipers and are in position

#### **MC announces the National Anthem**

Band plays *The Star Spangled Banner*

**MC asks audience to be seated**

MC introduces Guests

MC delivers scripted remarks provided by Veterans Affairs

MC delivers remarks about the Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad

MC announces the playing of *God Bless America*

**Band plays *God Bless America*****MC introduces Project Director**

Project Director recognizes and thanks Volunteers

**MC announces the playing of *The Last Full Measure Of Devotion* to be followed by 3-Volley Salute from the Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad**

Band begins playing *The Last Full Measure Of Devotion*

When the Band has completed playing *The Last Full Measure Of Devotion*, the Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad fires Rifle Salute

**Pipers and Buglers begin rendering *Taps* (in the order they signed-up to appear)**

Pipers and Buglers positioned nearest the Seating Area play first. The cascade will move "north" along Assembly Area #3 towards the Memorials on Kraus Avenue. Depending upon the number of Buglers in attendance, the cascade will circle the Memorials and then move "north" on Peterson Street

**The ceremony will officially conclude as the final Bugler plays the final note of *Taps*****About the Program ...**

We purposely tried to incorporate Veterans organizations, individual Veterans, active-duty units, Reserve units and individual Servicemembers into the Program in an attempt to reach out to America's latest generation to serve during a war and demonstrate the respect and admiration those of us who served previously have for the men and women, and their families, defending us today.

In addition, we are inviting as many civic organizations and non-Veteran groups and individuals as we could think of to ask for their continued support and to thank them for their past support.

We do not want to have to limit the number of Buglers and Pipers who would like to participate. Fort Snelling National Cemetery covers nearly 500 acres, so there is plenty of room for all those who would like to render *Taps*.

That fact presents an audience "attention span" problem. Let's say 100 Buglers volunteer to participate. *Taps* takes about 60 seconds to play. It is not realistic to expect people to sit for one or two hours listening to *Taps* over and over again, especially when they will not be able to hear the performers as the cascade moves out into the Cemetery and away from the Seating Area.

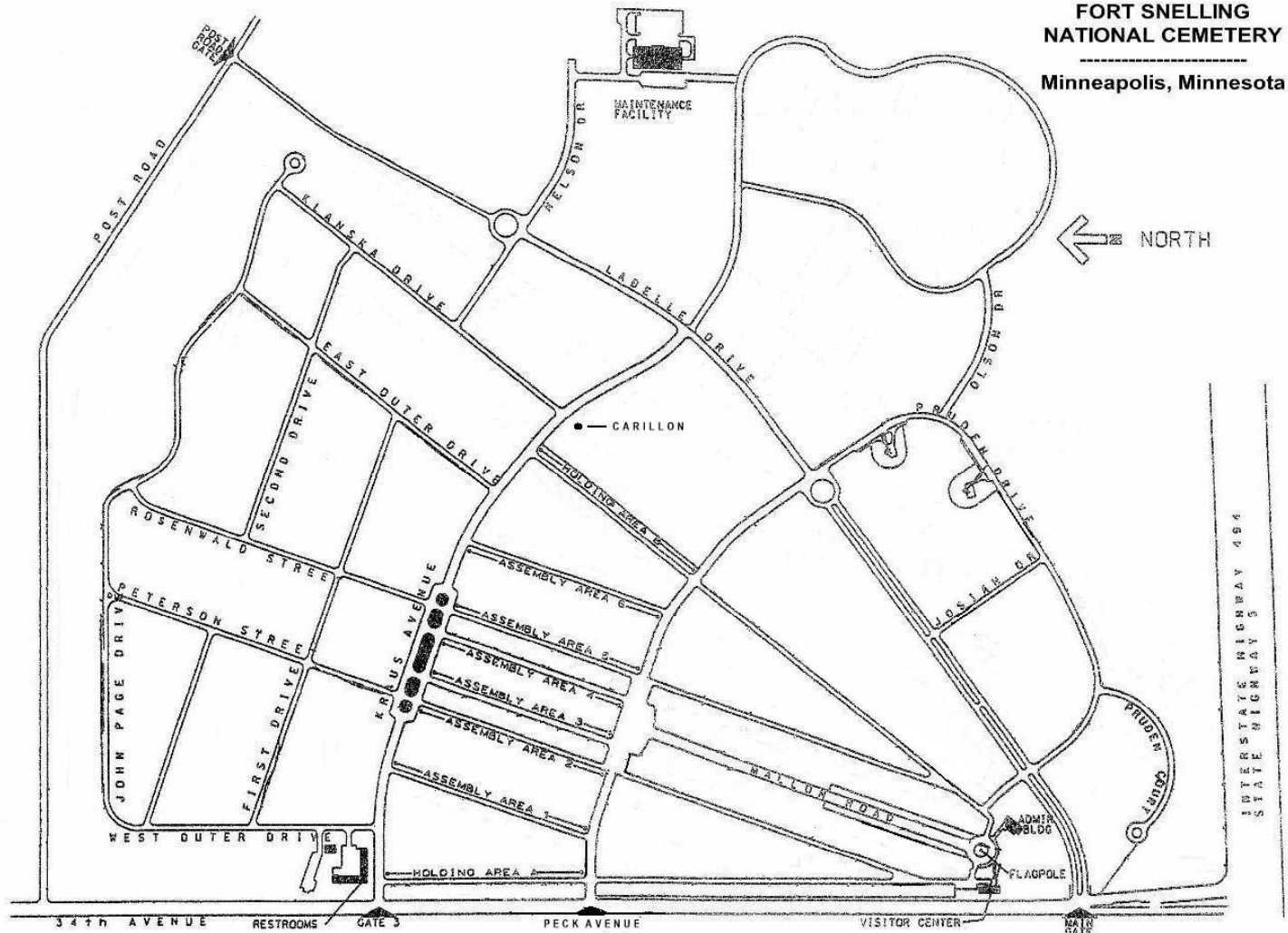
We feel that our program satisfactorily deals with that situation by inviting the audience to leave the Seating Area when *The Last Full Measure Of Devotion* concludes and walk out into the grounds as quietly and respectfully as possible.

However, having people moving about the Cemetery presents a protocol problem that will require some understanding. It is customary to halt, come to Attention, and salute as *Taps* is being rendered. Because the program is so unique, we are going to ask for some latitude for this particular event.

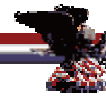
We would very much appreciate hearing any feedback you may have. Thank you.

Jeff Seeber, on behalf of The Minnesota Platoon

**FORT SNELLING  
NATIONAL CEMETERY**  
Minneapolis, Minnesota



Stage and Seating Area will be at the intersection of Peck Avenue and Mallon Road. Participating units will stage on Mallon Road between the Flagpole and Peck Avenue. During the *Parade of Colors*, units will move around both sides of audience and take positions along Assembly Areas 3 & 4, towards the Memorials at Kraus Avenue.



**Participating Groups include ...**

**Fort Snelling Memorial Rifle Squad**  
<http://www.memorialriflesquad.org>

**Minnesota Chapter of Families United For Our Troops and Their Mission**  
<http://www.minnesotafamiliesunited.com>

**The Minnesota State Band**  
<http://www.minnesotastateband.org>

**Blue Star Mothers of America**  
<http://bluestarmothers.org>

**Minnesota Patriot Guard**  
<http://www.mnpatriotguard.org>

**The Military Salute Project**  
<http://condocat.home.att.net>

**Project Director – E-mail: [condocat@att.net](mailto:condocat@att.net) or call 651-730-5626 ...**

Jeff Seeber, representing *Bugles Across America*, runs the *Military Salute Project* with the assistance of four other service-connected disabled Vietnam-era Veterans. The group, known as *The Minnesota Platoon*, are out-patients in several of the same clinics at the Minneapolis VAMC. They do not solicit, nor do they accept, any financial contributions.

## Color Guards and Honor Guards for Armed Forces Day 2007 ...

*Please Note ...* You may notice that we are using the term *Color/Honor Guards*. We are well aware there is a distinctive difference. In order to be INclusive rather than EXclusive, we are using the combined term because some smaller groups have a Color Guard as part of its Honor Guard, rather than a separate unit as larger groups generally have. We do not want to give the impression that groups having an Honor Guard but not a separate Color Guard are any less welcome than larger groups.

---

### CONFIRMED UNITS ...

#### *Color/Honor Guards representing the Branches of the Armed Forces ...*

U.S. Air Force -  
U.S. Army -  
U.S. Coast Guard -  
U.S. Marine Corps -  
U.S. Merchant Marine -  
U.S. Navy -  
Minnesota National Guard -

#### *Color/Honor Guards representing Veterans Service Organizations ...*

American Ex-Prisoners of War -  
American Legion -  
AMVETS -  
Blinded Veterans Association -  
Catholic War Veterans -  
Congressional Medal of Honor Society -  
Disabled American Veterans -  
Jewish War Veterans -  
Legion of Valor -  
Military Order of the Purple Heart -  
Military Order of the World Wars -  
National Association for Black Veterans -  
Paralyzed Veterans of America -  
The Retired Enlisted Association -  
Veterans of Foreign Wars -  
Veterans of the Vietnam War -  
Vietnam Veterans of America -

---

Anyone who can play *Taps* is encouraged to volunteer. You can play bagpipes, a traditional bugle with no valves, a 1, 2 or 3-valved bugle, a Trumpet, Cornet, Flugelhorn, Baritone, Trombone or Tuba. The player can be any age as long as you can play the 24 notes of *Taps* with an ease and style that will do honor to the Veterans, their families, and the individuals and groups attending the event.

### NO DIGITAL BUGLES !!!

Almost all of the venues for EchoTaps Worldwide 2007, including Fort Snelling National Cemetery, will be performing **Cascade Taps** so that players using different types of horns, and who may have different skill levels, can be included.

#### **Cascade Taps**

One bugler plays all 24 notes and then the next bugler begins playing all 24 notes. Any number of buglers can be involved.