

The calm and quiet display of support is incredibly moving and poignant. It's a symbol of unity and compassion among families and their care teams.

Every person that has the honor of performing this service can feel the humanity and the strong emotions that are tied to the task.

An Honors Escort is a powerful act of community. Something solemn, even sacred, happens in those minutes in the hallway. Together, we honor a hero. We give thanks. We hope to help a grieving family in a moment of fathomless loss.

It may or may not be in your power to offer much to any of the brave men and women who served in the military, but sometimes it's enough to express your sincere respect and gratitude for their sacrifices. Perhaps you can share this poem with their families so they know their veteran was appreciated and will not be forgotten.

"In loving memory
of one who loved his country,
who fought against evil
to preserve what is right and true and good.
In loving memory
of one who is a cut above the rest of us,
who had the surpassing courage,
the uncommon strength,
to do whatever had to be done,
persevering through hardship and pain.
In loving memory
of a unique and treasured soldier
who will never be forgotten."
~Joanna Fuchs
poemsource.com

Please contact us for more information on how we may assist you
in starting an HONORS ESCORT program.

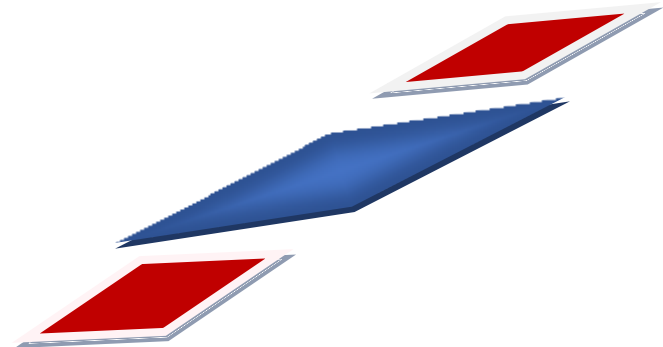
VFW Auxiliary # _____

Phone _____ Email _____



HONORS ESCORT

The Final Salute



Department of Kansas
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary
Hospital Program

Every day countless veterans leave us. No veteran should ever pass and not be honored for the service that they presented and provided for our country. EVER.

An Honors Escort is a quiet, yet profound and powerful way to give a veteran a hero's goodbye and to give thanks and gratitude for their service to our country.

This is such a difficult day for the veterans' family, and we hope that showing appreciation with an HONORS ESCORT can help comfort the family in a time of great sadness.

The walk also offers hospital caregivers, patients and others an opportunity to show their respect and gratitude for the veteran and their family.

Bedside nurses, in particular, form close bonds and are present during some of the most challenging days of their lives.

Each veterans initial sacrifice and devotion to duty was vital to this Nation's ability to maintain the many freedoms that we cherish and so many of us take for granted or abuse.

Patriotism, honor, and respect can't simply be flying a flag on the 4th of July or posted on Facebook alone but must be lived every day.

What may seem as a small gesture of gratitude and respect for us may have a big impact on others.



HONORS ESCORT CEREMONY

Helping bring closure to a veterans family.

When a Veteran dies, members of the HONORS ESCORT go to the deceased's room and stand guard until the ambulance or the hearse arrives. Once the funeral staff arrives, the body, or gurney, is draped with an American flag.

Next, an announcement is made that a procession will begin. The speaker system for the hospital plays patriotic songs, including Taps. Medical center staff and others are encouraged to line the hallways to salute the passing of the body. Family members walk beside the Veteran as the gurney makes its way to the door.

When the procession reaches the lobby, or other designated area, a short prayer is said, the flag is folded per military procedure and presented to the family. A final salute is rendered and then the Veteran is taken to the hearse or ambulance.

The ceremony can be expanded or simplified to accommodate each facility.

Words of condolence offered: " The service from your loved one will never be forgotten from the continued memories by you and your family. Keep them in your heart and always cherish the service they provided for all of us to live comfortably and enjoy our beautiful country. Please accept my (our) sincere condolences."

The Honors Escort team could simply stand guard and offer comfort to the family until the hearse arrives.

A dedication or reading could be done and a prayer with the family.

A brief reflection of the Veteran could be said followed by a moment of silence.

A small token of appreciation, such as: a small U.S. flag in a triangle box, small branch of service flag, bible, etc. could be presented to the family to show gratitude for their Veterans service to our country.

Taps could be played or a bell could be rung three (3) times to let all know that a Veteran has passed.