

# America Supports You: states declare May 1 'Silver Star Day'

**JOHN J. KRUZEL**

*American Forces Press Service*

WASHINGTON - Thanks to the efforts of Silver Star Families of America, May 1 will now be "Silver Star Day" to honor the nation's wounded servicemembers in Indiana and New Mexico.

Silver Star Families of America is a member of America Supports You, a Defense Department program highlighting the ways Americans are supporting the nation's servicemembers.

"What we really want to do is have a nationwide event that day," said Janie Orman, the group's vice president. She added that the proclamation had been sent to every state.

The group, which would like to establish May 1 as a national day of

observance honoring America's wounded servicemembers, drafted a proclamation in November for Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels' consideration. His office responded a few weeks later, informing Silver Star Families of America that the governor had signed the proclamation.

"We need someone in (each) state to represent us," she said, adding the American Legion has expressed interest in supporting the group in this effort.

"A resolution we wrote has passed the local (American Legion chapter). It has to then pass the district, then the state, then national," she said. "But they're in big support of Silver Star Day also, so that's a great help."

Orman also said individuals wanting to help represent Silver Star Day in their state should contact her or Steve

Newton, Silver Star Families of America's president and co-founder.

"Their main goal would be to get the word out about the Silver Stars and what we do: ... honor and assist our wounded and their families in any way we can," Orman said.

The group also acts as an advocate for the wounded and works to educate the public about dilemmas wounded troops and veterans face, according to its Web site.

The Silver Star Banner, which the group is working to make a government-recognized service banner like those of the American Gold Star Mothers, will play a big part in observing Silver Star Day on May 1, Orman said. Silver Star Families of America members are hoping to present their

banners to veterans and wounded servicemembers in each state.

They also hope to work with schools to help students understand why the day is important. "I guess what we try to instill in them is that their freedom (to) go to school ... depends on our troops standing up for freedom," Orman said.

The day of recognition is open to participation by other groups wishing to honor America's wounded troops, as well.

The Patriot Guard Riders, a motorcycle group that attends military funerals to shield families from protestors, has indicated it would like to hold a rally to commemorate the day, Orman said.

"We're just really getting a great response about Silver Star Day," Orman said.

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