Facts for Features
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Veterans Day 2005: Nov. 11

Veterans Day originated as "Armistice Day" on Nov. 11, 1918. Its purpose: to commemorate the end of World War I. First proclaimed by Congress in 1926, and each year thereafter, Armistice Day became "Veterans Day" in 1954 as a result of legislation signed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The name was changed to honor all who served the nation in wars or conflicts. Veterans Day has been observed annually on this date since 1978, except for a brief period when it was celebrated on the fourth Monday of October.

24.5 million

The number of military veterans in the United States.
(From the upcoming *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*.)

1.7 million

The number of veterans who are women.
(From the upcoming *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*.)

9.5 million

The number of veterans who are age 65 or older.
(From the upcoming *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*.)

2.3 million

The number of black veterans. Additionally, 1.1 million veterans are Hispanic; 276,000 are Asian; 185,000 are American Indian or Alaska native; and 25,000 are native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander. (The numbers for blacks, Asians, American Indians and Alaska natives and native Hawaiians and other Pacific islanders cover only those reporting a single race.) (From the AmericanFactFinder.)

8.2 million

Number of Vietnam-era veterans. More than 30 percent of all veterans served in Vietnam, the largest share of any period of service. The next largest share of wartime veterans, 3.9 million or fewer than 20 percent, served during World War II.
(From the upcoming *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*.)

16%

Percentage of Persian Gulf War veterans who are women. In contrast, women account for 5 percent of World War II vets, 3 percent of Vietnam vets and 2 percent of Korean War vets.
(From the upcoming *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*.)

432,000

Number of veterans who served during both the Vietnam era and in the Gulf War.

In addition,

- 383,000 veterans served during both the Korean War and the Vietnam conflict.
- 107,000 served during three periods: World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam conflict.
- 376,000 served in World War II and the Korean War.
  (Source: AmericanFactFinder.)

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Number of states with 1 million or more veterans. These states are California (2.3 million), Florida (1.8 million), Texas (1.7 million), New York (1.2 million), Pennsylvania (1.1 million) and Ohio (1.1 million).
(From the upcoming *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*.)

$22.4 billion

Aggregate amount of money received annually by the 2.6 million veterans receiving compensation for service-connected disabilities.
(From the upcoming *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*.)

$59.6 billion

Total amount of federal government spending for veterans benefits programs in fiscal year 2004.
(From the upcoming *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2006*.)

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Jan. 17) &
African-American History Month (February)
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)
Women's History Month (March)
St. Patrick's Day (March 17)
Asian /Pacific American Heritage Month (May)
Older Americans Month (May)
Mother's Day (May 8)
Father's Day (June 19)
The Fourth of July (July 4)
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)
Back to School (August)
Labor Day (Sept. 5)
Grandparents Day (Sept. 11)
Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Halloween (Oct. 31)
American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month
(November)
Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 24)
The Holiday Season (December)

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: (301) 763-3030; fax: (301) 457-3670; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.