

# Commissioner Sue Gunzburger

*Broward County Commission, District 6*

## **Broward County Agency Assists Veterans Every Day**

With more than 116,000 veterans living in Broward County, it is fitting and appropriate this Memorial Day to reflect on the sacrifices made by our brave men and women in uniform. No words can repay our debt of gratitude to those who have fought to protect the freedoms we enjoy.

In Broward County, we have an agency dedicated to serving the needs of our growing veteran community: the Elderly and Veterans Services Division. Although not all veterans are elderly and not all elderly residents are veterans, this division services both population groups in an efficient and helpful manner.

Take John O'Connor of Hollywood, a Vietnam-era veteran. Originally from New York, Mr. O'Connor moved to Florida in 1968 with his wife, a year after his discharge from the military.

While he had a good career in the hospitality industry, Mr. O'Connor says he always felt a need to talk about his military experiences. In April 2006, he finally met someone who would get him to talk and provide some direction. He met Broward County employee Floyd White, who was working with Broward County's Elderly and Veterans Services Division. He persuaded O'Connor to start attending meetings at the Fort Lauderdale Vet Center and offered help with veteran's benefits.

Mr. O'Connor is one of the nearly 4,000 veterans and their dependents who utilize the services provided by **Broward County's Elderly and Veterans Services Division**. Located at **2995 N. Dixie Highway in Fort Lauderdale**, the Elderly and Veterans Services Division has a mission of empowering elders, veterans and their families with the help to improve their quality of life through a variety of support systems that provide self-sufficiency.

The Veterans Services Section of the Division provides assistance to veterans, their widows, dependents and dependent survivors regardless of age or other status. Services are focused on attainment and/or maintenance of self-sufficiency. The division helps clients with outreach; information, referral and linkage services, and explains their benefit entitlements and assist with the processing of claims.

The Broward Veterans Services Division is a member of the National Association of County Veterans Services Officers which helps facilitate connections. The agency helps veterans identify their benefits and entitlements. These can include compensation for service-related injuries, non-service-connected pensions for non-reimbursable medical costs, education benefits, vocational rehabilitation, and more.

Broward County veterans can call the Elderly and Veterans Services Division for more information at 954-537-2936.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time to share your concerns and priorities. I can be reached at 954-357-7006 or you can e-mail me at [sgunzburger@broward.org](mailto:sgunzburger@broward.org) .

*Please have a safe and Happy Memorial Day!*

**Commissioner Sue Gunzburger**  
***Broward County Commission, District 6***

May 2007