



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, June 18, 2017

Volume 8, Issue 25

This-N-That

On behalf of our Volunteers and myself, we would like to wish all our fathers a Happy Fathers Day!

This past week I've met with a few people trying to get the HHP program started in another community and I was truly surprised at how many people still think and believe that Homeless Veterans is not a problem, "they made the choice!"

Although some media sources have done documentaries and news briefs about the situation, none have really delved into the real situation, real causes not to mention not even discussed real solutions that are having positive effects on the lives of those who were formerly homeless and many now being productive people in society again.

While I might agree to a very small degree some Veterans are

homeless by choice, but it's a very tiny percentage. And the majority are homeless due to our government and the VA not doing or not wanting to do their jobs and take care of those who served.

For many decades the answer to the problem of PTSD with VA Doctors was to prescribe extremely heavy duty and dangerous drugs to "numb" their issues and never really addressing the problem. Then in many cases would simply pull those drugs away from the Veteran after it was already too late and they became addicted.

And when Veterans who were subjected to this kind of treatment would eventually stop going to the VA, eventually some would lose benefits or failure to comply with doctors appointments, etc.

While many others were just continually denied benefits and care would just lose hope, give up and finally lose their home or apartment and being left with no options, no family would end up on the streets.

Eventually some would turn to booze and street drugs to try and cope with their "problems" and sooner or later become addicted to the street drugs or turned into alcoholics.

If our Country, our Government and the Veterans Affairs actually kept their word, did what they were supposed to do and provided benefits and care I'd like to think and believe that the homeless Veteran situation might only be a small fraction of what it is today.

Then most recently an article was released and unfortunately I don't have the link to it, but the headline was "Drug Addiction is a Choice not a Disease!" I just about went ballistic on this, no one chooses to be an addict.

I know from first hand how the VA got my uncle hooked on heavy drugs while in a VA hospital and having had his legs amputated when he returned from Vietnam. Then they turned around after increasing his doses month after month and pulled all the drugs from him, but by then it was too late they had made him a drug addict.

And even though our family did their best to get him help, he felt the drugs were the only way to remove his pain and turned to street drugs. And like many other Vietnam Veterans put in that position, he eventually over-dosed.

I can't speak for every single Veteran and I am far from being an expert on the subject, but what I would ask is think hard before speaking and proclaiming drug addiction is a choice, or that being homeless is a choice.

Four weeks we put the call out to everyone for stories they would share with us to send to members of Congress.

We've received several hundred stories and have been blast faxing to all members of Congress since four weeks ago Sunday non-stop.

It's not too late, so if you'd like to share your story and help put faces on the problems that you face in your everyday life in dealing with the VA, please send them on to my e-mail address.

Only rules are no last names, no social security numbers, no phone numbers, only first name, city and state. All other information would be redacted and isn't needed so we can insure the protections of everyone.

On behalf of our Volunteers nationwide and myself, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,
Jim Davis
Founder
Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org



VA Announces Fraud, Waste and Abuse Initiative

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is launching the 'Seek to Prevent Fraud, Waste and Abuse (STOP FWA)' initiative that will prevent or identify FWA. The department-wide effort will eliminate duplicative activities and explore potential partnerships with other federal agencies to capitalize on their successes in detecting fraud, waste and abuse. VA will also establish a Prevention of Fraud Waste and Abuse Advisory Committee by July 2017. The committee will provide insight into lessons learned and private-sector practices; identify analytical tools that can be used at VA to prevent FWA; and build effective STOP FWA programs that

protect VA's resources.



Support SBP/DIC Offset Repeal Legislation

Senator Nelson (FL) has introduced legislation (S. 339) and Congressman Joe Wilson (SC) has introduced identical legislation in the house (HR 846) that repeals the SBP/DIC offset for survivors, sometimes referred to as the "Military Widows Tax.". Please use this action center contact your legislators to ask them to support this important legislation.

[Take Action!](#)



Franchise Opportunities for Veterans

Have you thought about having your own business? Owning a franchise is a great opportunity, especially for Veterans. Franchisors are actively seeking Veterans for Franchisees. In fact, multiple Franchisors provide substantial discounts on their Franchise Fee. Why? Veterans are disciplined and know how to follow a process. That is exactly what they are looking for in a

Franchisee. Plus, they are grateful for your service to our country.

If you have interest, how do you know where do you start?

1. Start thinking about what kind of business you'd like to run. Where are your interests? What do you enjoy doing? This is where we can help.
2. Financing – do you have money that you can put down on your business? If not, we can help you with resources for grants and loans.
3. Read the book “[Franchise MBA](#)” by Nick Neonakis, MBA. It is a comprehensive guide that brings together experience and fact to give you the tools you need to understand which franchise is right for you.

If you would like to learn more about looking at your own franchise, please give us a call. I work with hundreds of franchise companies that represent all of the industry categories. My services simply assist prospective clients, in researching and selecting available franchise businesses that best suit desired lifestyles and financial goals. The research, qualification, and application service we provide costs you absolutely nothing; I am paid by the Franchisor if and when you open your doors.

We look forward to assisting you!

Janice Charles

The Franchise Consulting Company

janice@thefranchiseconsultingcompany.com

303-319-5186



VA Seeks to Replace CHOICE Program

The nation's largest veteran groups joined key senators Wednesday to endorse conditionally a plan from VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin to replace the unpopular [2014 Choice program](#), which critics contend often has failed to provide timely access to private sector care when VA healthcare isn't readily available. Shulkin recently unveiled his replacement for Choice, titled the Veterans Coordinated Access and Rewarding Experiences (CARE) Program. Read the [full story](#).

U.S. Government Accountability Office Reports

- 1) [Armored Commercial Vehicles: DOD Has Procurement Guidance, but Army Could Take Actions to Enhance Inspections and Oversight.](#)
- 2) [Customs and Border Protection: Improved Planning Needed to Strengthen Trade Enforcement.](#)
- 3) [Department of Defense: Actions Needed to Address Five Key Mission Challenges.](#)
- 4) [Ford-Class Aircraft Carrier: Follow-On Ships Need More](#)

Frequent and Accurate Cost Estimates to Avoid Pitfalls of Lead Ship.

5) Improper Payments: Additional Guidance Could Provide More Consistent Compliance Determinations and Reporting by Inspectors General.

6) Military Readiness: DOD Has Not Incorporated Leading Practices of a Strategic Management Planning Framework in Retrograde and Reset Guidance.

7) VA Information Technology: Pharmacy System Needs Additional Capabilities for Viewing, Exchanging, and Using Data to Better Serve Veterans.



Veterans call the President. Whose VA is it?

We need everyone to call The President's VA Hotline @ **855-948-2311** 8:00AM till 5:30PM ET and tell them about the Veterans plight with the VA denying presumption of exposure to Agent Orange and various other illnesses related to Agent Orange. Tell

them your story.

This would also apply to Veterans from Korea, Gulf War, Iraq and Afghanistan as well.

This is YOUR CHANCE to get the message through to the President . Be patient and wait for the operator to talk to you .

The line is being manned by military spouses, parents and veterans. All are volunteers. Please show them the respect they deserve.

And if you have not written your story and sent it to me, please do keep them coming. We're not stopping the attack from the side of Congress either!

Send your stories to: Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org

Just please keep in mind, no last names, street addresses, social security numbers or phone numbers. Just First Name, City and State.

**CONTACT YOUR
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS!**

To Call your Representative:
202-225-2305

To Call your Senators:
202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553

To call Different Members of Congress:
202-224-3121

TOLL FREE: 866-272-6622

PLEASE... STOP Making Excuses!

www.veterans-for-change.org



Bill Gives Vets Hiring Priority

President Trump has signed into law a bill that prioritizes the hiring and training of veterans to become law enforcement officers. The new law gives preference to certain Justice Department grant applications from state and local law enforcement agencies that use the money to hire veterans. For more information, watch the [video](#).

State awards \$62 million to house veterans experiencing homelessness in third round of Proposition 41 Grants

The VHHP program means more homeless veterans and their families will soon have a place to call home.

SACRAMENTO – The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet), and the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) announce the latest round of awards to help build or rehabilitate 12 development projects that will house and assist veterans experiencing homelessness. The awards constitute the third round of funding in the Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention (VHHP) program and include projects from Eureka to San Diego.

Awards for this third round of funding total approximately \$62 million. Once built, the projects will increase affordable housing units by 836 throughout the state. Of those units, 471 will be veteran-specific, with 243 of the units dedicated to chronically homeless veterans.

CalVet Secretary Dr. Vito Imbasciani affirmed California's ongoing commitment to veterans and their families to lift them out of homelessness over the long term, stating "The VHHP funding generates more than four walls and a roof for veterans who are struggling; it provides a safe place with supportive services that

create a ladder for success from chronic homelessness.”

“The men and women who were brave enough to serve our country should not have to fight another battle once they return home,” said Housing and Community Development Director, Ben Metcalf. “The VHHP program helps veterans and their families regain a sense of place, a sense of pride, and peace.”

On any given night, more than 9,600 veterans are at risk of homelessness in California, and countless more face housing instability. Instability and homelessness among women veterans and their children are also on the rise. The service-rich communities being developed through VHHP funding address many of the challenges homeless veterans face and support their movement toward self-sufficiency. To date, the VHHP program has awarded \$238 million in funding, which will result in 1970 number of housing units for veterans and their families.

HCD Contact: Evan Gerberding, evan.gerberding@hcd.ca.gov, (916) 263-7408 CalVet Contact: Thora Chaves, thora.chaves@calvet.ca.gov, (916) 653-2547 CalHFA Contact: Kathy Phillips, kphillips@calhfa.ca.gov, (916) 326-8605



Recruiting Fair

Date: Tuesday June 20, 2017

Place: Hawker Pacific Aerospace

7103 Fair Ave. Sun Valley, CA 91352

Time: 1:00PM — 3:00 PM

You are strongly encouraged to attend this Job Fair. Please apply to jobs prior to attending at: www.Hawker.com/jobs.

Resumes with requisite job skills are required. Applicants should bring 3 copies of their resume. Resumes are required for admittance into the job fair!

We are currently hiring for the following positions:

- Aircraft Records Coordinator
- Aviation Maintenance Technicians
- Aircraft Records Inspector
- Customer Support Representatives
- Grinder
- Hand Finishing Technician
- Material Disposition Inspector II
- NDT Technician
- Logistics/Warehouse Intern
- Plating Technician
- Procurement Specialist
- Aircraft Records Supervisor

Vets Get Online Access to Exchanges

Veterans can confirm eligibility to receive a lifelong military exchange online shopping by logging onto VetVerify.org, which will use information from DoD's Defense Manpower Data Center's records and inform them of their ability to access this new benefit. If a veteran's record has character of service data and that data meets the criteria for the online benefit, the Veteran will be verified

to shop. Then, beginning on Nov. 11, the veteran can log onto to the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy Exchange websites at shopmyexchange.com, shopcgx.com, mymcx.com and mynavyexchange.com for tax-free shopping. If a veteran's information is incomplete, VetVerify.org will provide guidance on next steps.



[New PTSD Treatment Comparison Tool](#)

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has launched a new online tool that will help Veterans compare various treatment options for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The [PTSD Treatment Decision Aid](#) is a free, interactive online tool that helps educate patients about effective treatment options for PTSD and encourages them to participate actively in decisions about their care. The tool includes information about evidence-based PTSD treatments, such as talk therapy and prescription medication options. Users can watch videos of providers explaining different treatment options and what to expect with those treatments, and

hear from Veterans who have benefited from them. To learn more about PTSD visit the National Center for PTSD [website](#).



Oppose Benefit Cuts to Retirement Age Disabled Veterans Don't Reduce Disabled Vets Benefits

The Trump Administration's FY 2018 budget request reduces some VA benefits.

The proposed budget eliminates the Individual Unemployability benefit payments to retirement-age disabled veterans. Under current policies, the Individual Unemployability program allows VA to award payouts at the 100-percent disabled rate to veterans who cannot find work due to service-connected injuries, even if they are not deemed 100-percent disabled. The Administration has proposed stopping those payouts once veterans are eligible for Social Security retirement benefits. This cut would impact more than 225,000 veterans currently receiving this benefit.

Veterans receiving benefits checks from the VA would also have their annual cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) reduced or “round down” to the nearest dollar.

Use the [Action Center](#) to ask your legislators to oppose these benefit cuts.

VA Announces Electronic Health Record Decision

Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin announced his decision on the next-generation Electronic Health Record (EHR) system for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) at a news briefing at VA headquarters in Washington. Secretary Shulkin's full statement is available on the VA [website](#).



Blue Star Markers

The organization National Garden Clubs, Inc. serves as the lifeline for the miles and miles of Blue Star Memorial markers in America that serve as living tribute to the men and women who serve in the Armed Forces. Since the program began over 70 years ago, more than 3,000 Blue Star markers of all three types have been dedicated across the country. Often, one or more Federation of Garden Club Districts collaborates on acquiring the markers and maintaining them in perpetuity. Often a memorial garden is planted with the Blue Star markers. After each marker is installed, the club conducts a dedication ceremony inviting the public. For more information, visit the [National Garden Clubs, Inc. website](#).

Veteran Crisis Resources

Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1

Military Crisis Line 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

**National Call Center for Homeless Veterans
1-877-4AID-VET (424.3838)**

VA Caregiver Support Line 1-855-260-3274

Links to Other Stories

- 1) [A Veteran's Final Hours at a VA Hospital](#)
- 2) [Advocates denounce VA delays in developing housing for homeless Veterans at West L.A. site](#)
- 3) [California homeless veterans move into apartment built from recycled shipping containers](#)
- 4) [Congress Gets Plan to Replace VA 'Choice' with 'CARE' Plan](#)
- 5) [DoD Offers Wellness Resources for the Military Community During PTSD Awareness Month](#)
- 6) [GI Internship Program Act H.R.758 Update](#)
- 7) [Health IT Publisher Recognizes 11 Innovative VA Programs](#)
- 8) [Judicial Watch Sues Veterans Affairs for Information on a Plan to House Homeless Vets](#)
- 9) [New VA initiative focuses on combating fraud, waste and abuse](#)
- 10) [New VA online tool helps Veterans learn about and compare effective PTSD treatments](#)
- 11) [PVA "Cautiously Optimistic" on New VA Patient Record System](#)
- 12) [Senate passes new rules for firing VA employees](#)
- 13) [Senate Set To Vote On Department Of Veterans Affairs](#)

Reform Bill

- 14) [Senator Grassley Says U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs Intentionally Withheld Iowa Veteran Wait Times](#)
- 15) [Shulkin stresses 'lot of work to do' to fix beleaguered VA](#)
- 16) [Trump urges House of Representatives to pass Veterans Affairs Accountability legislation quickly](#)
- 17) [VA ditches error-rate database](#)
- 18) [Va Secretary Announces Decision on Next-Generation Electronic Health Record](#)
- 19) [Veterans Affairs Official Downplays Agent Orange Risks, Questions Critics](#)
- 20) ['We Need Private Sector Help': VA Secretary Gives 'Candid Assessment' of Agency in Rare White House Presser](#)
- 21) [Why so many more homeless Vets in LA?](#)

You can help VFC by reading articles posted and commenting at the bottom and rate the articles. If you don't have an account, sign up today, it's FREE. Your comments and rankings tell us what type of information you want most.

Check us out today: www.veterans-for-change.org

Who Can Use Military Campgrounds?

The military has a large system of campgrounds and recreation areas. Most, if not all, military bases include some sort of camping area with RV hook-ups and tent spaces. Other bases have set aside recreation areas and rent cabins and other amenities. But who can use them? Get the details in this [article](#).



Veterans Summer Slam Employment Fair

Friday, June 16

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Resume Writing & Interview Breakout Sessions | 8 – 9am

Opening Ceremony | 9 – 10am

Job Fair | 10am – 2pm

LOCATION

LA Trade Tech College
400 W Washington Bl
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Free Backpack giveaway by the
Veteran's Advocacy Group of
America. Arrive Early to secure
your backpack. Limited supply
available.

**All veterans attending will receive free tickets to the LA Sparks Service Night June 18, 2017.*

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Veterans-For-Change Web Site

The Veterans-For-Change website has been under construction

since day one back in 2009 and every day since then. The looks pretty much stay the same, but in the background constant improvement and change is being done to make our website the most user friendly “One-Stop-Shop” website to find almost everything you might have tried to find searching the internet.

Almost a hundred people have been involved; collecting web links to documents now houses on the VFC website, collecting thousands of web links for various issues, illnesses and benefits. Creating forums for all eras of service and two forums one just for men and one just for woman where you can go question, comment, share medical and personal concerns, what ever you'd like it to be.

We also have a forum with a licensed Mental Health Worker, again where you can seek help or just ask questions.

We average 1,700 hits per day, and downloads average 1,000 per day with a total 3,350,777 visitors as of Friday.

If you subscribe you will have full access to the entire website and best of all it's FREE of charge! You just need a valid E-mail address so the system can send you a confirmation E-Mail. Once received, click on the link to be authorized automatically.

www.veterans-for-change.org

- Documents Library with over 16,034 documents on-line (Updated: 5/19/17)
- FAQ's with more than 1,600 FAQ's and answers
- Multiple Forums
 - o Afghanistan Veterans
 - o FMP - Foreign Medial Program
 - o Gulf War & Desert Storm Veterans
 - o Iraq Veterans

- o Korean Veterans
- o Men Veterans Forum
- o Mental Health for Veterans
- o Political Issues
- o Suggestion Box
- o The Mess Hall
- o VA Hospitals and Medical Centers
- o Veteran Affairs
- o Vietnam Veterans
- o Welcome Mat
- o Women Veterans Forum
- o WW II Veterans
- Job Postings
- Memorial Pages (Updated: 10/10/16)
- News (Articles On-Line: 6,517)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than 3,587, Added 38 New Links (Updated: 05/26/17)

If you have a submission for the memorial pages, E-Mail:
Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org



Keep Financial Protections for Active Duty

Don't Weaken CFPB's Office of Service Members Affairs

The House passed the "Financial CHOICE Act" (H.R. 10) which

seeks to dramatically reshape the regulation of banking and other financial activities. This legislation includes a number of provisions weakening the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and its Office of Service Members Affairs.

The bill now goes to the Senate for further consideration. Please use the [Action Center](#) to ask your Senators to oppose this legislation.

Texas Redesigns Vet Portal

The Texas Veterans Portal has been redesigned to make it easier for veterans to connect with resources they may need while transitioning out of the military. The website now includes: (1) a responsive design for users who access the site via mobile devices; (2) an improved layout that clearly highlights the most important topics; and (3) the addition of a search tool. Visit the [website](#) to see the improvements.



[**https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change**](https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change)

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors

The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) offers compassionate care to all those grieving the loss of a loved one

who died while serving in the Armed Forces or as a result of his or her service. Since 1994, TAPS has provided comfort and hope 24/7 through a national peer support network and connection to grief resources, all at no cost to surviving families and loved ones. TAPS also conducts regional survivor seminars for adults and youth programs at locations across the country, as well as retreats and expeditions around the world. For more information, visit the [TAPS website](#) or call the TAPS 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline toll free at 800-959-TAPS (8277).



VA Tests FitHeart App

Currently in the testing phase, the VA [FitHeart](#) app is for patients who have heart problems and are undergoing a medically supervised exercise and lifestyle program. The app is designed specifically for Veterans and can send data directly to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) patient-generated database. This allows care providers to view vital information from anywhere in real time and more easily prepare reports for our electronic

health record system. If the app passes field testing, it will be released nationally for use throughout the United States.



DAV action on Proposal to Eliminate Individual Unemployability Rating at Age 62

Over the past several weeks, DAV has received hundreds of inquiries from DAV members and other concerned parties regarding the proposal to eliminate the total disability rating based on Individual Unemployability (IU) benefits for veterans over the age of 62 contained in the President's fiscal year 2018 budget. Specifically, the proposal would terminate existing IU total disability ratings for veterans when they reach the minimum retirement age for Social Security purposes (age 62), or upon enactment of the proposal if the veteran is already in receipt of Social Security retirement benefits. In the May 24 House Veterans' Affairs Committee budget hearing, DAV expressed its strong opposition to this proposal. We are aware that the elimination of these benefits would affect not only the veteran's family income, but other critical ancillary benefits, such as dental coverage, Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the VA (CHAMPVA), commissary and exchange privileges, and the value of Social Security benefits. Additionally, this will impact access to some state benefits such as property tax exemptions for veteran homeowners, free vehicle registration and free access to state parks.

Please be assured this is a key priority for DAV and we are trying to respond to your phone calls and email messages as quickly as possible. DAV is actively working to educate Capitol Hill lawmakers and the public about the devastating impact this proposal would have upon service-disabled veterans and their families.

Click [HERE](#) and send your message!



**~We Proudly Support our
Military Personnel & Families~**

If you received this newsletter as a courtesy or a forward from a friend or relative, you can sign up to receive in your E-mail every week.

[Subscribe Here](#)

United Way Offers Assistance to Veterans and Families

United Way's Mission United program assists military veterans and their families in acclimating back to civilian life. Veterans can face challenges transitioning from active duty, and too many find themselves homeless, jobless, or unable to access treatment for substance abuse, brain injury, or other physical and mental health issues. Mission United is a free program that coordinates community services for veterans and their families, connecting them to affordable housing, job training, health care and other

resources. For more details, visit the [United Way site](#).



Veterans-For-Change, Inc.

Riverside County, CA

Visit our website today

www.Veterans-For-Change.org

Serving those who served!

Please pass on to all your Veteran Friends and Family!

Please do not reply to this E-Mail, this is an unattended E-Mail address, please send all correspondence to:

Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org

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DoD	30,191
Face Book Pages	3,543
Google	28,842
Los Angeles	135,542
Microsoft	9,748
National Guard	4180
New York	153,123
Other Social Media	43,458
San Francisco	79,142
Twitter	41
US House of Reps & Staff	990
US Senators & Staff	109
University of So. California	5,279
US Air Force	26,319
US Army	67,371
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US Navy	38,187
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