



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, October 09, 2016
Volume 7, Issue 37

This-N-That

Last week I discussed how the VA now covers sex reassignment, counseling etc. for Veterans.

Well now they have not only insulted all those who have been waiting months, even years to receive medical care and benefits for service connected illnesses, they are slapping the other cheek by making sex reassignment counseling, services and surgery to dependents.

And in an article I read about an active duty service members son (soon to be daughter) the hormone therapy will be \$15,000 which is three times the amount I had quoted to you last week.

I have contacted many members of both the House and Senate, and I'm still waiting (not holding my breath) for one or more of them to respond to this issue.

And now taking this slapping in the face further, the Department of Veterans Affairs will begin covering costs for in vitro fertilization and adoptions for combat-wounded Veterans struggling with infertility because of their injuries, giving thousands of young Veteran families fresh hope at starting a family, advocates say.

Again I need to say I am not against anyone choosing to change their sex, if that is what he/she wishes to do that's all fine and dandy, but cover it on your own dime, not the taxpayers, and certainly not on the backs of your fellow Veterans.

I'm also not opposed to the VA assisting Veterans with pregnancy and adoption, but what on earth gave either of these situations priority over those who are sick and dying all from service connected illnesses?

And still I see not one of the nationally Chartered Veteran Service Organizations screaming and hollering about any of this. They're not fighting for their members to get the desperately needed medical care and benefits. Why is that?

I will admit that I do feel the VA's move to assist Veterans with pregnancy and adoption is a good move as is most if not all cases they're not able to conceive in a normal manner and all because of a service connected problem, but why continue to ignore, table, put to committee, what ever they do on such seriously needed medical care for all the rest of you who need medical attention?

The VA even has the audacity to force an 80 year old Veteran to wait five months just to get a lousy wheel chair!

What on earth gives with this? If a doctor orders it, and the Veteran is eligible then why wasn't one provided within a week or two?

But with communications with a reporter and the VA and getting several different responses, on was: "VA is so huge, sorry we messed up one little case," a dismissive response.

One little case? Is this how our precious VA Staff looks upon Veterans, "One Little Case?"

Well this is precisely why the legislation was presented not once but twice to give the authority to terminate being made easier, which the first one Obama Vetoes, and the second I've not heard back on yet.

If any employee of the VA has this attitude, they sure as heck do not need the job and their union protecting people like this is why we're losing so many Veterans, because of lack of service, lack of compassion, and just down right piss poor attitudes toward those who ensure they have a job in the first place.

I know I ask often, but I am asking again. If you have an opinion on any of the issues discussed this week, please do write to me. Even if one of these issues affects you directly, I'd also like to hear how you were treated, etc.

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

Sense of Congress on Agent Orange Blue Water Issue

Congresswoman Elise Stefanik (NY) and Senator Chuck Grassley (IA), have introduced a non-binding Sense of Congress (H Con Res 161 and S Con Res 51 respectively) expressing support for those who served in the bays, harbors, and territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, and should be presumed to have been exposed to the toxin Agent Orange and should be eligible for all related Federal benefits that come with such presumption under the Agent Orange Act of 1991.

While these measures, if passed, are non-binding, it will show Congressional support for the Blue Water Navy veterans and will hopefully convince the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide this presumption by regulation.

Please Click [HERE](#) to support these measures.

Phoenix VA Launches Robots

The Phoenix VA Health Care System is [the first hospital in Arizona](#) to deploy Xenex Germ-Zapping Robots to destroy deadly germs and bacteria lurking on hospital surfaces that can cause hospital acquired infections. The portable room disinfection system utilizes pulsed xenon UV light and is effective against even the most dangerous superbugs. The room, bed and equipment are first disinfected by hospital Environmental Management Service staff. Once the room is visually clean, the robot comes in and destroys anything left behind -- it kills all the dangerous bacteria the naked eye cannot see.



Campaign Seeks to Raise Support for Vet Caregivers

A new national public awareness campaign seeks to leverage celebrity appearances to raise public support for veteran caregivers. Rolled out Tuesday at an event on Capitol Hill, the Elizabeth Dole Foundation's Hidden Heroes campaign includes a series of televised and print public service announcements featuring actor and campaign chair Tom Hanks, partnerships with cities nationwide, and the launch of the website HiddenHeroes.org, officials said.

HIRING EVENTS

Wed, October 12, 2016
BWI Marriott
1743 West Nursery Road
Linthicum Heights, MD 21090

VA Chief: Stop Using Veterans as Pawns

In an hour-long interview in his office overlooking the White House, Secretary of the VA Bob McDonald expands on the surprisingly sharp critique of Congress he delivered a week earlier while testifying on recommendations of the congressionally chartered Commission on Care. McDonald is upset to see fiscal 2016 expiring with Congress having failed to pass up to two dozen pieces of legislation he labels "essential" for continuing to transform VA to better serve veterans – with faster access to quality healthcare outside VA, breaking a disgraceful logjam of disability claim appeals, shelving archaic statutes that handcuff staff, and more.

Hurricane Matthew Update

As Hurricane Matthew moves North, several areas are affected. Currently, Primary Care Manager referral requirements have been waived in Florida and several other states.

Get the full update [here](#).

To Contact your Members of Congress

To Call your Representative: 202-225-2305

To call your Senator: 202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553

To call different members of Congress: 202-224-3121

Toll FREE Number: 866-272-6622

Tricare Rx Network Adds Walgreens, Drops CVS

Walgreens will soon rejoin [TRICARE's pharmacy network](#) for users nationwide, officials announced Friday, while CVS pharmacies will leave. That means [TRICARE](#) users will now be able to fill their prescriptions off-base at Walgreens pharmacies without paying out-of-network rates, and CVS users will need to find a new pharmacy or pay unsubsidized rates for their medications.

Hurricane Matthew Affecting Beneficiaries in Several Areas

Hurricane Matthew is affecting beneficiaries in several areas. Emergency prescription refill procedures and some referral waivers are in place. Get full details here: www.tricare.mil/HurricaneMatthew.

JOB FAIRS

Sponsor: Corporate Gray

Date: October 19, 2016

Time: 9 am - 12:30 pm

Location: [Virginia Beach Convention Center](#) - Virginia Beach, VA

Recommended Hotel: [Double Tree Virginia Beach](#)

Attending Employers

- [AECOM](#) (2814 jobs posted)
- [Advanced Technology Institute](#)
- [Alban Caterpillar](#) (35 jobs posted)
- [Alion Science and Technology](#)

- [Aviation Institute of Maintenance](#)
- [Bradley-Morris Inc.](#)
- [Carter Machinery Company, Inc.](#) (4 jobs posted)
- [Centura College](#)
- [Clancy & Theys Construction Company](#)
- [Cleveland Brothers Equipment Co.](#) (19 jobs posted)
- [David Griswold & Associates](#)
- [Defense Contract Management Agency](#)
- [Diebold Nixdorf](#)
- [Eaton Corporation](#) (597 jobs posted)
- [Fairfax County Police Department](#)
- [First Command Financial Services](#) (174 jobs posted)
- [HAZON Solutions LLC](#)
- [Hewlett Packard Enterprise](#) (2782 jobs posted)
- [Intelligence Careers](#)
- [Jacobs Technology](#) (1856 jobs posted)
- [Kokua Support Services Corp.](#) (21 jobs posted)
- [L-3 Unidyne](#) (1033 jobs posted)
- [Leidos](#) (3933 jobs posted)
- [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#) (23 jobs posted)
- [Navy Exchange Service Command](#)
- [New Horizons CLC](#)
- [New York Life](#)
- [Newport News Shipbuilding](#) (243 jobs posted)
- [Opportunity Inc. of Hampton Roads](#)
- [Stratford University](#)
- [Tidewater Tech](#)

[U.S. Department of Justice](#)

Operation Mail Call

*Troops resting on long deployments
- your support matters*



Veterans-For-Change - Operation Mail Call

Operation Mail Call needs your help! We need cards and letters to send to our troops currently serving on foreign soil.

Our men and women in uniform often go months without hugging their children, walking through the park with a significant other or enjoying Mom's home-cooked Sunday dinners.

Ask them where they'd go if they had a free plane ticket anywhere in the world, and the overwhelming majority would say, "home."

Of course, we can't replace the hugs, the love or the secret family chili recipe – but with your help, we can provide them a connection to their fellow Americans who are grateful for their service.

Now, we're hoping you'll take your support to the next level by sending more cards and letters. Hand made cards by your children, or class mates are a terrific means of putting smiles on their faces even if only for a moment.

Cards and Letters of encouragement to help boost moral and let them know we sincerely appreciate the job they are doing and look forward to they day they are all brought home. Your card or letter will show your appreciation and help thousands more American heroes feel connected to the people they love and the country they serve.

Please help us to make a powerful expression of how much their fellow Americans care about them.

Thank you so much for all you're doing to show our service men and women they are appreciated missed and loved.

If you're a school teacher, please contact me at my E-Mail address at the top, our troops love to hear from kids too!

For more information, visit: <http://veterans-for-change.org/5439-operation-mail-call-2>

Government Accountability Reports

Advanced Technologies: Strengthened Federal Approach Needed to Help Identify and Mitigate Supply Risks for Critical Raw Materials. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-699>

Elderly Housing: HUD Should Do More to Oversee Efforts to Link Residents to Services. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-758>

Iraq: State and DOD Need to Improve Documentation and Record Keeping for Vetting of Iraq's Security Forces. http://www.gao.gov/restricted/restricted_reports

Securities and Exchange Commission: Management Has Enhanced Supervisory Controls and Could Further Improve Efficiency. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-16>

Skilled Nursing Facilities: CMS Should Improve Accessibility and Reliability of Expenditure Data. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-700>

Emergency Communications: Improved Procurement of Land Mobile Radios Could Enhance Interoperability and Cut Costs. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-12>

Public Relations Spending: Reported Data on Related Federal Activities.
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-877R>

Emergency Communications: Survey of Selected Federal Agencies' Use and Procurement of Land Mobile Radio Equipment (GAO-17-13SP, October 5, 2016), an E-supplement to GAO-17-12.
<http://www.gao.gov/special.pubs/gao-17-13sp/index.htm>

GI Bill Rates Increase for 2017

Every year GI Bill rates increase based on the Consumer Price Index as calculated by the government. Based on these calculations, the VA has released the Fiscal Year 2016 GI Bill rates. [These rates are effective from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.](#)

[Take advantage of this increase and see how you can use the GI Bill.](#)

Important Note: The schools included in this tool have chosen to work with Military.com. This tool does not include every school with VA approved programs. For a complete list visit www.va.gov. GI Bill eligibility and credits for service depend on individual circumstances. Confirm with schools whether programs and policies meet your specific requirements.

State of Emergency for Florida and North Carolina due to Hurricane Matthew

The governors of Florida and North Carolina have declared States of Emergency due to Hurricane Matthew for several counties. Emergency refill procedures are in place from October 3, 2016 through November 2, 2016. For a list of affected counties, please visit the [TRICARE](#) website.



Walgreens Offer Free Flu Shots

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has teamed up with national retail pharmacy Walgreens to provide free flu vaccinations for enrolled Veterans. All Veterans who are currently enrolled in VA care may walk into any of the over 8,000 Walgreens nationally (and the Duane Reade pharmacies in the New York metropolitan area) to receive a vaccination at no cost. After presenting a Veterans Identification Card and a photo ID, a Walgreens pharmacist administers the vaccine and transmits that information securely to VA where it becomes part of the patient's electronic medical record. To learn more about the partnership, call 1-877-771-8537 or visit the VA website at www.ehealth.va.gov/immunization.asp. To locate a Walgreens store near you, call 800-WALGREENs (800-925-4733) or visit the Walgreens website at Walgreens.com/findastore. For more information on flu and flu vaccine, visit the VA Influenza webpage at www.publichealth.va.gov/flu or the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov/flu.



VA and Tinnitus

Hearing loss, including tinnitus, which is a ringing, buzzing or other type of noise that originates in the head, is the most prevalent service-connected disability among veterans, with more than 30 million veterans suffering from a form of it due to frequent exposure to loud noises from weaponry and aircraft.

Because of the pervasiveness of hearing loss among veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is recognizing October as Audiology Awareness Month by highlighting important VA research on the subject and advances made in treating veterans with hearing loss.

VA researchers conduct a wide range of studies in audiology—from biomedical investigations to large clinical trials and epidemiologic database studies. Much of the work takes place at VA's [National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research](#) in Portland, Oregon, one of the world's leading facilities for research in the field. Studies include older veterans whose hearing problems have been compounded by aging and younger veterans who may have suffered hearing loss as a result of blasts in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Source: NAUS

Hurricane Readiness

The impending threat of Hurricane Matthew has the Eastern Seaboard on high alert status. In preparation for this potentially devastating storm, I have put together some must know information from NOAA for you to review!

The best time to prepare for a hurricane is before hurricane season begins. It is vital to understand your home's vulnerability to storm surge, flooding, and wind. Below are the basics to get started:

- **Know your zone:** Do you live near the Gulf or Atlantic Coasts? Find out if you live in a hurricane evacuation area by contacting your local government/emergency management office or by checking the [evacuation site website](#).
- **Write or review your Family Emergency Plan:** Before an emergency happens, sit down with your family or close friends and decide how you will get in contact with each other, where you will go and what you will do in an emergency. Keep a copy of this plan in your emergency supplies kit or another safe place where you can access it in the event of a disaster. Start at the **Ready.Gov** [emergency plan webpage](#).
- **Put Together an Emergency Supplies Kit:** Put together a [basic disaster supplies kit](#) and consider storage locations for different situations. Check emergency equipment, such as flashlights, generators and storm shutters.
- **Review Your Home Owners Insurance:** Review your insurance policy to ensure that you have adequate coverage for your home.
- **Understand NWS forecast products,** especially the meaning of [NWS watches and warnings](#).
- [Download the NWS Hurricanes, Unleashing Nature's Fury](#) booklet for more information about hurricanes

For up to the minute information on this storm... please refer to <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>

Understanding the New Blended Retirement System

The U.S. Navy has released information on the transition to the Blended Retirement System (BRS) and training requirements. The new Blended Retirement System goes into effect Jan. 1, 2018. However, Sailors who are currently serving in the Navy will be grandfathered into the current retirement system. Active Component Sailors with less than 12 years of service (as of Dec. 31, 2017) and Reserve Component Sailors with fewer than 4,320 retirement points (as of Dec.31, 2017) will be able to opt-in to the new retirement plan if they choose to do so. All Navy servicemembers will be required to complete either the BRS Leader's Training course available now on Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) and Navy E-learning, or the BRS Opt-in Training course that will go live early in 2017. For more information, visit the [Department of Defense BRS webpage](#).

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

TRICARE Doesn't Cover All Costs: Get Covered

Doctor and hospital bills are expensive even when you're covered by TRICARE. Help minimize or even eliminate out-of-pocket expenses with the [TRICARE Insurance Supplement Plan](#).

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 1,400 per day with a total **3,027,471** 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 15,616 documents on-line (Updated: **08/02/16**)
- FAQ's with more than 1,600 FAQ's and answers (Updated: **02/20/16**)
- Multiple Forums
- Job Postings (Updated: **09/15/16**)
- Memorial Pages (Updated: **01/02/16**)
- News (Articles On-Line: **6,046**)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than 3,444, Added 1 New Links (Updated: **09/19/16**)

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

Vets Needed for SBA Task Force

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) seeks nominations from two veterans' service or military organizations to serve on the [Interagency Task Force for Veterans Small Business Development](#) (IATF). The deadline for submitting a nomination is Oct. 14, 2016. Nominations of eligible representatives of veterans' service or military organizations must be sent via email to veteransbusiness@sba.gov. Submissions should include: (1) name and contact information of the individual, (2) Name and contact information of represented organization with an endorsement letter from the organization, (3) a description of how the organization supports veteran and service-disabled owned small business issues. For information about SBA resources for veteran businesses, visit the SBA website at www.sba.gov/vets.



<https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change>

Links to Other Stories

- 1) [*200 Veterans die waiting for care as troubled Phoenix VA builds new backlog*](#)
- 2) [*Congress Shuts Down Medical Cannabis For Veterans*](#)
- 3) [*Express Scripts Pharmacy Network Changing for TRICARE Beneficiaries*](#)
- 4) [*Federal Probationary Period Doubles For Some New Hires*](#)
- 5) [*Hearing loss and brain injuries*](#)
- 6) [*Lawmakers concerned with record of new Phoenix VA chief*](#)
- 7) [*Long wait times and schedule manipulations persist at Phoenix VA hospital, watchdog says*](#)
- 8) [*Madison VA Spent \\$300k On 2 Unusable Robots*](#)
- 9) [*Mourning the loss of a loved one from suicide*](#)
- 10) [*October is National Audiology Awareness Month*](#)
- 11) [*One-Third of VA Suicide Hotline Calls Go Unanswered Due to Government Employees Leaving Early*](#)
- 12) [*Raise your awareness of breast cancer*](#)
- 13) [*The robot takeover of the VA has failed... for now*](#)
- 14) [*VA Announces Several Caregiver Partnerships*](#)
- 15) [*Veteran never received VA cardiology appointment that could have 'forestalled' his death*](#)
- 16) [*Veteran With Terminal Brain Cancer Explains Why He's Against Assisted Suicide*](#)
- 17) [*Veterans Affairs Makes Elderly Vet Wait 5 Months For Wheelchair*](#)
- 18) [*Veterans Affairs will begin covering IVF and adoption costs for wounded Veterans*](#)
- 19) [*Why Veterans With PTSD Are Turning To Cannabis*](#)

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



Are you seeking employment? Been looking and not found the right job?

Well Veterans-For-Change is working hard to bring you more information on Job Fairs and Job postings available across the country.

<http://veterans-for-change.org/documents-library/category/167-job-fairs-job-postings>

If you're an employer and have a job to post, send and E-Mail to: Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org

United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration

By presidential proclamation, the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration began with the Presidential inaugural event at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. On Memorial Day, May 28, 2012 and concludes on Veterans Day, November 11, 2025. The Commemoration honors all United States veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time between November 1, 1955 to and May 15, 1975, regardless of location. For more information, visit the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration website at www.vietnamwar50th.com and follow the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration on Facebook at www.facebook.com/VietnamWar50th.

A Look at Vet Centers

Vet centers are committed to assisting veterans and their families toward a successful adjustment in or near their communities. 71 percent of vet center staff members are veterans. Vet Centers provide all readjustment counseling services at no charge. Those using vet centers are not required to enroll in the VA Health Care System or to have received a service connection for conditions caused by military service. Vet centers provide services regardless of the nature of a veteran's discharge. The vet center program also has a [Veterans Call Center](#) staffed with qualified counselors who will answer your calls after duty hours; the phone number is 1-877-927-8387.



~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.

<https://gem.godaddy.com/signups/193302/join>

Marines' Memorial Association

The Marines' Memorial Association (MMA) is an organization that is dedicated to honoring the legacy of military service through a historic hotel that is also a Marine Corps museum. They offer programs that commemorate, educate, and serve veterans of all eras. The support MMA offers includes scholarships, care packages for deployed troops, gatherings for parents of servicemembers, and commemorative events. Many of the members from the MMA are retired senior and flag officers who bring a significant amount of leadership and experience along with them. For more information, follow the Marines Memorial Club on [Facebook](#).

Shift in VA Private Health Care Program Criticized by Lawmakers

CQ RollCall

New data show that many veterans using a \$10 billion private health care expansion program are not the ones Congress intended to help.

That's rankled lawmakers charged with oversight of the 2-year-old Veterans Choice Program, launched after an uproar over disturbing reports of veterans who waited for appointments at Department of Veterans Affairs facilities.

In addition it is reported that the VA provided incorrect data to the Congressional Research Service that resulted in [inaccuracies in a CRS report](#) examining the Veterans Choice Program. The authoritative and objective reports produced by the CRS, which is part of the Library of Congress, are heavily relied upon by lawmakers for policy and legal analysis.

A Library of Congress spokeswoman said "CRS is independently aware that the information provided by the VA is inaccurate. CRS will update the report accordingly when corrected information is available."

It was reported that most authorizations for the Veterans Choice Program have been granted for expanding access to care that veterans can't get at traditional Department of Veterans Affairs facilities, not due to explicit wait time or distance problems.

Those two issues — that is, if a veteran had to wait more than 30 days or travel further than 40 miles to get to a VA facility — were the original criteria used to determine whether a veteran was eligible for the Choice program. They were also the reasons why concerned members of Congress moved to plug \$10 billion into the program.

Source: NAUS



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

Distribution	
Express Mail	144,595
Boston	73,761
Courtesy Copies	3,500
Department of VA	12,006
DoD	16,765
Face Book Pages	3,331
Google	15,599
Los Angeles	130,482

Microsoft	3,427
National Guard	2485
New York	144,915
Other Social Media	32,611
San Francisco	74,960
Twitter	34
US House of Reps & Staff	830
US Senators & Staff	99
University of So. California	4,604
US Air Force	14,000
US Army	39,660
US Marines	23,250
US Navy	16,577
Veterans	19,070,029
Washington DC	136,964
Yahoo	134
	19,964,618

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