



Veterans-*For*-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, January 04, 2014
Volume 6, Issue 01

This-N-That

As we look at this year, I think we all realized just how fast it has gone by. I want to thank you all for being part of this wonderful and amazing journey and I hope we can continue to work together in 2015 and help to make life a little better for those who served or are still serving our great country of ours.

One of the biggest items that we all knew about that finally got the attention of major media were the appointment books being cooked so that VAMC Directors and senior staff could all get their enormous bonuses for “keeping in the guidelines on appointments scheduling” and if not for CNN, chances are this may never have been brought to light.

On the good side of the CNN outing the information, more civilians were made aware of a small fraction of what Veterans go through and are forced to endure. Maybe in the future when they demand their reps in DC cut costs they won't be so harsh when it comes to DoD budgets.

Although we've seen some changes, personally I'm still not confident much has been accomplished, or even fast enough.

One program rolled out late 2014 was that cards were issues to Vets so they could either go to a closer VA clinic or a civilian hospital. But this program already seems to be showing flaws.

The “mapping” system is in both geographical and nautical miles, and one Veteran is 42 geographical miles from the nearest VA Medical Center which by their own rules should allow him to go to a closer clinic or civilian hospital. Well not so says their system, and the other facility which he can go to is 40 nautical miles. So he has no option but the VA Medical Center.

We haven't heard of other issues as of yet other than those who got their cards and attempted to use them were not happy at all. But we will continue to dig and listen and hopefully get a better grasp on the situation.

Recently Lockheed Martin who owns and operates Systems Made Simple, the re-contract award for designing a fully automated claims and documents handling systems announced they are working hard to produce a product that will be user friendly and help expedite claims and benefits.

I can't tell you any of the in's and out's of this contract or what it will or won't mean. Right now I am highly doubtful this system will produce much at all. After we have been hearing this from the VA for years now and failure after failure is what we hear, or a specific program/task even such as digitizing all military and medical records got cut as it was too expensive.

When it comes to digitizing military and medical records to get rid of the buildings upon buildings of paper documentation it's not going to be cheap until it's all done then it's a matter of tying computer systems into the documentation system and costs would drop dramatically.

But you do have to have staff to run the equipment, and as a file is finished scanning, you have to manually go in and label each document in the file to make the search and recovery of documents easy and fast.

We do sincerely hope this time they will produce an automated claims and documents system that will work for all concerned, it's what Veterans-For-Change has been asking and demanding happen for several years now.

Have you lost a loved one, friend, buddy who served our Country? We'd like very much to honor them by placing their picture and what ever information you'd like to have others know in our memorial pages.

Visit today <http://veterans-for-change.org/gallery3/> and do let us know how we can best honor your loved one or friend.

If you're a member on Face Book, be sure to visit our Faced Book Page for Veterans-For-Change and like us, and spread the word! If you're a fan of Twitter, be sure to visit us there and follow us!

And if you have not been to or visited our website lately, take a visit today. We've now opened up 80% of the system and you're not required to subscribe, which is and always will be 100% free. You do need to subscribe to view all the Forums, to post freely, and a few of the libraries which are restricted. Visit today: www.veterans-for-change.org

We're still looking for someone who is talented at Microsoft Access to write a few databases for us. If you have those talents, and can volunteer some time, please E-Mail me.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Advocacy Group Members and Volunteers nationwide, we wish you and your family good health and Happy New Year!

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

God Bless The USA Tribute in Lights

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ls3vQmzN20>

Report Looks at Depression, Suicides

A new report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has found that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides inconsistent treatment to veterans with depression and may be underestimating the number of vets who suffer from the condition. The report also says VA needs to do a better job monitoring veterans who are prescribed antidepressants and in tracking suicides. The report is available on the GAO website at www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-55.



FROM MILITARY-VETERANS ADVOCACY

OK here is the update in the waning days of the 113th Congress. The news is not good. Across the board, there were significant losses, especially in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

First of all, HR 543 will die despite having 258 co-sponsors. We will reintroduce next year and will attempt to submit the bill with a large number of returning sponsors. So please CALL or write your member of Congress, ask them to contact Congressman Chris Gibson (R-NY19) and sign on the new Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act. We will be taking a more proactive role to craft a Congressional Budget Office score and identify offsets to get this bill moving.

Two of our HR 543 sponsors have been elected to the Senate. We are hoping that one or both of them, (Senators-Elect Steve Daines R-MT and Shelley Moore Capito R WV) and perhaps several others will join with Senator Gillibrand (D-NY) to introduce a companion bill. We also hope that the new Chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, Senator Johnny Isakson R-GA will help move this bill forward. We don't know the ranking member yet but it might be Sen Jon Tester D-MT who has been a friend to us in the past.

Our ship count provision was struck from the NDAA on the insistence of the Senate. Based on the fact that 308 ships have been identified in inland waters, we think we can move past this by doing our own analysis. Anyone with deck logs showing service in the rivers or tied to a pier, whose ship has not made the VA. list, please contact John Rossie via www.bluewaternavy.org

The religious freedom provisions of the House version of the NDAA were struck at the insistence of the Senate.

Tricare co-pay increases and housing allowance reductions were included in the final version at the insistence of the Senate. The House did minimize some of these increases over what the Senate bill originally called for. On a positive note, the provision that would have tightened judicial review of correction board issues was not enacted.

We had a hearing on the VA's Motion to Dismiss the Blue Water Navy court suit, Being honest it was a tough hearing. The Judge has taken the matter under advisement. I will let you know what happened when we get the decision. Thanks to all that attended.

Being a perennial New Orleans Saints fan, I've learned to adopt the old saying "Wait `til next year." We did not win the Super Bowl this time but WE WILL BE BACK!

Commander J. B. Wells U. S. Navy (Retired)
Attorney at Law
Executive Director
Military-Veterans Advocacy, Inc.

The WorkPlace Ca

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Santa Ana, Ca 92705
714/972-2605
FAX 714/972-3003

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TheWorkPlaceCa@yahoo.com

We need to HIRE a RECRUITER

Someone who can connect with non-profits and other organizations serving people on disability benefits (SSI or SSDI) and ENCOURAGE them to activate their 'Ticket to Work' by assigning their 'Ticket' to an Employment Network – such as The WorkPlace Ca – and thereby increase their income by work and make their life HAPPIER.

Since we were founded in 1986, in Santa Ana, we have always believed that 'WORK IS LIFE'

We also believe that 'WORK IS DIGNITY' and that while disability benefits are a blessing, when you have no other choice, disability benefits will never get you to Hawaii or on other interesting life tracks.

Who should the RECRUITER be?

Someone also on SSI or SSDI benefits (and/or VA disability benefits).

Someone comfortable on the phone and able to visit organizations in their home offices here in So Cal, (in a wheelchair, or otherwise physically limited, is no problem and may be a positive).

Following success with recruitment, we will train on how to deliver job placement and job retention services to some of our new clients and that will also be very satisfying.

PLEASE CALL US, if interested. 714/972-2605



America's Veterans United

Is an advocacy group on Yahoo Groups developed to fight for the benefits, care, facilities, caring and compassionate fully licensed medical professionals, updated and properly operated VA Medical Facilities.

Are you sick and tired of the "business as usual" attitude, or the "delay, deny, until they die" attitude?

Are you able to give 30-60 minutes of your time per month to help develop and send letters to all 535 members of Congress each month in an attempt to force Congress into getting off their seats and actually doing something for Veterans vs. their usual lip service?

And are you sick and tired of all the other organizations who say they are fighting for you, but have shown decades of really not doing much for you?

Then join us, we do more than use membership numbers to fight, we actually have you working with us in the fight. Take control of your health and medical care and help us fight for you.

If interested, check out our page on Yahoo Groups:

https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Americas_Veterans_United/info

If you're not a member of any Yahoo Group, and not familiar with the system but want to join in the fight, you can do so via E-Mail as well:

americas_veterans_united-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

One really good thing about America's Veterans United, it won't cost you one thin dime, no membership dues, not postage costs, just your time and your computer.

Help us to help you and your fellow Veterans in the fight!

~ ALL HANDS ON DECK ~

We have an immediate need for your help!

We need to get as many Valentine's Day Cards and hard candy as we can get to send to our troops on foreign soil!

We want to send them a little something "from home" to let them know we support them and their actions 100% and we're behind them all the way, and that we have not, nor will we ever forget them!

Help us to brighten their day, put a smile on their faces, something I'm sure we all know they have little of!

Also if you have information on a Platoon who needs TLC, and you can provide an address of the Postal Officer, we can use those too.

Deadline to receive cards and candies is January 25, 2015!

To send the cards & candy send to:

BNH
Operation Mail Call
832 South 2nd Street, Ste #4
San Jose, CA 95122

Government Accountability Office (GAO) Reports

No reports this week!

Veterans fought for us; we continue to fight for our veterans!

If Presidential Elections were held tomorrow, who would you vote for?

Cast your vote, strictly anonymous!

<https://www.justsurvey.me/5072725a7320>

VFC Website Update

If you've not visited our website, maybe you should visit today! Since going on-line on 10/28/12 we have been averaging between 2,800 and 5,000 visitors per day and have had **1,878,949** visitors to date.

Visit today and subscribe, it's 100% **FREE** of charge to all! Just be sure to use a valid E-Mail address so the system can send you an authentication E-Mail.

We have the largest One-Stop-Shop Veterans website available that is user friendly, offers a host of information on many topics, Several forums, Frequently Asked Questions and Answers, a massive Documents Library with more than 9,000 documents, various VA and DoD forms, over 1,300 articles which is updated at minimum every one to two days and more.

www.veterans-for-change.org

- Documents Library with over **130** different libraries and over **10,632+** documents
- FAQ's (**1,362** on-line now)
- Forums (with Licensed Mental Health Worker Moderator)

- Memorial Pages (**Updated 12/04/14**)
- News (Updated almost daily, **3,999** articles on-line)
- Polls (**Updated 12/15/14**) 1 New Polls Added
- Sponsors
- Web Links (**1,577** Active Links)(**Updated 09/11/14**)

The documents library has many different categories and will eventually house more than 50 million pages of information and forms.

There are forums for all Eras of service and one just for Women Veterans, which we'll lock to use by women only. Another for Men Veterans which is also locked to men only.

In the documents and forums we provide information pertaining to women and the ability speak freely in the forums to other women about the same issues and problems you face.

The Memorial Pages are open, and if you have a loved one or a buddy you've lost and would like for them to be added to our Memorial Pages, please send a photo, First and Last Name, Rank, Branch of Service, DOB and DOD, and allow us 2-3 days to install on the proper page. (Send to: Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)

You also have the ability to comment and rate all NEWS articles which would be very helpful for us so we know the types of information you'd like to see on our website.

There is **NO charge** to use the site, or to become a member. Members have full access where non- members will have limited access approximately 45%.



ManpowerGroup Solutions just recently launched their Veteran/Military Spouse Hiring Initiative as a concerted effort to honor and offer our deserving transitioning servicemembers, Veterans and their spouses, gainful employment opportunities, nationwide.

Please contact our Veteran Specialist, Alejandra Cox, either via email or phone. Email your resume to be considered for current and /or future openings or connect with her to ask about opportunities available in your area.

We look forward to working with you and finding the right opportunities that will benefit you and your family.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!

www.manpowergroupsolutions.com

Veteran Specialist: Alejandra Cox
Email: Alejandra.Cox@ManpowerGroup.com
Phone: 916-692-8950

Cast your Vote in the Latest Veterans-For-Change Polls

Tell us how you feel on several different polls posted. Votes are all anonymous! (updated 12/15/14)
<http://veterans-for-change.org/polls>

Looking for an opportunity to give back to Veterans?

The Veterans Home in West Los Angeles is looking for you. If you are caring and compassionate and want to give back to those that have given so much for us, this may be your opportunity. As the West LA Veterans Home is filled to capacity, CalVet will be hiring caregivers to take care of Veterans in our home. We need Nurses, LVNs, CNAs, rehabilitation therapist, occupational therapist, recreational therapist, pharmacist, social workers, materials and stores workers, food workers, and other positions required to operate a long term care facility.

The Job Fair will be a one stop location to speak with Human Resource staff, get instruction on navigating the State of California Job website, provide on-site testing for state jobs, and training on "How to get a State Job."

For more information regarding careers at CalVet, visit www.calvet.ca.gov/jobs or if you have questions please email us at atglavchr@calvet.ca.gov.

For directions please call (877) 605-1332 or (424) 832-8200.

Veterans-For-Change on Facebook & Twitter

You can now track us, meet fellow vets and their families and friends on our [Veterans-For-Change](#) page, come "LIKE" us!



Come join us, follow us and friends, make new friends, share useful information and more!

Follow us on Twitter too: [@Veterans4Change](#)

Links to other Stories

- 1) [*Afghanistan war ends but grief endures for Dunedin mom*](#)
- 2) [*Brothers-in-arms create Vets' legacy*](#)
- 3) [*Combined PTSD, Brain Injury in Veterans Tied to Poorer Outcome*](#)
- 4) [*Department of Veterans Affairs Awards Systems Made Simple, A Lockheed Martin Company, Re-Compete of T4 Veterans Services Network \(VETSNET\) Development and Maintenance Support Contract*](#)
- 5) [*Dozens of US Veterans Died While on Secret Doctor Waiting List*](#)
- 6) [*Eagle Scout project: War Veterans recount their service for Library of Congress*](#)
- 7) [*Eagle Scout project: War Veterans recount their service for Library of Congress*](#)
- 8) [*Help Available for Veterans Dealing with Hearing Loss*](#)
- 9) [*High school clubs in Allen Park collecting donations for homeless Veterans*](#)
- 10) [*Homeless Advocates Recruit Volunteers for Count*](#)
- 11) [*Honoring Shipmates: Submarine Veterans Work to Install Memorial in Bartow*](#)
- 12) [*IU study looks at marijuana's effects on the brain*](#)
- 13) [*Judge: Homeless on Tucson sidewalks can keep their stuff*](#)
- 14) [*Kansas' first Veterans court program in the works*](#)
- 15) [*Knezek Veterans jobs bill headed to governor's desk*](#)
- 16) [*New Minnesota license plates available to women Veterans*](#)
- 17) [*Public's Help Needed Finding Missing Vet With PTSD*](#)
- 18) [*Robert Wood Johnson Medical School puts focus on Veterans' needs*](#)
- 19) [*Statewide relief drive to help at-risk Veterans*](#)
- 20) [*The Spice Ingredient That Can Block Bad Memories*](#)

- 21) [Twenty-Five Adaptive Sports Organizations in Seventeen States to Serve 500 Disabled Veterans through Department Of Veterans Affairs Grant to Disabled Sports USA](#)
- 22) [Veteran seeks service dog for PTSD help](#)
- 23) [Veteran suicide tracking faulted](#)
- 24) [Veterans look back on Afghanistan, Iraq odyssey with strong emotions](#)
- 25) [Vietnam Veteran distraught over missing service dog](#)
- 26) [Vietnam Veteran, who lost eye sight and leg, says he's not getting the help he needs](#)
- 27) [Why I Didn't Report Being Raped 14 Years Ago](#)
- 28) [Woman denied service in restaurant says her pet helps calm her PTSD](#)

You can help Veterans-For-Change by reading the articles posted, and comment at the bottom and rank the article. If you don't have an account, sign-up today, it's **FREE**. Your comments and rankings help us to better determine the type of information you'd like most to see.

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

National Museum of the U.S. Navy

The National Museum of the U.S. Navy at the Washington Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. is open to the public Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. for most holidays. Tours can be arranged for schools or other groups by calling (202) 433-6826. Visitors must have a Department of Defense common access card; an active military, retired military or military dependent ID; or, an escort with one of these credentials to enter the Washington Navy Yard. Contact the museum for help accessing the facility at (202) 433-4882. View photos of some of the historic naval artifacts in the Naval History and Heritage Command's (NHHC) collection on the [NHHC Flickr page](#). For more information, visit the [National Museum of the U.S. Navy website](#).

VFC Memorial Wall

If you have a loved one you lost to service in the Military, and would like to have their name added, please do let us know.

And for those listed below, keep their families in your thoughts and prayers.

Rank	Name	Branch of Service	Year of Passing
Msgt.	David Graves	Air Force	2011
Colonel	George "Bud" Day	Marine Corps	2013
Msgt.	John Kenneth Smallwood	Army	2010
MgySgt.	Lesley Davis	Marine Corps	2006
Colonel	Melvin Killian	Air Force	1965
SPC	Michael Evans	Army	2012

Not Too Late for a Flu Shot

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has developed a Flu Vaccination Pledge to encourage everyone to get the flu vaccine. There are two forms of flu vaccine in the U.S., and TRICARE covers both, the flu shot and flu mist. Visit the TRICARE Flu Vaccine webpage to see which is best for you and to find out how to get the flu vaccine at no cost. Take the CDC's Flu Vaccination Pledge on the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw/pledge/index.html. A complete list of who should and who should not get an influenza vaccination is available at www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/whoshouldvax.htm.

Veterans Choice Program

The Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act is a new law designed to improve health care for veterans. Many veterans will now have the option to receive non-VA health care rather than waiting for a VA appointment or traveling to a VA facility. For more information, visit the Veterans Choice Program webpage at www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/.

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

Army Substance Abuse Program

Substance Abuse can be defined as overindulgence in or dependence on an addictive substance such as alcohol or drugs. However, other substances are also prohibited by the Armed Forces. Mood altering matter such as inhalants, solvents, caffeine, tobacco -- nearly any substance can be abused. While illicit drug use is lower among U.S. Military personnel than among civilians, heavy alcohol use, tobacco, and especially prescription drug abuse are much more prevalent and on the rise among all of the armed services. The Army Substance Abuse Program is an outstanding solution to help combat substance abuse on many levels. For more information, visit the [Army Substance Abuse Program \(ASAP\) website](#).

Give the Gift of Life

Give the best gift of all this holiday season -- a blood donation. The military healthcare system will require about 5,600 units of blood this holiday season. Yet, many of the usual donors are unavailable to give due to block leave. Bases collect blood for the blood for the Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP). Blood the ASBP collects directly supports ill or injured servicemembers, retirees and their Families in military hospitals around the globe as well as servicemembers on the battlefield. For more information and to make an appointment to donate blood, visit the Armed Services Blood Program website at www.militaryblood.dod.mil/Donors/default.aspx.

New Support Center Debuts

The American Legion has grouped all of the various resources and services that it offers these servicemembers and their families into its new Troop and Family Support Center at www.legion.org/family, which provides links to apply for the Legion's Family Support Network (FSN), Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW), Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) and scholarship opportunities. The webpage also provides useful external links to helpful military resources, such as Hero Miles, which provides free airfare to military families, Soldiers Angels, a resource for wounded veterans and their families, and Cell Phones for Soldiers, which gives free calling cards to deployed servicemembers. For more information, visit the Troop and Family Support Center.

JOB OPENING IN COLUMBUS OHIO

TITLE: Mobile Scheduling Specialist
REPORTS TO: Senior Manager of Information & Referral (I&R) Services
HOURS: Monday – Friday, 7:45 am - 4:15 pm
TIME COMMITMENT: One year with the possibility for extension
START DATE: February 9, 2015
HOURLY RATE: \$10.60 - \$12.60

HandsOn Central Ohio inspires, equips and mobilizes people to create meaningful change in their lives and in their community. The agency is the region's premiere information, resource referral, and volunteer mobilization organization, serving Greater Columbus for nearly 30 years. HandsOn Central Ohio serves more than 500,000 people across 29 Ohio counties each year, by providing community insights, access to critical needs, and volunteer support to provide access to safe and warm housing; nutritious meals; improved academic, social and emotional outcomes for young people; better public health; and to strengthen Central Ohio's neighborhoods.

As part of our new Mobile Scheduling Program, we are looking for qualified individuals to act as Mobile Scheduling specialists, connecting thousands of Columbus residents with emergency food via online chatting and Short Messaging Service (SMS). Individuals will be primarily responsible for scheduling daily appointments at Columbus food pantries via an online scheduling platform.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Answer incoming chat messages and SMS text messages to schedule appointments at area food pantries for Columbus residents
- Attend staff meetings and trainings
- Other duties as assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation
- Strong computer skills (familiarity with proprietary databases preferred)
- Extremely comfortable with instant chat (and display proper grammar and spelling skills)
- Exceptional attention to detail
- Ability to multi-task
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team

HandsOn Central Ohio is an equal opportunity employer.

Please send cover letter, resume and 3 references by Monday, January 12, 2015 to:

Kiley Orchard, Manager of Community Insights
HandsOn Central Ohio, 195 N. Grant Ave, Columbus, OH 43215
korchard@handsoncentralohio.org

Vet Business Start-up Support in Austin

The Bunker Austin, a program geared to help veterans become entrepreneurs, has launched at the University of Texas at Austin. The program is going to be a one-stop place for veterans to plug into all the resources available in Austin. Other cities with similar 'Bunker' programs include Chicago, Los Angeles, Tacoma, Colorado Springs, Kansas City, Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia. At the Bunker Austin, veteran-led startups will have access to mentorship, a network of veteran entrepreneurs and help to find venture capital. The program is accepting application for its first cohort through January 10th. For more information, visit The Bunker Austin website at www.thebunkeraustin.com.

Updated for 2015: BAH Tables

Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) paid to a million service members living off base in the United States will rise by an average half percentage point in January as two slimming changes to rate calculations take hold. The 2015 BAH rates no longer will include added dollars for renters insurance, a move that dampens rates an average of one percent. Also, [the fiscal 2015 Defense Authorization Act that President Obama signed](#) Dec. 19 slows BAH growth so new rates cover 99 percent rather than 100 percent of average rental costs for stateside service members. To see the official BAH rates for 2015, visit the [Military.com BAH page](#).

Explore VA

Learn about the Department of Veterans Affairs benefits you may be eligible for at the Explore VA webpage at explore.va.gov. You can also visit the [Military.com Benefits section](#) for more on VA benefits.

If you received this Newsletter as a forward or as a Courtesy Copy and would like to continue to receive this FREE weekly newsletter, click on link below:

<https://app.expressemailmarketing.com/survey.aspx?sfid=121170>

Complete all information, and select the appropriate box at the bottom of the form. You will then receive an automated authentication E-Mail, follow the instructions and you will then be added to the weekly distribution list.

Or if you prefer you can sign up to the Yahoo Groups VFC-News page and receive our weekly newsletter by sending an E-Mail to: VFC-News-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Our mailing list is never sold, traded or shared with anyone ever, and is held in the strictest of confidence.

With your help, America's Veterans United and you can make a difference!

[We Can Win!](#)

Better benefits, care, facilities, medical professionals and equipment!

Unite with [America's Veterans United](#) today!

Veterans-For-Change Newsletter is a once weekly publication deadline for submission is 5:00 PM PST on Thursday!



"Our country, right or wrong." When right to be kept right; when wrong to be put right.

~Carl Schurz~

Veterans-For-Change, Inc.

Riverside County, CA

Visit our website today
www.veterans-for-change.org

Serving those who served!

Please pass to all your Veteran friends and family!

Distribution	
Express Mail:	14,401
Face Book Pages:	11,413
Yahoo:	57
Twitter:	13
Linked-In:	16,505,722
Courtesy Copies:	3,500
	16,535,106