



Veterans-*For*-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, October 18, 2015
Volume 6, Issue 42

This-N-That

Well the proverbial shit hit the fan this past week when the Veterans House Committee allowed a provision of the Agent Orange Act of 1991 to quietly expire.

This will be a huge and very significant impact on Vietnam Veterans and their benefits ending up in even more denials than ever before!

Committee staff and the DVA agree the change has not impacted the VA secretary's authority to decide to expand the list of diseases presumed connected to wartime herbicide exposure. But the question now is, will he expand the benefits, will he push it to the federal register?

The expired provision also set a timetable for the secretary to accept or reject IOM findings and required him to explain in writing if he declined to add IOM identified conditions to the presumptive list.

About 2.6 million Veterans served in Vietnam. Most are still alive. Current law presumes that all of them have been exposed to Agent Orange. VA grants disability ratings of 10 to 60 percent for hypertension, depending on severity, and the Center for Disease Control says high blood pressure grows more common as any population ages.

And in all this mess, who will suffer most, OUR VETERANS, not congress, not the DVA, YOU and your families!

And this again begs the question, where in the heck are all the nationally chartered Veteran Service Organizations in this? Where are their screams of bloody murder, knocking on doors in DC and demanding they extend the law?

NO WHERE! Not a single peep from a one of them! And all the more reason why Veterans need to band together, burn up those phone lines calling your Reps in DC and DEMANDING this not be allowed. Phone numbers are toward the bottom of this newsletter.

Again, Camp LeJeune is in the news and the VA is supposedly going to expand regulations and assign presumption to those who served there in their effort to "make it easier" to get benefits and care!

Seems rather interesting that after a law was passed quite some time ago, which in my opinion fell extremely short of standard protocols and how "benefits" were granted, and still making it difficult if not impossible for Veterans and their families to apply that now after all this time the one thing that should have been done from the get go is possibly now going to happen.

But... time will certainly tell that's for sure!

Then we have a couple of Senators now speaking up about Veteran Homelessness which is great, but they still are allowing the VA to toss millions and billions of dollars at the problem and it just doesn't seem to be getting any better.

I've seen where a couple of very small private organizations have built small homes with roughly 600-800 SqFt which is enough for a single person and the costs have been hovering at about \$80k for each home. And all the homes being built are on small parcels of land and an office and small apartment for 24/7 staff and counselors to work and have one on one and group sessions.

These are great projects and have proven very worthy, but I've also seen two other organizations taking shipping containers which are relatively large and making each one of these into small homes as well and at a total cost of \$8k per container/home.

All are fully featured, small bedroom, living room, dining room, full bath and kitchen with appliances and some I've seen you would never know what it was originally, but that it looks like a medium to large single wide mobile home but without the wheels.

So with this type of home, and the acres of available land on most VA properties, why are they themselves not doing this?

It would save billions of dollars on programs that are not working and still accomplish the job needing to be done and that is taking care of our Veterans!

We're still pushing hard on Congressman Farr's office to assist and we're asking all Veterans from that base and/or their families to please call the Congressman's office at (831)-424-2229 and ask to speak to Nancy.

Tell her all you can, and ask that they please investigate and help all those who have filed claims to be addressed and processed for approval.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Volunteers nationwide, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder & CEO

Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org

No-cost flu shot options for Veterans
Free at Walgreens – Bring your VA ID And use the code in this story

Flu season is here, and getting your flu shot has never been easier. Remember that getting vaccinated is the single best way to protect yourself, as well as your loved ones, against the flu virus.

This year, enrolled Veterans of the VA health care system have several options to get a seasonal flu shot. VA offers more options, easy access, and seamless records – the choice is yours.

So what are your options?

You may opt to get a free flu shot at your local VA health care facility.

Or you may choose to go to your neighborhood Walgreens.

As an enrolled VA patient, you can get a no-cost flu shot at Walgreens from August 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016.

VA health care facilities

You may receive a no-cost flu shot during any scheduled appointment, if you are admitted to one of our VA health care facilities, or at one of the convenient walk-in flu stations.

For more information on locations and hours contact your local VA health care facility.

Walgreens nationwide

If you are a Veteran patient in the VA system, you may choose to get a no-cost flu shot at a local Walgreens between now and March 31, 2016.

No appointment is required; simply go to any Walgreens, tell the pharmacist you receive care at a VA facility and show your Veterans Identification Card and another form of photo ID. Use **Group Code # 5933XBAYV**.

Your immunization record will be updated electronically in your local VA electronic health record.

Non-VA Providers and Pharmacies

Many local retail pharmacies offer flu shots that may be covered by private insurance or programs such as Medicare. If you do not have insurance, there will usually be a charge.

View this video for more information about VA's national immunization initiative to provide Veterans more options, easier access, and seamless records when it comes to getting their seasonal flu shot.

Individual Unemployability

Over the past few months, the issue of Individual Unemployability (IU) has been both a topic of discussion and one of rising concern for DAV and its members. A [hearing](#) regarding IU was held before the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability and Memorial Affairs on July 15, 2015.

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), for eligibility to IU, a veteran must be unable to maintain substantially gainful employment as a result of his or her service-connected disabilities. Marginal employment, such as an odd job, is not considered "substantial gainful employment" for VA purposes. In addition to the employment barrier, a veteran eligible for IU must have one service-connected condition ratable at 60 percent or more disabling, or two or more service-connected disabilities, at least one condition that is ratable at 40 percent or more disabling, with a combined rating of 70 percent or more disabled.

Reports published by the Congressional Budget Office in August 2014 and the General Accountability Office in June 2015 made recommendations for substantial changes to the IU program. If implemented, these changes would cause significant financial harm to wounded, ill and injured veterans, their survivors and dependents.

Many of the views expressed within these reports are quite troubling, particularly the notions of restricting, limiting, or eliminating entitlement to IU on the basis of age and offsetting IU benefits when veterans are in receipt of other earned federal benefits such as military compensation or Social Security benefits ; concepts that DAV vehemently opposes.

No legislation has been introduced to address IU, but discussions are underway. DAV wants the voice of DAV members, the auxiliary and other DAV supporters who are concerned about the preservation of veterans' benefits to be part of this discussion. DAV asks you to contact your elected officials with the letter provided, or please write your own letter for the same purpose.

Click the link below to log in and send your message:

<https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/MYbmjTRaiMjk16rPv6H7yg>

DoD Identifies Air Force Casualties

The Department of Defense announced today the deaths of two airmen who were supporting Operation Freedom's Sentinel. They died Oct. 11 in the crash of a British Puma Mk2 helicopter in Kabul, Afghanistan. The cause of the accident is currently under investigation.

Killed were:

Maj. Phyllis J. Pelky, 45, of Rio Rancho, New Mexico. She was assigned to the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado. For more information, media may contact the U.S. Air Force Academy Public Affairs Office at 719-333-7731.

Master Sgt. Gregory T. Kuhse, 38, of Kalamazoo, Michigan. He was assigned to the 3rd Manpower Requirements Squadron at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

VFC's OPERATION MAIL CALL



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

Doesn't have to be anything special, just words of support and thanking them for their service!

For more information visit: <http://veterans-for-change.org/4727-operation-mail-call>

Government Accountability Office (GAO) Reports

DOD Financial Management: Additional Efforts Needed to Improve Audit Readiness of Navy Military Pay and Other Related Activities. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-658>

Intelligent Transportation Systems: Vehicle-to-Infrastructure Technologies Expected to Offer Benefits, but Deployment Challenges Exist. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-775>

K-12 Education: Most Eighth Grade Students Are Not Proficient In Geography. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-7>

School Nutrition: USDA Has Efforts Underway to Help Address Ongoing Challenges Implementing Changes in Nutrition Standards. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-656>

Federal Real Property: Performance Goals and Targets Needed to Help Stem GSA's Reliance on Lease Extensions and Holdovers. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-741>

Sole Source Contracting: Defining and Tracking Bridge Contracts Would Help Agencies Manage Their Use. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-15>

Defense Additive Manufacturing: DOD Needs to Systematically Track Department-wide 3D Printing Efforts. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-56>

Department of Energy: Transactions Involving USEC Inc. Since 1998. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-730>

Senate Stationery Room Revolving Fund: Audit of Fiscal Year 2014 Cash Receipts and Disbursements. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-98R>

Senator Calls for VA Investigation

U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, has urged the Department of Justice (DoJ) to immediately investigate unethical behavior by Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

employees identified in a VA Office of Inspector General (VAOIG) report released in September. In a letter to Attorney General Loretta Lynch, Blumenthal noted that this is another example in a growing list of misconduct at VA, and the DoJ must take action to stop any ongoing and future misuse of funds that should be going to the nation's veterans. Senator Blumenthal's letter is available on the [Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs website](#). The VAOIG report is available on the [VA Office of Inspector General website](#).

Medicare Part B Premiums to Rise 52% For 7 Million Enrollees

For seven in 10 Medicare beneficiaries 2016 will be much like 2015. They will pay \$104.90 per month for their Medicare Part B premium just as they did in 2015. But 2016 might not be anything like 2015 for some 30% of Medicare beneficiaries — roughly 7 million or so Americans. That's because premiums for individuals could increase a jaw-dropping 52% to \$159.30 per month (\$318.60 for married couples). And for individuals whose incomes exceed certain thresholds, premiums could rise to anywhere from \$223.00 per month up to \$509.80 (or \$446 to \$1,019.60 for married couples), depending on their incomes.

To read more about those who will be affected by the large Medicare increases CTRL click this link [COLA story](#).

Two bills that would avert the premium increases. **S. 2148**, sponsored by Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR), and **H.R. 3696**, sponsored by Rep. Dina Titus (D-NV), were introduced on Oct. 7 and would block premium increases for 2016.

Source: NAUS

National Creative Arts Festival in North Carolina Showcases Veterans' Artistry

Exhibits Open to Public and Media

WASHINGTON – The Durham VA Medical Center in North Carolina will host more than 100 Veterans from across the country for the 2015 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. The festival will run Oct. 12 through Oct. 18.

The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival features gold medal-winning entries from 53 categories of art, ranging from oil painting to leatherwork to fiber art. Veterans' artwork will be displayed at an exhibit at Gerrard Hall at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill on Oct. 18 from noon to 1:45 p.m. Performing artists will present a stage show at Memorial Hall also at the university, on Oct. 18 at 2 p.m. Tickets are free to the events and must be obtained by contacting 919-286-0411, ext. 6070. The exhibit and stage show are open to the public and media.

The weeklong Festival, sponsored by VA and the American Legion Auxiliary, showcases the artistic achievements of Veterans from across the country who placed first in national art, music, dance, drama and creative writing division competitions. The Veterans are participating in workshops, rehearsals and artistic interaction sessions, culminating in Sunday's art exhibit and stage show performance.

Among many other therapeutic benefits, the Festival encourages artistic expression to help Veterans dealing with PTSD and other psychological issues. More than 3,500 Veterans participate in local competitions for a chance to attend the annual national festival.

The Festival relies heavily on the support provided by numerous American Legion Auxiliary volunteers.

For more information, visit www.creativeartsfestival.va.gov. Media interested in covering the event can call Michael Molina at (202) 560-7305.

TRICARE Multi-State State of Emergency

The governors of South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland and New Jersey have declared States of Emergency due to Hurricane Joaquin. Emergency prescription refill procedures are in place for each of these entire states through October 31, 2015. To get an emergency refill, take your prescription bottle to any TRICARE retail network pharmacy. To find a network pharmacy, call Express Scripts at 1-877-363-1303 or search the network pharmacy locator at www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE/pharmacy/findpharmacy.shtml. If possible, visit the pharmacy where the prescription was filled. If you use a retail chain, you can fill your prescription at another store in that chain. If your provider

is available, he or she may call in a new prescription to any network pharmacy. You can request assistance at another pharmacy, but it is at that pharmacy's discretion to help you.

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

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 **2,408,003** 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. Becoming a subscriber will show you all the various forum's, added libraries, and more.

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 12,900 documents, various VA and DoD forms.

www.veterans-for-change.org

- Documents Library with over **140** different libraries and over **13,451+** documents
- FAQ's (**1,567** on-line now) (**Updated 04/05/15**)
- Forums (**with Licensed Mental Health Worker Moderator**)
- Job Postings and Job Fairs (Updated 10/12/15 **67** New Jobs)
- Memorial Pages (**Updated 04/19/14**)
- News (Updated almost daily, **5,258** articles on-line)
- Web Links (**1,587** Active Links)(**Updated 10/12/15**)

The documents library has many different categories and contains more than 55 million pages of information and forms.

There are forums for all Eras of service and one just for Women Veterans, which is locked 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.

Follow Veterans-For-Change on Twitter



<https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change>

Autism Care Updates

The Comprehensive Autism Care Demonstration (ACD) was recently updated to reduce the potential financial burden of applied behavior analysis (ABA) services for non-active-duty families. As of Oct. 1, all ACD cost-shares will match TRICARE Prime and Standard cost-shares for all ABA services provided by authorized ABA supervisors, assistant behavior analysts and behavior technicians. This eliminates the 10 percent cost-share for assistant behavior analyst and behavior technician services ("tiered" services), significantly reducing the potential financial burden of ABA services for non-active-duty families. The TRICARE ACD covers all TRICARE eligible beneficiaries diagnosed with ASD under a single benefit.

No COLA

The Bureau of Labor Statistics announced Thursday that the CPI-W, which is the measure of increases or decreases in the Cost of Living, was actually lower than last year. This means, unfortunately, that there will be no COLA increases for Social Security, Military Retired Pay, all VA pays and Government civilian retired pay.

Source: NAUS

Elks Pledge Four Million Dollars to End Veteran Homelessness

Commitment is Part of VA and Community Partnership

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is strengthening community and non-profit partnerships to better serve Veterans. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America (BPO Elks) today announced that it has committed \$4 million over a 4-year period to help end Veteran homelessness.

This partnership and pledge embodies the mission of MyVA, launched last year to transform VA by putting Veterans in control of how, when and where they wish to be served. In order to achieve transformation, the Department has been reaching out to community partners working to meet the needs of Veterans.

As a part of this partnership, the Elks will work with VHA staff on pilot programs in the cities of Washington, Chicago and New York City. In addition, the organization is calling on the group's 800,000 members across the country to support efforts to support homeless Veterans in their communities. The Elks have a strong tradition of service to VA. In this fiscal year alone, approximately 1,300 Elks members volunteered more than 117,000 hours of service at VA facilities nationwide.

"We're so excited about partnering with the Elks on this important issue impacting far too many Veterans," said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. "As we move closer to our goal of ending Veteran homelessness, partnerships like these will be critical to ensuring that all Veterans have access to safe and affordable housing."

"Our goal is to provide the tools and support necessary for homeless Veterans to transition successfully into healthier and more stable lives," said Mary Morgan, Director of the Elks National Veterans Service Commission. "Most Americans agree that Veteran homelessness should not exist, but few people know how they can help."

For more information about VA's homeless initiatives, visit <http://www.va.gov/homeless/>. For more information about the Elks' service to Veterans, visit <http://www.elks.org/vets/>.

Calling on the President to Drop his Veto Threat of Defense Policy Bill

Mr. President, sign the NDAA into law!

Working together, the House and Senate have passed with strong bipartisan support the fiscal 2016 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This important legislation gives our armed forces the equipment and the training they need in order to carry out the missions our country asks them to perform. However President Obama has actually issued a veto

threat of this legislation that is critical to our men and women and our national security. Instead of issuing a veto threat, President Obama should sign this bipartisan measure and provide our troops with the pay and tools they need to perform here in the United States and around the world. Click TAKE ACTION to send the President a message to reconsider his veto threat and enact the NDAA for the security of our country.

[TAKE ACTION NOW!](#)

Second Round of \$75 Million in Prop 41 Funds

Now Available for Veteran Housing

SACRAMENTO – Today, \$75 million is being made available by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) as the second round of funding through the Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention program (VHHP). VHHP's goal is to develop housing opportunities for our Veterans, especially those at risk for homelessness or experiencing temporary or chronic homelessness. Awards will be made to qualifying developers and nonprofit entities to construct, acquire, rehabilitate, or preserve affordable multifamily housing for our Veterans and their families.

“On any given night, as many as 12,000 of our Veterans remain at risk of housing instability and homelessness,” said HCD Acting Director, Susan Lea Riggs. “VHHP plans to change that by creating stable, safe, service-enriched housing for our Veterans who served our nation.”

VHHP was developed by three collaborating state agencies: HCD, the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet), and the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA).

“Our Veterans, who risked their lives to ensure our freedoms, deserve the very best housing solution we can provide,” said CalVet Secretary, Dr. Vito Imbasciani. “I’m proud that our collaboration with HCD and CalHFA has developed such a wonderful program that ensures our Veterans in need have housing along with strong Veteran centric services from providers with specific experience serving Veterans.”

In February 2015, VHHP made awards to 17 projects in the first round of funding. The existing awards cover projects in the Bay Area, Los Angeles County, Orange County, the Inland Empire, San Diego, and other areas of the state.

VHHP expects \$75 million will be released annually until all Proposition 41 funds are exhausted, with a goal of providing quality housing for approximately 7,000 people. Geographic distributions intend to focus on areas with the largest concentrations of Veterans in need.

Prior Authorization Allows Custom Care

Health care is rarely one size fits all. The TRICARE benefit is designed to ensure that all covered care is safe, effective and appropriate for the patient. Sometimes this means that certain types of specialty care and prescription drugs require special review to make sure they are right for the patient. Prior authorization lets your doctor provide additional information so TRICARE and our contract partners can make an individual review of your care.

Prior authorization is a standard process throughout the health industry, including other government health plans like Medicare. If a procedure or drug requires prior authorization, it may be because there is an equally effective treatment or therapy available at a lower cost. According to the Defense Health Agency, this lowers the cost of care for everyone, and protects the TRICARE benefit for future generations of the military community.

Prior authorization applies to more than 80 drugs under the pharmacy benefit, and some compound drugs. A common reason a drug needs prior authorization is if it is a brand name drug with a generic equivalent. In these cases, TRICARE requires you to use the generic version of the drug, but prior authorization lets your doctor provide evidence to show that the brand name works better for you.

Another example is some compound drugs have commercially available versions. Compound drugs are a combination of two or more drug ingredients made specifically by your pharmacist to meet your individual needs. Prior authorization allows your doctor to submit additional evidence that the ingredients in your compound drug are safe and effective, and to

show that commercially available drugs aren't appropriate for you. You can find the form to submit a compound drug prior authorization, and get more information on TRICARE's compound coverage on the TRICARE website.

You should work with your doctor to get prior authorization, which, when provided, is typically good for one year. You can check the status of your request for prior authorization on your regional contractor's, or Express Scripts' website. Regional contractor websites can be found on the View My Referrals/Authorizations page on the TRICARE website.

Source: NAUS



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

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

Click on the link below, and find all the jobs available, Job Fairs coming up, locations, details, etc.

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

If you have a job position open, and are willing to hire a Veteran, please send an E-Mail to: JIM.DAVIS@VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE.ORG there is never any fee involved, this is a 100% free service in order to help thousands of Veterans nationwide to gain full time employment.

To be Updated 10/16/15 by 8pm PST

VA Sends Errant Letters to Seattle Vets

A report by the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General (VAOIG) says dozens of military veterans incorrectly received letters indicating they would lose unemployment benefits after an overworked VA staff member in Seattle lost track of records they had submitted. VA auditors took a sampling of 132 employment questionnaires and determined that one-fifth of the veterans had been sent letters indicating a reduction or cancellation of benefits, even though they had mailed forms that should have allowed them to continue receiving money. The VAOIG report is available on the [Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General website](#).

National Park Pass for Veterans

Rep. Rich Nugent (R-FL) is seeking cosponsors for *Veterans Eagle Parks Pass* (H.R.1505) – a bill to allow veterans lifetime access to national parks for a one-time \$10 fee. Currently, active duty personnel have free annual admission and this bill would simply extend that privilege to them after their military career. The \$10 fee was at the request of the National Parks Service to cover a processing fee.

While there is a lifetime pass for national parks for seniors (over 62) that costs the same, this would allow all veterans to get the pass before becoming a senior.

Source: NAUS

Links to other Stories

- 1) [Agent Orange law changes as cost fears surface](#)
- 2) [Airmen sharpen medical, combat readiness skills](#)
- 3) [Corpsman up: Marines and Sailors conduct realistic training](#)
- 4) [Georgia Tech blood donations on a roll](#)
- 5) [Less than eight hours to better Women's Health](#)
- 6) [Military Health System members use Hispanic heritage to help in care, compassion](#)
- 7) [Ohio senator speaks out against Veteran homelessness](#)
- 8) [Sanders stretched truth on VA record during debate, some Vets say](#)
- 9) [VA Cites Phoenix Facility for Poor Urology Care](#)
- 10) [VA scandal: Amid budget woes, facilities spent \\$6.3M on art installations](#)
- 11) [VA Seeks Presumptive-Disability Status for Camp Lejeune Veterans](#)

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

New Vet Employment Initiative in Virginia

Leaders from IBM and Corporate America Supports You, a national non-profit dedicated to helping veterans find employment, Virginia's Veterans & Defense Affairs and local veterans today launched a new veterans' initiative at Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) to help local veterans translate their military experience into high-skilled jobs. The new Veteran Employment Accelerator Grant program will provide local returning servicemembers with hands-on training, certification, and job placement assistance in the fast-growing tech sector. For more information, visit the [Northern Virginia Community College website](http://www.nvcc.edu/military) or contact the NOVA Office of Military Services (www.nvcc.edu/military/) at militaryservices@nvcc.edu or call (703) 293-8132.

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

VA Chief to Hill: Health Reforms You Seek Are Here

VA Secretary Bob McDonald told the House Veterans Affairs Committee Wednesday that a \$68 million, 4000-page study of VA health care it ordered last year and accepted last month uncovers the same weaknesses and solutions McDonald and his policy team have been tackling for months. The "Independent Assessment" of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) by outside industry and government health experts makes 188 recommendations. Rep. Jeff Miller (R-Fla.), committee chairman, touted it as a blueprint for reforming the beleaguered VA health care system.

~ We Proudly Support Our Military Personnel & Families ~

VA Vets Choice Expansions

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has implemented the first of several Veterans Choice Program eligibility expansions. Thanks a new law, VA is able to enhance the Veterans Choice Program in a number of ways, including expanding eligibility to all enrolled veterans. The department will implement these changes in several phases, with the first phase being effective immediately. Any veteran who is enrolled in VA health care, regardless to when they enrolled, may now be eligible for the Veterans Choice Program. Veterans must meet at least one of the additional wait times, distance or other criteria in order to be considered eligible for the Veterans Choice Program. For more information, read VA's [VAntage Point Blog](#).

Navy General Library Program

For Sailors, families, retirees, dependents and civilians wanting 24/7 access to electronic books, audio books, reference materials, and newspapers, all free of charge, the Navy has a solution for you. The Navy General Library Program (NGLP) recently launched its new Navy Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Digital Library website. To get started, authorized users can visit the website at www.NavyMWRDigitalLibrary.org, click on "login" in the upper right corner of the screen, then click "login" under the DS logon logo, and enter their DS Logon username and password. Those who don't already have a DS logon can register on the same page. Current CAC users can choose to set up a DS Logon account or simply log on using their CAC. For more information about the Navy MWR Digital Library, email nglp@navy.mil.

Don't Lose Your TRICARE Coverage

TRICARE offers several resources to make sure you and your family members have access to health care when you lose your TRICARE eligibility. Sponsors and eligible family members may be covered by the [Transitional Assistance Management Program](#) (TAMP), which provides 180 days of premium-free transitional health care benefits after regular TRICARE benefits end. Active duty servicemembers with certain service-related conditions are eligible for [Transitional Care for Service-Related Conditions](#) (TCSRC). The [Continued Health Care Benefit Program](#) (CHCBP) is purchased coverage that acts as a bridge between TRICARE coverage and your new health coverage. It is typically limited to 36 months. Another option for health care coverage is the Health Insurance Marketplace at www.healthcare.gov.

Veterans Day Parade St. Cloud, Minnesota

Applications are being sought from veterans, veterans groups and everyone wanting to honor veterans to march and participate in the ninth annual Veterans Day Parade and Social in St. Cloud, Minnesota. The parade will be Sunday, Nov. 8. "Muster time" for those marching begins about 11:30 a.m. on the west side of VA Health Care System campus. The parade starts at 1 p.m. on the west side of the VA and proceeds east across 44th Avenue, ending on the north side of Apollo High School. The registration deadline is Oct. 23. If you or your group would like to participate in the parade, contact St. Cloud Times Engagement Editor Randy Krebs at (320) 255-8762 or by email to rkrebs@stcloudtimes.com for a registration form and informational letter.

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.

Indiana Vets Asked to Share their Stories

Unity Hospice of Northwest Indiana is extending an invitation to veterans in Merrillville and surrounding Northwest Indiana communities to share their stories of military service for inclusion in the U.S. Library of Congress' nationally-recognized Veterans History Project (www.loc.gov/vets/). Interviews will be conducted at Unity Hospice's office building, located in Merrillville, Ind., at 8407 Virginia St., during the last week of October (Monday, Oct. 26 through Friday, Oct. 30). The Library of Congress accepts all interviews, regardless of wartime service or combat experience. If you are a veteran, or you know a veteran who might be interested in sharing their story of service, please contact Unity Hospice Director of Program Development Brenda McGarvey at (618) 954-6114 or e-mail volunteers@unityhospice.com to schedule an interview.

New Vets License Plates in Pennsylvania

The "Honoring Our Veterans" license plates for motorcycles in Pennsylvania are now available. The plates, which have been available for cars since 2012, became available to motorcyclists on Oct. 6. The new license plates feature the words "Honoring Our Veterans" at the bottom. The motorcycle license plates are \$35, and you do not have to be a veteran to obtain one. Fifteen dollars from the sale of each license plate goes to the Veterans' Trust Fund administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. Motorcycle and automobile owners can apply for a plate by completing and submitting Form MV-914, which is available at www.dot.state.pa.us/Public/DVSPubsForms/BMV/BMV%20Forms/mv-914.pdf.

Up to \$417k Financing with the VA Loan Benefit

Thinking of buying or refinancing? Don't wait until rates rise. Qualified borrowers can pay as little as \$0 down with no PMI payments, plus they can get financing up to \$417,000. [Use your VA Loan Benefit today.](#)



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



We need an America with the wisdom of experience. But we must not let America grow old in spirit.

~Hubert H. Humphrey~

Veterans-For-Change, Inc.

Riverside County, CA

Visit our website today

www.veterans-for-change.org

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Please pass to all your Veteran friends and family!

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