



Veterans-*For*-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, April 17, 2016

Volume 7, Issue 16

This-N-That

First I'd like to ask that you please bare with me as learning this new software has seriously been a challenge at best.

While we still hear and read more and more on the VA's "wait list" and document shredding and how this may seriously have caused the deaths of 307,000 or more Veterans we still see absolutely no signs of correction, legal action and/or terminations.

I also do not believe in nor do I approve of how Secretary McDonald is handling this as it's in his own backyard!

At one point Secretary McDonald was protecting and defending VA Staff saying you can't just fire them all!

Well excuse me, but this is precisely what needs to be done from the top on down!

Had this occurred in a civilian hospital that is exactly what would have been done. A possible suspension till a full investigation was done, and accomplished in days not months, then termination if found guilty. All other issues would have been immediate grounds for termination, so why is the VA so different?

Something I've run across this week that every Veteran should be aware of when taking advantage of the GI Bill for education.

You should monitor the payments from the VA to the educational facility you attend or have attended.

It seems the VA forgets when to shut off the Scholarship funds and then the school sends you a 1098-T noting the amount of the scholarship paid, but there would be no education fee to offset the scholarship.

Under IRS regulations this becomes "phantom" income and also is taxable. So be sure to check the payments and charges against tuition and make sure it matches and when you graduate, or cease going to school that payments are stopped.

Operation Mail Call is in need of your help!

We need cards and letters of encouragement for those who are serving on foreign soil. Many are single, have no family, or are not communicating with family and just need a little encouragement, and know that WE THE PEOPLE do care about them, appreciate them, and thank them for the job that 99.5% of Americans can't or won't do.

Operation Mail Call is designed to address that problem and a little more!

Betty Hidalgo who is the director of VFC's Operation Mail Call Program does her level best to bring a little joy to all those on foreign soil by sending them care packages which she is working all the time to fill them with a little bit of home with cards, letters, baked goods, candies, and sometimes little gag gifts, anything she can find to bring a little joy to their daily lives where they are.

A little further down in this newsletter there is a web link which will take you to the information on where you can send cards and letters which will be included in many of the boxes that go out weekly.

We'd appreciate anything you can do to help us bring a little joy to them, maybe even put a smile on their faces even if only for a few moments.

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

Decision Time Nears for Survivor Benefit Offset

The armed services committees will be deciding whether to continue to ease a sharp loss of survivor benefit payments for certain widows by extending or even bolstering their Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA) which is due to expire on Oct. 1, 2017. At the other end of the spectrum of options, this one perhaps requiring a budget miracle given its projected cost of \$7 billion over the next decade, Congress could decide to protect these surviving spouses more fully by ending the so-called SBP-DIC offset, which the SSIA was created to ease.

TRICARE Referral Requirement Waved

TRICARE is waiving the primary care manager (PCM) referral requirement for all beneficiaries evacuated from Turkey. The waiver will last 180 days from March 30-Sept. 30. While evacuated, beneficiaries can contact the [military treatment facility \(MTF\)](#) closest to them to get primary care. If they stay overseas, but are not close to an MTF, they can contact [International SOS](#) for help. If they are in the U.S., and not close to an MTF, they should contact the International SOS TOP Regional Call Center or the [appropriate regional contractor](#). If they do not return to the region, they can change their TRICARE enrollment to their new permanent location by contacting the regional contractor for that area.

Can Grandchildren Be Registered in DEERS?

In this week's "Questions and Benefits" column, a military spouse asks whether it's possible for her grandson to be able to access military benefits like healthcare. To get the full lowdown, see [the Questions and Benefits column](#), and if you have a military family question that relates to your benefits, write in to the column.

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!

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

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

End the 'Disabled Veterans Tax'

The American Legion is again calling on its members to voice their support for legislation that will repeal the "disabled veterans tax" that has been in place since 1999. Under current federal law, some disabled veterans still are forced to forfeit \$1 of earned retired pay for each dollar received in veterans' disability compensation. The Retired Pay Restoration Act ([H.R. 303](#) in the U.S. House of Representatives and [S. 271](#) in the Senate) would repeal the current law. Veterans are urged to contact their members of Congress and ask them to support the Retired Pay Restoration Act. Members of the Senate can be reached through the main switchboard (202-224-3121) or through their [websites](#). The House is on recess until April 11.

Yale Study Finds VA Could Do More to Protect Vets

A study by Yale Law School's Veterans Legal Services Clinic finds that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs had the authority to protect veterans from institutions that use deceptive recruiting practices by denying GI Bill funds to those colleges. But the VA and other state approving agencies have failed to do so. A memorandum regarding that study is available on the InsideHighEd.com website [here](#). The memo prompted Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal to call on the VA to act against deceptive recruitment by predatory colleges. For more information, read the article on the [InsideHigherEd.com website](#).

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 2,100 and 3,000 visitors per day and have had **2,693,951** 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 **14,417+** documents
- FAQ's (**1,662** on-line now) (**Updated 02/20/16**)
- Forums (**with Licensed Mental Health Worker Moderator**)
- Job Postings and Job Fairs (Updated **04/15/16**)
- Memorial Pages (**Updated 01/02/16** added **17**)
- News (Updated almost daily, **5,641** articles on-line)
- Polls Added **02/08/16**
- Web Links (**3,429** Active Links)(**Updated 03/07/16** added **1** New Links)

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.

3 Ways To Be Financially Prepared for Transition

Financial actions are especially challenging when you leave the military, but fundamentally they consist of three components: budgeting for today, saving and investing for tomorrow, and protecting against unexpected risks Think of these tasks as three as three legs of a stool: Neglecting any of them will unbalance the stool and topple your financial stability. These components evolve from active-duty service, to transitioning from the military, and finally to retirement.

Air Force Mental Health Resources

To help Airmen and their families stay mentally balanced, the Air Force provides several mental health resources to assist them. Individual counseling is available along with a variety of therapy protocols to address mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. Other resources include the Military Family Life Advice Consultant program, the chaplain, and a behavioral health optimization program which offers a mental health provider in the family health setting. Chapels also often offer marriage care retreats, family care retreats and single retreats to enable Airmen to unwind.



<http://veterans-for-change.org/>

No Co-Pays for Rx with the TRICARE Supplement

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](#).

Government Accountability Office (GAO) Reports

Federal Real Property: Improving Data Transparency and Expanding the *National Strategy* Could Help Address Long-standing Challenges. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-275>

Resolution Plans: Regulators Have Refined Their Review Processes but Could Improve Transparency and Timeliness. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-341>

Security Assistance: Better Records Management and More Reporting Needed on Presidential Drawdowns. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-291>

Terrorism Risk Insurance: Comparison of Selected Programs in the United States and Foreign Countries. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-316>

Federal Emergency Management Agency: Progress and Continuing Challenges in National Preparedness Efforts. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-560T>

Information Security: IRS Needs to Further Improve Controls over Taxpayer Data and Continue to Combat Identity Theft Refund Fraud. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-589T>

2016 Annual Report: Additional Opportunities to Reduce Fragmentation, Overlap, and Duplication and Achieve Other Financial Benefits. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-375SP>

Disability Insurance: SSA Needs to Better Track Efforts and Evaluate Options to Recover Debt and Deter Potential Fraud. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-331>

Medicare: Opportunities Exist to Recover Potential Overpayments to Providers with Criminal Backgrounds. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-365R>

F-35 Joint Strike Fighter: Continued Oversight Needed as Program Plans to Begin Development of New Capabilities. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-390>

F-35 Sustainment: DOD Needs a Plan to Address Risks Related to Its Central Logistics System. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-439>

Sexual Assault: Information on Training, Funding, and the Availability of Forensic Examiners. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-334>

Counseling System Helps with Military Transition

Unsure about what field you wish to pursue once you leave the military? The Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Services (DANTES) offers service members free career counseling through the Kuder® Journey online counseling service. Kuder Journey is now available to Active Duty, Guard, Reserve personnel and service members in transition, making it a valuable resource during the military-to-civilian transition process. For more details, [see this article](#).

Follow Veterans-For-Change on Twitter



<https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change>

Links to other Stories

- 1) [Bridging the gap from homelessness to permanent housing for Veterans](#)
- 2) [Disgrace: Supervisors Falsified Patient Wait Times At Veterans Affairs Facilities In Several States](#)
- 3) [From the bottom of the barrel to the top of the world, a Veteran's journey from addiction to recovery](#)
- 4) [Honoring a forgotten Medal of Honor recipient](#)
- 5) [Marines get lectured by man who ignored them](#)
- 6) [Military Sexual Trauma – how one Veteran freed herself from fear](#)
- 7) [Reject TRICARE Fee Increases](#)
- 8) [Requiem for a VA Victim](#)
- 9) [VA bosses in 7 states manipulated Vets' wait times for care](#)
- 10) [Veteran wins landmark federal court victory against Department of Homeland Security](#)
- 11) [Why are Bibles being removed from 'Missing Man' tributes?](#)

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



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.

Check often for Updates!

Group Fights for WWI Veterans Cross

First Liberty Institute has filed a brief in the U.S. Court of Appeals to protect the 90-year-old cross-shaped Bladensburg World War I Veterans Memorial in Maryland from an atheist group that is pushing for its removal. The brief was filed in the Fourth Circuit court in conjunction with the law firm Jones Day for the American Legion, which erected the monument 90 years ago in honor of Bladensburg-area men who gave their lives in World War I. The brief argues that the cross is an internationally recognized symbol honoring men who gave their lives in World War I and notes that there is no available evidence of it being associated with any religious event. For more information, visit the First Liberty Institute [website](#).

TRICARE: Nurse Advice Line for Older Adults

Are you an older adult? If so, you can call the TRICARE Nurse Advice Line (NAL) 24 hours a day. When you call the NAL, a registered nurse will help you assess if you can handle your health concern with self-care or if you need to see a medical professional. The NAL can also help you find a doctor and schedule next-day appointments at military hospitals and clinics when available. To access the NAL dial 1-800-TRICARE (874-2273) and select option 1. For more information on the Nurse Advice Line, visit the TRICARE [website](#).

<i>Veteran Crisis Resources</i>	
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 While Traveling

Are you planning to travel soon? Your rules for getting care depend on your TRICARE plan and travel destination. If you are using Prime and have an emergency, go to the nearest emergency room. Standard and Extra beneficiaries can visit any TRICARE-authorized provider for care, whether stateside or overseas. If you need dental care and are enrolled in the TRICARE Dental Program, you can visit any licensed dentist for treatment. TRICARE Retiree Dental Program enrollees can call 1-215-942-8226 for dental emergencies. If you are traveling stateside and do not know what to do, call the TRICARE Nurse Advice Line at 1-800-TRICARE, Option 1. Information about all your TRICARE benefits is on the TRICARE [website](#).

100th VA Grant-Funded Veterans Cemetery Dedicated

Grants Partnership Improves Veteran Access to Burial Benefits

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the opening of the 100th VA grant funded Veterans cemetery. An \$8.9 million grant from the VA funded the new Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in Marana, Arizona. The cemetery is the 100th Veterans cemetery funded with a VA grant awarded to a State or Tribal organization.

"This significant milestone underscores the importance of our partnerships with State and Tribal organizations to increase Veterans access to benefits, said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. "This grant helps VA fulfill its goal of providing at least 95 percent of Veterans and spouses with access to an open national, state or tribal cemetery within 75 miles of their home," McDonald said

VA's Veterans Cemetery Grants Program complements VA's 134 National Cemeteries across the country. Since 1980, the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program has awarded grants totaling more than \$665 million to establish, expand, and improve 100 Veterans cemeteries in 47 states and territories including tribal trust lands, Guam, and Saipan. These VA-funded Veterans cemeteries provided more than 35,000 burials in 2015.

The new cemetery opened on March 14, 2016 and was dedicated on March 26, 2016 with a public ceremony with remarks by George D. Eisenbach Jr., Director, Veterans Cemetery Grants program. The cemetery, on approximately 20 acres, includes 1,802 pre-placed crypts, 1,638 cremains gravesites and 1,920 columbarium niches and will help serve the needs of approximately 105,000 Arizona Veterans and their families.

Veterans with a discharge issued under conditions other than dishonorable who have completed a period of active duty service as required by law, their spouses and eligible dependent children may be buried in the Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery at Marana.

The closest VA national cemetery to the new Arizona cemetery is VA's National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona in Phoenix, approximately 91 miles away. The nearest VA grant-funded state Veterans cemetery is Southern Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in Sierra Vista, which is located at a distance of about 107 miles from the new site.

For more information on VA's Veterans Cemetery Grants Program, visit: www.cem.va.gov/cem/grants. For more information on Arizona's Veterans Memorial at Marana, visit: <https://dvs.az.gov/arizona-veterans-memorial-cemetery-marana>.

VA Announces Future Site of the VA National Archives

VA will have a home for the Department's history in Dayton, O.H.

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs today announced that the Dayton VA Medical Center has been officially selected as the site for the National Department of Veterans Affairs Archives. Secretary Robert A. McDonald made the announcement this morning speaking to a group of Dayton-area leaders.

"I believe that history is incredibly important to VA. We're all about keeping the promises of the past to the Veterans of the present and the future," said Secretary McDonald. "With the necessary capital improvements, I can announce today that the Dayton Headquarters and Club House buildings will serve as a fitting home for VA's National Archives and we look forward to working with community leaders to make the archive a reality and to improve the lives of Veterans. "

Dayton has a long history of service to our nation's Veterans and is home to one of the original United States Veterans' facilities. The Ohio community has been caring for our nation's Veterans since the Civil War era when it housed a branch of the A National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, a predecessor to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Department of Veterans Affairs and its predecessor agencies have generated archival records and artifacts from the time before the Revolutionary War. Many of these historic materials are stored at the Washington-area facilities of the National Archives and Records Administration along with records from other federal agencies. VA is one of the largest federal agencies and it owns more historic buildings than any other civilian federal agency. Many of its historical documents, photographs, artifacts, and other materials are spread across the country in its 150 facilities under conditions that do not meet federal curation standards. The VA Archive at Dayton will enable VA to organize and protect its important heritage and eventually share VA's rich history with the public.

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

~ We Proudly Support Our Military Personnel & Families ~

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

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.

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



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



America is a passionate idea or it is nothing. America is a human brotherhood or it is chaos.

~Max Lerner, Actions and Passions, 1949~

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!

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