



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, July 03, 2016
Volume 7, Issue 24

This-N-That

Summertime is upon us, and this month we celebrate America's independence. Various known as the Fourth of July and Independence Day, July 4th has been a federal holiday in the United States since 1941, but the tradition of Independence Day celebrations goes back to the 18th century and the American Revolution (1775-83).

This July 4th ... marks 240 years since the Founding Fathers signed the Declaration of Independence!

In June, 1776, representatives of the 13 colonies then fighting in the revolutionary struggle weighed a resolution that would declare their independence from Great Britain. On July 2nd, the Continental Congress voted in favor of independence, and two days later its delegates adopted the Declaration of Independence, a historic document drafted by Thomas Jefferson. From 1776 until the present day, July 4th has been celebrated as the birth of American independence with typical festivities ranging from fireworks, parades and concerts to more casual family gatherings and barbecues.

And while Independence Day is celebrated in grand style through out the land of the free and home of the brave how many Americans take the time to think ... how the declaration came about?

This question is meant to encourage Americans to refresh ... their fleeting memory of why and how along with the names beyond the better known Founding Fathers. Nor can anyone be blamed ... for relying on knowledge ... retained from their school years ... and sadly for many Americans ... looking in a mirror quickly reveals ... just how long it has been.

Whatever you decide to do, just be safe and have fun. Check to see if your city has a burn ban and be cognizant of your surroundings if you partake in lighting fireworks.

And please, keep in mind your neighbors who have served! Fireworks and PTSD just don't mix well.

Happy Independence Day Everyone!

On behalf of myself and Volunteers nationwide, we wish you and your family good health and a happy and safe 4th of July!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org

PTSD and Fireworks Don't Mix



Independence Day and other patriotic holidays are a blast! Party time! For many. But for others, this “blast” propels them right back into the heat of battle. Physically and emotionally. How ironic and gut wrenching that the very soldiers who sacrificed so we could celebrate our freedom may be the ones who struggle most on this day.

So what can we do to help those who may be veterans, or may have Post-Traumatic Stress from other traumas? And what can those who battle PTSD do to successfully make it through? We cannot delete the day on the calendar, nor should we deny ourselves the privilege of celebrating these events with gratitude (and fun!).

First and foremost, we need to remember that we cannot fix it. Although there are many [resources to help PTSD](#) (see www.LoveOurVets.org), it will always be there at some level. Rather, as friends, family and loved ones, it is our privilege to care and support in any way we can.

Some of the typical [signs of PTSD](#) might include flashbacks, avoidance, numbing, putting up walls, withdrawing, hyper-vigilance, irritability, easily startled, memory blocks, sudden bursts of anger or other emotions, difficulty sleeping, nightmares, fear, depression, anxiety, substance abuse and other addictive behaviors, difficulty holding a job, relationship problems, and suicidal thoughts or attempts.

If you are new to PTSD, a good place to start is to learn more about it and how it affects those we care about, as well as those of us who love them. The best way I understand it is that Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder can affect anyone, resulting from exposure to a severe life-threatening trauma. At that moment, the whole person gets locked into emergency mode – fight or flight or freeze survival – which will haunt them for the rest of their lives. Physically, emotionally and mentally. 24/7 they live as if that trauma, crisis or a fatal attack could strike at any moment, overwhelming their ability to cope. When something triggers them, they have no reserve with which to handle it in a healthy way as others might.

The potential triggers this time of year are everywhere. One wife relates: “We were in a department store and they had fireworks blasting away on all the TV’s! Five soldiers hit the floor – along with mine! It took hours to calm him down. People just don’t realize. And it’s not funny.” The crowds that go along with official fireworks displays can also be a source of triggers.

Bottom line? The person needs to *feel safe and be safe.*

As the wife of a veteran who has struggled with PTSD for over four decades, I like to share from what I am learning personally, as well as from the input of many others (see [LOVE OUR VETS: Restoring Hope for Families of Veterans with PTSD](#)). The good news is that many of us are learning and growing successfully in spite of the PTSD. Here are some tips that might help you and those you love to **feel safe** and **be safe** on this upcoming holiday:

- Surround yourself with good people, perhaps other veterans or family you know *and enjoy*.
- Pet lovers – stay close to your furry friends. They don’t like fireworks either!
- Treat your body with good comforts such as a soothing massage, your favorite music, closeness with the one you love, and great food.
- Many find it helpful to leave town, or go somewhere quiet.

- Others turn on loud white noise, watch a good movie, or crank up music to drown out the sounds of the fireworks. Maybe a good pair of earplugs at bedtime.
- Stay sheltered indoors, far away from loud explosions and lights in the sky, and do not even drive that day if you can help it.
- And for the loved ones, you may want to just sit quietly with them, listen when they need to talk, and always respect their space when they need to be alone.
- As you do what you can to help them, NEVER stop living yourself, but do what YOU need and want.

Finally, I encourage all of us to be respectful of those who may be doing all they can to just survive. Then let's make a point to stop and THANK anyone we know who has served and sacrificed for our freedom, the reason we can celebrate, with or without fireworks.

by Welby O'Brien

State of Emergency Declared in Virginia and West Virginia due to Flooding

[State of Emergency Declared in Virginia and West Virginia due to Flooding](#)

The governors of Virginia and West Virginia have declared a State of Emergency in both states due severe flooding in several counties. Emergency prescription refill procedures are in place from June 24 - July 24, 2016.

Click [here](#) for details.

WWI Memorial Planned

The winner of the contest by the National World War One Centennial Commission to design a World War I Memorial is a 25-year-old architect-in-training who had never been to the nation's capital. His winning entry is a proposed revamp of Pershing Park in Washington, DC with sprawling green space atop memorial walls that tell the story of the Great War through the words and faces of the Americans who fought it. His partner in the project is New York sculptor Sabin Howard. The estimated cost of the new memorial is \$48 million, which will come entirely from private donations. The goal for beginning construction is November 2017, with a dedication on the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day, Nov. 11, 2018. For more information, visit the [Wikipedia website](#).

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

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 kids too!

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

Government Accountability Reports

Defense Contracting: Complete Historical Data Not Available on Canceled DOD Solicitations.

<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-502R>

Information Security: FDIC Implemented Controls over Financial Systems, but Further Improvements are Needed.

<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-605>

Information Technology: IRS Needs to Improve Its Processes for Prioritizing and Reporting Performance of Investments.

<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-545>

Casualty Assistance: DOD and the Coast Guard Need to Develop Policies and Outreach Goals and Metrics for Program Supporting Servicemembers' Survivors.

<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-569>

Defense Civil Support: DOD Has Made Progress Incorporating the Homeland Response Force into the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear Response Enterprise. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-599>

Human Trafficking: Agencies Have Taken Steps to Assess Prevalence, Address Victim Issues, and Avoid Grant Duplication.

<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-555>

Human Trafficking: Implementation of Related Statutory Provisions, Law Enforcement Efforts, and Grant Funding.

<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-748T>

Refundable Tax Credits: Comprehensive Compliance Strategy and Expanded Use of Data Could Strengthen IRS's Efforts to Address Noncompliance. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-475>

Veterans Crisis Line: Additional Testing, Monitoring, and Information Needed to Ensure Better Quality Service.
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-373>

2020 Census: Census Bureau Needs to Improve Its Life-Cycle Cost Estimating Process.
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-628>

Defense Headquarters: Geographic Combatant Commands Rely on Subordinate Commands for Mission Management and Execution. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-652R>

Defense Headquarters: Improved Data Needed to Better Identify Streamlining and Cost Savings Opportunities by Function.
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-286>

Elections: Issues Related to Registering Voters and Administering Elections.
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-630>

Freedom of Information Act: Department of Labor Can Improve Management of Its Program.
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-248>

Program Integrity: Views on the Use of Commercial Data Services to Help Identify Fraud and Improper Payments.
<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-624>

Information Security: FDIC Implemented Controls Over Financial Systems, but Further Improvements Are Needed.
http://www.gao.gov/restricted/restricted_reports

Military Readiness: DOD's Readiness Rebuilding Efforts May Be at Risk without a Comprehensive Plan.
http://www.gao.gov/restricted/restricted_reports

Free Legal Clinic in Virginia

Virginia's Attorney General is offering its first ever legal services clinic for veterans. Attorneys will help people create legal documents like wills, powers of attorney and advanced medical directives. The free clinic is open to veterans and their spouses or partners. The event takes place August 2 at Thomas Nelson Community College in Hampton, VA but participants must register in advance. For more information and to register, visit the Virginia Attorney General's [website](#).

American Legion to Survey Women Vets

The American Legion has created a military women veterans survey in order to make specific recommendations for congressional appropriations, Veterans Affairs programs and facilities, and increase public awareness of issues facing women veterans. All information from the survey is confidential and submitted anonymously. Women veterans can access the survey [here](#) until July 18.

Help us spread the word about the Women Veterans Call Center chat function!



The Women Veterans Call Center (WVCC) is expanding its outreach to women Veterans with a new online, one-to-one chat function. The new service enables women Veterans to go online and anonymously chat via real-time text messaging with a trained WVCC representative. All the representatives at the Women Veterans Call Center are women, and many are Veterans themselves.

The new feature provides women Veterans with another avenue to ask general questions about benefits, eligibility and services specifically for women Veterans. WVCC chat is available by visiting the Women Veterans Health Care webpage at www.womenshealth.va.gov and clicking the “Chat with the Women Veterans Call Center” icon.

As the chat function is anonymous; we are asking users to please do not use personally identifiable information such as social security numbers. WVCC Chat is available Monday through Friday 8 AM – 10 PM ET, and on Saturdays from 8 AM – 6:30 PM ET

Navy Conducts Norovirus Vaccine Trial

The Naval Health Research Center (NHRC) has launched a clinical trial at Recruit Training Command (RTC) to evaluate the effectiveness of the first norovirus vaccine in reducing outbreaks of acute gastroenteritis. Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent norovirus, a highly contagious disease which causes vomiting and diarrhea and can infect anyone who comes into contact with the pathogen. Once informed consent has been obtained and study volunteers are vaccinated, they will have three brief follow-up visits during basic training to determine how their immune system is responding to the norovirus vaccine. The vaccine trial will last up to one year with results contributing to the assessment of vaccine effectiveness for widespread use among other U.S. military populations and civilians.

Vet Groups Uniting To Oppose Privatized Care

The nation's leading veteran services organizations are rallying behind the Department of Veterans Affairs and its beleaguered health care system, touting the experience of staff, the breadth of services and its holistic approach to care delivery that they argue the private sector cannot match. The VSOs are warning of politicians and groups with agendas that constantly criticize VA health care, refuse to acknowledge reforms and thus advance a camouflaged campaign to dismantle VA health care.

Blue Angels Get Back to Work

The U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, has begun training flights in preparation to resume the team's Pensacola practice and air show season schedules. The mission of the Blue Angels is to showcase the pride and professionalism of the United States Navy and Marine Corps through flight demonstrations and community outreach. The Blue Angels air show schedule is available on the [Blue Angels website](#).

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

Legion Defends Veteran Preference System

The American Legion has begun a campaign to stop an effort in Congress to limit the advantage veterans have in federal hiring, starting with a letter to members of the House that accuses the Pentagon of conjuring a "morally-bankrupt tactic" to circumvent veterans' preference. A little-noticed provision of the massive defense bill the Senate passed last week would eliminate the preference veterans get once they are in the government and apply for another federal job.

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

Social Media Use Could Impact Clearances

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence recently enacted a policy under which federal agencies may consider publicly available social media information in connection with an application for a security clearance. The new policy allows investigators to scan an applicant's history on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and other similar sites. However, agencies cannot force individuals to hand over their passwords for private accounts, or provide pseudonyms for any profiles. Also, social media information gathered as part of a background check will not be retained unless it is considered "relevant" to the security status of the person in question. [See current guidance on social media usage](#).

AF Offers Training on New Retirement System

Online training designed to educate Airmen about the new Blended Retirement System is now available via [Joint Knowledge Online](#) course number P-US1330. The course is also available to those without a Common Access Card — to include family members — via an alternate [website](#). The BRS will go into effect Jan. 1, 2018. All currently serving members are grandfathered into the current military retirement system. However, those with fewer than 12 years of service as of

Dec. 31, 2017, or Air Force Reserve component members with fewer than 4,320 retirement points may choose to "opt in" to the BRS in 2018. To learn more about the Blended Retirement System, visit the Military Compensation [website](#).

Veterans-For-Change Website

If you haven't visited in a while, maybe you should visit today! Since we went back on-line in October 2012 average visitors have been around 1,700 per day and we've had a total of **2,851,668** visitors.

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.

We feel we have the largest One-Stop-Shop Veterans website available, and 100% user friendly.

There are era Forums, VA Forums, Mental Health Forum with a licensed clinical worker, and much much more!

www.veterans-for-change.org

- ◆ Documents Library with over 15,000 documents on-line (Updated: **06/28/16**)
- ◆ FAQ's with more than 1,600 FAQ's and answers (Updated: **02/20/16**)
- ◆ Multiple Forums
- ◆ Job Postings (Updated: **06/26/16**)
- ◆ Memorial Pages (Updated: **01/02/16**)
- ◆ News (Articles On-Line: **5,842**)
- ◆ Polls
- ◆ Web Links, more than 3,436, Added 1 New Links (Updated: **06/05/16**)

If you have a submission for the memorial pages, E-Mail: Jim.Davis@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](#).

Commissaries Healthy Lifestyle Festivals

The Defense Commissary Agency will host the military resale partnership event, Your Healthy Lifestyle Festival, July 1-31 at commissaries worldwide. The festival combines commissary farmers markets, exchange sidewalk sales, MWR fitness events, demos, music, free nutritious food samples, prize giveaways, discount coupon offers, health and wellness information and children's programs. Although the bulk of the sales are in July and early August, a few locations will be held in June to avoid calendar conflicts. An overall schedule listing installations and dates can be found on Your Healthy Lifestyle Festival [webpage](#). Customers should also contact their local installation media for specific festival event schedules.

2016 DISCOUNTS

[Blue Star Museums](#)

Blue Star Museums is a partnership among the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, Joining Forces, MetLife Foundation and museums across the country. From Memorial Day (May 30, 2016) through Labor Day (September 5, 2016), thousands of museums, art centers, and exhibits are offering free admission to all active duty, National Guard and Reserve military personnel and their families.

[Cedar Point](#)

All active, retired and honorably discharged members receive free admission, July 1-4, 2016. Immediate family members can also receive a military discount for \$43 each.

[Columbus Zoo and Aquarium](#)

The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is offering free admission and discounted Zoombezi Bay admission to military and their immediate family, July 2 through July 8, 2016.

[Dorney Park](#)

Dorney Park outside Allentown, Pennsylvania offers free regular admission to any active or retired military personnel July 2-4, 2016. Military members can also purchase discount admission tickets for members of their immediate family (maximum of six).

NEW [Funderland](#)

Funderland Amusement Park in Sacramento, CA is offering military members and their families a free day of rides on July 4, 2016.

[Gilroy Gardens Family Theme Park](#)

Active duty military personnel get free admission to Gilroy Gardens in Gilroy, California July 2-4, 2016.

[Home Depot](#)

All veterans are eligible for Home Depot's 10% military discount on July 4th with a DoD-issued ID, a DD214 or a Veterans Driver's License.

[King's Dominion](#)

The Kings Dominion amusement park in central Virginia is offering free admission for active, inactive or retired service members July 2-4, 2016.

[King's Island](#)

Military members will receive free admission to King's Island, an amusement and water park in Ohio July 2-4. They are also offering discounted tickets for up to six family members.

[Lowe's](#)

Lowe's is offering their 10% military discount to military personnel in active, reserve or retired status, as well as veterans on July 4th.

[Rack Room Shoes](#)

Rack Room Shoes offers a 10% military discount off entire purchase with military ID on Independence Day.

[Valleyfair](#)

Valleyfair amusement park in Minnesota is offering free admission during their Military Appreciation Days July 1 through 4, 2016. Discounted tickets are available for immediate family members.

[Worlds of Fun](#)

Active duty, retired military, veterans and National Guard and Reserve receive complimentary admission to Worlds of Fun in Kansas City on July 4, 2016. Military personnel can also purchase discounted tickets for their immediate family.

Follow us on Twitter



<https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change>

One VET, One Career, Many Successes.



Events for our VETERANS

- ◆ Resume Services and Career Mentorship
- ◆ Self employment and Entrepreneur Mentoring
 - ◆ VA Benefits Review and Counseling
 - ◆ Training and education opportunities
- ◆ Employment opportunities with Americas top companies

Wednesday – July 6, 2016
10:00 – 2:00

VFW Fort Sill Post 5263
103 NE 20th Street
Lawton, Oklahoma 73507

VETERANS, PLEASE PRE-REGISTER FOR FREE!

Veteran Event Registration
Please contact us on

Mobile: (978) 973-0025
Office: (772) 763-0002
Email: admin@vetswork.net

For more details, visit our website: www.vetswork.net

Links to Other Stories

- 1) [4 Vets tie up VA suicide hotline with abusive calls](#)
- 2) [Atlanta transgender Veteran reacts to the military's policy change](#)
- 3) [Congress: Republicans Derail Efforts To Expand Cannabis Access To Military Veterans](#)
- 4) [Fix Veterans Care Using the Best Research Available](#)
- 5) [Former Nurse Sentenced to 82 Months for Stealing and Tampering with Patient Medications](#)
- 6) [Gay Army Veteran dies at 83, just months after discharge status upgraded to 'honorable'](#)
- 7) [Heller backs push to require VA to disclose high-level directors' bonuses, awards](#)
- 8) [Letting Veterans Go to Any Doctor Just Isn't Feasible or Desirable](#)
- 9) [Men can hear it too: "You have breast cancer"](#)
- 10) [ProPublica, Virginian-Pilot Convening Asks: Has Agent Orange Hurt the Children of Vietnam Vets?](#)
- 11) [The Veterans Health Care System Is Being Unfairly Attacked](#)
- 12) [Use of Chiropractic Rising Steeply in Veterans](#)
- 13) [VA Denies Claims It Colluded With Union To Oppose Reforms](#)
- 14) [VA director: Flags cleaned up at RI Veterans' Cemetery](#)
- 15) [VA health care probe shows a pervasive sickness](#)
- 16) [VA suicide counselors' work ethic questioned, report says](#)
- 17) [Veteran says fireworks trigger PTSD](#)
- 18) [Veterans Should Enjoy the Same Health Care Options as All Americans](#)
- 19) [Vets bill would protect their credit scores](#)
- 20) [Wheelchair Games are about Living Healthy Lives](#)
- 21) [Yoga helps me manage PTSD](#)

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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

~We Proudly Support our Military Personnel & Families~

**Notice of Modifications to Text of Proposed Regulations and Addition of Documents and Information to Rulemaking File
State Veterans Cemeteries
(Amend CCR§461 and Adopt CCR §463-464)**

Pursuant to the requirements of Government Code sections 11346.8(c), 11346.8(d), 11346.9(a)(1), and 11347.1 and section 44 of Title 1 of the California Code of Regulations, the California Department of Veterans Affairs is providing notice of changes made to the proposed regulation sections 461, 463, and 464 and notice that documents and other information which the agency has relied upon in amending the proposed regulations have been added to the rulemaking file and are available for public inspection and comment.

The documents and information added to the rulemaking file, which replace all previous versions noticed in this rulemaking, are as follows:

- ◆ Updated proposed text
- ◆ VSD-002 – Application for Burial
- ◆ VSD-003 – Request for Disinterment
- ◆ DVS-100 – Repealed Document
- ◆ Addendum to the Statement of Reasons

These documents are available for public inspection at CalVet's headquarters located at 1227 O Street, Room 105, Sacramento, CA 95814 from June 30, 2016 until 5:00 p.m. on July 15, 2016 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. The documents are also available online [here](#). Comments regarding the proposed text, documents, and other information must be submitted in writing to CalVet, addressed to:

Angela Yamamoto, Veterans Services Division
1227 O Street, Room 105
Sacramento, CA 95814
Email: angela.yamamoto@calvet.ca.gov

The deadline to submit comments is 5 p.m. on July 15, 2016. CalVet will only consider comments received at the CalVet offices by that time.

CalVet staff will review and respond to all written comments received by July 15, 2016, which pertain to the above-listed proposed text, documents, and other information as part of the compilation of the rulemaking file.

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>



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	144,484
Boston	69,656
Courtesy Copies	3,500
Department of VA	13,389
DoD	12,079
Face Book Pages	3,307
Google	4,211
Los Angeles	118,339
Microsoft	3,487
National Guard	369
New York	136,151
Other Social Media	24,988
San Francisco	67,917
Twitter	32
US House of Reps & Staff	829
US Senators & Staff	96
University of So. California	3,688
US Air Force	30,006
US Army	45,301
US Marines	22,168
US Navy	21,168

Veterans	19,062,476
Washington DC	132,001
Yahoo	134
	19,919,776