



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, January 01, 2017

Volume 8, Issue 01

This-N-That

I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas, and I would also like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year!

If you are planning on going out, please be careful, and have a designated driver too if you plan on drinking. We want all of you to be around for a very long time to come!

We've been working for a couple of weeks now with a grass roots team to get the attention of President Elect Donald Trump to speak with and consider Commander John B. Wells for the position of Secretary of the VA.

Further down in this newsletter is a link to a petition started in which we are hoping to garner 10,000+ signers. Please give it serious consideration.

Among all the issues always on my mind, on my desk, and constant fax blasts to members of Congress to stay on their backs and keep in their minds are Veteran Suicides.

A 76-year-old Veteran of the United States Navy committed suicide outside of a New York VA hospital after being denied care.

On Aug. 21, Peter A. Kaisen, who served in the Navy from 1958 to 1962, shot

and killed himself outside the Northport Veterans Affairs Medical Center after he was allegedly denied care by the facility even though he was a recurring patient.

"He went there for help with depression," Thomas Farley, a friend of Kaisen's for 40 years, told Fox News. "That was his last hope, and he didn't get any help."

What on earth is going on in the VA Healthcare System, besides the normal of claims delayed and denied?

Kaisen was upset because the VA hospital would not allow him to see an emergency-room physician for a mental health condition. So when a Veteran is in distress, what are they to do, call and make an appointment in the right department and wait months and months?

Distress does not mean it has to be physical. Hell Emergency Rooms all across the country will still see anyone even in mental distress, and if needed can get them into a hospital bed and seen by the right kind of medical help.

So why is it that VA Emergency rooms turn Veterans in distress away? And no this is NOT the first time this has happened, and I'm quite sure will not be the last.

So will heads roll? Chances are no! Will the VAMC Director still get a bonus for meeting stats? Count on it!

Congress made sure bonuses were protected, so what is the cost of a life today? To what end will they go?

And the biggest question of all, What does it take to get Veterans involved and taking charge of their own healthcare?

On behalf of our Volunteers nationwide and myself, we wish you and your family good health and a Very Happy New Years!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org

PS: I apologize for the resend, Express Mail chopped up the original before sending out.

Costs Kill Big Gains for Vets but Reserve Retirees Win 'Vet' Status

For a while it seemed 2016 would be the year Congress phased in a \$3 billion plan to give older generations of severely injured veterans the same caregiver benefits enacted six years ago for Post-9/11 injured veterans. It also seemed Congress in 2016 would modernize VA's appeals process for veteran claims, and would impose stiff new accountability requirements on VA employees who are incompetent or misbehave. It even seemed possible this year that lawmakers would strengthen the Veterans Choice program by establishing prompt payment standards and by streamlining requirements for community medical care providers to enter into service agreements with VA. But have any of these things happened? For more details, see this [post](#).

Appoint Commander John B Wells, USN (Retired), as Secretary of Veterans Affairs

As you know Veterans-For-Change endorses Commander John B. Wells for Secretary of the VA.

He is a Veteran for Veterans! And will go in and hit the ground running in order to achieve all the goals both he and Veterans nationwide have in order to make the VA a much better Healthcare System.

We now come to you and ask for your support and ask you to click [HERE](#) to sign the petition posted on Change.org!

Commissaries to Offer Private Labels

The Defense Commissary Agency has selected MDV SpartanNash LLC to bring private label products to store shelves. Private label products are offered by a retailer under its own, in-house brand or under a brand developed by its suppliers. Retailers are able to do this by working directly with suppliers. [Commissaries will add private label options](#) to their assortments, while continuing to offer the name brands that patrons have always shopped. The initial assortment should be available at all commissaries worldwide in May 2017 and will include about 400 items. For more information on DeCA's private label program, read the [Transformation FAQ](#).

Reversal: Navy Brings Back Beloved Ratings System

The Navy has decided to bring back its 241-year-old job ratings system, reversing a decision at the end of September that prompted widespread outcry and even had the White House weigh in. The restoration of Navy rating titles was formally announced Wednesday in an administrative message from Adm. John Richardson. The service still plans to modernize jobs in order to make career paths more flexible and make it easier to transition to civilian work. But the [initial plan that replaced all 91 historical ratings, including jobs like yeoman, boatswain's mate, and hospital corpsman, with alphanumeric codes](#), has been scrapped. For more details, see this [news article](#).



COMBAT-INJURED VETERANS TAX FAIRNESS ACT OF 2016

On December 16, 2016, H.R. 5015, the Combat-Injured Veterans Tax Fairness Act of 2016 became Public Law No: 114-292. This new law provides veterans medically separated, or retired from the military due to combat-related injuries another opportunity to recoup the taxed portion of their severance payments.

The law requires the Department of Defense (DOD) to identify veterans medically separated from military service due to combat-related injuries that were issued severance payments after January 17, 1991, and withheld amounts for tax purposes.

DOD will provide this group of veterans with a notice of the amount of improperly withheld severance payments, and instructions for filing amended federal tax returns to recover the withheld amount. The period for filing this IRS claim for a credit, or refund is extended to one year after DOD provides the veteran with the information required by this Act.

This law will be a significant benefit to this group of injured and ill veterans, and partially fulfills DAV Resolution 011 that calls for allowing all veterans to recover taxes withheld from their disability severance pay.

Click [HERE](#) to send your message!

Bill Aims to Improve Career Readiness

The U.S. Senate has approved its spending bill, which contains a provision that seeks to block student veterans from using their GI Bill benefits on career programs that will not help them land a job. The [Career Ready Student Veterans Act](#), which was attached to the continuing resolution to fund the government through April 28, would prohibit institutions from receiving GI Bill benefits if their programs do not meet the requirements needed for required licensing exams or certification in order to enter the chosen career field. For more on the GI Bill and military education benefits, visit the [Military.com Education section](#).



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



AF Special Victims Counsel Program

The Air Force Special Victims Counsel (SVC) program assists sexual assault victims. Victims have a completely confidential communication, which is protected by attorney-client privilege. All active-duty military members, regardless of who the perpetrator is, are eligible to use the SVC. Adult and minor dependents are also eligible for SVC services when the assault has a military connection. The assigned attorney is with the victim throughout the interviews, hearings and courts-martial to provide them with the legal advice and support they need. For more information, read the American Bar Association article and watch the videos [online](#).

Operation Mail Call

Troops resting on long deployments
- your support matters



Veterans-For-Change - Operation Mail Call

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2017 VA Loan Rates are Out: Use Your Benefit Now

Get started using this increased VA Loan benefit for 2017. Qualified borrowers can pay as little as \$0 down, and have no PMI payments with great rates and financing up to \$424,000. [Use your VA Loan Benefit today.](#)



Government Accountability Reports

Dodd-Frank Regulations: Agencies' Efforts to Analyze and Coordinate Their Recent Final Rules. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-188>

Securities and Exchange Commission: Actions Needed to Address Limited Progress in Resolving Long-Standing Personnel Management Challenges. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-17-65>

Securities and Exchange Commission: SEC Personnel Survey Results (GAO-17-95SP, December 2016), an E-supplement to GAO-17-65. <http://www.gao.gov/special.pubs/gao-17-95sp/index.htm>



TRICARE Doesn't Cover All Costs - Get a 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](#).

VA Treats Dependency

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, prescription drug use and binge drinking occurs at a much higher rate among Veterans and the numbers are growing. In fact, a Department of Defense study found that prescription drug misuse occurs 2.5 times more often in Veterans than it does in civilians as reported by the [National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence](#). This is due, in large part, to the high rate of post-traumatic stress disorder that occurs among Veterans. Both inpatient and outpatient treatment is available at [VA centers across the country](#). For more information, visit the [VA Mental Health webpage](#).

Veteran Crisis Resources

Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1
Military Crisis Line 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
National Call Center for Homeless Veterans
1-877-4AID-VET (424.3838)
VA Caregiver Support Line 1-855-260-3274

Law Honors Filipino Veterans

President Barack Obama has signed a measure into law that honors Filipino and Filipino-American World War II veterans with the Congressional Gold Medal. The Congressional Gold Medal is the nation's highest civilian award by Congress, recognizing more than 260,000 Filipino and Filipino-American soldiers who fought alongside the U.S. in WWII. Less than 18,000 Filipino WWII veterans are still alive today. The Filipino veterans were promised U.S. citizenship and health and pension benefits but Congress revoked that promise in 1946.

Veterans-For-Change Web Site

The Veterans-For-Change website has been under construction since day one back in 2009 and every day since then. The looks pretty much stay the same, but in the background constant improvement and change is being done to make our website the most user friendly "One-Stop-Shop" website to find almost everything you might have tried to find searching the internet.

Almost a hundred people have been involved; collecting web links to documents now houses on the VFC website, collecting thousands of web links for various issues, illnesses and benefits. Creating forums for all eras of service and two forums one just for men and one just for woman where you can go question, comment, share medical and personal concerns, what ever you'd like it to be.

We also have a forum with a licensed Mental Health Worker, again where you can seek help or just ask questions.

We average 1,700 hits per day, and downloads average 1,400 per day with a total 3,116,743 visitors as of Friday.

If you subscribe you will have full access to the entire website and best of all it's FREE of charge! You just need a valid E-mail address so the system can send you a confirmation E-Mail. Once received, click on the link to be authorized automatically.

www.veterans-for-change.org

- Documents Library with over 15,905 documents on-line (Updated: 12/12/16)
- FAQ's with more than 1,600 FAQ's and answers
- Multiple Forums
 - o Afghanistan Veterans
 - o FMP - Foreign Medial Program
 - o Gulf War & Desert Storm Veterans
 - o Iraq Veterans
 - o Korean Veterans
 - o Men Veterans Forum
 - o Mental Health for Veterans
 - o Political Issues
 - o Suggestion Box
 - o The Mess Hall
 - o VA Hospitals and Medical Centers
 - o Veteran Affairs
 - o Vietnam Veterans
 - o Welcome Mat
 - o Women Veterans Forum
 - o WW II Veterans
- Job Postings
- Memorial Pages (Updated: 10/10/16)
- News (Articles On-Line: 6,260)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than 3,541, Added 46 New Links (Updated: 12/28/16)

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

AF Marathon Registration Opens Soon

Registration for the 2017 Air Force Marathon will begin Jan. 2 at 9 a.m. EST. Registration will open with special New Year's resolution discounts, and participants who register Jan. 2 will receive \$10 off the full or half-marathon and \$5 off the 10K or 5K. The Air Force Marathon sold out in July 2016 and organizers anticipate selling out even faster in 2017. The Air Force Marathon will be Sept. 16. The Sports & Fitness Expo is held at Wright State University's Nutter Center and will be Sept. 14-15. The event will feature a gourmet pasta dinner and Breakfast of Champions on Sept. 15. For more information about the race, visit the [Air Force Marathon website](#).



<https://twitter.com/Veterans4Change>

Links to Other Stories

- 1) [5 Things About Veterans and Opioid Addiction](#)
- 2) [Abandoned Motels Transformed Into Apartments For Homeless Veterans](#)
- 3) [Albuquerque Veterans' hospital gets lowest score](#)
- 4) [Arizona officials: Camp in north Mesa with homeless Veterans can stay](#)
- 5) [Doing right by our Veterans](#)
- 6) [Dr. Eloise Harman - One of VA's Top Doctors](#)
- 7) [Elderly Vet Begs VA For Help, Gets Rejected; Moments Later Employees Hear A Scream](#)
- 8) [Garry Owen House opens transitional residence for homeless Vets](#)
- 9) [Homeless Veterans wake up in new homes Christmas morning](#)
- 10) [Most Influential 2016: Donna Gallup is chief executive of American Family Housing, providing housing to homeless Vets](#)
- 11) [New Life for Old Bags project to create sleeping mats for homeless Vets really takes off](#)
- 12) [Sen. Peters sponsors measure to aid veterans with PTSD; Obama signs into law](#)
- 13) [Social security Veterans affairs announces 0.3 percent benefit increase for 2017](#)
- 14) [SURVEY: Integrity Of Senior VA Leaders Declined Under McDonald](#)
- 15) [Tillis achieves record of success on Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee](#)
- 16) [Trump Betrays Our Veterans And Shows He Has No Intention Of Fixing Their Healthcare](#)
- 17) [Veterans Groups Applaud New Rule Aimed at Decreasing VA Wait Times](#)
- 18) [Veterans homes in need of nurses; union objects to outside hiring](#)

You can help VFC by reading articles posted and commenting at the bottom and rate the articles. If you don't have an account, sign up today, it's FREE. Your comments and rankings tell us what type of information you want most.

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

Navy New OPSEC Policy

The U.S. Navy recently issued [ALNAV 072/16](#) as new guidance to accompany the Department's new Operations Security (OPSEC) policy. The new OPSEC policy includes two useful resources: a self-inspection tool and a DON Critical Information List (CIL). The self-inspection tool is intended to facilitate an internal assessment to determine compliance with Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of the Navy (DON) standards, as well as, provide higher level commands the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of subordinate programs. The DON Critical Information List (CIL) provides an overview of what the SECNAV considers "critical information" across the Department. Each Command is still expected to develop their own CIL based on local and specific operational threats.

University of Cincinnati Seeks Vets for Survey

The University of Cincinnati is recruiting Veterans to complete a survey as part of a research study aimed at better understanding the reintegration experiences of veterans, particularly concerning employment. Study administrators are currently recruiting 250 veterans who were discharged on or after September 1, 2001, for an online survey. The survey itself will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The final data set used by researchers will not include personally identifying information and all survey responses will be kept confidential. For more information, read the University of Cincinnati [website](#).



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 an E-Mail to:

Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org



Transition Assistance Program

The Soldier for Life Transition Assistance Program (SFL TAP) is a commander's program that requires leaders to take an active role in a Soldier's transition. The program encourages Soldiers to attend early and often, starting 18 months prior to transition and 24 months prior to retirement from active duty. Participation in SFL TAP is required for all soldiers who have at least 180 days of continuous active duty service. The program teaches career skills like resumé writing, financial planning, job application preparation and military skills translation. SFL TAP works to provide opportunities to Soldiers who are looking to pursue an education, entrepreneurship, or a career. For more information, visit the U.S. Army SLF TAP [website](#).



**“We Proudly Support our
Military Personnel & Families”**

VA Grants Full Practice Authority to Nurses

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced that it is amending provider regulations to permit full practice authority to three roles of VA advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) to practice to the full extent of their education, training, and certification, regardless of State restrictions that limit such full practice authority, except for applicable State restrictions on the authority to prescribe and administer controlled substances, when such APRNs are acting within the scope of their VA employment. However, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists will not be included in VA's full practice authority under this [final rule](#), which is available on the Federal Register [website](#).

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

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Boston	74,766
Courtesy Copies	3,500
Department of VA	12,222
DoD	23,659
Face Book Pages	3,422
Google	21,885
Los Angeles	131,748
Microsoft	4,395
National Guard	3597
New York	155,244
Other Social Media	38,061
San Francisco	77,686
Twitter	37
US House of Reps & Staff	973
US Senators & Staff	102
University of So. California	4,830
US Air Force	19,559
US Army	51,965
US Marines	26,026
US Navy	26,508
Veterans	19,076,048
Washington DC	138,974
Yahoo	134
	20,040,042

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