



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, September 23, 2018

Volume 9, Issue 37



This-N-That

PTSD Awareness month is here, and we've found as much information as we could and have posted to the VFC website, you will be able to find the links to those articles further down in this newsletter under "Links to Other Stories."

There is information on how to determine if you are affected by PTSD, what to do and where to go to seek help and assistance, and information for friends and family members to help figure out if you need help and more!

And as we find more we will certainly get it posted as quickly as we can so please check back under NEWS,

scroll to the bottom of the page and look for the category "Mental Health Care."

We all need to be aware of our Veterans around us and their actions, words, etc., you never know, you could be the one to save a life!

And if you are a Veteran who might be in distress, feeling anxious, depressed, angry, even thinking about suicide, PLEASE, call someone. A battle buddy, friend, family member, the VA hotline, someone!

One suicide is just one too many!

Blue Water Navy is still in the battle of their lives and truly do need your help!!

In the next block there is a link to their petition and we're asking everyone to please sign the petition. Once you do, look for an E-Mail to authenticate your signing. If not in your in-box, please be sure to look in your spam folder.

And if you use a mail client vs. logging into the web, and you don't feel the authentication E-Mail in your mail client, please log into your account via the web and look for it, then click on the link.

Then toward the bottom there is a picture with a red box around it with phone numbers to call both your senators. Please call them both every single week and kindly ask them to please pass the Blue Water Navy Bill HR 299.

Finally the Senate passed S. Res. 522 which will designate the week of September 23rd to September 29th as Gold Star Family Remembrance week!

We can't tell you how much this was more than needed. To take a week just to remember all our fallen husbands, wives, sons and daughters who have made the ultimate sacrificed of their lives for our freedom!

In the last two weeks we created a new category on our web site under web links called "Health Topics" where we've added 353 new links where you can read about symptoms, causes, treatment and prevention for over 1000 diseases, illnesses, health conditions and wellness issues.

We still have approximately 3,000 more to add, but in time they will be uploaded so do check back often, you never know we might post a link to information you've been looking for.

On behalf of our Volunteers nationwide and myself, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org





BWN Needs Your Help!

The United States government, through its agency the Veterans Affairs, has a DUTY to TREAT medical problems associated with military service; COMPENSATE veterans (or their families) for early death or disability associated with their service; and MONITOR and DOCUMENT the effects of government policy and MISTAKES that created a higher health risk. For 50 years, VA has FAILED to monitor and document the effects of Agent Orange on military members that served in the "Blue Water Navy" during Vietnam. Congress is attempting to "fix" this dereliction of duty - and VA Officials oppose the change. We the people support treatment and compensation for these medical issues; and believe monitoring and documenting these issues should be the responsibility of VA, not the individual veterans.

Please sign, share on your page, copy and paste web link into an e-mail and send out to your entire e-mail address book and ask all your friends and family to sign, and forward on to their entire e-mail address book too!

You don't have to be active duty military, or a Veteran, *civilians can sign too.* 98.000 signatures are needed!

Click [HERE](#)





Senate Must Pass Blue Water Navy Bill

On Wednesday, the VFW joined other veterans service organizations in sending a [letter to the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs](#) urging the Senate to pass H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2018, which would provide long-overdue benefits to Blue Water Navy and Korean DMZ veterans. It would also expand benefits to the children of veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange in Thailand and commission more research on Gulf War Illness. The VFW calls on its members and supporters to [contact their Senators](#) and urge them to pass this important bill. [Read the letter.](#) [Contact your Senators.](#)



REMEMBER THOSE WHO SERVED



ALL GAVE SOME, SOME GAVE ALL



September is Suicide Prevention Month

Year-round, and particularly during Suicide Prevention Month in September, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) collaborates with the Department of Defense to empower communities to take action to support our Nation's Service members and Veterans. Each community across the country plays a role in supporting Service members and Veterans, but as an individual you may not know what to do or where to start.

You don't need to have special training to support the Service members and Veterans in your life, and we can all do something to help someone who is going through a difficult time. Even seemingly small actions can have a huge impact: Preventing suicide begins with just the willingness to **Be There**.

Showing your support can be as simple as sending a text message — inviting someone over to catch up or sharing a positive thought are both great ways to communicate that you care. Your words could be exactly what an individual in crisis needs to hear, and could be a reminder of the many people out there who are willing to listen.

Here are some sample text messages:

“Hey Tom, haven’t seen you around in a while! We should grab coffee this week. How about tomorrow?”

“Just letting you know I’m here for you if you need anything. Call me anytime!”

“Hey Amy, hope all is well with you! Been thinking about you today. I miss you!”

When you sense that a Service member or Veteran is not doing well, your words can help. You can make a difference by just starting a conversation. Although it can seem challenging, it is important to talk about difficult feelings and experiences. Keep in mind: Asking questions about thoughts of suicide does not increase a person’s suicide risk. Instead, an open conversation can help someone feel less alone and let others into the Service member or Veteran’s experience — and feeling connected is shown to reduce suicide risk.

Keep these best practices in mind when preparing for a conversation:

If you believe a Service member or Veteran in your life may be contemplating suicide, call the Veterans and Military

Crisis Line at **1-800-273-8255 and Press 1**, send a text message to **838255**, or [chat online](#). Qualified and compassionate VA responders are on call 24/7/365 to provide guidance on how to connect Service members and Veterans with support and help keep them from harm.

Show that you are really listening. Remember to maintain eye contact and turn in toward the Service member or Veteran while they are speaking.

Validate their experience. Even if you can't relate to what a Service member or Veteran is experiencing, you can tell them you understand that they went through something difficult, and show that you respect their feelings about it.

Let them decide how much information to share. Supportive and encouraging comments, rather than invasive personal questions, will create a space for open communication and avoid putting a Service member or Veteran on the defensive.

Don't be afraid to ask the question. When you are concerned about suicide risk, it's OK to ask people if they have ever thought about hurting themselves or taken action to prepare for suicide. The answers can help you consider next steps to take.

Simply reaching out to a Service member or Veteran in need and opening the door for a discussion could make all the difference. Learn more ways to show your support and Be There by visiting www.bethereforveterans.com to find more resources and information.

VA's Caregiver Support Line assistance is just a quick phone call away. Whether you're in need of immediate assistance or have questions about what services you may be eligible for, the caring licensed social workers who answer the support line can:

Provide you with information about assistance available from VA.

Help you access services.

Connect you with the Caregiver Support Coordinator at a VA Medical Center near you.

Just listen, if that's what you need right now.

If you're just getting started with VA, calling the Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274 is a great first step to learn more about the support that is available to you.





Gold Star Families Remembrance Week

On Sept. 6, 2018, the Senate passed S. Res. 522, which designates Sept. 23 through Sept. 29, 2018, as Gold Star Families Remembrance Week to honor and recognize “the sacrifices made by the families of members of the Armed Forces who have made the ultimate sacrifice,” and to encourage all Americans to observe Gold Star Families Remembrance Week by performing acts of good will and celebrating the families of those who gave their lives for our freedom. [Read the resolution.](#)



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 for Mental Health and are currently seeking a new Licensed Mental Health Worker, where you can seek help or just ask questions.

We average **2,900** hits per day, and downloads average **1,770** per day with a total **4,374,346** 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 **16,662** documents on-line (Updated: 08/27/18)

- 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 (Counselor Needed)
 - 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: 01/11/18)
- News (Articles On-Line: 7,728)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than **4,020**, Added 153 New Links (Updated: 09/19/18)

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



Blue Water Navy Bill Stalled in Senate

Background: During the Vietnam War, veterans who served in the offshore waters of Vietnam drank, bathed in, and cooked with water contaminated by Agent Orange. They are now arbitrarily and unjustly denied benefits for illnesses associated with Agent Orange exposure. On July 25, 2018, the House of Representatives unanimously passed H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2018. This bipartisan legislation would end the injustice of denying care and benefits to veterans who suffer from life-threatening health conditions.

H.R. 299 is now stalled in the Senate. The VFW needs your help to make sure this bill is passed before the end of the year. If the Senate fails to do so, the bill will die and may never be considered again.

Take Action: Contact your Senators to demand that the Senate swiftly pass H.R. 299. The Senate must not delay passage of this important bill while Blue Water Navy veterans sicken and die from diseases related to exposure to Agent Orange.

[CLICK HERE TO TAKE ACTION](#)





September's Featured Song

Ladder Up To Heaven

By

LT Bobby Ross

LT Bobby Ross - Voice Of America

Previous Featured Songs



**Suicide Prevention Month: A
National Public Health Campaign
That Needs Your Support**

Each September, Suicide Prevention Month inspires conversations nationwide about a public health issue that affects all walks of life. Although approaching the topic of

suicide can be challenging, it is important to have these conversations with those showing signs of suicide risk. Often, just talking with someone and showing support can make a big difference during times of trouble.

At the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), suicide prevention is our top clinical priority. You can help us serve at-risk Veterans and others in your community by using the peer-to-peer resources found on VA's #BeThere [website](#) and by keeping these tips in mind:

You don't need any special training to discuss suicide risk or show genuine concern for someone in crisis. Keep in mind that talking about suicide does not increase suicide risk.

Build conversations on a foundation of respect. Even though you may not be able to relate to the other person's experience, you can show empathy by listening attentively and providing receptive, nonverbal cues.

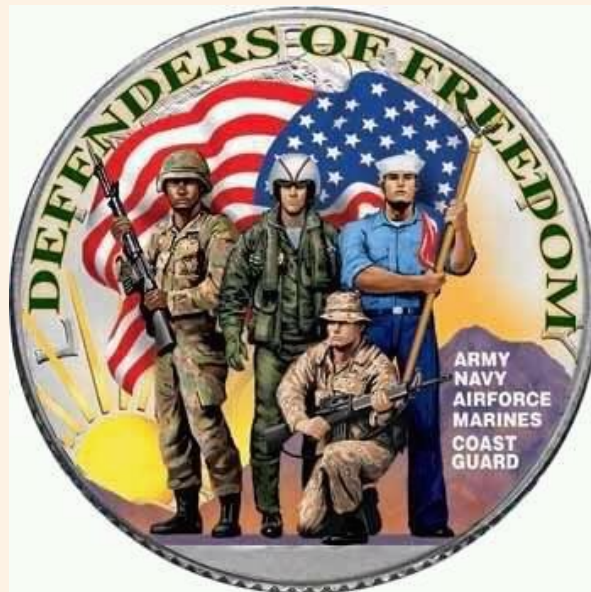
Sometimes you can help people feel less alone just by letting them know you're there — whether through a simple text message, a phone call, or an invitation for coffee or a walk.

VA recently launched an online suicide prevention training video, "S.A.V.E.," designed to help everyone demonstrate support and compassion when talking with a Veteran who could be at risk for suicide. The 25-minute training video is available for free at <https://psycharmor.org/courses/s-a-v-e>.

As a valuable member of your community, you can help

confront this national public health issue by simply starting the conversation, sharing resources, and genuinely connecting with someone in need.

Veterans who are in crisis or having thoughts of suicide, and those who know a Veteran in crisis, can call the Veterans Crisis Line for confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year at 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1. You can also send a text message to 838255 or chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat).



VA SEC'Y WILKIE IS WRONG ON NAVY BENEFITS BILL

Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie's new opposition

to HR 299, the Blue Water Navy bill, is a misguided affront to U.S. Navy veterans who have suffered for years with the results of Agent Orange exposure, the head of a national veterans advocacy group said today.

In a Sept. 6 letter to Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Johnny Isakson, Wilkie expresses opposition to the bill, which passed the House of Representatives earlier in the summer with massive support and after years of effort on the part of Military Veterans Advocacy and its executive director, Cdr. John Wells (USN, Ret.).

"Secretary Wilkie's letter is replete with misinformation, including an assertion that no scientific evidence supports the conclusion that Navy personnel who served on ships in the harbors and estuarine waters of Vietnam were exposed to the deadly toxins in Agent Orange," Wells said. "On the contrary, multiple studies provide ample evidence that the defoliant chemicals that were sprayed on land ran off into these rivers and harbors and were pumped into the water filtration systems of U.S. Navy ships. Not only were sailors exposed to the toxin, but it was made even more harmful in the distillation process."

Congress long ago authorized VA medical benefits for Navy personnel who served aboard these ships, but the policy was changed by the VA years later to only award Agent Orange benefits to personnel who set foot on Vietnamese soil. Military Veterans Advocacy and other organizations have lobbied Congress for many years to pass the Blue Water Navy bill, restoring these benefits. Now that the bill

has made it through the House, it is stuck in the Senate Committee.

"Despite having widespread support in the full Senate, this bill to restore rightful benefits to our veterans is being stalled by one senator - Chairman Isakson - and is being opposed by the person who should most be on our side - Secretary Wilkie," Wells said. "Our organization supported Sec. Wilkie's nomination and he told me directly that we could meet to discuss this legislation. Contrary to his word, he has declined to discuss the matter with us, and has now delivered official opposition. This is beyond disappointing; it's maddening.

"We will continue to fight this injustice and the VA misrepresentations in the Congress and the courts. We will not give up."





HANDS in Autism is seeking a Special Education Support Specialist

We at Hands in Autism® Interdisciplinary Training and Resource Center-- located in downtown Indianapolis, IN-- are focused on providing training, services and resources for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and a range of other developmental and behavioral challenges since 2004. We are contacting you today because you have previously expressed interest in our mission and potentially sharing our news when it is relevant to your audience. Today, we would like to share information about our current employment opportunity!

Special Education Support Specialist

This position will provide consultation in special education related areas on a team of experts in the field of autism spectrum disorder and other neurodevelopmental disabilities across the lifespan. Additionally, it will provide a range of consultation and follow up services at the Center as well as within the community setting; provide basic educational materials to families, school personnel, and other caregivers and providers; create tools utilized for education/training in clinical and research formats; assist in research and student training activities; conduct ongoing workshops and trainings to a range of consumers.

Duties and responsibilities include but are not limited

to:

Provide consultation to families, educators, and other providers regarding appropriate and effective academic programming within community settings.

Conduct academic and skills assessments for consumers of the Center.

Administer standardized and non-standardized tests and measurements to assist in identification of appropriate goals for educational and other programming.

Participate in multidisciplinary team evaluations as needed to aid in the completion of comprehensive evaluation of individuals seen within this service.

Assist in the implementation of outreach trainings provided within the context of the HANDS in Autism Center initiatives.

Assist with the dissemination of basic educational materials and research literature to help educate caregivers/staff/professionals.

Provide innovation in service delivery with development of workshops responsive to the expressed needs of the community.

This position is listed here:

<https://iujobs.peopleadmin.com/postings/66960>

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact HANDS Director, Dr. Naomi Swiezy at nswiezy@iupui.edu

You can also learn more about HANDS in Autism® by visiting our [website!](#)

We thank you for your time and encourage you to share this information with any persons, newsletters, or outlets you feel are appropriate.

If you are no longer interested in hearing from us, you can opt out of receiving these emails at any time by clicking the unsubscribe email at the bottom of this message.

Best regards,
The HANDS in Autism® Team



**CONTACT YOUR
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS!**

To Call your Representative:
202-225-2305

To Call your Senators:
202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553

To call Different Members of Congress:
202-224-3121

TOLL FREE: 866-272-6622

PLEASE... STOP Making Excuses!

www.veterans-for-change.org



Korean War Flag Presentation

The VFW was onsite yesterday at the Korean War Veterans Memorial to witness Vice President Mike Pence present an American flag to the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation. The flag was one of 55 flags that draped the 55 transfer cases of American remains when they were repatriated from North Korea to American soil. Even more poignant is that two soldiers have already been identified from that transfer — Pfc. William H. Jones of North Carolina and Master Sgt. Charles H. McDaniel of Indiana (more details below in the MIA update). The vice president, who participated in the Aug. 1 repatriation ceremony at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in Hawaii said, “When I was presented this flag ... I knew where it belonged. It belonged here on this hallowed ground, the Korean War Veterans Memorial.” He continued, “We will never relent in our effort to bring our missing fallen home.” [Read the vice president’s full remarks.](#)





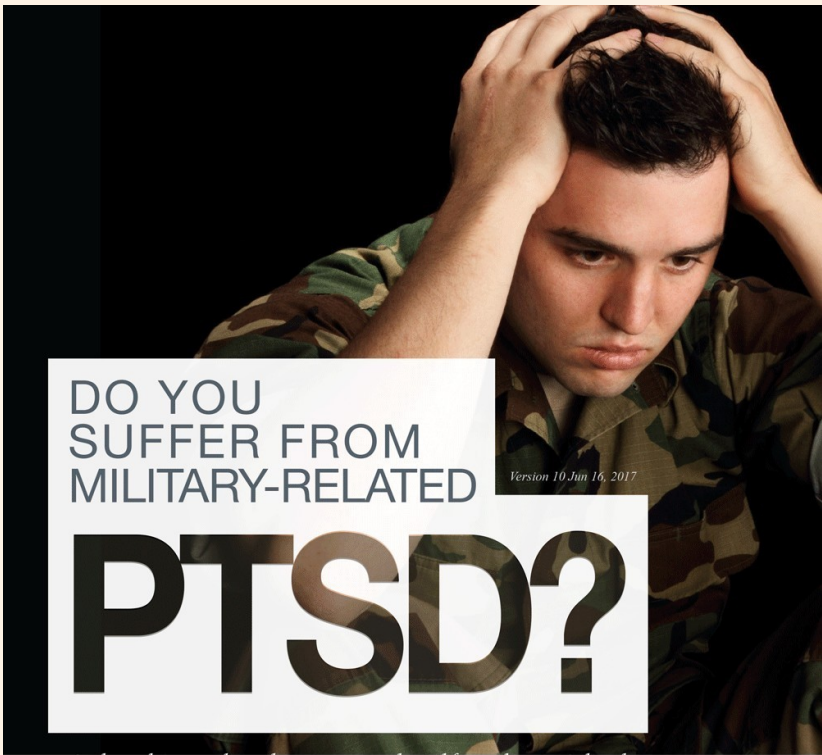
AMERICAN SOLDIERS

**WILLING TO DIE FOR THE COUNTRY
THAT ISN'T WILLING TO PAY THEM!**



Trump Signs Bill to Fund Veterans Programs

Today, President Trump signed the first appropriations bill of the year. The \$147.5 billion package includes full year appropriations for VA to start implementation of the VFW-supported VA MISSION Act of 2018, streamline the process for appealing decisions on benefit claims, reduce the rate of suicide among veterans, and modernize its electronic health care record. Full year appropriations for veterans programs was one of several important issues the VFW National Legislative Committee urged members of Congress to finish before the end of the year, during the VFW's Fall Legislative Conference. [Read the Joint Explanatory Statement for H.R. 5895.](#)



**Veterans Crisis Line:
1-800-273-8255 & Press 1
Ntl Call Center for Homeless Vets
1-877-424-3838**



Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study

On July 26, 2018, Representative Lee Zeldin (NY), introduced H.R. 6637, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act.

This bill would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Director of the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention of the Department of Health and Human Services, to conduct an epidemiological study on the prevalence of cholangiocarcinoma in veterans of the Vietnam era.

Bile duct cancer (cholangiocarcinoma) is a cancer of the biliary duct system, which includes the gallbladder, bile ducts, and certain cells inside the liver. One risk factor for bile duct cancer is past infection with tiny parasitic worms called liver flukes, which are found in the fresh waters of Southeast Asia. Veterans who ate raw or undercooked freshwater fish during their service in Southeast Asia, such as Vietnam veterans, might have been infected. Once eaten, the liver flukes grow to adulthood inside the human biliary duct system. The irritation and scarring caused by liver fluke infection can lead to bile duct cancer. Currently, there are no available studies to show that bile duct cancer occurs more often in Vietnam veterans than in other groups.

In accordance with DAV Resolution No. 090, we strongly support H.R. 6637 as it will help determine if this Vietnam

veteran environmental exposure can be linked to bile duct cancer.

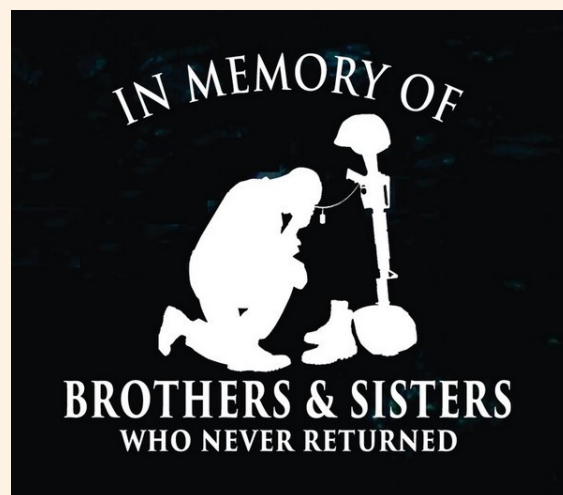
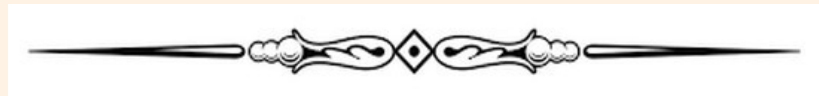
Please use the prepared electronic letter, or draft your own, to urge your Representative to support and cosponsor H.R. 6637. As always, we appreciate your support for DAV and your grassroots activism in participating in DAV CAN. Thank you for all you do for America's veterans and their families.

Take Action



VA to Hire 50 Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists

The Department of Veterans Affairs will hire 50 additional Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) specialists as part of the Veterans Treatment Court Improvement Act of 2018, which was recently signed by President Donald Trump. The law requires VA to hire these specialists within one year at eligible VA Medical Centers. “By signing this bill into law, President Trump is demonstrating VA’s commitment to supporting America’s veterans, particularly those who may be navigating difficult chapters in their lives,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Since incarceration is often linked to homelessness, mental health issues and substance abuse, the VJO specialists will help facilitate these veterans’ access to numerous VA programs and resources.” Created in 2009, the program currently funds 314 VJO specialists across the United States. [Read more.](#)



Senate Passes Defense Appropriations and VA Extenders Bills

On Tuesday, the Senate passed H.R. 6157, the Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019, which would provide full year funding for the Department of Defense, and the Department of Health and Human Services. The bill includes VFW-supported provisions to ensure death gratuity benefits are never delayed because of a government shutdown and to fund DOD research on Gulf War Illness and Burn Pits. The bill provides funding for DOD to implement the VFW-supported John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019. The Senate also passed S. 3479, the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2018, which will ensure the continuation of important veterans programs to provide child care, homelessness assistance, and travel reimbursement for veterans, and authorize VA to continue operations of the regional office in the Philippines. H.R. 6157 and S. 3479 await passage by the House of Representatives. Read a [summary](#) or the [text](#) of the defense appropriations bill. Read a [summary](#) or the [text](#) of the Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2018.





VA Nominees Advanced for Full Senate Vote

This week, the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs advanced the nominations of two potential candidates for VA's leadership. Dr. Tamara Bonzanto is nominated for Assistant Secretary for the Office of Accountability & Whistleblower Protection (OAWP), and Mr. James Paul Gfrerer is nominated for Assistant Secretary for the Office of Information and Technology (OIT). If confirmed, both would serve in critical roles within offices that have been under scrutiny in recent months. The OAWP was responsible for implementing the Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act last year, and overseeing the discharge and disciplinary actions against senior VA officials who failed veterans and VA employees. The OIT is tasked with overseeing the new Electronic Health Records program, a 10-year modernization of VA's records system which is considered one of the more substantial changes to VA's operating procedures in decades. The two candidates will now go before a full Senate vote for approval of their respective nominations.





VA-enrolled Veterans Eligible for Free Flu Shot

Now through March 31, 2019, all VA-enrolled veterans are eligible for free annual flu shots at their local Walgreens or Duane Reade pharmacy. While this immunization program is limited to VA patients, Walgreens offers flu shots to most VFW members and their families through other coverage programs, such as TRICARE, Medicare, and many health care plans. [Locate your closest Walgreens or Duane Reade.](#)



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



New Report on Veteran Services for Women

At the direction of Congress, VA has attempted to respond to the long-neglected medical needs of a rising population of female veterans. A new report was released by DAV last week that is a progress report on gains and remaining gaps in VA services for female veterans. For more details, see [this article](#).



TRICARE: No Referrals Needed for Those Affected by Hurricane Florence

TRICARE beneficiaries under mandatory evacuation orders in North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia may see a provider in any location without a referral from their primary care provider due to the impact of Hurricane Florence. The waiver applies to beneficiaries in approximately 40 counties where state governors have ordered evacuations as Florence approaches. Under the waiver, beneficiaries who have or may need to evacuate are not required to get a referral from their primary care provider to receive care in the community where they've evacuated. The waiver applies until Sept. 21. For prescription refills, if possible, visit the pharmacy where the prescription was filled. For a retail chain, one can fill the prescription at another store in that chain. If provider is available, he or she may call in a new prescription to any network pharmacy. Beneficiaries are advised to visit [TRICARE's disaster information page](#) for updates.



Links to Other Stories

1. [Army Veteran returns to annual TEE tournament in Iowa](#)
2. [At VA, Psychology is a career choice of many rewards – and demand is growing.](#)

3. [Bassfield Man Pleads Guilty to Bomb Threat Against Veterans Nursing Home](#)
4. [Help for Veterans with PTSD](#)
5. [How to Talk to Your Doctor about Trauma and PTSD](#)
6. [Keith Thompson earns top honors at National Veterans Wheelchair Games Dislocated shoulder during games](#)
7. [Maine VA helps Veterans rejoin society](#)
8. [Oceanside Man Admits to Stealing Benefits Intended for Widow of Military Veteran](#)
9. [Resources for Military Members Following a Hurricane](#)
10. [Secretary Robert Wilkie's message for Suicide Prevention Month](#)
11. [Severe Complications Rise Sharply Among Women Giving Birth in Hospitals](#)
12. [Types of Therapists](#)
13. [VA implements new fiduciary regulations](#)
14. [VA marks Suicide Prevention Month in September with 'Be There' campaign](#)
15. [VA to fund first national center of excellence for Veteran and caregiver research](#)
16. [Veterans Legacy Program: Maj. Charles Leonetti, Italian immigrant, Veteran of both World Wars, and well-known New York artist](#)
17. [Veterans Pension](#)
18. [What Can I Do If I Think I Have PTSD?](#)
19. [What's Stopping You? Overcome Barriers to Care](#)
20. [Women's Mental Health Services in the VA](#)

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



Changes Coming for Special Needs Family Benefits?

Military families with special needs members may benefit from a proposed policy update that would give them access to respite care. Currently, to receive such care through the Pentagon's Extended Health Care Option (ECHO) program, families must also qualify for and receive other ECHO program benefits, such as nursing, therapies or medical supplies. For more details on the proposed changes, see [this article](#).

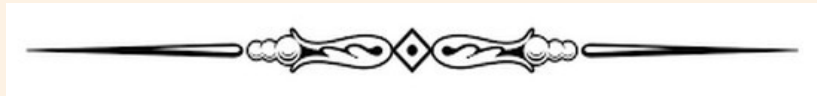


[CLICK HERE TO FOLLOW US ON TWITTER!](#)



Coming Soon: New Government Travel Card

A new government travel card is coming, due to a new contract with the card issuer Citi®. The card will go into place in November, and all military and civilian cardholders will be issued a new one. For details on potential problems to avoid with the new card, see this [Paycheck Chronicles post](#).



VA Marks Suicide Prevention Month

To mark Suicide Prevention Month this September, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is promoting effective ways to prevent veteran suicide with its [Be There Campaign](#). The campaign highlights the risk factors and warning signs for suicide, provides information about VA mental health and suicide prevention resources, and helps individuals and organizations start the conversation around veteran mental health in their communities. VA has also collaborated with community partners and is asking individuals across the country this month to share resources with veterans in their lives via the [Be There webpage](#). For more suicide prevention resources, visit the [Suicide Prevention page](#).



*** RED ALERT ***

**Everyone Call The Senate Committee
On Veterans Affairs Members Ask
Them To Support and Vote to pass
HR 299 Blue Water Navy
Vietnam Veterans Act Of 2018 to the
Full Senate for a Vote!**

**Jon Tester (D - MT)202-224-2644-Tony
Murray, Patty (WA)202-224-2621-Ryan
Sanders, Bernie (VT)202-224-5141-Matt
Brown, Sherrod (OH)202-224-2315-Anna
Blumenthal, Richard (CT)202-224-2823-Ethan
Hirono, Mazie (HI)202-224-6361-Adam
Manchin, Joe (WV)202-224-3954-Emily**

**Please Ask everyone to Make The
Calls and Share this with
Everyone!**

**Thank You Michael F Kvintus
Sr. BWNVVA
National Vice Commander**



Remembering an Uncommon Bravery

Today marks the seventeenth anniversary of the September 11th terrorist attacks on our nation. Whether you lost someone dear to you or watched the events unfold on television, that day continues to shape our lives and our nation. Each year, on Patriot Day, we honor and remember those men and women who lost their lives, and the brave men and women who helped save lives during and after the tragedy. It is important that we never forget the names and legacies of those lost; some who are laid to rest at VA national cemeteries across the nation.

Courageous men and women who served our country in uniform such as Melissa Barnes, U.S. Navy, buried at Riverside National Cemetery and Diana Padro, U.S. Army Veteran, buried at Puerto Rico National Cemetery died during the attack on the Pentagon. Others such as Sergeant Michael Curtain, U.S. Marine Corps Veteran, a member of the Emergency Unit of the NYPD, or Edward J. Martinez, U.S. Navy, an operations manager at Cantor Fitzgerald perished after the attacks on the World Trade Center buildings. Both are buried at Calverton National Cemetery alongside others we lost. At Quantico National Cemetery, Cheryle Sincock, wife of an Army Veteran, is laid to rest near two others who fell that day.

As VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said, “Despite the loss, we remain free, confident, and the beacon of hope for the entire world.”

We honor the uncommon bravery of these men and women, Veterans and spouses, and remain committed to ensuring their legacies never die. We will watch over them, in perpetuity—those who have been entrusted into our care. We will remember all who died that day. They are forever etched into our collective memory. I am

Sincerely,
Randy Reeves
Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs





TRICARE Changes Rules for Switching Plans

TRICARE has added to a list of circumstances under which users are permitted to switch plans, in anticipation of a new rule taking effect later this year. Currently, military families enrolled in [Tricare Select](#) or [Tricare Prime](#) can change plans for any reason. For more details, see this [article](#).



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U.S. Government Accountability
Office Reports

1. [Actions Needed to Improve Management of DOD's Biosafety and Biosecurity Program](#)
2. [Census Bureau Improved the Quality of Its Cost Estimation but Additional Steps Are Needed to Ensure Reliability](#)
3. [Expanded Use of Quality Measures Could Enhance Oversight of Provider Performance](#)
4. [Improved Data and Oversight Would Strengthen Cost Assessment and Fraud Risk Management](#)



Village for Homeless Veterans

The HELP Veterans Village is a new facility located near the Perry Point VA Medical Center in Annapolis, Maryland with 75 newly renovated and newly constructed units of energy-efficient housing built to serve at-risk and formerly homeless Veterans. The project created 75 units that will be entirely occupied by Veterans and their families and the possibility of almost completely free housing provided for by the HUD-VASH voucher program. Thirty-three of the buildings will be split into 66 one-bedroom apartments. For more information, read the [VA Vantage Point Blog](#).



Rocky Mountain Short Takes on Suicide Prevention

Both Suicide and IPV are serious public health concerns that affect many individuals in the general population and which share several factors associated with elevated risk. Such factors include poverty, employment and housing challenges, food insecurity, racism and gender inequality, and history of trauma and abuse.

Veterans may be disproportionately affected by these issues as well as additional factors, such as having experienced other traumatic events, substance misuse, traumatic brain injury, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and feelings of disconnection from family or friends. The impact of these challenges on an individual can be substantial, including affecting one's ability to cultivate and sustain close

relationships.

It is recognized that close relationships serve as protective factors, helping individuals overcome the negative effects of depression, trauma, and suicidal thoughts. Cultivating or strengthening healthy relationships significantly benefits the individual, partners and family while reducing risk for suicide and intimate partner violence alike.

Within the Veteran population, contextual/situational and bi-directional forms of IPV may indicate that stressors have overcome individuals' and couples' existing coping skills. Intervention can help couples build healthy communication and intimacy skills, especially when intervention occurs early. These programs and interventions address not only the identified IPV behaviors, but also provide the Veteran the opportunity to explore how trauma affected his or her ability to connect with others, to regulate emotion and to build trust again.

Drs. LeAnn Bruce, Keita Franklin and Lindsey Monteith discuss the intersection of intimate partner violence and suicide prevention in the podcast linked below.

[Listen to the podcast](#)



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



Base Exchange Thriving Despite Retail Slump

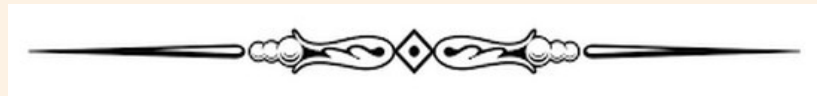
Stars and Stripes reports that the so-called retail apocalypse may be hollowing out shopping malls from coast to coast. But, the situation is different for servicemembers stationed overseas who can shop at on-base malls run by the U.S. Military. Exchanges and commissaries do not face the same threats as stores back home. Last year, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service reported \$376 million in earnings and generated \$219 million to support military quality-of-life programs such as on-base gymnasiums, bowling alleys and childcare centers. For more information, read the article on the Stars and Stripes [website](#).



Make Small Changes to Reduce the Risk of Childhood Obesity

September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. Did you know that obesity now affects 1 in 6 children and adolescents in the U.S.? Parents play an important role in preventing childhood obesity. You can help your kids develop smart food and exercise habits. And use your TRICARE benefit to help keep them healthy.

Read the full article [here](#).



Trauma Healing Courses in Your Community

REBOOT Combat Recovery is a 12-week, faith-based trauma healing course that is run by people just like you. REBOOT provides everything to run a successful course including curriculum materials, steps to help you build your team, and ongoing, personal leader support. Over 4,000 veterans and their families have been helped through REBOOT Combat Recovery. Visit [REBOOT's website](#) and bring healing to your own community by starting a course today.



U.S. FOOD & DRUG
ADMINISTRATION

1. BioLyte Laboratories Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall Due to the Voluntary Nationwide Recall initiated by King Bio Inc. (a Raw Material Supplier) for NeoRelief for Muscle Cramping and Restlessness Topical Gel Due to Possible Microbial Contamination
2. FDA alerts consumers not to use products distributed by Years to Your Health
3. Getinge Issues Worldwide Voluntary Correction of Maquet/Getinge Cardiosave Intra-Aortic Balloon Pump (IABP) For Interruption and/or Inability to Start Therapy at Altitudes above 3,200 Feet/975 Meters
4. Lidl Voluntarily Recalls Bellona Brand Hazelnut Wafers Due to Improperly Declared Wheat Allergen
5. Potential Eye Damage From Alcon CyPass Micro-Stent Used to Treat Open-Angle Glaucoma: FDA Safety Communication



TRICARE and College Students

TRICARE coverage of eligible dependents extends to [college students](#). Children are eligible for TRICARE benefits until age 21. But coverage extends up to age 23 for unmarried children of TRICARE-eligible sponsors, if both: (1) the child is a college student enrolled in a full-time course of study at an approved institution of higher learning; and (2) the sponsor provides over 50 percent of the child's financial support. If your student is heading to college, update the [Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System](#) to reflect this status. This will verify and ensure their eligibility for TRICARE. For more information on TRICARE options for college students or young adults, visit the TRICARE Going to College [webpage](#) or contact your [TRICARE Regional Contractor](#).



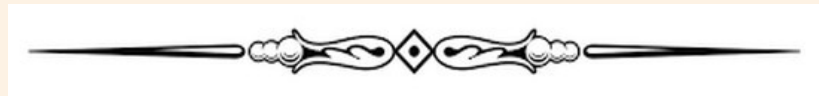


SURVIVAL IS FUN



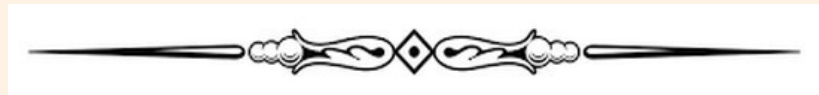
How to Access Community Care

Veterans may be eligible to receive care from a provider outside of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This is known as 'community care.' To see if you qualify: (1) schedule an appointment with a VA provider; (2) your VA care team will determine if you are eligible for community care; (3) Important: make sure VA confirms you are authorized; (4) find a community provider in the VA's network, and make an appointment; (5) arrive promptly for your appointment; and (6) if you need to schedule a follow-up appointment, check with your community provider to make sure VA authorized the care. For more information, read the [VA Vantage Point Blog](#).



VA Conducts Caregiver Study

VA researchers hoping to improve the experience of parent caregivers are carrying out a study that compares the effectiveness of two programs. One is called [Resources for Enhancing All Caregivers' Health in the VA](#) (REACH VA), a well-established behavioral program for caregivers. It involves one-on-one telephone sessions focusing on education, support, and skill-building. The other program is the control group. The researchers are recruiting 80 parent caregivers to participate in each program. For more information, read the [VA Vantage Point Blog](#) and this [article](#).



1. [Facts to help taxpayers understand Individual Retirement Arrangements](#)
2. [IRS extends upcoming deadlines, provides tax relief for victims of Hurricane Florence](#)
3. [IRS wants taxpayers to know they have rights when interacting with the agency](#)
4. [IRS warns of scams related to natural disasters](#)



MIA Update

This week, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced six new identifications, and the burial date and location for three previously identified servicemen.

Returning home with full military honors are:

Marine Corps Pfc. Roger Gonzales, 20, of San Pedro, Calif., whose remains were previously identified, will be buried Sept. 21 in Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif. Gonzales was a member of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division. On Nov. 27, 1950, Gonzales' unit moved northwest from Hagru-ri to Fox Hill at the Toktong Pass. In the early hours of Nov. 28, the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces attacked and Gonzales' company sustained heavy casualties. Gonzales was reported to have been killed in action on Nov. 29, 1950, and was buried at the base of Fox Hill. [Read about Gonzales.](#)

Army Cpl. Morris Meshulam, 19, of Indianapolis, whose remains were previously identified, will be buried Sept. 23 in his hometown. Meshulam was a member of Battery D, 82nd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion (Automatic Weapons,) 2nd Infantry Division. The division suffered heavy losses to units of the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces between the towns of Kunu-ri and Sunchon, North Korea. Meshulam was reported missing in action on Dec. 1, 1950. [Read about Meshulam.](#)

Army Pfc. Willard Jenkins, 27, of Scranton, Pa., whose remains were previously identified, will be buried Sept. 26 in his hometown. Jenkins was a member of Company C, 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division near Nijmegen, Netherlands. On Sept. 20, 1944, while participating in Operation Market Garden, his unit was ordered to cross the Waal River to make an amphibious attack. Jenkins was wounded in the chest by enemy fire. Because of the enemy activity in the area, a search could not be conducted and he was declared missing in action on Sept. 20, 1944. [Read about Jenkins.](#)

Army Pvt. Charles G. Kaniatobe was a member of Company A, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division. In July 1950, his unit was engaged in combat operations against the North Korean People's Army near Chonui, South Korea. Kaniatobe could not be accounted for and was declared missing in action on July 10, 1950. Interment services are pending. [Read about Kaniatobe.](#)

Army 1st Lt. Seymour P. Drovis was a member of Company A, 105th Infantry Regiment, 27th Infantry Division. In July 1944, his unit was engaged against enemy forces in Achugao Village, Saipan Island, Northern Mariana Islands. The division sustained heavy casualties during one of the largest Japanese "banzai" attacks of WWII. A soldier reported seeing Drovis fatally shot on July 7, 1944. Interment services are pending. [Read about Drovis.](#)

Army Staff Sgt. Karl R. Loesche was a member of the

3rd Pursuit Squadron, 24th Pursuit Group. On Dec. 8, 1941, Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands and forced the surrender of the Bataan peninsula on April 9, 1942. Loesche was among those reported captured, and one of the thousands who were eventually moved to the Cabanatuan POW camp. More than 2,500 POWs perished in this camp during the remaining years of the war. Interment services are pending. [Read about Loesche.](#)

Navy Seaman 1st Class Robert W. Headington was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, on Dec. 7, 1941, when the ship sustained multiple torpedo hits and quickly capsized, resulting in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Headington. Interment services are pending. [Read about Headington.](#)

Army Pfc. William H. Jones, of Nash County, N.C., was a member of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division. In November 1950, his unit engaged in attacks against the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces near Pakchon, North Korea. On Nov. 26, 1950, after his unit made a fighting withdrawal, he could not be accounted for and was reported missing in action. Interment services are pending. [Read about Jones.](#)

Army Master Sgt. Charles H. McDaniel, of Vernon, Ind., was a medic with the 8th Cavalry Regiment Medical Company supporting the regiment's 3rd Battalion. In November 1950, his unit was engaged with enemy forces of the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces (CPVF)

southwest of the village of Unsan, and east of Hwaong-ri, North Korea. He was reported missing in action on Nov. 2, 1950, when he could not be accounted for by his unit. Interment services are pending. [Read about McDaniel.](#)



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