



# **Veterans-For-Change Newsletter**

*A Voice of the Veterans*

Week Ending Sunday, July 11, 2021

Volume 12, Issue 28



## **This-N-That**

Good evening Jim,

This past week as truly been yet another very busy one.

We did finally manage to add 60+ new documents regarding Alzheimer's and week before we added 39 new weblinks. And now we're still working on articles and information on CPAP equipment which I anticipate being able to add this week.

I've posted a few new articles that rather upset me. One pertains to a Veteran who was enrolled into a mental health program.

He'd been instructed that anytime he was feeling pressure, or needed help with an issue to pick up the phone and call. And I

do hope all our Veterans would do this, it does work, it's proof your trying to heal, but now I need to also caution you.

If you're married, and separated please immediately change you back-up contact from your spouse to a close friend or family member on your side of the family.

I know there are a lot of good people in this world, but there also those who will use to their advantage anything they can, and in this case his spouse got a "well check" call on her husband and is now using that against him to reduce his visitation privileges.

And as you've seen in the past, I've posted countless articles on criminal activity on various health and medical issues because I want you to understand we still have absolutely no accountability and because a specific department loses millions or billions, those funds need to be replaced, and Veterans are always at the bottom of the pile when it comes to services, benefits and medical care.

So needless to say, it's very easy to manipulate budgets and transfer funds from one department to another and could explain why so many are denied benefits, or added benefits.

This time it was a Veteran scamming fellow Veterans, and for the life of me I will never be able to understand how one Veteran could bring harm or cause theft to another Veteran. I guess my point is please be mindful that no one is not victimizable.

We've not added any new legislation this time, but there are a number still listed, and I know you hate me continually asking, but please take the time to send each and every one of them.

With all that is going on in DC right now, we need to pull their focus back to day-to-day business, and distract them from all the miscellaneous mess they are attempting to do.

Still looking to hear from any of our Vets who have been approved for mental health and live a distance from your VA Medical Center and could go to a local clinic, but then have been denied access to the local clinic and told to come to the VA, or been given a financial issue excuse.

If you've not visited our website, [www.veterans-for-change.org](http://www.veterans-for-change.org) or not visited in a while, please be sure to check often for updates on documents, web links, etc., we are a bit slow, but are moving as fast as we can, yet not over-loading to put more work on our Webmaster when we get to the transition into the new look.

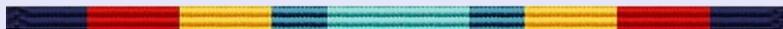
On behalf of our Volunteers nationwide and myself, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

[Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org)



## **VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE**

Chairman's Remarks

June was successful in many ways. We have a commitment from a Member of Congress to introduce a bill for Panama.



They are currently working on identifying co-sponsors to make the bill bi-partisan. Jerry Balmes, Section Chief for Veterans of Okinawa, came to MVA headquarters to work with me on a rule making request. The finished product was submitted to the VA later in June. The letter and supporting information are available on the MVA website.

Despite obstruction from Facebook, we were able to successfully complete our 3rd annual rifle raffle. We printed 300 tickets and sold all of them. Bottom line is that we made a profit of almost \$11,000.00. That sounds like a lot of money, but it will only pay for our two-week trip to Washington at the end of the month. We are taking 6 people. Hotels and plane fares are expensive. Congratulations to the winners!

Ricky from Gold N Guns Traders has invited us to share a booth next March at our local gun show to sell tickets. There will be no cost to MVA. Ricky has purchased our firearm prizes for the last two years. He makes little to nothing on those purchases. We appreciate his support and his willingness to forego profit to help MVA succeed.

We also had a sold-out event entitled "Breakfast with the Best" on June 26. Supporters from Southeast Louisiana and the Mississippi Gulf coast joined together to receive a briefing on MVA, our goals, and our accomplishments. We were happy to see our Parish President Mike Cooper, State Representative

Bob Owen, Judge Patty Oppenheimer, and Levee Board Chairperson Suzanne Krieger. Special thanks to our sponsors Michael Smith, St. Tammany Parish Council District #9 (also an attendee), the Law Office of John B. Wells (That's me folks!), Judge Beth Wolfe, Court of Appeals First Circuit, State Representative Mary Dubisson, Gold N Guns Traders, T. Leblanc's Creole Kitchen (the site of the delicious breakfast), and Dr. Brian Fong, MD (who also attended with his wife and son Bronson). Bronson interned with us in Washington on two occasions and is now a medical doctor in his own right. Watch out, Dad!

As I mentioned above, we are planning a trip to Washington the week of July 26. Susie Belanger has been lining up appointments for us. Our goal is 9 appointments per day. We probably will not meet that goal but we want to see as many folks as we can.

July 15 will be the one-year anniversary for our Executive Assistant Robin Barr. Robin came to MVA at a time when we were beginning to flounder administratively. We had just become a membership organization and we were going through growing pains from the merger. This included the need to merge our bank accounts and convert our accounting program to an online system. Robin is our only paid employee and she is well worth the money we pay her. She quickly took on the administrative avalanche and has straightened it out. She works on legislation and litigation as well as education and she is the editor of this newsletter. She keeps the board focused and gives the Commander a swift kick when I slack off. Happy anniversary Robin.

I also want to welcome Zac Greenway who has been interning

with us since June 1. Zac has just finished his second year of law school at Louisiana State University and has been working with Robin and Susie on our legislative approach. Currently MVA is supporting over 90 bills in Congress including toxic exposure, mental health issues, and benefits processing. Zac hit the ground running and has been a tremendous help. He has recently completed a detailed analysis of pending veterans' legislation in Congress and drafting letters of support. Welcome aboard, Zac!

I am a little disappointed in the lack of support for the MVA "Bill of the Week" program. We screen these bills closely to ensure they are veteran-friendly and not political. Yet we have very little participation. Sometimes we do not even have 100 folks taking the 10-15 seconds to send the email. We have only exceeded 200 participants on one occasion. We need to provide support for veterans everywhere. Please sign on, review our previous and current Bills of the Week, and send a pre-written email to your Member of Congress and Senators.

<https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/bill-of-the-week.html>

We have restarted our seminars and will be airing a combined seminar for veterans, Veteran Service Organizations, and Continuing Legal Education for attorneys. The date is August 21st and it will be done online. To register or for more information go to

<https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/seminaracle.html>. We hope to begin live seminars late this year or early next year. Please stay tuned.

Our litigation program is still going strong. We have had some setbacks but we are still pursuing cases at the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, Court of Appeals for the Federal

Circuit, and the Supreme Court. The government has asked for additional time to respond to our opening briefs in the Blue Water/Thailand case and the Guam/American Samoa/Johnston Island case. Their briefs are now due in August.

We will also be launching our summer Facebook fundraiser this week. As before we have an anonymous donor who will match all donations up to \$6,000.00. The fundraiser will run on Facebook through Labor Day.

I know that it always seems that we are asking for money and I guess the reason is that our travel costs to Washington and other areas are expensive. We will be attending the United States Submarine Veteran convention in Orlando next month followed by the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs convention in Reno in September. These meetings will allow us to ensure that our efforts are understood by the attendees but provides us recruiting grounds for additional membership.

Sadly, we have had to remove over 300 former members who did not renew their membership from the rolls. This was hard because we effectively lost 20% of our membership. We need to retain members to reach the 2000 member cutoff required for certification as a Veterans Service Organization. We also need to recruit new members.

The removal results in the denial of members services including access to members only Facebook pages. It is not too late to renew, however at [https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/store/c2/yearly\\_dues](https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/store/c2/yearly_dues). If you know someone who used to be a member ask them to renew. Additionally, your spouse or friends can also join.

Everyone gets one vote, honorably discharged veterans get two votes. Life memberships are available and gift memberships can be awarded to those in financial difficulties.

The August newsletter may be late because we will be in DC but it should come out shortly after our return. I hope you are all enjoying these monthly updates.

Until next month, God bless you and the United States of America.

John B. Wells  
Commander, USN (retired)  
Chairman



**Military Veterans Advocacy**

Military Veterans Advocacy is offering some free memberships for those who are struggling to get their claims through, are having financial difficulties. Annual dues are \$25.00 per year. Our organization includes special



sections, Blue Water Navy, Veterans of Southeast Asia, Central Pacific Islands, Veterans of Panama Canal Zone, and Okinawa. We have gift members available which can be paid by your fellow brother or sister Veterans. Gift members are kept confidential. Go to this link and help a Veteran.

[https://www.militaryVeteransadvocacy.org/.../c2/yearly\\_dues](https://www.militaryVeteransadvocacy.org/.../c2/yearly_dues)

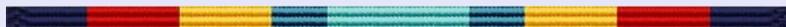
You may contact Robin at [robin.barr@madvocacy.org](mailto:robin.barr@madvocacy.org)



## **#VeteranOfTheDay Army Air Forces Veteran Ralph A. DiSpirito**

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Air Forces Veteran Ralph A. DiSpirito, who served in the 390th Bomb Group during World War II.

[Read More](#)



## **After nearly 600 combat operations, a Veteran faced invisible enemies**

He had a feeling of invincibility. He was the best of the best and could do anything he wanted. A year later he was lost and felt useless. Read how VA gave him the courage to keep pushing forward.

[Read More](#)



## **Veterans Lead QuickFire Challenge Series offers up to \$250k grants from Johnson & Johnson**

Veterans are nearly twice as likely to be self-employed. Learn more about an opportunity to submit potential healthcare solutions for the chance to receive up to \$250,000 in grant funding and mentorship from the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies. Apply by August 20, 2021.

[Read More](#)



## **Rural Mental Health Bill Becomes Law**

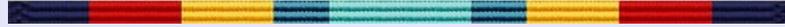
On Wednesday, the president signed into law VFW-supported [S.1468](#), the Sgt. Ketchum Rural Veterans Mental Health Act of 2021. Sgt. Brandon Ketchum served in the Marine Corps, completing tours in both Afghanistan and Iraq. In his first tour alone, he cleared 92 roadside bombs in 7 months – service that earned him a Combat Action Ribbon. In 2016, Sgt. Ketchum died by suicide after he was denied access to mental health services at a VA facility in Iowa, related to his battle with post-traumatic stress disorder. This law will require VA to report an assessment of health needs for rural and highly rural veterans and provide an account of VA’s outpatient mental health care, residential programs, and VA’s Rural Access Network for Growth Enhancement (RANGE) program cost savings.



**The most important job search strategy that you might not be using**

Networking can help take your job search to the next level, according to a VA recruitment expert.

[Read More](#)



## **Genetic testing – the new standard in treatment for advanced prostate cancer**

Genetic testing looks for variations in a person's genes. Finding gene variations can help with decisions about cancer treatment. Finding gene variations can also help to understand why cancer developed and how best to find cancers early or to prevent them altogether.

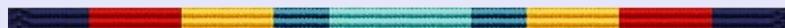
[Read More](#)



## **Borne the Battle: Air Force Veteran Denise Jelinski-Hall**

Denise Jelinski-Hall felt stuck in her small hometown of Little Falls, Minnesota, so she created a new future for herself by joining the Air Force. Years later, Jelinski-Hall became the highest-ranking enlisted female in United States military history.

[Read More](#)



## **National Park Access for Veterans Bill Introduced**

On Thursday, Rep. Miller-Meeks introduced the VFW-supported Veterans in Parks Act, which would provide free access to national parks and public lands for service members, veterans, and their families. This bill would codify the existing benefits of the annual [America the Beautiful Pass](#), ensuring that those who qualify for the pass would have a lifetime of free access to more than 2,000 of our nation's parks and federal recreation areas.

[Read More](#)



## Know the Warning Signs

**It Matters.**

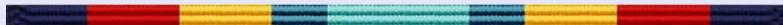
**Sometimes, a crisis may involve thoughts of suicide. Learn to recognize these warning signs:**

- Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings
- Feeling like there is no reason to live
- Rage or anger
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Increasing alcohol or drug abuse
- Withdrawing from family and friends

**The presence of the following signs requires immediate attention:**

- Thinking about hurting or killing themselves
- Looking for ways to kill themselves
- Talking about death, dying or suicide
- Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse

..... Confidential chat at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](https://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net) or text to **838255** .....



**Veggies-for-Veterans provides healthy food options for Veterans and community partners**

Phoenix area Veterans receive sacks full of fresh produce thanks to community sponsors, volunteers and VA staff. Veggies for Veterans is held five times a year to offer healthy food choices for Veterans.

[Read More](#)



## **5 inspiring stories honoring Veterans and their journeys, from AARP**

Not only does AARP provide practical news and information to help Veterans and military families stay healthy, avoid scams and find employment at [AARP.org/Veterans](https://www.aarp.org/Veterans), AARP also works to share unique stories of service. This month we are highlighting several stories about Veterans and their service experiences.

[Read More](#)



## **Monoclonal Antibodies Available to Treat Eligible High-Risk COVID-19 Patients**

There's a lot of information available about how to prevent COVID-19: get the vaccine, maintain social distancing, wear a mask, and wash your hands. But what can you do if you test positive for COVID-19? You may be eligible for treatment with monoclonal antibodies. This will depend on your age, health history, and how long you've had your COVID-19 symptoms.

[Read More](#)



## Women Veterans Needed for Million Veteran Program

The world's largest medical research biobank, Million Veteran Program, is [seeking women Veterans](#). There are 2 million women veterans in the United States, but only 75,000 have participated in the Million Veteran Program so far. In general women are often under-represented in biomedical research which can leave gender-specific health questions unanswered. By contributing a blood sample to the biobank, women veterans can help ensure that the research is more comprehensive. [Sign up today](#).



### *[Links to Other Stories](#)*

- [1. Georgia Man Sentenced for Stealing Medical Treatment Using Veteran's Identity](#)
- [2. Physician admits to assault charges](#)
- [3. Seven charged for roles in a \\$110 million compound drug scheme](#)
- [4. Manhattan Doctor Sentenced to More Than 17 Years in Prison for Bribery and Kickback Scheme, and for Distributing Oxycodone and Fentanyl for no Legitimate Medical Purpose](#)
- [5. Medical Device Companies Alere Inc. and Alere San Diego Inc. Agree to Pay \\$38.75 Million to Settle False Claims Act Allegations](#)
- [6. St. Jude Agrees to Pay \\$27 Million for Allegedly Selling Defective Heart Devices](#)

7. Owner of Spring Hill-Based Crestar Labs, LLC Charged in Massive Medicare Fraud Scheme
8. 'Captured by Grace': How Louis Zamperini survived the unthinkable by the grace of God
9. Vets demand Biden take action for Afghan interpreters, other allies
10. US Soccer denies women's team disrespected WWII Veteran before send-off match
11. Do student Veterans have adequate child care? Lawmakers want answers from VA
12. Army Veteran, GOP Senate candidate, accuses Twitter of flagging July 4 post of his salute in uniform
13. VA may start confronting 'extremism' among Vets nationwide
14. Fallen US Bombardier's Bracelet Tells Story of Secret Missions to Norway in Last Days of WWII
15. Veterans Affairs gets new regional health director
16. Iraqi war Vet says judge 'punished' him in custody case for calling VA hotline
17. TWC files \$100K lawsuit on behalf of disabled Veteran against Central Lubbock apartment
18. World War II B-17 bomber pilot to get his medals 77 years after last run
19. Air Force Veteran pleads guilty in scams to fleece other Veterans



**#VeteranOfTheDay Army Veteran Timothy Thorne Templin**

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran Timothy Thorne Templin, who served in an artillery unit in Germany during the Cold War.

[Read More](#)



## **Live Whole Health #78 – Moving to the Beat**

When you hear music playing do you automatically find yourself swaying, toe tapping, or feel like bursting out in dance? Well – you are not alone! Studies have shown that moving to the beat is built into our nervous systems.

[Read More](#)



**Take the pledge to help us continue to raise awareness!**

PTSD Awareness Month aims to raise awareness about effective PTSD treatments and resources that are available to Veterans. There are many ways you can get involved and help spread the word, but one way to start is by taking the pledge.

[Take the pledge today](#) and tell us about your individual or organization's local, regional or national involvement in raising awareness. We've also provided a space for you to suggest ideas and community events you find beneficial to those living with PTSD.

Help make a difference in the lives of Veterans and other who have experienced trauma.

Are you ready?

[Take The Pledge](#)



## **Blood Donation Need Still Critical**

The American Red Cross currently has a severe shortage alert in regards to lifesaving blood products. Hospital demand continues to outpace donations, so the Red Cross strongly urges healthy, eligible individuals who are feeling well to give blood, platelets, or plasma to help maintain a sufficient supply for those battling COVID-19, cancers, other infections, or trauma victims. Those who donate July 7-31, 2021, will receive a \$10 Amazon gift card via email and be automatically entered for a chance to win gas for a year. Please schedule an appointment using the Red Cross Blood Donor app, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org), or calling 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767).



## Suicide Prevention Resources for Military and Veterans

### **Military & Veterans Crisis Line**

1-800-273-8255, Press 1  
Text 838255, 24/7

**Vets 4 Warriors**  
855-838-8255

**InTransition**  
1-800-424-7877

### **Office of Warrior Care Policy**

warriorcare.dodlive.mil/

**Military One Source**  
1-800-342-9647

**Tragedy Assistance  
Program for Survivors  
[TAPS]**  
1-800-959-8277



## Oklahoma VA replaces all hospital beds

Jack C. Montgomery VA replaced all inpatient beds after listening to the concerns of Veterans and staff regarding comfort and safety. New beds are equipped with the latest hospital bed technology.

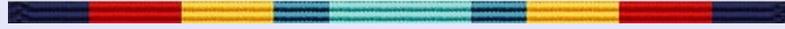
[Read More](#)



## Johnson & Johnson Veterans Lead QuickFire Challenge Series offers up to \$250k grants

Johnson & Johnsons' QuickFire Challenge Series offers Veterans up to \$250k in grant funding for their transformative health care ideas.

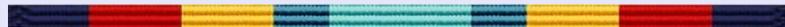
[Read More](#)



## **New VA tool uses artificial intelligence to predict COVID-19 patient mortality**

Tim Strebel is no stranger to the spirit of innovation. Currently a computer programmer focusing on health informatics at the Washington DC VA Medical Center, Strebel has been recognized by VA for his ingenuity.

[Read More](#)



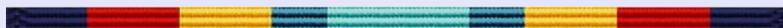
## **MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHIEF OF STAFF**

As you know we have lost one of the most hard working advocates we had. Not only did Carol do a lot for the Blue Water Navy Veterans, she did a lot on the local level as well as help many Widows fight their way through the VA maze. She was a very special lady and will be missed.

I get phone calls every week from Blue Water Navy Veterans asking questions about how to get help with their claim. I will suggest that they talk to their VSO and I usually get the response back that they have no idea what they are doing or they won't call back. There are some Very Good VSO's out there but with that said, there are even more that are only going to do the stuff that they need to do. They are not going to go that extra mile that may be needed. You have no idea how many VSOs call me to help them with something. We are always willing to help, as in the end it will be helping the Veteran.

I know I am sounding like a broken record (I'm sure you remember those) but we need everyone's help so that we can become a registered VSO so we can provide even more help to the Veterans who need it. We are not just helping Blue Water Navy Veterans, we are trying to help the Veterans who served on Guam, the Veterans who served in the Panama Canal Zone, the Veterans who served in South East Asia, the Veterans who served in Okinawa and Veterans who served in all other places.

Mike Yates  
MVA Chief of Staff



The title 'Veterans-For-Change Website' is centered within a grey rectangular box. This box is set against a background of a textured, abstract image with shades of blue, green, and brown, resembling a natural surface like wood or stone.

## Veterans-For-Change Website

The Veterans-For-Change website has been around since 2009, We've been around since May 2006. The looks pretty much stay the same for now, but in the background our new webmaster has been working on a whole new look and feel, a facelift so-to-speak. And we're sincerely hoping to roll out the new website sometime this coming July.

Constant improvement and change are 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, whatever 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 **3,589** hits per day, and downloads average **6,033** per day with a total **7,516,372** visitors as of Sunday evening.

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-

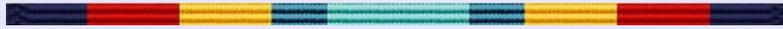
mail address so the system can send us a notification to approve your account. Once received, and we approve, the system will send you an E-Mail letting you know your account has been approved. Be sure to check your junk and spam folders just in case you don't receive it in your In-Box.

[www.Veterans-for-change.org](http://www.Veterans-for-change.org)

- Documents Library with over **19,602** documents in 237+ Libraries, added **66** new documents on-line (Updated: 07/07/21)
- FAQ's on-line with **1,843** FAQs on 104 topics! (Updated 05/30/20 - 46 NEW)
- 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: 04/23/20) (3 Added)
- News (Articles On-Line: **10,706**)
- Polls

- Web Links, more than **8,192**, Added 39 New Links (Updated: 06/25/21)

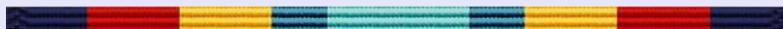
If you have a submission for the memorial pages, E-Mail:  
[Jim.Davis@Veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@Veterans-for-change.org)



## **Medical Foster Homes offer Veterans sense of family**

The VA Medical Foster Homes program is an alternative to placing Veterans in a nursing home. The homes are chosen by the Veteran from a list of homes that meet a nursing home level of care.

[Read More](#)



## **#VeteranOfTheDay Army Veteran Phillip Vander Weg**

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran Phillip Vander Weg, who served with the Golden Knights and was killed during the battle of Tri Nam in Vietnam.

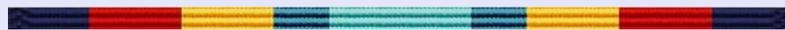
[Read More](#)



## **Innovation that serves women Veterans**

The Veterans Health Administration's Innovation Ecosystem (VHA IE) is the catalyst for enabling the discovery and spread of mission-driven health care innovation to advance care delivery and service that is changing and saving Veteran lives. The IE includes many innovations and programs that focus on women Veterans, specifically their health and well-being.

[Read More](#)



## **In Memorium Carol Olzanecki**

Military-Veterans Advocacy lost a key ally in our battle to extend toxic exposure benefits to veterans. Carol was a founding member of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association, which is now a section of Military-Veterans Advocacy.

Carol's struggle began in 2002 when her husband John, only 57 years old, died of complications from Agent Orange exposure while serving onboard the Bon Homme Richard. Carol applied for her widows benefits but the VA issued her a denial. It took Carol over four and a half years to prove her case. Four and half years that Carol spent calling Congressional members, conducting research, and traveling to Washington D.C. Eventually, she was able to prove that her husband had been on Vietnamese soil, winning her case. The experience left her troubled by the difficulty she faced and ultimately steeled her resolve to help other Blue Water Navy Veterans.

Carol was instrumental in the fight to ensure that others would not face the uphill battle she did. Herbicide exposure was not

the only issue Carol fought for. She sought to take any burden from veterans and their families that she could. In 2015, she took up the fight against PTSD after her son unfortunately passed following his own struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder. She was active in her local community and was responsible for organizing monthly luncheons and “Stand Down” events for veterans where they could arrange for things like personal care items, food, clothing, and help finding services like health care, housing, legal assistance and employment counseling.

Some MVA members had the honor of working with Carol on projects. MVA Legislative Director Susie Belanger described Carol as “The go to person for widows who needed help with their DIC benefits. I could not tell you how many widows she helped.” Mike Yates, MVA Chief of staff and Section Chief of the Blue Water Navy Section said “I had the honor of meeting Carol in Washington D.C. and was very impressed by her. Speaking with her you could tell she was a fireball, and you did not want to stand in her way. In my opinion and I’m sure in others, Carol was a hero to us”.

Carol was a valued member of this community. She gave her time and energy ceaselessly to the cause. Not only did Carol have the love and respect of those of us at Military-Veterans Advocacy and the Blue Water Navy Association, but she also had the respect, and sometimes, the fear of Members of Congress. She was admired and she will be sincerely missed.





**Jim**, below are links to all currently active pre-written E-Mails to many pieces of legislation. We ask that you go to each one, and send the pre-written E-Mails, and to also call your Reps or Senators and ask for their support on a weekly basis!

**Jim** you don't need to be Active Duty or a Veteran, in fact we ask all Veteran friends to also help! (Updated **07/03/21**)

Please note, we've added **0** new items to the **TAKE ACTION** list.

1. [HR 1014 - Furnish Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy \(HBOT\) to a Veteran who has a Traumatic Brain Injury \(TBI\) or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder \(PTS\)](#)
2. [HR 109 will establish an advisory committee on the implementation by the DVA of an electronic health record](#)
3. [Concurrent Receipt Legislation Introduced](#)
4. [Expand Concurrent Receipt](#)
5. [FRA and Others asks SecDef Not to Raise TRICARE Fees](#)
6. [H.R. 333, Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act](#)
7. [H.R. 344, Support the Women Veterans TRUST Act](#)
8. [H.R. 914, the Dental Care for Veterans Act](#)
9. [Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act](#)
10. [Oppose TRICARE fee Increases](#)
11. [S. 134/H.R. 637, the Veterans Economic Recovery Act of 2021](#)
12. [S. 437, Take Action for Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits](#)

13. S. 89, Ensuring Survivors Benefits during COVID-19 Act of 2021
14. STOP TRICARE Fee Increases
15. Support Bills to Expand Coverage for ChampVA and TRICARE Young Adults
16. Veterans Economic Recovery Act Introduced
17. Support Bipartisan Bill to Expanding COVID-19 Vaccine Access for Veterans and Families
18. H.R. 855, the Veterans Expedited TSA Screening (VETS) Safe Travel Act
19. HR 1355 and S 454. These companion bills will provide health care and benefits to Veterans who were exposed to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces at Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan.
20. Support Repeal of TRICARE Select Enrollment Fee
21. HR 1585 & S 565- Provide for the treatment of Vets who participated in the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll as Radiation Exposed
22. Please Support S. 344, the Major Richard Star Act
23. Support the Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act
24. S. 810 & H.R. 1972, the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021
25. HR 109 Establish an Advisory Committee on Implementation by the DVA of an electronic health record
26. HR 2372 and S 952 will Provide for Presumption of Service Connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to toxins
27. Please Ask you Senator to support S.952 the Warfighters Act
28. Support Improving VA Homelessness Program
29. S. 976, Caring for Survivors Act of 2021
30. H.R. 303, the Retired Pay Restoration Act
31. H.R. 912, American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans

## Mental Health Act

32. S. 976, the Caring for Survivors Act of 2021
33. HR 2269 and S 657 cover herbicide exposure in Thailand
34. Bipartisan Bill Introduced to Help Military Survivors
35. Legislation asks for Study of Involuntary Discharges for Women
36. H.R. 2436, the Veterans Burn Pit Exposure Recognition Act
37. H.R. 958—the Protecting Moms Who Served Act
38. HR 2127 and S 927, the TEAM bills Veterans Exposed to Toxic Substances
39. Ask your Senator to Support S.1520 Military Justice Improvement Act
40. Ask your member to support S.810 and H.R. 1972 The Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021
41. Ask your member and senator to support HR 2580 and S 1151 to provide for a presumption of service connected disability for certain Veterans who served in Palomares, Spain, and for other purposes
42. "Bold New Plan" for Veterans Toxic Exposure (S. 927/H.R. 2127)
43. Ask your Senator to Support S.1520 Military Justice Improvement Act
44. HR 855, VETS Safe Travel Act
45. HR 3368, the Guam, American Samoa, and Johnston Island bill
46. H.R. 2521, Delivering Optimally Urgent Labor Access (DOULA) for Veterans Affairs Act of 2021
47. H.R. 1273, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act
48. H.R. 2968, the Military and Veteran Student Loan Relief Act
49. H.R. 845, the VA Billing Accountability Act

- 50. Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Bill Introduced in House
- 51. S. 1031, Legislation Requiring a Study to Look at Disparities in VA Claims
- 52. Action Alert: Tell Congress to Support the COST of War Act and the Honoring our PACT Act!
- 53. HR 303 and S 1147 The Retired Pay Restoration Act
- 54. Ask Your Legislators to Support Concurrent Receipt Reform HR-1282
- 55. HR 1656 TREAT PTSD Act
- 56. S. 1664, the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Processing Claims Improvement



## **Fresh Focus S6 #33: Caring for the mealtime giver**

Families and caregivers are a Veteran's support system and help to prevent or manage chronic illness with healthy eating. Nutritionists want to support you!

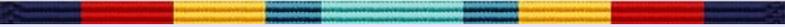
[Read More](#)



## **Veteran reclaims his confidence through Whole Health**

He started to receive Botox injections for his migraines in 2015 and was referred for acupuncture in 2019. "After my second round of acupuncture, I felt the best I had felt physically in years."

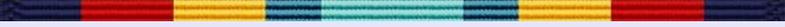
[Read More](#)



## Legislator Anker Honors U.S. Marine Corps Veteran Janis Henderson

Suffolk County Legislature hosted the 2nd Annual Women Veterans Appreciation Day Ceremony. During the ceremony, Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker recognized Janis Henderson as this year's Suffolk County Women Veterans Appreciation Day 6th District Honoree.

[Read More](#)



## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Susie Belanger, Director of Legislation

I am the wife of a US Navy Vietnam Veteran, mother of 3 children, grandmother of 4, and great grandmother of one. My work history is a collection of many types. I worked for a tug boat company in New Orleans when my husband Ernie served at NAS, New Orleans. I worked as a teacher's aide for multiple handicapped children, and as a home health aide. These were my main jobs

through out my working years.

I come from a strong military family. My Dad and his brother both served in the Coast Guard during WW2. My brother served in the Army in Germany, a cousin served as a medic during the Vietnam War in Korea, and his brother served in the Air Force in the Philippines with duty in Vietnam. This past year, my nephew graduated from Officer School and is an Ensign.

I began my journey as a veteran's advocate in 2002, when I discovered our Navy Vietnam veterans were stripped from their benefits for Agent Orange. My husband was denied benefits and that is when my journey began. After 2 years, we did get his benefits. What about the rest of his shipmates? I had no choice but to move forward. I decided to start a grass roots movement to restore these benefits. After recruiting many great people including veterans, wives, and widows, we accomplished that. My position with Blue Water Navy Association was special projects director. Between the passage of the Blue Water Navy Bill and the court case Procopio vs the Secretary of the DVA, our Blue Water Navy Veterans were finally granted their earned and deserved benefits. The photo above was taken on the day HR 299 passed on the House Floor. Congressman Valadao gave me a shout out on the floor. It moved me to tears. We merged with Military -Veterans Advocacy, Inc. created by CDR John Wells, USN retired. Our mission is to continue to move forward to make sure all veterans exposed to toxic substances receive their earned and deserved benefits in a timely manner.

Yes, it is possible for one person to make a difference as a leader, but not alone. It takes a TEAM or a village. Remember there is no "I" in the word TEAM. Veteran's issues are my

passion and I will continue to advocate as long as I am able.



## SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

### TALK:

- Killing themselves
- Feeling hopeless
- Having no reason to live
- Being a burden to others
- Feeling trapped
- Unbearable pain



### BEHAVIOR:

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Looking for a way to end their lives
- Withdrawing from activities
- Isolating from people
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Visiting or calling people to say goodbye
- Giving away possessions
- Aggression
- Fatigue

### MOOD:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Loss of interest
- Irritability
- Humiliation/Shame
- Agitation/Anger
- Relief/Sudden Improvement



## Not self, but country: Danny Dietz

Navy SEAL Danny P. Dietz was part of a four-man reconnaissance team tasked to kill or capture Ahmad Shah during Operation Red Wings.

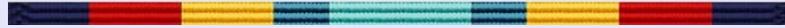
[Read More](#)



**For VA's Brandy Wade, making science straightforward is a mission and passion**

Today, Wade is a technology transfer specialist for the Technology Transfer Program (TTP), part of VA's Office of Research and Development. She also cofounded and directs Science for Georgia, nonprofit organization.

[Read More](#)



## **Stories of Honor: Depew woman, 100, served during WWII and 'would do it again'**

100 Year Old, #WWII, Women's Army Corps Veteran tells her story. We Honor your Service!

[Read More](#)



## **LEGISLATIVE NEWS**

## TEAM UPDATE



**LEGISLATIVE**  
*Update*

MVA Executive Committee members CDR John B. Wells, USN (Retired) and Susie

Belanger, as part of the Toxic

Exposure in the American Military (TEAM) coalition, held a meeting with House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) staff to discuss and compare the House and Senate veteran's toxic exposure bills, The Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act (H.R.3967), and The Comprehensive and Overdue Support for Troops (COST) of War Act (Senate). The Toxics (PACT) Act is a comprehensive toxic exposure omnibus bill introduced in the House and sponsored by HVAC Chairman Rep. Mark Takano (CA) and is comprised of several MVA-supported toxic exposure bills. The COST bill is sponsored by Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (SVAC) Chairman Jon Tester (MT) and is also comprised of several toxic exposure bills introduced in the Senate.

This HVAC bill is still in committee and the SVAC bill has passed out of committee and is awaiting further action on the Senate floor. Both sponsors have announced that they hope to pass their respective bills out of their chamber later this year with the goal of passing an agreed to bill before the end of the year. Many other legislators have expressed concern about the cost of this legislation. MVA wants to ensure that no veteran who had exposure to burn pits or other environmental toxins goes without access to VA health care benefits.



**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!**

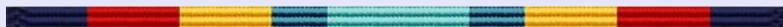
[www.veterans-for-change.org](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)



**#VeteranOfTheDay Marine Corps Veteran  
Wade Spann**

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Marine Corps Veteran Wade Spann, who served four years and multiple tours supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

[Read More](#)



**Borne the Battle #249: Denise Jelinski-Hall,  
3rd Senior Enlisted Advisor, National Guard  
Bureau**

Denise Jelinski-Hall felt stuck in her small hometown of Little Falls, Minnesota, so she created a new future for herself by joining the Air Force. Years later, Jelinski-Hall became – at the time – the highest-ranking enlisted female in United States military history.

[Read More](#)



## **Veterans Leadership Development Program - Virginia Beach, VA**

Seeking women Veterans for a Job Opportunity with Geico, Veterans Leadership Development Program - Virginia Beach, VA.

[Read More](#)



## **From the Desk of the Director of Social Media**

### **Agent Orange Survivors of Guam Rally**

On June 18, Agent Orange Survivors of Guam section of Military-Veterans Advocacy held a rally at Bay Pines VA Hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida to bring awareness to the Lonnie Kilpatrick Central Pacific Relief Act, HR 3368, sponsored by Delegate Michael San Nicolas (D-Guam-At Large).

Brian Moyer, USMC founding member of AOSOG, Renne Jo Villademoros AOSOG, Mrs. Lonnie (Sheila) Kilpatrick AOSOG,

Mrs. Lois Lively, Mr. Richard Fisher USAF, and Tom Walden USN, Director of Social Media for Military-Veterans Advocacy were there from 10:00am to 2:00pm at the main gate of Bay Pines Medical Center. We were interviewed by Spectrum Bay News 9 and WFLA Channel 8 News. With only 6 of us, we still really made a showing that day. We got a lot of response from the public, people going by blowing their horns and giving us a thumbs up.

We all really need to push this bill. It will help cover some of the ships that were left out by HR 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act. I ask each and every one of you to call your representative and ask them to co-sponsor and ask for the House of Veterans Affairs Committee to mark this bill up and send it to the floor for a vote. Our job is not done. Agent Orange is a silent killer. No matter what branch of service you served or where your duty station was, this is one of the deadliest chemicals known to man. So please, if you are not a member of Agent Orange Survivors of Guam Facebook page, we need you to stand up and support our brothers and sisters that served in this area.

If you live near a VA facility, you can do this too. If you need help organizing, please let me know and I can see what I can do for you. We need to get this out to the public so we can put pressure on Congress to move forward with this bill.

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/RaibowherbicidesofGuam/permalink/2844573422520489/>

#### Bill of the Week

If you have noticed the last few weeks, we have been pushing for you to participate in the Bill of the Week, this process only takes you a few seconds. Afterwards, it automatically sends a

letter on your behalf to your Representatives in the House and Senate. We have been getting a good response back from our Representatives from this process. We highly encourage each and every one of you to do this because it really is working. No matter what section you belong to, we are all Military-Veterans Advocacy. Visit our website to view all of the Bills of the Week <https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/bill-of-the-week.html>

### Membership

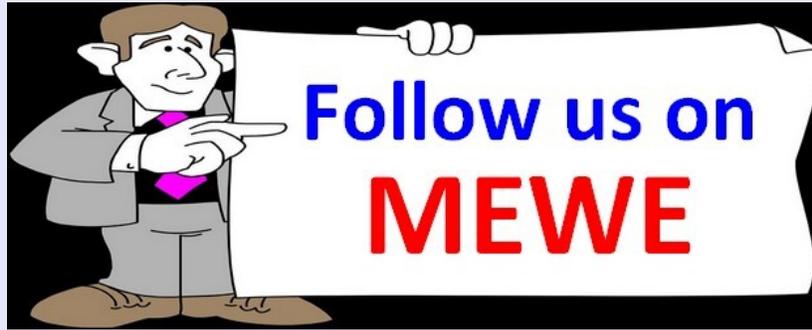
If you have not already become a member of Military-Veterans Advocacy, I strongly encourage you to do so. We still need to maintain 2000 paid members to become a viable VSO "Veterans Service Organization". If you are a member and have not paid your 2021 dues, please do so. We will only become stronger with more paid members. We need you to maintain our member numbers so we will be recognized in Congress and have a seat at the table with the House Veterans Affairs Committee and the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee when they meet with other Veteran Service Organizations. I believe if we had been a reputable VSO today, we would have a lot more vessels covered.

As of today, we have 1,314 paid members. I ask you to join MVA today

[https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/store/c2/yearly\\_dues](https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/store/c2/yearly_dues).

Capt. Thomas L. Walden USMM Ret.  
Military-Veterans Advocacy  
Director of Social Media





Follow us on [MEWE](#)! The support staff at [MEWE](#) is responsive, open to suggestions and works very hard to protect your personal information.

We hope you will join us on this new site.

[VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE](#)

[HOMELESS HEROES PROGRAM OF VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE](#)

[AMVETS GROUP](#)

[VETERANS SOCIAL GROUP](#)

[{USAVET} SUPPORTING GOD & ALL WHO SERVED OUR GREAT NATION](#)

[AMERICANS FOR SOVEREIGNTY](#)



**Hope after PTSD... Special Forces  
commando finds peace of mind**

Special Forces commando Hird was at the top of his game. He was well-respected, in a stable relationship and had his act together. Nothing could rattle him. Until it did. Here's his story of recovery.

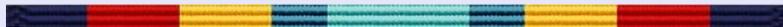
[Read More](#)



## **#VeteranOfTheDay Army Air Forces Veteran Neil Simon**

On the anniversary of his birth, today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Air Forces Veteran Neil Simon, who served from 1944 to 1946 and became a Broadway legend.

[Read More](#)



## **Wyoming-based nuclear missile force gets new commander**

Wounded Warrior Project releases a white paper on "Women Warriors: Understanding PTSD Risk in a Rapidly Growing Population."

[Read More](#)



## **NCA Lifts Restrictions on Attendance at Committal Services, Adjusts COVID Safety Precautions**

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs'

National Cemetery Administration (NCA) announced it would lift all restrictions on gathering sizes at committal and memorial services in VA national cemeteries starting on Wednesday, May 26, 2021.

Earlier the NCA adjusted its rules for visitors and staff members in accordance with the CDC's new guidance, Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People. Fully vaccinated persons are no longer required to wear masks and physically distance themselves while at a national cemetery.

"This is an important step in restoring full operations," said Acting Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Ronald Walters. "We are pleased families will no longer have to limit the number of people attending a service or physically distance themselves from each other after they are fully vaccinated."

Limitations on the number of persons permitted to attend committal and memorial services have been in place since June 9, 2020. Between March 23 and June 8, 2020, VA national cemeteries only performed direct interments, and did not permit committal or memorial services due to the pandemic.

Consistent with the new CDC guidance, NCA will still require persons who are not fully vaccinated to practice the safety procedures recommended by the CDC – such as wearing face coverings and maintaining physical distancing – while visiting a cemetery or attending a service.

The NCA oversees 155 national cemeteries and provides grant funding to an additional 118 state, territorial and tribal cemeteries across the nation. More than 93% of Veterans

living in the U.S. have access to a free Veterans burial option within 75 miles of where they live.

For more information, contact Les' Melnyk of National Cemetery Administration Public Affairs at [Les.Melnyk@VA.gov](mailto:Les.Melnyk@VA.gov).



## Office of Inspector General

1. [VA Disability Benefits: Veterans Benefits Administration Could Enhance Management of Claims Processor Training](#)



### **Extreme heat: How to stay cool, hydrated and informed**

There's hot summer weather, and then there are heat waves or extreme heat. Much like other natural disasters, extreme heat can be very dangerous.

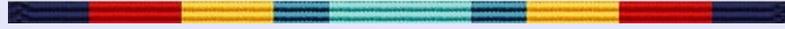
[Read More](#)



### **Robert Sidney: The Dancing Master Sergeant**

Army Veteran Robert "Bob" Sidney played an unusual role in the Allied efforts during World War II – he was a dancer and choreographer.

[Read More](#)



## **Army staff sergeant will make history when she boxes for Team USA at Tokyo Olympics**

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Naomi Graham from Fayetteville, N.C., will be the first woman active-duty U.S. service member to box for gold, according to Team USA. #VAWomenVets

[Read More](#)



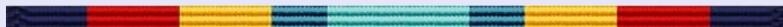
**BLUE WATER NAVY ASSOCIATION**

As you know we are trying to increase Membership. I'll ask again that you help us gain Members. If you read my piece in the Chief of Staff article, I explained something about VSO's. Here another fact, most know what a Deck Log is and they have no idea what to do with them except submit them. You'd be surprised how many calls or emails I get from a VSO asking for help in getting the Deck Log for their client. They need proof that their client was in the Territorial Seas and they are coming to the experts to find the Deck Log they can use. I have even been told by a couple of them that you can't use a Deck Log that does not show the 0800, 1200, or 2000 does not show that the ship was within Territorial Seas. They have no clue on what Dead Reckoning is or how to even begin doing it.

I have been reaching out to more Ship's Facebook Pages and making posts about some of the things we are doing. Please reach out to the other Facebook Pages you belong to and suggest that they join our organization.

Mike Yates

Director, Blue Water Navy



1. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: July 6, 2021
2. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: July 9, 2021
3. FDA Approves Drug to Reduce Risk of Serious Kidney and Heart Complications in Adults with Chronic Kidney Disease Associated with Type 2 Diabetes
4. FDA Drug Shortages
5. FDA In Brief: FDA Issues Systems Recognition Draft Guidance
6. FDA warns that vapors from alcohol-based hand sanitizers can have side effects
7. FDA's Budget: Data Modernization and Enhanced Technologies
8. Potential Biocompatibility Concerns with NuVasive Specialized Orthopedics' Precice Devices – Letter to Health Care Providers
9. Quidel Recalls Lyra SARS-CoV-2 Assay (M120) Due to Risk of False Negative Results



## **Winning design selected in the 2021 Veterans Day poster contest**

An author-illustrator of children's books and advocate for military families is this year's Veterans Day poster contest winner.

[Read More](#)



**Happy Independence Day from VA**

"The peace and freedom we enjoy as Americans have been secured by the sacrifices of generations of Veterans. It is a privilege to serve our Veterans and their families." VA Secretary Denis R. McDonough

[Read More](#)



## **Governor Abbott Announces Outstanding Women In Texas Government Award Recipients**

ICYMI Office of the Governor Greg Abbott Announced 2020 Outstanding Women In Texas Government Award Recipients: Outstanding Community Involvement: U.S. Army #Veteran Krystle Matthews, Women Veterans Program Manager, Texas Veterans Commission. Congratulations.

[Read More](#)



## **AGENT ORANGE SURVIVORS OF GUAM**

We are currently promoting HR 3368, the Lonnie Kilpatrick Central Pacific Relief Act. To date we have 432 co-sponsors. Additionally, this bill has been incorporated into the discussion draft of the two omnibus bills, Senator Tester's COST of War Act and Congressman Takano's Honoring our PACT bill.

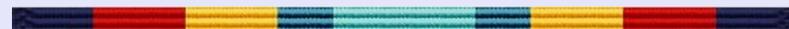
The remaining problem with the bill is the start date of January 1962 instead of August 1958. MVA Chairman CDR John B Wells and Legislative Director Susie Belanger met, along with the TEAM coalition, with the House Veterans Committee (majority) staff. They are reviewing the issue now.

HR 3368 was a previous bill of the week. If you have not sent emails in support, please sign on to our bill of the week:

<https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/bill-of-the-week.html>

Please also note Tom Walden's report on the successful demonstration at Bay Pines VAMC in Tampa.

Thanks Tom!



*CLICK HERE TO FOLLOW US ON TWITTER !*



## #VeteranOfTheDay Army Veteran Pallas Wahl

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran Pallas Wahl, who served for 37 years in the Massachusetts National Guard and deployed to Iraq.

[Read More](#)



## Summer Fun Straight Ahead

Enjoying summer safely - like drinking plenty of water, wearing sunscreen, and wearing a life jacket around water - is the best way to enjoy summer.

[Video](#)



## VA's Million Veteran Program wants thousands of more women to sign up for genetic study

The Veterans Affairs Million Veteran Program has almost 1 million veterans, but it needs more women Veterans. Learn more here: [#BringWomenVeteransHome2VA](#)

[Read More](#)



## VETERANS OF PANAMA CANAL ZONE

In the news...This is unfortunately old news – still waiting for

an answer from the new VA Secretary regarding our Rulemaking Request.

<https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/vets-of-panama.html>.

We have received a letter back from the VA Undersecretary. It is not a No, not a Yes, but a “we are still reviewing the evidence.” I am still hopeful that the VA Secretary will someday soon add Panama to the list of places where dioxin (TCDD) was used based on the clear evidence of the U.S. Commerce records and the testing that was done by Aberdeen for its presence.

Wins recently for Panama CZ veterans...We have had a handful of veterans win in 2020 by using these shipment records. The judge ruled in favor of the veteran due to “overwhelming evidence” when speaking of the U.S. Census records. The shipments from 1958-1977 can be seen in the references attached to our Rulemaking Request.

Asked for a bill to be introduced in Congress...Our Legislative Director, Susie Belanger, scored a meeting on May 21, 2021 with a Congressional aide and Commander Wells, Susie, our Administrative Assistant Robin, and myself met electronically since DC was still on lock down mode. The aide has assured us that the Congressional Representative is onboard with introducing a bill for Panama veterans. This is Great News!

Sad news to report. The Panama Bill did not come out yet and the aide we are working with is now hopeful before the Congressional recess in August. Once we have a bill number, then we will all get busy contacting our representatives asking for their support of our bill. The Panama bill would then become one of our Bill of the Week pushes.

Too many bills die due to lack of support...If you haven't been participating in our Bill of the Week, we ask you for your support to please do so. There are many veterans bills which are very important to many of your brothers and sisters which just end up dying in Congress for lack of support. Each week the MVA puts forth a Bill of the Week and ask each of you to support. It takes just seconds and is very important to gain support in the Congress to get our voices heard.

The MVA spends a lot of money each month for your benefit to make it easier for you to support Veterans bills. Please help us help you by going here

<https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/bill-of-the-week.html>

every Monday to support the newest bill. Pretty soon you will see a Panama bill and I would hope each of you will help get the Panama bill across the finish line and have your voices heard once it is posted. But all veterans bills are important to someone and could use your support! We make it easy with our Bill of the Week!

Speaking about spending money...I had the bright idea to ask businesses to round up at the Point of Sale to raise money for the MVA and it got me a new position! Director of Fundraising! If you are a business owner or know of a business owner, please ask if they would ask their customers to round up. Put them in touch with me so it all works seamlessly. We use the membership and other donated money to help all of you in our collective fight for benefits for each group. The MVA deeply appreciates all of your continued support! Congratulations to the recent winners of our latest raffle. Watch for more raffles on the MVA website in the near future. It seems Raffles are a great avenue for fundraising. I'm new at this position, so if you have an idea, feel free to reach out to me.

New members missing...Thank you for your support! Some new members have not found the MVA Panama FB members only FB page. My apologies. I'm having an issue inviting people from within the Panama FB page. To get around this FB issue, I am sending you a personal email. It will come from [donna.tornoe@madvocacy.org](mailto:donna.tornoe@madvocacy.org). Please look in your junk email if you have not gotten an invite from me once you have become a member of the MVA Panama section. As well, you can go to the "joining area" on my Panama MVA members only FB page by going here.

Another way to support the MVA...There are other ways to support us other than membership. We are a Nonprofit, a good place to make donations for tax purposes. And if you shop on Amazon, if you would just put a smile in the URL, you can pick the MVA as the place Amazon will donate a small sum to. The prices are the same, but Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to Military-Veterans Advocacy Inc. Bookmark the link <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/38-3890520> and support us every time you shop.

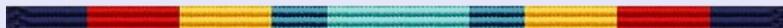
Lastly...a BIG THANK YOU for your continued support in this journey. And a BIG THANK YOU to the members who have recently joined. We need membership to be heard. Together we can cross the finish line. Please ask all of your contacts to join and support and donate to help our effort.

Your support is greatly appreciated!

Donna Tornoe

Director, Veterans of Panama Canal Zone





## **Opioid Overdose Rescue a first-aid kit must have**

A passionate team of Reno pharmacists is on the forefront of the VA Opioid Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution Program. They educate Veterans on the importance of overdose rescue kits.

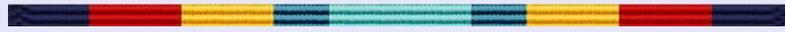
[Read More](#)



## **Safety Tips for the 101 Critical Days of Summer**

COVID-19 restrictions are relaxing, which means we'll be able to enjoy more summer fun. Here are some of our best tips for enjoying summer safely.

[Read More](#)



## **VFW Honors Women Veterans**

Live Oak County VFW POST 6119 honors women #Veterans on June 12th.

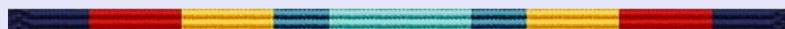
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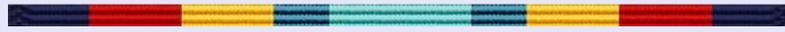
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**Celebrating independence with adaptive sports and therapeutic recreation**

America's Warrior Partnership empowers Veterans to find their ideal recreational program through services such as the Four Star Alliance and The Network

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## **Have Fun, Stay Safe with Tips from TRICARE this Summer**

Vaccinated and ready for summer fun? Be safe this summer but know your options for care if something does go wrong.

[Read More](#)



## **Veteran gives women 'overdue' memorial**

Kokomo, IN: Faith, Honor Duty. Women's Legacy Memorial, led by Howard County Veterans Memorial will continue construction on the memorial this summer. Current plans are to have it dedicated on Friday, Aug. 6, during First Friday.

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[www.veterans-for-change.org](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)



## **VAntage Point gets new look, mobile integration**

VAntage Point, the official VA blog, will be down July 11 for maintenance. The site redesign will include functional efficiencies, a more modern appearance and full mobile integration.

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## **After nearly 600 combat operations, a Veteran faced invisible enemies**

He had a feeling of invincibility. He was the best of the best and could do anything he wanted. A year later he was lost and felt useless. He had hit rock bottom and wanted to go away forever.

Read how Chris VanSant found the courage to work hard, keep pushing forward and recover.

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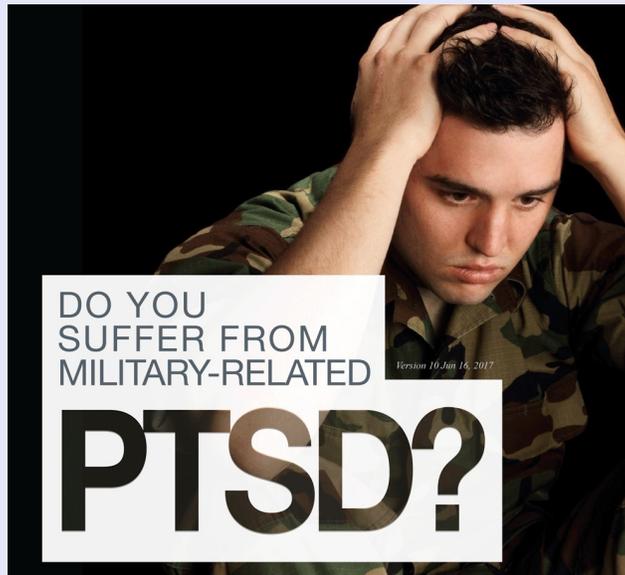


## Woman Veteran of the Week #LOCWVW - Catherine Vail

Catherine Vail got her first taste for flying on a teen date with a boyfriend, who had a pilot take them for a ride in a small plane. In college at Berkeley College, she signed up for the Civilian Pilot Training Program and obtained her pilot's license. When aviator Jacqueline Cochran began forming the group that would become the #WASP, Vail interviewed with her and was hired as her personal secretary. Cochran would make an exception for Vail and other young pilots with less than the required flying time, and Vail became a member of the second class of WASP to graduate. She flew over 1000 hours, doing ferrying work all over the U.S., while her husband, whom she married in June 1944, served as a pilot in the Pacific Theater. She admits her life's biggest disappointment came when the WASP were deactivated in December 1944, with so much experience behind them and so much still to offer to the war effort. Catherine's story can be found at her Library of Congress Veteran History Project page.

[Read More](#)





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



## **Traveling eye care pilot program launches in Wyoming**

Cheyenne VA in Wyoming has launched a pilot program to expand mobile eye care. This Technology-based Eye Care Services (TECS) program brings specialty eye care services to underserved Veterans.

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## **Army Veteran finds purpose in Adaptive Sports – and a new career**

After a spinal injury left her in a wheelchair, Army Veteran Desiree Emilio-Duverge reinvented herself by embracing change, learning to use adaptive equipment and finding a new passion in adaptive sports. "It changed me to my core," she said. "I needed adrenaline, not pity."

She also embraced possibilities for a new career, which is what led her to Compensated Work Therapy.

[Read More](#)



## **Women Veteran's Program hosts drive-through baby shower**

VA Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System Women Veterans Program Manager, held a drive thru baby shower.

#BringWomenVeteransHome2VA

[Read More](#)



**Job opportunity: Keep Veterans safe as a VA law enforcement officer**

Want to help Veterans receive reliable medical care in a safe environment as a member of the VA police force? This month, as part of our celebration of VHA's 75th anniversary, we're highlighting this critically needed occupation, which is near the top of our nonclinical career shortage list. Modern police force Our 4,000-member team of officers, supervisory officers and detectives staff VA medical facilities throughout the country. "In VA law enforcement, you'll play a critical role in ensuring that Veterans receive the care they deserve as safely as possible," said Darren Sherrard, associate director of recruitment marketing. We are building ...

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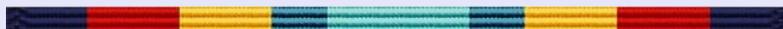


## **Cancer patient's final treatment ends with a victory bell**

After eight weeks of radiation treatments and chemotherapies for throat cancer, Veteran Anthony Thomas received his last radiation dose but still had one final step before recovery: ring the victory bell.

"To ring that bell, you've earned it. I've earned it. I really have," said Thomas. "To me, it's a glorious feeling because that bell means it's over."

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**#VeteranOfTheDay Navy Veteran Cristie Rimmel**

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Navy Veteran Cristie Remmel, who served as a corpsman for field Marine force during Operation Desert Storm. After graduating high school, Cristie Remmel joined the Navy as a hospital corpsman.

We honor your service, Christie!

[Read More](#)



## **#VeteranOfTheDay Navy Veterans Hawley C. Spradlin and Ruth Marie Nicholson Spradlin Cutlar**

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay are Navy Veterans Hawley Spradlin and Ruth Marie Nicholson Spradlin Cutlar, who served as aircraft mechanics during World War II.

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## **Veteran reclaims his confidence through Whole Health**

Marine Corps Veteran Christopher Young, a former athlete, became immobile due to migraines and other health issues. "It messes with your spirit," he says. "I know what good shape is and I knew I wasn't in good shape."

Now, thanks to his work with Whole Health at Orlando VA, Young has lost 23 pounds and kept it off through healthy eating and exercise. "I just feel happy to be alive and I feel much more outgoing now," he says.

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## **You Asked, We Answered: What do I need to know about the Delta variant of COVID-19?**

VA is listening to your questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and this blog series answers your questions. Want to ask a question?

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The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced four

burial updates and two new identifications for service members who have been missing and unaccounted-for from World War II and Korea. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

**Marine Corps Sgt. Donald D. Stoddard**, 22, of Boulder, Colorado, was a member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands, in an attempt to secure the island. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded, while the Japanese were virtually annihilated. Stoddard died on the third day of battle, Nov. 22, 1943. He was buried June 26, 2021, in his hometown. [Read about Stoddard.](#)

**Navy Electrician's Mate 3rd Class Alphard S. Owsley**, 23, of Paris, Kentucky, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Owsley. He will be buried Aug. 5, 2021, in his hometown. [Read about Owsley.](#)

**Navy Pharmacist's Mate 3rd Class George L. Paradis**, 23, of Yelm, Washington, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Paradis. He

will be buried on Oct. 7, 2021, at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. [Read about Paradis.](#)

**Navy Electrician's Mate 3rd Class George M. Gooch**, 22, of Laclede, Missouri, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 2021. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Gooch. He will be buried Oct. 9, 2021, in his hometown. [Read about Gooch.](#)

**Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. J.L. Hancock**, 21, was a member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands, in an attempt to secure the island. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded, while the Japanese were virtually annihilated. Hancock died on the third day of battle, Nov. 22, 1943. Interment services are pending. [Read about Hancock.](#)

**Army Cpl. Walter A. Smead**, 24, was a member of Battery A, 57th Field Artillery Battalion, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 6, 1950, after his unit was attacked by enemy forces as they attempted to withdraw near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Smead.](#)



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