The PASC Newsletter

May, 2019

Vietnam Veterans of America
Pennsylvania State Council

A Congressionally Chartered Veterans Service Organization

Memorandum

From Desk of Lee Corfield, PASC Secretary

To All VVA Chapters

Date June 1st and 2nd

RE Pennsylvania State Council Weekend

There will be a Presidents Meeting for all the Chapter Presidents for PA at

10:00 AM Saturday Morning - June 1st, 2019 @ the Ramada Inn.

The Pa State Council will pay 1/2 your room rate for the stay on Friday night, May 31st so that you will already be there for the 10:00 AM meeting on Saturday. You won't have to wake up early and make that drive.

***Now* - If you as your Chapter President can not make it, you may send one of your Vice Presidents or one of your Elected Officials to take your place. You must let us know who is going to represent your chapter. "You" must make your own room reservations.**

Election and Financial Reports Must Be Filed

Reports must be filed with the following:

(1) Election and Financial Reports to VVA National (Forms are on the website at the bottom under "Resources"

(2) Internal Revenue Service

(3) Pennsylvania VVA State Council (Lee Corfield)

(4) Pennsylvania Division of Corporations and Charitable Organizations

Please keep in mind your Board of Directors bears a fiduciary responsibility in all fiscal matters.

Purple Heart recipients are already treated on a priority basis at VA Medical Centers across the country, and are exempt from co-payments for their medical care. Including their initial disability claims in VAB's priority claims processing will further improve their over all experience with VA, and shows the department's commitment to improving the claims process.

"Those who hold the Purple Heart, the recognition of wounds taken in battle, will now receive priority consideration when it comes to claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs."

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie

We want to hear your GI Bill story!

When did you use it? What did you do with it? Where did you go to school? Did you connect with other Veterans in school? We will be featuring your "My GI Bill Story" videos to celebrate the 75th GI Bill Anniversary this summer. Submit before June 22, 2019. No personal information other than your name will be made public.

We're Hiring - Apply Now!

The Census Bureau is hiring temporary employees for the 2020 Census. Our jobs offer weekly pay, competitive pay rates, flexible hours, and paid training. By joining the 2020 Census team, you can support your community while getting paid to do it.

Prolonged Exposure Therapy — Does it Work?

What is prolonged exposure therapy and how does it work? According to VA's National Center for PTSD, prolonged exposure therapy teaches Veterans to gradually approach trauma-related memories, feelings, and situations that they have avoided revisiting since experiencing trauma. Confronting these challenges can decrease PTSD symptoms.

"You keep repeating [the memory] and reliving it until it seems normal to you," says Scott, a U.S. Navy Veteran. "It seemed to help quite a bit."

Follow the VA on RallyPoint - the world's largest military network

1.6 million servicemembers, Veterans, family members, government civilians, caregivers, and survivors are engaging on this social network, and VA recently signed a MOU with RallyPoint. There are more than 425K Veteran-centric discussions on the platform. It's a great place to ask (or answer!) questions like "How do I get my Army Medical Records to submit a VA claim?" "When does the VA pay out travel pay?" and "When can I expect my first disability check?"

Take this 25-min Suicide Prevention Course, Save a life

The PsychArmor S.A.V.E. training is free, and it only takes 25 minutes! The course is designed in partnership with VA to help anyone learn how to identify the *signs* of suicide risk in a Veteran, *ask* the Veteran questions, *validate* the Veteran's experience, *escort* the Veteran to care, and *expedite* treatment. Discuss on RallyPoint

- … Congress is considering several measures focusing on airborne hazards
- … War on terror vet wins back postal job after 14 years
- … VA proposes new AFGE collective bargaining agreement
- … Gold Star Mother "shocked" by new tax bill on son's survivor benefits
- … The March to Memorial Day
- … VA and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announce agreement
- … VA opposes bills broadening medical marijuana usage for veterans
- … Nominations for "VSO of the Year" award
- … VVA National Convention

Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1

"Today, I'm Sober For 31 Years"

MAKE THE CONNECTION

John was just 21 years old when he went to Vietnam — and it was the first time he had ever been away from home. "It became very real right away."

"I came on home and tried to put it behind me," the U.S. Army Veteran says. He attempted to suppress the trauma through drinking and "doing a lot of things I regret." Hearing songs that reminded him of Vietnam triggered his emotions, and he retreated from his family to be alone with his difficult memories.

"I didn't know I needed help," John says. "I just wanted to be left alone."

It wasn't until John noticed a co-worker who had gotten sober that he asked for help and joined a 12-step program. "I've been a member ever since," he says. John also joined a support group at a local Vet Center, where he found comradery with his fellow Veterans. "I became a part of the group," he says. "We could identify with each other's experiences in Vietnam." The strength in that bond has helped John maintain his sobriety. "Today I'm sober for 31 years," he says. "It's been a blessing in my life.

When I was young, many years ago.....
I joined the military, why, I don't know.....
I served my time with honor and pride.....
For a young person it was quite a ride.....

I went to places I'd never dreamed.....
Time went fast or so it seemed.....
I met people I will never forget.....
And some I wish I'd never met.....

But as I think back on those days gone by.....
My assignments, my buddies, bring a tear to my eye.....
I didn't know it then, never gave it a thought.....
But my time in the service could not have been bought.....

I guess we all feel the same after we're out.....
The pride we feel that's what it's about.....
Having served our Nation, keeping it free.....
Protecting our way of life and our liberty.....

The friends I made along the way.....
I'll remember them to my dying day.....
To my brothers and sisters that answered the call.....
A respectful salute to one and all.....

On behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Veterans we are deeply honored to serve, I want to say thank you to our country's more than six-and-a-half million living Vietnam Veterans and their families.

Welcome home!

Two years ago, President Trump signed the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act into law. That Act designates every March 29 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day. It was March 29, 1973, when the last of our combat troops left Vietnam.

It was on that day that the last American prisoners of war held in North Vietnam came home.

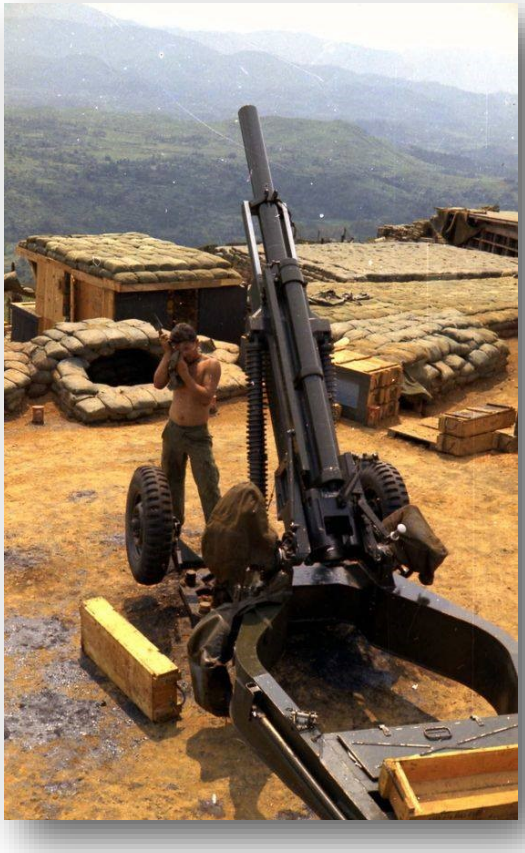
Vietnam War Veterans Day is part of our nation's ongoing commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. In support, VA and more than 10,000 local, state, and national organizations join the Department of Defense as Commemorative Partners.

We honor the nine million American men and women who served on active duty from November 1, 1955, to May 7, 1975. We solemnly remember more than 58,000 whose names are etched into the Vietnam Memorial's polished black granite—constant reminders of the price of freedom.

Take advantage of the opportunities this commemoration encourages and show your gratitude to this noble generation of American service members.

Say, Thank you.

And welcome them home.



The Willys Jeep
Now That's A Classic

TOP PHOTO: On March 5, VA's National Cemetery Administration dedicated the first "Tribute to the Fallen and Their Families" plaque at Quantico National Cemetery. Medal of Honor recipient Hershel "Woody" Williams joined undersecretary of Memorial Affairs Randy Reeves to unveil the plaque honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice and their families. (*U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*)

Who Will Pay For
New Agent Orange Coverage?

Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie has recommended the government not challenge a federal court decision expanding eligibility for Agent Orange-related benefits to Vietnam-era service members who served on coastal ships.

That has left appropriators and top lawmakers on the Veterans' Affairs committees wondering how to pay for the latest expansion of benefits—or whether to ignore the new costs altogether. Indeed, an update to the budget baseline for VA programs to be released May 2 by the Congressional Budget Office may make lawmakers' decision easier.

PENNSYLVANIA VETERANS HOMES

Delaware Valley Veterans' Home, Phila., 215-856-2718

Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center, Scranton, 570-961-4348

Hollidaysburg Veterans' Home, Hollidaysburg, 814-696-5352

Pennsylvania Soldiers' & Sailors' Home, Erie, 814-878-4939

Southeastern Veterans' Center, Spring City, 610-948-2406

Southwestern Veterans' Center, Pittsburgh, 412-665-6782

We are here to make you feel at home!

pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY
AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

veteranshomes.pa.gov

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
VA Healthcare–VISN 4

The VA MISSION Act will officially be implemented next month (June 6)! The VA MISSION Act puts Veterans and their needs at the center of their care.

Through this Act, VA will:

- Provide Veterans more options for health care,
- Offer an improved community care process,
- Provide a new urgent care option,
- Help Veterans get access to the care they need in the right place at the right time,
- Offer Veterans great service through a nationwide network of high-quality care,
- Provide more Veteran-to-Veteran peer specialists, and
- Expand the program to support Veteran caregivers.

Through the MISSION Act, VA now has additional opportunities to enhance our high-quality health care to our nation's Veterans.

Eligibility

1. Veteran needs a service not available at a VA medical facility
2. Veteran lives in a U.S. state or territory without a full-service VA medical facility
3. Veteran qualifies under the "Grandfather" provision related to distance eligibility for the Veterans Choice Program
4. VA cannot furnish care within certain designated access standards
5. It is in the Veteran's best medical interest

A VA service line does not meet certain quality standards