



The above mural honoring our Veterans through the era's is on display in our hallway and was created by local artist Galen McCarthy

VICTOR SIERRA OSCAR COMMO CHECK!

Vol 2 Number 6

"America's Veterans embody the ideals upon which America was founded."

June 2019

This publication is for all Veterans, their families and their communities, compiled solely by the Jackson County Veterans Service Officer. The information provided herein is to keep you informed of upcoming events, newsworthy items and historical data of interest.

Proud member of



MN and National Associations of Veteran Service Officers



"In the aftermath, we are because they were." R.J. Heller,

OFFICE INFORMATION

The Jackson County Veterans Service Office is located at:

402 White St. (Door 6)
Jackson, MN 56143
507.847.4774

jeff.gay@co.jackson.mn.us

Monday 8am-4:30pm
Tuesday 8am-4:30pm
Wednesday 8am-Noon
Thursday 8am-Noon
Friday Closed

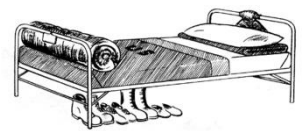
(Available for after hour & weekend appointments case-by-case)

www.co.jackson.mn.us/veterans
You can find us on FaceBook too

MAKE YOUR BED!

JEFFREY L. GAY, Jackson County VSO

As stated by U.S. Navy Admiral William McRaven a great way to begin your day is by simply "making your bed, your first accomplishment of the day". A great way to begin your summer is by listening to the poignant commencement speech issued by the Admiral



Admiral McRaven is retired from the United States Navy and last served as the ninth commander of the United States Special Operations Command from Aug 8, 2011, to Aug 28, 2014. His crowning achievement was that as commander of the operation of the raid on Osama bin Laden's compound would be the crowning achievement of his 37 years as a Navy SEAL. Following that he became the chancellor of The University of Texas System.

www.bing.com/videos/search?q=make+your+bed+speech&view=detail&mid=8C3E1BF75937460915248C3E1BF7593746091524&FORM=VIRE



In Navy SEAL training "All you have to do is ring the bell to get out," McRaven said. "If you want to change the world, don't ever, ever ring the bell."

Actually changing the world is not something we generally think about but consider this. Everything that you do has an impact, big or small, on the world around you and that essentially may impact even further as you plant the idea and others continue the discussion.

"They talk about millennials being soft and pampered and entitled, well I'm quick to say then you've seen them in a firefight in Afghanistan... this is a fabulous generation and anybody that worries about the future of the U.S., I don't think you need to worry." --Admiral McRaven

To read more on this interview and article you can go on-line to: www.military.com/off-duty/2019/05/20/mcraven-anyone-calling-millennials-soft-has-never-seen-them-firefight.html?ESRC=eb_190521.nl

The most important thing you can do in your quest for life today and making it a better world to live in is, "NEVER RING THE BELL"! Stay engaged and do what's needed to "fix" the problems we face rather than merely "fixing" the blame. Too many are far too quick to blame someone or something else when resolve is right there, within reach, within grasp of it with just a little more effort.

Today is as good as any to begin making what we have better! It's all up to each and every one of us beginning with a smile, an outreached hand and our desire to succeed going forward. **Be that guy, change your part of the world!**

Jackson County Veteran Service Office June 2019

SPECIAL DAYS

Jun is: National Military Appreciation Month

- 6 - Anniversary of D-Day Invasion - WWII
- 14 - Flag Day
- 14 - US Army Birthday
- 16 - Father's Day
- 23 - Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday
- 27 - PTSD Awareness Day
- 28 - Operation Red Wings Observance



Your Jackson County CVSO will be on the KKOJ Morning Show the **2nd Tuesday of every month**. Tune in but don't tune out! The show begins

at 8:50AM. Question & answer, interesting information, VA Program updates fun facts, straight talk and announcements. This will be geared for all Veterans, their families and Veteran Organizations...



STAY TUNED - STAY INFORMED!



Through the vehicle of radio, Thomas Lyons of the MN Military Radio Hour provides information pertinent to today! He has a guest most every week and discusses upcoming events important to you as the Veteran or military family. *The MN Military Radio Hour is on KKOJ radio at 3PM Sundays.*

VA MISSION ACT

Under the **MISSION Act**, signed by President Trump in June 2018, there are six different eligibility criteria for community care:

- *Services unavailable*
- *Residence in a State without a full-service VA medical facility*
- *40-mile legacy/grandfathered from the Choice program*
- *Access standards*
- *Best medical interest*
- *Needing care from a VA medical service line that VA determines is not providing care that complies with VA's standards for quality*

...More information later in this document!

SPOUSAL BURIAL WITH VETERAN

Last month I discussed death benefits due a Veteran upon their passing. However, I failed to mention the fact that Veteran's spouse or dependent family member may be buried with the Veteran at a National or State Veteran's cemetery.



State and National Veteran's cemeteries offer,

for little or no money, a family member to be interred with the Veteran.

Your spouse may be eligible to be buried with you in a veterans cemetery at little or no cost. There are, however some restrictions and guidelines. If you and your spouse have divorced and they have remarried, they probably are not eligible. Dependent children may also be eligible, as well as some parents of those killed on active duty.

Learn more about spouse burial eligibility at www.Military.com.

REDESIGN OF THE DFAS MYPAY WEBSITE

myPay The next time you log into myPay, you may notice a few differences. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service has redesigned the myPay website to make it easier to use on both mobile devices and computers. The makeover offers an uncluttered design and moves the navigation menu to the left side of the screen with simple-to-understand categories that give you easier access to all your pay information. The redesign went live May 4. Read more about the changes on Military.com. www.military.com/daily-news/2019/05/01/redesign-mypay-website-promises-many-improvements.html



Update DEERS! What is DEERS and why do I have to update it? **DEERS** is the acronym for **Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System**. For retirees and those still serving is what "drives" their benefits both for them and their families. It is also what authorized you for your Military ID's and Family Dependent ID's.

This is why it's so important that you keep your information in **DEERS** current. If information changes so can your eligibility for benefits such as TRICARE insurance for you and your family. Some of the information that is subject to change are:

ID CARDS and DEERS

From the first time you were issued your military ID card or CAC (remember that great picture?????) you understood the importance of safeguarding it and having it with you at all times. Your ID card opened the doors to being recognized so you can benefit from the PX (Post Exchange) or BX (Base Exchange) (a.k.a. AAFES "Army Air Force Exchange Services) or commissary services. Not to mention showing it to get your pay (back in "the day").

If you are still serving or had gone for the long haul and retired from the military the importance of a military ID card has not diminished. In order to get or keep your Military ID valid you must have everything in DEERS up



to date, this means to also **MAKE CHANGES AS THEY OCCUR!**

Changes include but may not be limited to:

- Address/Phone information changes
- Height/Weight
- Dependency Status (*either being single or married, children, vulnerable parents/siblings as dependents by court order*) Marriage or Divorce.
- Death of Dependent or Sponsor (*dependents may continue receiving ID cards, some restrictions apply*)
- Birth or Adoption of Children
- Gender Change/Reassignment

Keeping DEERS updated will eliminate confusion and other issues, but it's all up to you! It's your responsibility to keep your "house" in order!

As a still serving service member or a military retiree

your dependents are eligible for dependents ID cards. Yep, they get that "pretty" picture too! This card affords them the majority of the same benefits you have as the military sponsor allowing them to also take advantage of TRICARE, exchanges, commissaries, fuel points, service clubs, and more without you having to be present to present your card on their behalf.

The dependent's ID card is salmon in color and must be renewed every four years minimally.

When are you eligible for an ID or CAC card? If you're still serving it's automatic. Once you retire from military service you are eligible for a Retiree Card. If your retirement is based on Guard or Reserve time you can receive an interim card at your date of retirement (*Salmon in color*). When you get to age 60 the interim card can be upgraded to one which is green in color which will expire at age 65. At age 65 you may receive a card which is blue/gray in color and is indefinite.

Where can you get your ID card?

Any Active Duty or Guard/Reserve base has a DEERS ID station. Most HQ unit National Guard Armories in the state also has a machine and technician. You may either stop in to see if they have an open slot for you or, best practice, call to make an appointment. The technician assigned is usually performing those services as an additional duty assigned and has other duties as well.

If you are in Southwest Minnesota the closest places for you to acquire or renew a military CAC or Dependents/Retired ID card are listed below. The best rule of thumb is to call ahead of time, **DO NOT** just show up. Refer to the paragraph above.

There is certain documentation that you will need to carry with you to your ID appointment. Minimally you will need **two (2) UNEXPIRED** and **ORIGINAL (no copies)** forms of identity must be presented **EVERY TIME** an ID

is issued or renewed. When you call for your appointment have the DEERS operator tell you what you need for sure for your situation. Most times the Service Member or Retiree must accompany dependents.

MONTEVIDEO, MINNESOTA

National Guard Armory
711 S 17th St.
Montevideo, MN 56265
Phone: 320-269-9284 or 320-269-5180

Appointment Only
M-F – 9am-3pm

MANKATO, MINNESOTA

National Guard Armory
100 Martin Luther King Jr Dr.
Mankato, MN 56001
Phone: 507-389-6219

Call Ahead for Appointment
M-W-F – 9am-3pm

SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

114th FW SD ANG
1201 West Algonquin St
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
Phone: 605-988-5845

196th MEB
801 West National Guard Dr.
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
Phone: 605-357-2900 or 605-357-2985



Primary Documents

- DOD Requires that for ID Card Issuance, at least one document shall be valid, state or Federal Government-issued photo.
- U.S. Military card
- U.S. Passport
- Driver's license or ID card issued by a state or outlying possession of the U.S. provided it contains a photograph.
- ID Card issued by federal, state, or local government agencies or entities provided it contains a photograph
- Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card with Photograph (Form I-151 or I-551)
- Temporary Resident Card (Form I-688)
- Employment Authorization Card (Form I-688A)
- Employment Authorization Document issued by the INS which contains photograph (INS Form I-688B)
- U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner Card

Secondary Documents

- Certificate of U.S. Citizenship (Form N-560 or N-561)
- Foreign Passport with I-551 stamp or attached form i-194 indicating unexpired employment authorization
- Reentry Permits (Form I-327)
- Voter's registration card
- Native American tribal document
- Drivers license issued by a Canadian government authority
- U.S. social security card issued by the Social Security Administration
- Birth Certificate issued by state, county, municipal authority
- Refugee Travel Document (Form I-327)
- U.S. Citizen Card (Form I-197) or ID Card for use of Resident Citizen in the United States (Form I-197)
- U.S. Military ID

IF, AT YOUR VISIT, YOU DON'T HAVE THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION ACCOMPANYING YOU A NEW APPOINTMENT WILL HAVE TO BE SCHEDULED. Don't waste the time and money of the trip until you are ready with all required documentation.

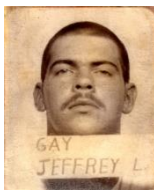
Prior to your appointment you can go on-line to www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect to create an account for yourself and will be able, if you wish, to update your DEERS account yourself. This may save you some time at your appointment. This also allows you to be more in

charge of your own information. At MILCONNECT you will be able to: (However, you still won't be able to do anything about your ID picture.....)

- Update DEERS (address, email, phone)
- View or change TRICARE enrollment information
- Find an ID card office
- Sign up for [eCorrespondence](#) about changes to your TRICARE coverage
- View personnel information (sponsors only)
- Transfer GI Bill benefits to family members (sponsors only)
- View civilian employment information (Guard/Reserve only—excluding Army, Navy, and Coast Guard Reserve)
- View Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance information (except Marines and Coast Guard)
- Get [proof of TRICARE coverage](#)
- Search frequently asked questions about health care eligibility and more

REMEMBER! IF YOUR INFORMATION'S NOT CORRECT YOUR CARD MAY BE INVALID AND AS SUCH MAY BE CONFISCATED WHEN USED.

Note, I found my original basic training JD photo a few months back. I now have it hanging in my office to scare the rodents away!



Sioux Falls VA Campus and Facilities Will Become Smoke Free

As part of VA's commitment to provide excellent health care for Veterans, the Sioux Falls VA is pleased to announce all facilities, including the Dakotas VA Regional Office, will be smoke free for all visitors, contractors, volunteers, vendors and Veteran patients by May 31, 2019. A national Veterans Health Administration Directive 1085, Smoke-Free Policy for patients, visitors, contractors, volunteers, and vendors at VA Health Care Facilities outlines the plan for VHA facilities.



VA has several supportive tools and resources for Veterans who would like to quit tobacco use to improve their health. Patients are encouraged to speak with their providers for information regarding these tools and resources.

Resources include:

- <https://smokefree.gov/vet>
- <https://www.veteranshealthlibrary.org/>
- VA Tobacco Quitline – 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838)

Over 4,000 health care facilities and four national health care systems in the U.S. have implemented smoke-free grounds and include many VHA health care facilities.

NOTES FOR EMERGENT MEDICAL CARE



Staying healthy is a priority! We make appointments and see our doctors for a variety of things but sometimes things occur which may be considered urgent or life threatening.

If you are usually treated by the VA and the distance to that clinic would put you in danger or cause extreme discomfort you need to visit the nearest Emergency Room. That's just common sense. However, there are guidelines you need to follow to help get the bill paid!



Will the VA pay for an ambulance ride or for emergent care at an "other than VA" medical facility?

If you believe that your life is in danger immediately call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. Veterans **do not need to call the VA before** they call for an ambulance ride or emergent care. But promptly notifying the nearest VA medical facility of the emergency care and transportation is vitally important to ensure the VA is **POTENTIALLY** able to reimburse costs. Also, be sure to let the admitting nurse know you are a Veteran, many hospitals may take care of notifying the VA for you.



There is a **72 hour window** you have to notify the VA of your emergent care in order to be considered for payment. You need to make sure the VA was not reasonably available for you (*the veteran*).



The VA will pay if it is a service connected injury or illness and you meet qualifying the criteria. The VA will not pay for a non-service connected injury unless the following condition is met:



"Other health insurance or a third party paid for the emergency treatment (leaving no liability for the treatment) excluding the emergency transportation itself or if death occurred during transportation to receive emergent care."

CHAMPVA BENEFITS

There have been several calls to this office concerning CHAMPVA benefits. The Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) is a health benefits program in which the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) shares the cost of certain health care services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries.

Essentially the rules for eligibility include that the beneficiary cannot be eligible for TRICARE. CHAMPVA provides coverage to the spouse or widow(er) and to the children of a Veteran who:

- ...is permanently and totally disabled (P&T) because of an adjudicated service-connected disability
- ...died as a result of an adjudicated service-connected disability or who at the time of death was rated P&T due to service-connected conditions,
- ...died while in an active duty status and in the line of duty, not due to misconduct. The term "active duty" may include periods of inactive duty for training.

For more information you may go online to: www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/pubfiles/factsheets/FactSheet_01-02.pdf and read the fact sheet.

Legacy Corps for Veterans and Military Families

Legacy Corps is a volunteer-powered program supporting family caregivers, with an emphasis on the unique needs of veteran and military families. Highly trained, vetted and committed volunteers provide companionship respite, caregiver education and networking opportunities, and linkages to community and veteran resources.



LEGACY CORPS
For Veterans and Military Families

See how Legacy Corps supports this veteran and his wife. Click here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMD4lwEUNRs

Legacy Corps Volunteers:

We are happy to connect you with a fulfilling position honoring your skills, abilities, passion and schedule!

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

AmeriCorps Volunteers

AmeriCorps Volunteers, referred to as Members, commit to one year of service (November through October) consisting of 450 hours of training, respite and support services. Members are matched with 3-4 families for weekly visits throughout the year. Members receive a monthly living allowance (approx. \$167) and are eligible for an education award at the end of their service year (over \$1,550.00). Members over the age of 55 are able to gift the education awards to a child or grandchild. Members participate in monthly (4-hour) team trainings and begin their service with a 20-hour orientation.

Non-AmeriCorps Volunteers

Companionship Non-AmeriCorps Volunteers provide program support and in-home respite to families. Non-AmeriCorps Volunteers providing respite commit to weekly 2-3 hour visits with a family carefully matched. Volunteers also provide respite during 6-part Powerful Tools for Caregivers Workshop series. Non-AmeriCorps Volunteers receive a 4-hour orientation, offered quarterly.

Volunteers positions are also available for program support at events, in the office, and outreach or fundraising efforts

Caregiver Support Services

- *In-Home Respite (average 4 hours per week)*
- *Transportation to medical appointments/grocery shopping/errands*
- *Information about community and veteran resources to help family caregivers*
- *Powerful Tools for Caregivers course*
- *Social and Informational events for family caregivers and their loved ones*

Who is eligible to receive Legacy Corps Services:

- *Family Caregivers are friends or family members caring for a loved one- whether they live with that person or not*
- *Family members who care for a veteran of any age*
- *A veteran caring for a family member of any age*
- *Families with any military service history – including deceased relatives and in-laws*

Opportunity to SPONSOR Legacy Corps families:

Show your gratitude to veterans in our community by supporting the Legacy Corps Program. We seek business partners and individuals who want to be recognized as champions of veteran and military families who care for a loved one at home.

Program Contact

Melissa Radloff, Program Director 208-947-4281
1607 W. Jefferson St. FAX: 208-336-0880
Boise, Idaho 83702

EMAIL:

mradloff@jannus.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO THEIR WEBSITE:

www.jannus.org/program/legacy-corps/

FACEBOOK:

www.facebook.com/Legacy-Corps-Caregiver-Support-163789536991977

VA AND VIRTA HEALTH PARTNER IN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO DIABETES CARE



WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced a partnership on May 13 with Virta Health to explore an innovative program focused on improving the health of persons with type 2 diabetes.



In effect since March 22, the agreement will give 400 Veterans the opportunity to participate in the Virta Treatment, which can help individuals safely and

Jackson County Veteran Service Office June 2019

sustainably achieve glycemic control while reducing use of medications.

This diabetes care will be provided for up to one year at no cost to VA or Veteran participants.

“Partnering with community providers facilitates a more comprehensive approach to care,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Many Veterans have type 2 diabetes, and it is strongly linked to obesity, so we are excited to explore Virta Health’s approach to tackling this debilitating and costly condition.”

Currently, VA offers medical care, education, counseling, weight loss programs and blood glucose monitoring for more than 1.5 million Veterans with type 2 diabetes. This partnership provides a small group of Veterans access to Virta’s proprietary, individualized, low-carbohydrate nutrition protocols on a 24/7 continuous remote care platform from medical providers and health coaches, an approach currently not widely in use at VA.

Virta Health, a licensed medical provider in all 50 states, focuses on treating type 2 diabetes through noninvasive means. Their services, available 24/7, include personalized nutrition, peer support, health coaching and physician monitoring, all delivered remotely.

This partnership exemplifies the work of the VHA Office of Community Engagement (OCE), which supports and develops community and corporate partnerships to benefit Veterans. For information regarding developing a nonmonetary partnership with VHA, contact OCE at <https://www.va.gov/healthpartnerships/>.

Veterans interested in the program should visit www.virtahealth.com/veterans. For more information about VA health care, visit www.va.gov/health.

“I began to realize how important it was to be an enthusiast in life. He taught me that if you are interested in something, no matter what it is, go at it full speed ahead. Embrace it with both arms, hug it, love it, and above all become passionate about it. Lukewarm is no good. Hot is no good either. White hot and passionate is the only thing to be.”
Roald Dahl, “My Uncle Oswald”

KARE Investigates:
Whistleblowers say
Veterans are owed millions

Thousands of disabled Veterans nationwide are due millions of dollars in refunds on VA backed home loans, according to internal Department of Veterans Affairs records obtained by KARE 11.

Despite internal warnings dating back to 2014, VA whistleblowers tell KARE 11 that top officials failed to alert Veterans about refunds they are owed.

I realize this is a long URL but it’s well worth the read! You could be due a refund and don’t know it... If you are reading this on-line just use your mouse to highlight the URL and press “CTRL” and click your mouse simultaneously and it should open. Otherwise, copy the link, paste it in your browser and press “Enter”.

www.kare11.com/article/news/kare-11-investigates-whistleblowers-say-veterans-are-owed-millions/89-52bddaf8-146e-4a83-80bb-4fec584ba024



MN TWINS AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY DAY REMINDER!

The American Legion Family day at the Twins is June 14th at 7:10PM. You can call 612-659-4083 for tickets! Don’t forget to ask for the special group rate for the American Legion...



Interesting Facts

THE ‘ZERK!’

Jeffrey L. Gay

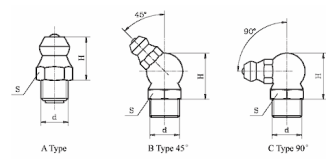
Many of us remember the fitting on a bearing or ball-joint on a vehicle referred to as the “zerk”. It’s a grease fitting Alemite fitting is a metal fitting used in mechanical systems to feed lubricants, usually lubricating grease, into a bearing under moderate to high pressure using a grease gun.

I was pretty much raised in a mechanics shop, dad had a shop in Marshall. I can’t tell you how many oil changes & grease jobs I did back then. Well, let’s just say I’ll never forget how!



All those years of slipping the grease gun onto the nipple of the zerk I just took for granted that the term “zerk” was derived from some technical term.

Curiosity got the best of me the other night as I had to find one for my neighbor’s big mower. I had to look it up and lo and behold I found that the name is actually derived from the name of its inventor.



The patent for the “Zerk fitting” was granted to **Oscar U. Zerk** in January 1929, and the assignee was the Alemite Manufacturing Corporation (thus the eponymous name for the fittings).

This is probably knowledge you’ll never use in day to day conversation but you may be able to impress somebody in a game of trivial pursuit or Scrabble! And besides, I found it interesting and just thought I’d share.

NOTE! Your Jackson County Veteran Services Office offers a dedicated workstation in our facility for VA Telehealth appointments without a charge! Please call 507-847.4774 to schedule its use once you have an appointment with the VA CTH.

IT'S SUMMER! BUGGED BY BUGS?



The mosquito, our unofficial "Minnesota State Bird"... Mosquitoes have been found preserved in amber tens of millions of years old. And they're still around. Now there is one tenacious little bug! It swarms, swirls, hovers and lives among us and shows its pesky face when we least expect it!

I have a difficult time distinguishing whether it's the mosquito or the ant (*or maybe even the fly*) that is the most annoying at picnics in MN. Then you have the gnat, the No-See-em, bees, wasps and the venerable wood tick...

Mosquitos are the purveyors of several diseases, blood borne pathogens (Malaria, Zika Virus, HIV, so we really don't want them anywhere near us with their buzzing and sharp proboscis that to puncture our skin and draw out our life's blood. How in the world do we keep them away???



I've sprayed and fogged, sprinkled stuff in the grass, burned Citronella Tiki Torches and candles, I've listened to the bug zapper "electrocutions". I've doused myself with copious amounts of "bug dope". Each had an effect to one degree or another but they are still able to defy the line of defense and attack at will!

A couple of tips I've learned over my lifetime to help deal with this epidemic of the summer...

"DEET" is the immediate one-word answer and the Standard for repelling these varmints! "DEET" is the acronym for the chemical name N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide. It's the active ingredient in many insect repellents, which don't kill mosquitoes but keeps them at bay.



- **Be sure, when looking for a good repellent**, that DEET is included in the active ingredients. Be sure to read and follow the instructions and cautions as DEET has been billed as a carcinogen in non-diluted amounts.
- **When using a repellent**, you may have to re-apply it every 2 to 4 hours, depending on the concentration of DEET it contains.

Mosquitoes are water borne at birth. Take care to drain anything which holds standing water in and around your property. You may also get mosquito pellets to put in ponds or create an oil slick (not really recommended) on water you can't drain.

Keep your lawn and other open areas mowed. Many of these species of bugs can thrive in longer grass or weeds as they provide protection and safety for them.



- **There are also granules** that you can spread on grassy areas which are activated by rain or watering. These can be applied by hand but it's better to use a lawn fertilizer spreader.

I am told that I have "bats in my belfry"... Well, that may not be all bad! They are a nuisance in your home but if you provide bats an environment to live they can be important "soldiers" in the battle against flying insects.



- Example, one ordinary brown bat can eat up to 100 percent of its body weight every night (*about half an ounce*). It can consume about **1,200 insects** per hour approximately. Many plans for bat houses may be found on the Internet and are easy to build.

Several plant varieties will repel 'squitoes by their scent as well as their color. Marigolds and lavender scents are good examples. More information may be found on-line or call your local County Health Department.



- **There are many herbs and spices** that may be used as natural deterrents as well.
- **Cloves, Garlic, Mint, Rosemary, Basil, Lemon Balm, Eucalyptus**
- **Coconut Hand/Body Lotion will repel Gnats!**

An inexpensive option may be a portable trap. These systems run on batteries and propane. One unit can cover up to an acre, luring mosquitoes to the system and trapping them. It is an excellent way to get rid of mosquitoes, since the traps operate 24/7. It may take up to ten days before you see fewer mosquitoes.



A screened-in tent or enclosure is also a great way to keep them out and away from you. The smoke from a fire is somewhat a deterrent as well. However, if you're like me inside with air conditioning is always nice too, and pretty much fool-proof!



For more great tips you can go on-line to: www.tipsbulletin.com/how-to-repel-mosquitoes/

GOIN' ON-LINE



This section was run in our very first issue and I thought it good to revisit it. These are web addresses which can help you, entertain you and keep you abreast of news, views and changes in benefits. Keep an eye out for additions to the list as we move forward!

NEWS & VIEWS

- Marine Times www.marinecorpstimes.com
- Air Force Times www.airforcetimes.com
- Military Times www.militarytimes.com
- Military.COM www.military.com
- SOFREP News <https://sofrep.com/news/>

BENEFITS & OTHER INTERST

U.S. Veterans Affairs www.va.gov
MN Dept. of Vet Affairs <https://mn.gov/mdva/>
My Health-e Vet www.myhealth.va.gov

SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

American Legion www.legion.org
MN American Legion www.mnlegion.org
Veterans of Foreign Wars www.VFW.org
Disabled American Vets www.DAV.org
AMVETS <http://amvetsnsf.org>
Vietnam Vets of America <https://vva.org/>
Mil Order of Purple heart <https://moph.org>

MILITARY SERVICE BRANCHES

US Army www.goarmy.com
US Marine Corps www.marines.mil
US Navy www.navy.mil
US Air Force www.airforce.com
US Coast Guard www.uscg.mil
National Guard (Army/Air) www.nationalguard.com

OF INTEREST TO MILITARY RETIREES

TRICARE Health www.tricare.com
DFAS MyPay (Finance) <https://mypay.dfas.mil>
Military Officers Assn. www.moaa.org
DoD Lodging Site www.dodlodging.net

OTHER LINKS PROVIDING INFO AND ASSISTANCE!

MACV (Fin/Legal) www.mac-v.org
Minnesota LinkVet <https://minnesotaveteran.org>
Wounded Warrior Proj www.woundedwarriorproject.org

A quick note about the "My Health-e Vet" site. If you don't use it I would recommend it for ordering meds, tracking appointments and much more! Check it out!

"Hard pressed on my right. My center is yielding. Impossible to maneuver. Situation excellent. I am attacking."

– Ferdinand Foch at the Battle of the Marne

INTRODUCING THE VA "MISSION ACT"



The new VA MISSION Act is unveiled on June 6th. It will strengthen the VA's ability to deliver trusted, easy to access, high quality care at VA facilities, virtually through telehealth and in your community through "Community Care Providers". This means you get the care and services you need where and when you need them.

The MISSION Act's new criteria increases to roughly 40 percent the number of the VA population which will now be eligible to see a doctor within the community — as opposed to the 8 percent of veterans who can use the department's community care programs now.

Under VA's new access standards, veterans can see a community provider if they've been waiting for more than 20 days for primary, mental health and

noninstitutional extended care services, or if they face a 30- minute drive to the nearest VA facility.

There is criteria which must be met but be sure you ask is you would like to see a local Community Care Provider.

Under the previous legislation, "the Veterans Choice, Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014", Veterans were allowed to visit a community provider if they lived 40 miles away from the closest VA medical facility or if they had been waiting 30 days or longer for VA care.

Still, the department believes veterans will continue to use VA care. VA officials said they estimate roughly one-third of enrolled veterans would seek community care, even under the MISSION Act's new criteria.

- *The VA MISSION Act puts Veterans and their needs at the center of their care. Through it, VA will:*
- *Provide you with more options for health care*
- *Offer an improved community care process*
- *Provide a new urgent care option*
- *Help you get access to the care you need at the right place at the right time*
- *Offer you great service through a nationwide network of high-quality care*
- *Provide more Veteran-to-Veteran peer specialists*
- *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.

Again, this program goes into effect on June 6th . For more information be sure to visit your local County Veteran Service Officer.

For even more convenience talk to your VA scheduler about taking advantage of the "VA Tele-Health Program". Through this program you can visit your care provider from you recliner through use of your home computer, iPad or smartphone. You can see them and they can see you as you interact.

I use VA Tele-Health for follow-ups, mental health appointments, diabetes training and the "MOVE" program. It's convenient, private and non-invasive.

If you do not have a home computer or smartphone to use the VA Tele-Health program many CVSO offices are being equipped with workstations you may use in their office or you could use your local library.

BOTTOM LINE! Contact your local CVSO often and stay in communications with him/her. They are your best source for news and updates of any VA benefit. You may also go on-line to <https://missionact.va.gov>

MISSION ACT NEWS RELEASE JUST IN!

As of Wednesday, 5 June 2019: Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the publication in the Federal Register of two final regulations as part of its new Veterans Community Care Program under the VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks (MISSION) Act of 2018.

Signed into law on June 6, 2018, the MISSION Act strengthens VA's ability to deliver trusted, easy to access, high quality care at VA facilities, virtually through telehealth, and in Veterans' communities. The law makes several improvements to VA care that begin on June 6, 2019.

"President Trump promised to give Veterans greater choice. We are honoring that promise by making sure Veterans have access to timely, high-quality care, whether from our VA facilities or our community providers," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie.

A key component of the MISSION Act is a new urgent care benefit that provides eligible Veterans with greater choice and access to timely, high-quality care. With urgent care, Veterans have a new option for care for the treatment of minor injuries and illnesses, such as colds, sore throats and minor skin infections. The benefit is offered in addition to the opportunity to receive care from a VA provider, as VA also offers same-day services.

VA also published the final regulation for the Veterans Community Care Program governing how eligible Veterans receive necessary hospital care, medical services, and extended care services from non-VA entities or providers in the community. The new Veterans Community Care Program replaces the Veterans Choice Program, which expires June 6, 2019.

VA previously published an interim final rule for Veterans Care Agreements (VCA) on May 14, 2019. VA may use VCAs to order care when that care is not otherwise feasibly available through VA's contracted network. VCAs are intended to be used in limited situations. VA will purchase most community care for Veterans through its contracted network as part of its strong partnerships with third party administrators. Currently, these administrators are TriWest Healthcare Alliance and Optum Public.

VA is implementing improvements to its community care program as required by the VA MISSION Act. Veterans can find detailed information on urgent care eligibility, community care eligibility and MISSION Act implementation at www.missionact.va.gov

FREE! FED/STATE PARK ADMISSION

If you are a **Veteran** and a Minnesota resident you can get an annual state park pass **FREE!**

Any Veteran with a total and permanent disability can receive a free annual park permit. Also, any resident Veteran with any level of service-connected disability is eligible for a free daily park pass. This daily pass does not include camping fees.

Active military personnel in any branch or unit of the United States Armed Forces and Veterans with a service-connected disability will be eligible to receive a free year-round vehicle permit, providing unlimited access to all 75 Minnesota state parks and recreation areas.



To see all of the licenses, permits and passes that are available to military personnel and Veterans and the form of identification that an individual needs to show, visit www.mndnr.gov.

For more information, contact the DNR information Center at info.dnr@state.mn.us, 651-296-6157 or 888-646-6367 (8am-8pm Monday-Friday, 9am-1pm Saturday)

To utilize this program, Veterans may need to present either a copy of their Federal U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs determination letter (*Summary of Benefits Letter*) or a Veterans Identification Card-VIC (*which indicates Service-Connected or SC*) to a park attendant.

NATIONAL PARKS PERKS!



A little-known benefit from the Interior Department gives military veterans with any disability rating from the Department of Veterans Affairs a free lifetime pass to national parks and other recreation areas, as well as discounts on some fees.

Although the tell you the lifetime Access Pass is available to those who have been medically determined to have a permanent disability you do not have to be at a 100 percent disability rating.

Any veteran with a disability rating from the VA should be able to access it. "If a veteran has disability paper that states they have a 10 percent disability, etc., the ranger should accept it," a National Parks spokesperson confirmed.

About your Access Pass

- A free, lifetime pass, plus a \$10 processing fee.
 - available to U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the United States that have been medically determined to have a **permanent disability** (does not have to be a 100% disability) - that provides admittance to more

Jackson County Veteran Service Office June 2019

than 2,000 recreation sites managed by five Federal agencies.

- May also be obtained free in person at a federal recreation site.
- Provides entrance or access to pass owner and accompanying passengers in a single, private, non-commercial vehicle at Federal operated recreation sites across the country.
- Photo identification may be required to verify ownership.
- Passes are **NON-REFUNDABLE, NON-TRANSFERABLE**, and **cannot** be replaced if lost or stolen.
- The cost of obtaining an Access Pass through the USGS is ten dollars (\$10). The pass itself is free, and there is a ten dollar fee for processing the application. Applicants must provide documentation proof of residency and documentation of permanent disability. If you cannot order an Access pass online, you can submit a paper application by mail to the USGS using the paper application and enclosing the same documents and \$10 fee.
- At many sites the Access Pass provides the pass owner a discount on Expanded Amenity Fees (such as camping, swimming, boat launching, and guided tours).
- Generally does NOT cover or reduce special recreation permit fees or fees charged by concessioners.

Go to <https://store.usgs.gov/faq#Access-Pass> for Access Pass Facts.

FLAG DAY 2019



June is host to our annual Flag Day celebration, a day set aside to honor the Flag of our Nation! Flag Day commemorates the adoption of the flag of the United States on June 14, 1777 by resolution of the Second Continental Congress.

Celebrate Flag Day by waving your Flag proudly and encourage others to do the same. You can also teach your children the significant of the Flag and the proper ways to display it, care for it and how to dispose of it once it has become unserviceable. Review with them proper Flag etiquette and where to find the official Flag code. On June 22, 1942, Congress passed a joint resolution, later amended on December 22, 1942, that encompassed what has come to be known as the U.S. Flag Code. Teach them how to honor the Flag as it passes by in a parade or is presented at a sporting event. Stand erect, caps off and cover your heart with your right hand. Likewise it's a great time to inform those who have unserviceable Flags flying of where they can take them to be retired respectfully and to get new a new Flag.

Our flag is our identity, and we can't disrespect or let anyone else disrespect our identity.

TRAVELING THIS SUMMER?

Jeffrey L. Gay, VSO



The exodus to places in the sun is a summer ritual! Are you prepared? I mean, are you REALLY prepared for the trip and any unseen circumstances?

Pack the car and load up the kids and off you go! ZOOM!!!! Do you have everything?

- Fun stuff
- Food stuff
- Navigation stuff
- Camping stuff
- Safety stuff
- Human stuff (don't forget the head count at each stop!)
- Other stuff



Y'know, when you think about it you really gotta have a lot of "stuff" with you! Besides all that "stuff" you need to prioritize the "stuff". What important "stuff" would you load first? OK, clothes, that's important but what about the really **REALLY** important stuff?

Yes, that's right, the think safety "stuff"... In the military we had to complete "Risk Analysis Cards" before any movement to anticipate what may impede our trip, or in your case, impede the family fun!

We need to start asking the "WHAT IF" questions to be sure that we cover all (most) contingencies.

What if...

- **...there was a fender bender?** Do you have your insurance cards, registration, a camera for taking photos, auto club numbers, insurance agent number, (Accident form kit, nice to have)?
- **...there was mechanical trouble?** Do you have your auto club info, mechanic's/dealer's numbers, emergency tool kit, spare tire, jack, etc.?
- **...there was an injury?** If someone gets a scratch, cut, scrape, sunburn, etc. do you have a freshly stocked first aid kit in the car? (you can go to www.redcross.com for a list of necessities to put a kit together) Sunscreen and sunburn ointment is very important! Hand sanitizer is also a must.
- **...you got lost?** Yeah, it happens... Do you have a map of the area, a satellite navigation device or mapping on you cell phone?
- **...you drive by an amusement park or fast food place?** Do you have a "kid distraction" ready to use on them? Well, this isn't necessary but it's a nice idea! "Are we there yet?!?! Are we there yet?!?!?" Road games are great too!
- **...you plan to go swimming?** Do you have ample floatation devices along and water safety plans or drowning first aid experience?
- **...someone gets ill?** Do you have "barf bags" in the vehicle, wipes, cleaning/disinfecting

Jackson County Veteran Service Office June 2019

solution, rags, **AIR FRESHENER?** Maybe Pepto-Bismol would be good too and a roll (or 2) of TP! Ya just never know.....

- **...you are camping or picnicking?** Bug can really “bug” a person! Some with just buzzing around, others that “bite” and there are those that “STING”! Do you have insect repellent that has **DEET in it’s formula**, anti-itch cream, or (my favorite) AfterBite pen? AfterBite is effective if it’s applied to the bite immediately after the bite and stops the itching. **VERY IMPORTANT**, did you pack an epi-pen if there are allergies to certain bites or stings in your family?
- **...What about your pet(s)?** Plan accordingly?

Everything else is just rudimentary “stuff”... However, it is important to make the list and then follow it. It will put your mind more at ease... **“OH crap! Did I turn off the iron?????”**



Happy trails!

Traveling Deluxe First Aid Kit

If you are looking at packing a first aid kit below is a listing of what’s in the Red Cross Deluxe Family First Aid Kit that retails for \$35 through www.redcross.com.

- 2 Chewable aspirin tablets, 81 mg each
- 5 Triple antibiotic ointment packs, 0.5g each
- 6 Antiseptic cleansing wipes (sting free)
- 2 Hydrocortisone cream packs, 1%, 0.9g each
- 2 Hand sanitizer packs, 0.9g each
- 2 Trauma Pads, 5" x 9"
- 6 Gauze Dressing Pads, 4" x 4"
- 6 Gauze Dressing Pads, 3" x 3"
- 1 Conforming gauze roll bandage, 4"
- 1 Conforming gauze roll bandage, 3"
- 1 First Aid Tape Roll, 1" by 10 yard
- 1 Instant cold compress
- 1 CPR one-way valve face shield, latex-free
- 1 Emergency blanket
- 2 Triangular sling/bandages (safety pins included)
- 25 Adhesive plastic bandages, 3/4" x 3"
- 15 Adhesive plastic bandages, 1" x 3"
- 3 Elbow and knee plastic bandages, 2" x 4"
- 10 Junior adhesive plastic bandages, 3/8" x 1-1/2"
- 3 Elbow and knee plastic bandages, 2" x 4"
- 5 Patch plastic bandages, 1-1/2" x 1-1/2"
- 3 Knuckle fabric bandages
- 3 Fingertip fabric bandages
- 4 Thermometers (one time use)
- Plastic tweezers, 1 pair
- Scissors, 1 pair
- 4 Latex-free exam-quality vinyl gloves, 2 pairs
- 1 American Red Cross Emergency First Aid Guide
- Nylon bag with clear pocket pages

MY FAVORITE MILITARY ACRONYMS

- **WWWDWOA** (What Would We Do Without Acronyms)
- **JAF A** (Just Another Freakin’ Acronym)
- **FUBU** (Fouled Up Beyond [all] Understanding)



HOW ‘BOUT DOIN’ SOMETHING SPECIAL THIS YEAR?

How about doing something special this year, treat yourself with a little goodness compliments of the US Military?

I’ve said it before but I’ll say it again. If you are still serving on Active Duty or in the Guard or Reserve or you are a military retiree you can take advantage of DoD Lodging. To locate the nearest lodging along the route you take driving for vacation go on-line to www.dodlodging.net. I’ve stayed at several and they rate better, in my book, than most of your brand named hotels/motels even though they don’t have some of the amenities you’re used to. My biggest concern is safety and security not to mention that you can’t beat the rates. You have it with DoD Lodging.

If you’re resort hunting don’t discard your US Military. They have vacation resorts worldwide and are generally more “price effective” than their civilian counterparts. The cost of many of these is on a sliding scale related to your military pay grade.

To locate any of these worldwide resorts you can go on-line to www.militaryonesource.mil/recreation-travel-shopping/travel/recreational-lodging/vacation-with-military-lodging. They include:

Hale Koa Hotel (HA) - Welcome to paradise. Hale Koa Hotel is an oceanfront retreat for military members and families on the storied, sunny shores of Waikiki Beach. You’ll find a whole new meaning for rest and relaxation here among the sand, surf and swaying palms. Plus, our shows, sights and shopping bring Hawaiian culture,

Jackson County Veteran Service Office June 2019

activities and entertainment within easy reach. For more info go on-line to www.halekoa.com/

SHADES OF GREEN (FL) - Explore the family-friendly excitement of Central Florida from Shades of Green® on Walt Disney World® Resort. Tucked between two PGA golf courses and arm's reach to theme park magic, Shades of Green is a unique resort for military members and families. Tickets, adventures, dining and accommodations are all more affordable than you think.

www.shadesofgreen.org

FORT FISHER USAF RECREATION AREA (NC) - Come and see why "Ft. Fisher is one of the Military's Best Kept Secrets." Ft. Fisher lies between the Cape Fear River and the Atlantic Ocean, both a short walk from our accommodations. While in Kure Beach visit the NC Aquarium, Ft. Fisher Civil War Museum, surf & pier fishing and take advantage of our large uncrowded beaches. On-site we offer the Beach House Bar & Grill, Recreational Hall, Rental Center and outdoor swimming pool. Enjoy a carefree family vacation of fun and sun in Southeastern NC and enjoy other close by activities. <http://ftfishermilrec.com/>

EDELWEISS LODGE AND RESORT (GER) - Discover why Garmisch-Partenkirchen is a peak destination; far away from everyday life. Consider us your all-season pass to all the Alpine action. From skiing and snowboarding to historic castles; Edelweiss has it all. It's not like you're planning to spend much time in your room. But, when you do tucker out, you can rest assured in your comfortable room with a view. Stay connected with family and friends to make them jealous while you are on vacation with FREE in room WIFI provided by Stars and Stripes. To keep the family vacation affordable, children under 17 stay for free on available bed space. www.edelweisslodgeandresort.com/

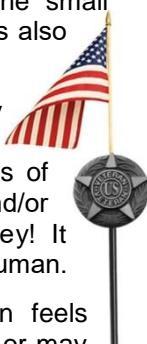
Don't forget to take advantage of the Military Vacation Club with Resort Stays From \$349 for 7 nights and other special deals worldwide! If you are still serving Active Duty, Guard or Reserve or are a military retiree or an American Legion Member you are eligible! Go on-line to www.afvclub.com

CEMETERY MARKERS & FLAGS

As hard as local organizations try there always seems that a grave here or there is missed as the small marker flags are placed in the cemeteries. It's also possible that it was placed but stolen.

I've had three calls already asking why there wasn't a marker flag at a relative's grave. As VSO I have no list or any means of managing this as it's done by volunteers and/or local service organizations. All I can say is, "Hey! It happens...", because it does. We're all only human.

However, when it does happen a person feels disrespected and hurt regardless of who may or may not have been at fault.



What can you do about it?

First consider the origins of the event. Memorial Day was originally referred to as "decoration day" and families "decorated" the graves of loved ones themselves. ***With that said you may purchase a flag to have with you as you visit the site so you can remedy the issue yourself.***

You may also contact the organization who does it for that cemetery and make sure they know so they can be sure that grave location is on their list. Many times if there are no military funeral honors performed by their organization they may not know that it's there.

If you're unsure as to which organization does it for that cemetery you can contact the cemetery caretaker.

If there is no bronze flag holder/marker on your loved one's grave you may not have been given one. You need to work with your local VSO to get the bronze marker and/or bronze flag holder ordered. It's not automatic.



The bronze flag marker is made to be able to stick directly into the ground. This is convenient but it also makes them easy to pilfer. Not often but occasionally you will find one missing, probably stolen. There are a couple ways you can deter this.

- 1) ***When the special day has passed*** you can take it home and store it until the next time's it's needed. This creates another set of issues such as losing it, forgetting to take it to the cemetery, discarding it, etc.
- 2) ***You can drill a hole in the concrete*** base of the grave stone, squeeze a cement adhesive into the hole and then place the marker into the hole you drilled. It will then be permanent. Before you consider this be sure to talk with the cemetery caretaker to make sure it's allowed at that cemetery.

I find that when I visit the graves there is a moss or fungus which grows on the stone. I have printed the instructions or also have the web address (URL) to where you can get the instructions to remove this and hopefully eradicate it. I use a wire brush but that can be harsh as well as really difficult to do on some of them.

There are limits that caretakers have when caring for the cemetery and it's "residents". Some are geared to provide a more comprehensive care as others are more to be sure the grass is mowed and the weeds cut.

One limit may be the realignment of the head/foot stones if they have sunken or tilted. Additionally, the repair of broken stones should be done by a professional. You can have it contracted out at your own expense or in my case, I'm going to dig, fill and level the foot stone myself for my father's grave. For me, it's a solemn duty to my father. However, if the headstone needed straightening I would probably contract it out.

Bottom line, if you see a flag has not been placed research why and just maybe take it on as a family duty. I'm afraid that after probably three generations we will most likely have to rely on others to care for our resting places and the accoutrements in place to identify us.

MISSING NAME LISTING?

I've also fielded several calls concerning Veteran's names not being included in the list posted in our local newspaper as well as on the role of the dead on programs, etc.

First, I can assure you it's not just one community. I've had calls as Legion District Commander too with the same questions concerning other communities.

As I stated above there is no central "clearing house" where these names are provided. Generally each communities service organizations do their best to compile the names, generally based on calls or on military funeral honors they've provided at funerals.

To resolve an issue such as this I would do much the same as with the flags above, call your local Legion or VFW who may take care of keeping a list. I would further call the local newspaper and provide them the information for next year's publication.



Free Braille and Talking Book Program for Veterans

The gift of reading returned to Veterans with visual impairments

The Braille and Talking Book Program offers Veterans who have difficulty with regular print materials the return of the gift of reading.

Whether escaping into a great novel or staying current with popular magazines, the freedom and independence of reading are only a few steps away. This program, from the National Library Service (NLS) and the Library of Congress, provides talking books, audio magazines, and digital talking-book players free of charge.

Any honorably discharged Veteran who is blind, has low vision, or a disability preventing the reading of traditional materials is eligible. Participants choose whether their selected reading materials are delivered by mail, downloaded from the web-based service BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download) or through the BARD mobile app for smartphones and tablets. NLS maintains a vast catalog of titles and publications from the latest best-sellers to timeless classics. Plus, Veterans have preferential status in the lending of materials and equipment.

The Braille and Talking Books Program is accomplished through a nationwide network of libraries

to serve citizens and Veterans living inside the U.S. or abroad. Applying for this service is easy. Call the National Library Service at **1-888-NLS-READ** (1-888-657-7323) or visit them on the web at www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead

Veterans served to protect freedom. Now let National Library Service provide the freedom for all to read.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please place these numbers close by in case you would ever need to call one. We hope that the need never arises but we also understand that it's a real possibility. Better to be prepared and to know where to call for help when help is needed...

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-273-8255

NATIONAL PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE

1-800-522-4700



Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

OR TEXT TO "838255"



Veterans Linkage Line™

minnesotaveteran.org | **1-888-LinkVet**
(546-5838)

HOW COPY? OVER...

GOOD COPY! OUT!

DON'T FORGET – LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!
www.facebook.com/JacksonCountyMNVeteranServices
or visit online at www.co.jackson.mn.us/veterans

See y' all next month!



The sole responsibility for content is
Jeffrey Gay, Jackson Veteran's Service Officer.