



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 11

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

November 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

CVSO@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)

VETERAN'S TOWN HALL MEETING

You, Veteran's and/or Veteran's Families, are welcome to attend a Veteran's Town Hall Meeting (Veteran's Staff Tour) at the Jackson County Government Resource Center (Door #5 off White Street). There will be subject matter experts on hand to answer any questions you have or to note your concerns and take them back to St Paul for action.

This event is facilitated by Senator Amy Klobuchar's office and sponsored by your Jackson County Veteran Services Office.

DATE: 19 November 2019
TIME: 1000hrs (10:00 AM) (Approx. 1 hour)
LOCATION: 402 White Street, Jackson, MN – Door #7
County Gov't Center (Cafeteria)



We've all heard of events like this having been referred to as "Dog and Pony Shows", we have even used those terms ourselves. This may be true of some events but it all begins with you and how strongly you feel about an issue and your ability to vocalize it to those who listen and may be able to act upon them. **Let's endeavor not to be the Dog or the Pony, let's be the one who holds the leash on the dog while riding the pony!**

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

To offer a platform for having your concerns heard. To ask questions directly to resident experts for answers. You will also be able to discuss various issues and what's being done or what needs to be done. It'll give you a chance to personally delineate that the buzzwords and focus issues important to the metro area are not necessarily relevant to our area of the state.



WHAT'S IN IT FOR THEM?

A chance for them to hear directly from you what is important and what isn't important in your area giving them a chance to better understand what is needed and what they should work for as they consider future legislation.

To actually experience first hand the impact their work has on you in SW Minnesota as compared to other areas in the State.

You can begin now by writing down questions/comments you have that may be asked of those present at the event. Remember, this is non-partisan and that we are all concerned so keep your tempers in check and it will be a more meaningful meeting and enjoyable for us all. Any questions may be directed to this office at 507.847.4774 or email to CVSO@co.jackson.mn.us.

See also page 8 for other locations of this tour.

Jackson County Veteran Service Office November 2019

SPECIAL DAYS

**November is: National Diabetes Awareness,
Child Safety Awareness and Epilepsy Month;
MILITARY FAMILY MONTH**

- 1 – All Saint's Day
- 2 – All Soul's Day
- 3 – Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 5 – US General Elections Held
- 7 – **Space Available Military Gift Mail Deadline**
- 10 – USMC Birthday
- 11 – Veterans Day
- 17 – World Peace Day
- 19 – [Veteran's Town Hall – Sen Klobuchar – VSO Office](#)
- 21 – Great American Smokeout
- 28 – Thanksgiving (Holiday)
- 29 – **BLACK FRIDAY!** Shop til ya drop!



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!



rough 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 nportant to you as the Veteran or military family. The MN Military Radio Hour is on KKOJ radio at 3PM Sundays.

FIRST MONDAY IN LAKEFIELD

Don't forget that the Jackson County Veteran Service Office is located at the Lakefield Library the first Monday of every month, 1-3:30PM. C'mon down and visit! Recommend that you call for an appointment first at 507-847-4774 or just walk in...

TRICARE – PRESCRIPTION MED\$ RISING!

TRICARE prescription medications will soon be increasing by more than 40%. If you order your meds through the Express Scripts mail-order pharmacy through TRI CARE a 90-day supply of generic drugs are likely to increase from \$7 to \$10!

TRICARE – ANNUAL OPEN SEASON!

Did you know that the TRICARE Open Season and Federal Benefits Open Season happen only once a year? Unless you experience a Qualifying Life Event, open season is your only chance to enroll in or make a change

to your enrollment for the participating programs. TRICARE Open Season applies to anyone enrolled in or eligible for a TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select health plan.

Did you know that the TRICARE Open Season and Federal Benefits Open Season **happen only once a year?** Unless you experience a Qualifying Life Event, open season is your only chance to enroll in or make a change to your enrollment for the participating programs.

TRICARE Open Season applies to anyone enrolled in or eligible for a **“TRICARE Prime”** or **“TRICARE Select”** health plan. Federal Benefits Open Season is for enrollment in a **“Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program”** (FEDVIP) dental and vision plan. Both the TRICARE and FEDVIP open seasons will run from **Nov. 11 to Dec. 9**. The enrollment choices that you make during this period will take effect on Jan. 1, 2020.

“Get a head start on open season by reviewing your benefits now and thinking about how much health, dental, or vision coverage you'll need for the 2020 plan year,” said Mark Ellis, chief of the Policy and Programs Section of the TRICARE Health Plan at the Defense Health Agency. **“You can visit the TRICARE and FEDVIP websites to learn more about your options, specific plans, and costs.”**

TRICARE Open Season

If you're eligible to participate in TRICARE Open Season, you have three choices for your 2020 health coverage:

- **Do nothing.** If you want to stay in your current TRICARE health care plan, you don't have to take any action. You'll continue in your current health plan through 2020 or as long as you're eligible.
- **Enroll in a plan.** If you're eligible for a TRICARE Prime option or TRICARE Select but not enrolled, you can enroll in a plan now.
- **Change plans.** If you're already enrolled in TRICARE Prime (including the US Family Health Plan) or TRICARE Select, you can switch plans and switch between individual and family enrollment.

TRICARE Open Season DOES NOT apply to “TRICARE For Life” (TFL). TFL coverage is automatic if you have Medicare Part A and Part B. It also doesn't apply to premium-based plans:

- TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR)
- TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS)
- TRICARE Young Adult (TYA)
- Continued Health Care Benefit Program (CHCBP)

As described in the TRICARE Plans Overview, you can purchase premium-based plans any time.

Federal Benefits Open Season

Jackson County Veteran Service Office November 2019

Eligible TRICARE beneficiaries may purchase dental and vision coverage through FEDVIP during the Federal Benefits Open Season. If you're already enrolled in a FEDVIP dental or vision plan and you don't want to make a change, your enrollment will continue in 2020. If you wish to make changes to your existing plan, you must do so during open season.

You may choose between multiple vision and dental plans and carriers. Compare 2020 plans and rates using the FEDVIP plan comparison tool.

FEDVIP dental coverage is available to:

- *Retired service members and their eligible family members*
- *Retired National Guard and Reserve members and their eligible family members*
- *Certain survivors*
- *Medal of Honor recipients and their immediate family members and survivors*

FEDVIP vision coverage is available to:

- *Active duty family members*
- *National Guard and Reserve members and their eligible family members enrolled in TRS or TRR*
- *Retired service members and their eligible family members*
- *TFL beneficiaries*

To enroll in a FEDVIP vision plan, you must be enrolled in a TRICARE health plan or have TFL coverage.

Adult children enrolled in or eligible for TYA aren't eligible for FEDVIP. This also applies to ADSMs and beneficiaries enrolled in the Transitional Assistance Management Program or CHCBP.

Don't miss this important opportunity! Sign up for email updates about open season on the TRICARE website. Take command of your health and prepare now for this year's TRICARE Open Season and Federal Benefits Open Season.

TRICARE will host a webinar about open season on Oct. 24. Register to join the webinar to learn about your 2020 health care, dental, and vision coverage options.

(There are many informational links in this article. To access them please go to the original article on-line at: https://tricare.mil/CoveredServices/BenefitUpdates/Archives/10_10_19_2019_TRICARE_Open_Season_Federal_Benefits_Open_Season_Starts_Next_Month)

Q: What do you call the age of a pilgrim?
A: Pilgrimage...

"Thanksgiving dinners take 18 hours to prepare. They are consumed in 12 minutes. Half-times take 12 minutes. This is not coincidence." — Erma Bombeck

AGENT ORANGE ON-LINE INFORMATION

AGENT ORANGE AND ONLINE HELP: During the Vietnam War, the U.S. military used Agent Orange. Did you know that VA recognizes certain health conditions are associated with Agent Orange exposure, including many diseases and several forms of cancer? To learn more you can go on-line to: www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20180212-agent-orange-and-online-help

For an Agent Orange FREE on-line exam you can go on-line to: www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/benefits/registry-exam.asp



MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT BEGINS!

Medicare's Open Enrollment Period is here! Now's the time to compare Medicare coverage options for 2020. The Medicare **Open Enrollment continues through December 7th**. Your new coverage begins January 1st.

Think about what benefits matter to you and find a Medicare plan that fits. Why compare again for 2020? Plans change, and your health care needs or situation may have changed, too. And you might even save money.

Go to <https://www.medicare.gov/plan-compare/> to compare plans and begin your open season enrollment.

Visit Medicare.gov through December 7 to compare plans and make any changes. If you decide to change plans, your new coverage will start January 1.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

For Veterans and Service Members:

Moving Forward is a free, online course designed for Veterans and Service Members who are facing challenges with:

- *managing stress*
- *balancing school & family*
- *relationship problems*
- *coping with physical injuries*
- *financial difficulties*
- *adjustment issues*



Registration is not required to access the 8 modules that include videos, games, and interactive exercises. Download the companion app for iOS devices. The app may be utilized with the course or as a standalone tool for stress management and problem solving.

For more information or to participate go on-line to: <https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/movingforward/>

Do you want the Moving Forward app for your phone so you can continue "Moving Forward" on the go? Go on-

line to <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/moving-forward/id804300239>

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES

IN-Home Respite Care – Short term and non-medical respite services for families caring for someone 60 and over. Caregivers complete an in-home assessment to determine needs. If additional services are needed, we can assist with providing information, resources, and/or referrals. Respite is provided by volunteers offering flexible schedules to meet the caregiver's needs. Volunteers are matched with families based on compatibility and experience. All volunteers are trained and have completed background checks.



Morning Out and/or Afternoon Adventure – Short term and non-medical respite in the community. Volunteers assist elderly who are 60 years and older, to participate in community activities such as: social groups, personal errands, shopping, and/or community meals. Respite is provided by volunteers offering flexible schedules to meet the caregiver's needs. Volunteers are matched with families based on compatibility and experience. All volunteers are trained and have completed background checks.

Counseling – In-home counseling, telephone reassurance, and family mediation can be provided. This can include: assisting families in developing coping skills, managing stress, planning for the future, asking for help, making difficult decisions, and life's transitions. We can assist with facilitating family meetings, setting boundaries, and dealing with one's emotions of guilt, frustration, and/or anger.

Support/Discussion Groups – Support/Discussion Groups offer a safe place for caregivers to discuss any issues they are having, provides information/resources, training/education, and assist families with building a supportive network.

Information and Referrals – This service can assist connecting caregivers to information/resources.

Caregiver Training and Education – Coordinators are available to present to groups on caregiving issues. We can provide books and videos from our Resource Library for checkout.

Caregiver Coaching – Caregiver Coaching assists caregivers with setting reasonable, attainable, and realistic goals. We assist with developing effective coping skills, setting realistic boundaries, identify and obtain additional assistance as needed, and affirming caregiver's strengths and accomplishments.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers – This is offered at least twice a year. Time and location TBA based on area needs. This class is designed to provide caregivers the tools needed to increase their self-care and their

confidence to handle difficult situations, emotions, and decisions. These tools will help caregivers reduce personal stress, communicate effectively with all involved, practice self-care, reduce guilt/anger/depression, experience relaxation techniques, make tough decisions, setting goals, and problem solving.

iPad/Technology Program – Providing support for rural caregivers who do not have access to local services and/or internet in their areas via accessing technology. If the caregiver doesn't have their own internet services or technology, if eligible we can assist with providing the technology to access services. Services available via technology would be: Counseling via video, Caregiver education, exercise programs, email, social media, video programs such as Skype or Face time to keep in touch with family and friends.

REACH – Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer's Caregiver Health in the Community. REACH program helps caregivers with their own current situations in ways that will make a positive difference for them and their loved ones. Caregivers will work on practical skills of problem solving, managing feelings/emotions, and stress management.

SUPPORT A SERVICE MEMBER

MDVA is sponsoring the Gopher Football 'Salute to Service Members' game on Saturday, November 9. (Time TBD). All are encouraged to attend, and if able, contribute to the effort to send other service members and their family to the game.



The Gopher Football team will host their 2019 "Salute to Service Members" game on **November 9, 2019** vs. Penn State!

All donations support both active and veteran military personnel and their families. **Any amount you donate helps send active or veteran military service members to the Minnesota vs. Penn State football game!** In addition, Gopher Athletics will match all contributions by fans to increase the number of tickets being donated to the cause.

To view this information on-line simply go on-line to: <https://gophersports.com/sports/2018/7/11/salute-to-service-members.aspx>

To donate online you just click on the yellow **DONATE ONLINE** button on the page...

Thank You and Go Gophers!

Are you an active military member or veteran interested in attending the game? Please click on the link below: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdG4rLtjAujmr7LSsYd7wr4qBTbVNqZrt1YLlqXkU55DiKlq/vi/wform>

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact us by telephone at 1-800-U-GOPHER or by e-mail at:

Jackson County Veteran Service Office November 2019



**REMEMBER TO...
...Set YOUR CLOCKS BACK 3 NOVEMBER!**

WERE YOU EXPOSED TO TOXINS?

Welcome to the first issue of the newsletter “Military Exposures and Your Health.” This newsletter will be released twice a year. It combines the previous “Gulf War Newsletter” and “Post-9/11 Vet Newsletter.” It is meant for Veterans who served during the period from 1990 to the present. Topics covered include military environmental exposures in the region, benefits information, updates about general health, and news about issues of concern TO VETERANS

For even more information on toxic military exposures and your health go on-line and visit: www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/index.asp

In this issue...

- **The Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record** An individual, electronic record of exposures for service members and Veterans is under development.
- **Gulf War Veterans and Presumptions** For Veterans who served since August 2, 1990, VA presumes service connection for certain health conditions and provides disability payments and health care benefits.
- **Sleep Apnea in Gulf War Veterans** There are several types of sleep apnea research has been conducted on Gulf War service and sleep apnea.
- **New Resources on the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry** VA created new materials and updated information on the registry.
- **Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances and Your Health** Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are synthetic chemicals that have been used to fight fuel fires.
- **Spotlight on the Work of an Environmental Health Coordinator and Clinician** Mr. William Kingsberry and Dr. Shoba Battu work together to make sure that Veterans receive environmental health registry exams. Find out about their roles and about environmental health registries.
- **Research Update: WRIISC’s Airborne Hazards and Burn Pits Center of Excellence** The New Jersey WRIISC was designated as the site for the Airborne Hazards and Burn Pits Center of Excellence (AHBPCE) and continues its research program.

- **VA’s Toxic Embedded Fragment Surveillance Center Program** VA offers programs for Veterans who are concerned about health effects from toxic embedded fragments or depleted uranium.
- **National Academies to Review Long-Term Health Effects of Antimalarial Drugs** VA has contracted with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to conduct a study on the long-term health effects of antimalarial drugs.

The Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry

Program The Airborne Hazard and Open Burn Pit Registry program reached its five-year anniversary in June 2019. With this milestone, VA has achieved many important goals and continues to strive for improvement.

INTERNAT’L HOLIDAY POSTAL DEADLINE

Ensuring those serving in the nation’s armed forces and diplomatic service



receive their presents, care packages and cards in time for the holidays is a priority for the U.S. Postal Service and for friends and family members of military and diplomatic personnel serving around the world.

To send packages to loved ones serving in the military abroad, the Postal Service offers a discount on its largest Priority Mail Flat Rate Box at \$13.80 (online) and \$15.90

OUR MILITARY POSTAL PERSONNEL WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS/HAPPY HOLIDAYS

(retail). The price includes a \$2 per box discount for mail sent to APO/FPO/DPO (Air/Army Post Office/Fleet Post Office/Diplomatic Post Office) destinations worldwide.

AND REMIND YOU TO... **MAIL EARLY!!** DEADLINE MAILING DATES

Priority Mail Flat Rate boxes are available at no cost at local Post Offices and online at shop.usps.com. Postage, labels and customs forms can be printed online anytime using Click-N-Ship at <https://cns.usps.com/go>.

To ensure timely delivery of holiday wishes by Dec. 25, the Postal Service recommends that cards and packages be sent to military APO/FPO/DPO addresses overseas no later than the mailing dates listed below.

Military Mail Addressed To & From	Priority Mail Express Military Service (P/MEMS) ¹	First-Class Mail Letters and Cards	Priority Mail	Parcel Airlift Mail (PAL) ²	Space Available Mail (SAM) ³	Standard Post
APO/FPO/DPO AE ZIPs 090-092	Dec-17	Dec-10	Dec-10	Dec-3	Nov-25	Nov-7
APO/FPO/DPO AE ZIP 093	N/A	Dec-03	Dec-03	Dec-3	Nov-25	Nov-7
APO/FPO/DPO AE ZIPs 094-098	Dec-17	Dec-10	Dec-10	Dec-3	Nov-25	Nov-7
APO/FPO/DPO AA ZIP 340	Dec-17	Dec-10	Dec-10	Dec-3	Nov-25	Nov-7
APO/FPO/DPO AP ZIPs 962-966	Dec-17	Dec-10	Dec-10	Dec-3	Nov-25	Nov-7

1 **PMEMS is available** to selected military/diplomatic Post Offices. Check with your local Post Office to determine if this service is available to an APO/FPO/DPO address.

2 **PAL is a service that provides** air transportation for parcels on a space-available basis. PAL is available for Standard Post items not exceeding 30 pounds in weight or 60 inches in length and girth combined. The applicable PAL fee must be paid in addition to the regular surface price for each addressed piece sent by PAL service.

3 **SAM parcels are paid at** Standard Post prices with maximum weight and size limits of 15 pounds and 60 inches in length and girth combined. SAM parcels are first transported domestically by surface and then to overseas destinations by air on a space-available basis.

Complete mailing and shipping deadlines for domestic and international services, as well as additional tips and guidelines, can be found at:

https://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2015/pr15_054.htm.

2 **PAL is a service that provides** air transportation for parcels on a space-available basis. PAL is available for Standard Post items not exceeding 30 pounds in weight or 60 inches in length and girth combined. The applicable PAL fee must be paid in addition to the regular surface price for each addressed piece sent by PAL service.

3 **SAM parcels are paid at** Standard Post prices with maximum weight and size limits of 15 pounds and 60 inches in length and girth combined. SAM parcels are first transported domestically by surface and then to overseas destinations by air on a space-available basis.

Complete mailing and shipping deadlines for domestic and international services, as well as additional tips and guidelines, can be found at:



https://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2015/pr15_054.htm.

Use the Military Care Kit to Send Presents and Care Packages

The Postal Service has created a free Military Care Kit based on the items most frequently requested by military families. The kit contains:

- Two Priority Mail APO/FPO/DPO flat rate boxes.
- Two Priority Mail Medium flat rate boxes.
- Priority Mail tape.
- Priority Mail address labels.
- Appropriate customs forms.

To order the kit, call **800-610-8734**. Guidelines for packing, addressing and shipping items to U.S. troops can be found at usps.com/ship/apo-fpo-dpo.htm. To order flat-rate boxes featuring the “America Supports You” logo, go to store.usps.com.



Addressing the Package

- Write out the service member’s full name in the address.
- Include the unit and APO/FPO/DPO address with the 9-digit ZIP Code (*if one is assigned*). For example:

Army/Air Post Office (APO)

PFC JOHN DOE
PSC 3 BOX 4120
APO AE 09021

Fleet Post Office (FPO)

SEAMAN JOSEPH SMITH
UNIT 100100 BOX 4120
FPO AP 96691

Diplomatic Post Office (DPO)

JOHN ADAMS
UNIT 8400 BOX 0000
DPO AE 09498-0048

1. Do not write the country name where the service member is stationed in the address.
2. Include a return address.
3. Include the service member’s name and address as well as the sender’s name and address on an index card inside the package in case the shipping label gets damaged in transit.

Domestic mailing deadlines are as follows:

Standard Post	First-Class Mail	Priority Mail	Priority Mail Express
Dec. 15	Dec. 19	Dec. 21	Dec. 23

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

https://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2015/pr15_055.htm

WHERE HAVE ALL THE SOLDIERS GONE?

Commentary by: JEFFREY L. GAY, CVSO



Back in the day There was a song by the “Kingston Trio” and “Peter, Paul and Mary” called “Where Have All the Flowers Gone”. It was further released as “Where Have All the Soldiers Gone”. It was mostly a pacifists song about the Vietnam War but it was a tune many of us

fondly remember yet today.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=wK9Mbx1DBjo

This is a question I often ask myself, where have they gone? The younger Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines of today's conflicts. Again, back in the day, they returned home triumphant and then began to live and work in their home communities.

Now it seems that they quietly return home and then they must leave right away! I base this on the number, or lack thereof, of how many come into my office to register, to file claims or just to check in and say hello. I also base it on the dwindling membership numbers of our American Legions and VFW's.

I wonder if they think that the VA is for older, more "seasoned" veterans in our communities or the same therefore of your local service organizations.

I've heard many discussions on the issue as this is the "what's in it for me generation" or that they "think we owe them something more".

However, in my feeble sometime warped mind I wonder if we do enough (*anything*) to make them feel welcome to join the rest of us and that's why we don't see them.



The new Veterans of today may be cut from a different cloth than we were. In today's world men take a greater role in raising their children than our dad's or we did. What was offered to us as incentives are far different from their perception of incentive is.

Again, back in the day, our service clubs were a place where Veterans went to talk and unwind, generally over a (or a few) "brown bottle" beverages. It was a place to share, a place for those with like experiences to hang out and feel that they're in a place they are understood. It also was a good excuse to get a night out from the wife and kids!

Today, the military teaches many family values to their enlistees as well as what they will need to perform their military duties. I guess I don't remember that as part of my military curriculum.

It's a brave new world out there for us fossils! I have spoken to many young men and women returning home and when asked what would make them become involved, well, again, it's family. More family events with games and attending meetings where something was actually accomplished. Having guest speakers who share something relevant to the individual or the family to take home with them.

Bottom line, it's all about imagination (*have we lost ours?*), thinking outside the "box" and listening to (*not just hearing*) what our younger Veterans have to say.

As a CVSO I must adhere as well to what I'm saying and I hope to do so more with events in the near future. Events that will benefit not only the Veteran but his/her family and community, events that will be fun and instill a desire to belong and which exudes

the values of Americanism, camaraderie, volunteering and compassion.

In other words, boys and girls, it's time we get off our dead ass and begin to live again! The more we hang with young people the younger we will feel and be able to "think younger" too. The slang has changed and we have to change with it to understand today.

Thank you for all you do and have done, now let's roll up our sleeves and go out there and meet, greet and invite our new Veterans to join the ride!

We all have a lot in common and if you consider it the only things about war and life that has really changed is the technology, we're all still people with feelings and stakeholders in this world...

USING SECURE MESSAGING CORRECTLY



A concern many, if not all, of us have when using e-mail or other media on-line is security. "Will my private information be compromised?" I know I do!

MyHealthvet has some tips for you when you're using the VA MyHealthvet website and messaging service.

HOW MY HEALTHEVET CAN HELP: You may not be able to travel to your medical center or spend time on the phone about non-urgent questions. Like email, Secure Messaging allows you to contact your health care team. But there are some things to know before pressing send.

To find out more go on-line to the following web address: www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20190603-avoid-secure-messaging-mistakes

You may also get the VA "Secure Messaging User Guide" on-line at: www.myhealth.va.gov/documents/25286/25831/MyHealthVet-Secure+Messaging+UserGuide/cb67c4e6-048d-fa9f-cb1d-59cd0cf1226d

Or just simply go to www.myhealth.va.gov and surf around, become acquainted!

(REMINDER: If you get this publication on-line in a .pdf format you can simultaneously press "CTRL" and "Right Click" on the mouse to be automatically taken to that page. Otherwise just highlight the link, copy it into your browser and then hit "Enter"...)

www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/benefits/registry-exam.asp

DIABETIC "FRIENDLY" MEALS

Are you diabetic? Are you sure???? It's a good thing to be tested... If you are a bona fide diabetic creating tasty but still diabetic friendly meals can be difficult at times? The MDVA has some meal options for you!

Recipes for a Diabetic-Friendly Meal If you have diabetes, knowing what to do during family dinners can be tough. VA has healthy recipes everyone can enjoy. Whether you or someone you know has diabetes, you can cook a delicious diabetic-friendly meal.

For healthy diabetic meal recipes and more nutrition links you can go on-line to: www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20181019-diabetic-friendly-recipes

GOT CHOLESTROL UNDER CONTROL?

With diabetes or not it's still important to control your cholesterol and eat healthy. MDVA has some tips for you to follow when planning your meal regimen.

Tips to Control Your Cholesterol If you have high cholesterol, you're at risk of heart disease, stroke, and other health problems. The good news is that you can lower and control your cholesterol by adopting healthy lifestyle changes.

To learn more go On-line to: <https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/web/myhealthvet/ss20181017-control-your-cholesterol>

Q: What would you get if you cross a turkey with a ghost?

A: A poultrygeist!

OTHER SENATE STAFF TOUR LOCATIONS

Other locations on November 19th for Senator Klobuchar's Staff Tour include:

Martin County 1pm-2pm
Basement Community Room
115 West 1st Street, Fairmont, MN 56031

Freeborn County 4pm-5pm
American Legion Post 56
142 N Broadway Ave, Albert Lea, MN 56007

Additional itinerary information for upcoming locations on both the 19th and the 20th will be forthcoming posted on our Veteran Service Facebook page.

IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER!

It's that time of year again where special care must be taken. For one, NEVER put your tongue on a freezing flagpole! Also, when driving an important safety consideration is visibility. If you can't see where you're going you can't avoid hazards!

Before you drive anywhere remember to scrape not just an opening but your entire windshield AND THEN move on to your other windows so you get a good 360° view! It may just save a life as well as post-accident insurance premiums!

It's all about common sense! Keep your field of vision clear and clean and **your windshield washer fluid full!**

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

Annual Veterans Suicide Awareness Day is held annually the first Saturday in October

NATIONAL PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE

1-800-522-4700



OR TEXT TO "838255"



DON'T FORGET – LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

www.facebook.com/JacksonCountyMNVeteranServices

or visit online at www.co.jackson.mn.us/veterans

HOW COPY? OVER...

GOOD COPY! OUT!

See y'all next month!



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

*Happy
Thanksgiving*

Jackson County Veteran Service Office November 2019



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!

FIND A LOCAL CVSO

MN Ass'n of Vet Service Officers www.macvso.org

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://yva.org/>
Military 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 *
America's Warrior Part. americaswarriorpartnership.org

OTHER LINKS PROVIDING INFO AND ASSISTANCE

Nat'l Archives (Records) <https://archives.gov/veterans>
MACV (Financial/Legal) www.mac-v.org
Minnesota LinkVet <https://minnesotaveteran.org>
Senior Linkage Line www.seniorlinkageline.com
Wounded Warrior Proj. www.woundedwarriorproject.org
"Make the Connection" www.MakeTheConnection.net
MN Military & Vet Exch. www.mnme.us

VETERANS MALL, LODGING & VACATIONS

Armed Forces Exchange www.aafes.gov *
Armed Forces Lodging www.dodlodging.net/
AF Vacation Club www.afvclub.com

(** denotes must be still serving Active Duty, Reserve or Guard and military retirees)

"WHO YA GONNA CALL?!"

From time to time you need to call for help. Besides your local CVSO the numbers below may be helpful for you to call direct!



Resources for SW/WC MN Area Veterans

VAMC, Sioux Falls, SD 605.336.3230
(Toll Free) (800.316.8387)
(Press "0" or your party's extension to interrupt message)

VA Nurse & Telephone Care 866.687.7382
Telephone Triage x7140
Patient Advocate x6688
Pharmacy Refills 855.560.1723
VA Billing Questions 866-347-2352

CBOC, Spirit Lake, IA 712.336.6400
CBOC, St James, MN 507.375.9670

MN Vet's Home, Luverne, MN 507.283.6200
Toll Free 877.588.8387

Vet Center, Sioux Falls, SD 605.330.4552

MACV, Mankato Office 507.345.8258

SW Ctr for Independent Living 507.532.2221
507.537.7213

MDVA SW MN Higher Education Coordinator 507.637.1534

MDVA Tribal VSO, SW MN 888.546.5838

MDVA Veterans Linkage Line 800.333.2433

Senior Linkage Line 1.800.273.TALK
VA Crisis Line/Suicide Line press 1 (273.8255)

Defense Finance & Acc't. Svc 888.332.7411

TRICARE West Region 844.866.9378

MN Veterans Service Organizations' Dept. HQ's

The American Legion 866.259.9163
Veterans of Foreign Wars 651.291.1757
Disabled American Veterans 651.291.1212
Military Order Purple Heart 651.227.4456
Vietnam Veterans of America 651.224.6345

IDENTIFICATION CARDS/DEERS UPDATES

(Call for appointment and bring proper paperwork)

NG Armory, Mankato, MN 507.389.6219
100 Martin Luther King Drive Mon-Wed-Fri

114th FW (Airport), Sioux Falls, SD 605.988.5845
1201 W. Algonquin St. 605.357.2900 or 2985
196th MEB, Sioux Falls, SD 800 W. National Guard Drive

NG Armory, Montevideo, MN 320.269.9284 or 5180
711 S. 17th St. Mon-Fri / 9am-3pm

YOUR LOCAL CVSO



"The nightmares were the hardest part because they were recurring. I didn't sleep well – I'd sleep an hour and a half, two hours at a time...it was kicking my butt. I was working at the time and I was tired all the time going into work..."

For U.S. Army Veteran (1980-2008) Kevin Cottrell, PTSD came with sleep problems that made it difficult for him to do his job.

Mr. Cottrell's experience is common. Many who are diagnosed with PTSD also have sleep problems. And when sleep problems last, they can have a negative impact on many parts of your life. The good news is, **treatment can help!**

Kevin shares in the National Center for PTSD's AboutFace (www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/AboutFace/) video that getting treatment for PTSD helped him turn his life around: "After I've received therapy, it's getting better, slowly but surely."

Recognize Sleep Concerns

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Have I had difficulty sleeping (getting to sleep, staying asleep, waking up too early) several nights a week for several months?
- Do I feel sluggish or have low energy?
- Have I noticed changes in my concentration or mood?
- Do I dread the idea of trying to sleep, instead of looking forward to it?
- Have I woken up gasping for air?

If you answered yes to any of the questions, then talk with your provider about getting a sleep assessment and discuss sleep treatment options.

Seek Treatment

If you have PTSD and sleep problems, ask your provider about evidence-based treatment options. Treating your PTSD can help improve your sleep problems. If your sleep problems continue after you complete a front-line treatment for PTSD, talk to your provider about options for sleep-related treatments.

If you have been diagnosed with insomnia, consider Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I). CBT-I is a talk therapy that is the most effective treatment for insomnia. CBT-I does not require medication either. For people who are doing CBT-I, the National Center for PTSD has a free treatment companion mobile CBT-I Coach. Also, VA has a free Veteran online training called Path to Better Sleep to help address insomnia symptoms.

Manage Sleep Difficulties

Treatment is the best option if you have lasting sleep problems. But these tips can also help temporarily:

- Have a 30-minute wind down time before bed.
- Go to bed when sleepy.
- Get out of bed if you find yourself "trying" to sleep. Engage in a relaxation activity until you feel sleepy and then go back into bed.
- Have a consistent wake time.
- Make your bed and sleeping environment comfortable.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs before bed.
- Limit your caffeine use.

Visit the National Center for PTSD's website to learn more about the relationship between PTSD and sleep problems.