



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 10

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

October 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)

www.co.jackson.mn.us/veterans

ANNUAL AGENT ORANGE NEWSLETTER!

MESSAGE FROM DR. LOREN ERICKSON

Welcome to VA's 2019 Agent Orange Newsletter. As Chief Consultant for VA's Post Deployment Health Services and as both a Veteran and son of a Vietnam Veteran, I am happy to provide this latest newsletter for Vietnam Veterans.

This issue contains articles on environmental health registries and telehealth; the Ionizing Radiation Registry; research on Vietnam Veterans' health; links to benefits information; and an update on registry eligibility for Blue Water Navy Veterans.

VA strives to provide up-to-date information on issues of concern for Vietnam Veterans. For the latest information, go online to

<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/index.asp> and click the links to topics of interest, including related diseases, benefits, research studies, and more.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

Research Findings on COPD

Researchers tested breathing airflow in Army Chemical Corps Veterans using spirometry to learn about the association between reported herbicide exposure and COPD.

Benefits Resources

Helpful links to benefits information.

The Ionizing Radiation Registry Exam

VA offers the Ionizing Radiation Registry health exam for Veterans who are concerned about possible long-term health problems related to potential exposure to ionizing radiation during their service.

Telehealth Technology for Environmental Health Registry Exams

The Orlando VAMC uses telehealth technology for Environmental Health Registry exams and plans to offer more registry exams through telehealth.

Researchers Use Interviewing and Observation to Improve a VA Study

VA researchers used interviewing techniques and observation to improve the VE-HEROeS study questionnaires.

The Agent Orange Registry and Blue Water Navy Veterans

Eligible Blue Water Navy Veterans can join the Agent Orange Registry.

Subscribe to email updates about agent orange exposures, including notices of published newsletters. Go online to view the magazine at www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/publications/agent-orange/agent-orange-2019/index.asp...

SPECIAL DAYS

October is: Breast Cancer & Domestic Violence Awareness Month; National Diabetes Month

- 9 – Fire Prevention Day
- 9-13 - Fire Prevention Week
- 13 –US Navy Birthday
- 14 – Columbus Day
- 24 – United Nations Day
- 26 – National Day of the Deployed
- 26 – Make a Difference Day (*Neighbors helping Neighbors*)
- 27 – Navy Day
- 31 – Halloween

Get your Flu Shot!



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.

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 – CHANGES & ENROLLMENT!

If you are a military retiree who either has transitional TRICARE or TRICARE for Life (TFL), or a Guard/Reservist who has TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS), "OPEN SEASON" for health care or Federal Benefits (FEDVIP) of dental and vision open enrollment begins soon.



TRICARE Open Season is the annual period when you can enroll in or change your health plan for the next year. The 2019 TRICARE Open Season begins on Monday, November 11th and ends on Monday, December 9th. During TRICARE Open Season, you can:

- **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 a TRICARE Prime option, or TRICARE Select, you can switch plans and switch between individual and family enrollment.

TRICARE Open Season doesn't apply to premium-based plans such as:

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

DON'T FORGET! You can make changes any time if you have a Qualifying Life Event (QLE) such as marriage, birth/adoption of a child, death of a beneficiary or divorce.

For more information about TRICARE programs you can go on-line to www.tricare.mil. Specifically for Open Enrollment you can go on-line directly to <https://tricare.mil/Plans/Enroll/OpenSeason>

ON ANOTHER NOTE... TRICARE Premiums!

There is another change to TRICARE benefits affecting military retirees that will happen in the near future, probably beginning 2021. This is just a heads-up for you so you can begin planning now.

It has been unofficially announced that you will soon see premiums for your TRICARE if you are a "gray area" retiree now receiving TRICARE free. It will not affect TRICARE For Life enrollees, those over the age of 65.

The premiums are not expected to be high, generally under \$100, but they will be a monthly expense you need to consider.

LEGION ACT SIGNED INTO LAW

It's been a couple of months since the signing of "The LEGION Act" into law. This opens anyone who has served in uniform in the US military to membership in the American Legion. Previously a Veteran had to serve during any of seven specific time frames. Now they all run consecutively opening membership to many more Veterans to be able to enjoy the benefits of being a legionnaire.

See the press release from the VA below:

The American Legion - Jul 30, 2019

In a significant legislative victory for The American Legion, President Trump signed a bill July 30 that declares the United States has been in a state of war since Dec. 7, 1941.

The American Legion sought the declaration as a way to honor approximately 1,600 US Servicemembers who

were killed or wounded during previously undeclared periods of war.

The **LEGION Act** (Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for National Service Act) also opens the door for approximately 6 million veterans to access American Legion programs and benefits for which they previously had not been eligible.

“Recognizing the service of these wartime veterans is the right thing to do and it is long overdue,” National Commander Brett Reistad said. *“The families of those who were killed or wounded during these wartime acts should take pride in knowing that we recognize their sacrifice and service. Moreover, we are proud to welcome any of the six million living veterans from the previously unrecognized periods into our organization and call them ‘Legionnaires.’”*

Now that the legislation has been signed, The American Legion’s eligibility criteria immediately changes from seven war eras to two: **April 6, 1917, to Nov. 11, 1918, and Dec. 7, 1941 to a time later determined by the federal government.** No other restrictions to American Legion membership are changed.

The law’s journey began on Feb. 14 when Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz., introduced S. 504, along with Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C. A companion measure, H.R. 1641, was introduced in the House by Reps. Lou Correa, D-Calif., and Ben Cline, R-Va.

Reistad expressed gratitude to the bipartisan members of Congress for passing the legislation.

“We are grateful that President Trump fully acknowledges the importance of The American Legion by signing the LEGION Act in the White House today – just one week after it passed the House of Representatives,” Reistad said. *“In an era of partisan gridlock, Republicans and Democrats in Congress overwhelmingly recognized the importance of allowing thousands of honorable but previously ineligible veterans the right to join the largest and most influential veterans organization in the country.”*

Reistad pointed out that existing American Legion membership applications are in the process of being updated but can still be used. *“In the meantime, I recommend that prospective Legionnaires and recruiters write ‘LEGION Act’ in the eligibility date section of American Legion membership applications if they fall outside the previous war eras,”* Reistad said. *“The larger pool of veterans now eligible for The American Legion will also open their family members to eligibility in the Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary as well.”*

“Anyone who thinks fallen leaves are dead has never watched them dancing on a windy day.”

– Shira Tamir

READY OR NOT, WINTER’S COMIN’

By the calendar winter’s a way’s off but by the feel in the air it could be sooner than we want. In any case it’s never too early to prepare for anything. Winter is just one but a vitally important one for your safety and your comfort.



ARE YOU READY???

SELF/FAMILY – Get yourself ready by checking to see if you need any vaccinations such as **influenza** or **pneumo-vax**. As long as you’re at it check your tetanus too, it’s one we all so often forget about. ***I got my flu vaccine, it was a “real shot in the arm”!***



HOME – As a homeowner or even a renter there are many things you can do to prepare!

- **Calk and winterize** your windows and doors.
- **Be sure your outdoor faucets** are the frost free type and cover them with foam faucet covers.
- **Get your furnace checked and serviced!**
 - Check and change the filters in your furnace
 - be sure the chimney or exhaust and intake are free from soot or debris.
- **If you don’t heat via natural gas** be sure you monitor the gauge on your propane or fuel oil tank. If by wood, check your supply!
- **Check smoke & carbon monoxide** detector’s batteries and to be sure the dust is blown out. It’s also good to have a properly charged household fire extinguisher.
- **Go on-line to <https://dmcsnow.com/wp-content/uploads/Basic-Household-Winter-Tips.jpg>** for a list!

AUTOMOBILE – You want your automobile to be as dependable as it can be in cold weather.



- **Be sure your vehicle** is properly winterized (*antifreeze is strong enough to at least -30°, all fluids are topped off, tires have ample air, check vehicle battery, keep fuel tank full!*)
- **Carry an emergency kit** in case you get stuck or otherwise become stranded. www.redcross.org/about-us/news-and-events/news/2019/national-preparedness-month-how-to-build-your-emergency-kit.html
- **Include some blankets or sleeping bags** in the car for added warmth.
- **Have a shovel in your trunk** in case you become stuck and have to remove snow. Probably some sand or cat litter to use for traction also.
- **An ice scraper is a must to have in your car!** One with a brush on it is nice or the smaller ones with a mitten attached to it to keep your hand warm.

- **Carry flares or a flashing** emergency light or some red cloth to tie to your antenna.
- **Keep your cellular phone car charger** in your car. You can also carry a CB radio. (*Yes, there are still truckers and others who carry these things*)
- **A pad of paper and pencil** may be good to pass the time or leave a message. Books or magazines might help too.

EMERGENCY – Do you have a “go-bag” ready? How about a stockpile of food on hand? Have you thought about heat and electricity?



- A **“Go-Bag”** is a duffel or suitcase that is always packed with a three to five day supply in the event you have to leave quickly. It should contain changes of clothing, water, medications, food and other necessities
- **You need food and water** if you’re stranded at home. Keep extra food & water available to sustain you for at least up to a week or more.
- **Be sure to have extra blankets available.**
- **Cold weather clothing** is a must to help stay warm (*parka, snow suit, thick socks, long underwear, etc.*)
- **If you stranded at home without power** plan ahead so you don’t have to open the refrigerator or freezer any more than you have to so its contents remain cold or frozen.
- **Keep extra water and food** in an area that will not freeze.
- **Have a sterno or other such stove** available that is safe to use inside without ventilation. Candles will work as well just not as well.
- **Keep extra batteries** for flashlights and radios on hand. Have a stockpile of candles and/or kerosene lamps.
- **Stay stocked up on medications** and keep a first aid kit fully stocked.

Fight the Flu

REMEMBER THE 3C's



Cover your Cough
Use a tissue or your elbow.

Clean your Hands
Use soap and water or hand sanitizer.

Contain Germs
Stay home when sick.

‘SUPPORT OUR TROOPS’ LICENSE PLATE FUND AWARDS GRANTS

September 24, 2019

St. Paul, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) announced today the recipients

of the competitive Support Our Troops (SOT) license plate fund grant program.

- **Pain Free Patriots: \$100,000**
- **Disabled Veterans Rest Camp Association: \$34,000**
- **Lutheran Social Services: \$20,700**
- **Support the Troops - Minnesota: \$20,000**

The MDVA SOT grant program offers a competitive grant process which allows organizations to apply for funding. These grants, ranging from \$1,000 to \$100,000, are focused on supporting and improving the lives of Veterans and their families.

“**Congratulations to our diverse group** of grant recipients for their commitment to serving Minnesota Veterans in many different ways,” said Commissioner Larry Herke, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs. “I also thank those Minnesotans who purchase SOT license plates. Without support from the thousands who are ‘driving home their support’ every day, these grants would not be possible.”

Pain Free Patriots

(PFP) is receiving a \$100,000 grant to provide an innovative pain treatment program for up to 30 Veterans experiencing chronic pain.

<https://painfreepatriots.org/>

The Disabled Veterans Rest Camp Association

(DVRC) will use their \$34,000 grant to purchase three new golf carts and covers, including one eight-passenger, one six-passenger, and one four-passenger cart. The golf carts will enable DVRC to provide differently abled and elderly Veterans and their families’ access to the activities offered throughout the 69-acre camp property. <http://www.vetscampmn.org/>

Lutheran Social Services

(LSS-MN) was awarded a \$20,700 grant to fund qualified Lutheran Social Services Respite Care staff to develop a “Care Plan” with up to 35 Veteran Caregiver families to be implemented in the event of a crisis that pulls the caregiver out of the caregiver role.

<https://www.lssmn.org/>

Support the Troops – Minnesota

(STT-MN) is receiving a \$20,000 grant to provide financial assistance and clothing donations for up to 100 veterans and their families at the VA Medical Hospital.

<https://supportthetroopsmn.org/>

About the SOT License Plate Program:

Deployments and military service can put a strain on families, finances and health. Purchasing a Support our Troops License plate helps Minnesota military, Veterans and families in the following ways:

- *Grants through Support Our Troops program*
- *Benefits the Lutheran Social Services CORE program, (<https://www.lssmn.org/services/military-and-veterans/core>) which provides family*

counseling, with specialty services available for children; financial counseling, debt management and mental health counseling

- Emergency financial assistance
- Helping homeless Veterans secure shelter and access to benefits
- Outreach to diverse communities across Minnesota, helping provide Veterans with access to earned benefits
- Community seminars on health conditions associated with military service

To purchase SOT plates, visit your local DMV office. SOT plates are also available from auto dealerships. Be sure to ask about SOT plates when you purchase your next new or used vehicle. To locate your local DMV: <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/dvs/locations/Pages/find-office-locations.aspx>

To receive a notice when the next grant cycle opens, or to learn more about how to apply for an SOT grant, visit the MDVA grants page: <https://mn.gov/mdva/resources/federalresources/grants/>



KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

When you sustain a physical injury, your body will let you know through a signal of pain or through other signs. **Your body will also let you know if your mental health needs attention.** These signs are a lot more subtle, but if these signs persist for days or weeks, you need to act to support your mental health.

- Excessive worrying, fear, sadness, or anger
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating and learning
- Difficulty understanding or connecting with other people
- Extreme changes in mood or habits
- Abusing substances like alcohol or drugs
- Growing inability to handle daily problems and activities
- Anger or rage Issues

The following signs require immediate attention:

- Thinking about hurting or killing yourself
- Looking for ways to kill yourself

- Talking about death, dying, or suicide
- Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse, weapons, etc.

Visit this site to see more signs and understand how you can address them.

<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/education/signs-of-crisis>

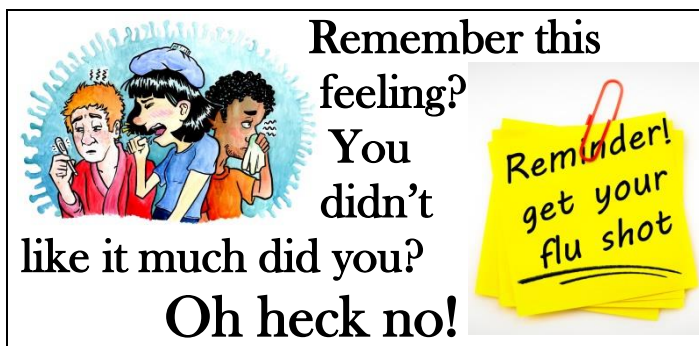
If you recognize any of these signs in yourself or others please call for help. Calling for help is not a sign of weakness it's a sign of strength, the strength to take control of your life again!

Who do you call? There are several, to begin with phone a friend!

- Friends & family can help!
- Call a local mental health organization
- Call your nearest VA
- Join a support group that understands what you're experiencing

If it's an immediate need, for instance suicide or a desire to hurt yourself or others:

- Call "911"
- You may also call 800-273-8255 and press "1" (This is a 24 hour crisis help line and is answered by a human being)



MIDWEST HONOR FLIGHT

The Midwest Honor Flight organization is looking for veterans from **WWII**, the **Korean War**, or **any other veterans with a terminal illness** to fly to Washington, DC to visit your respective war memorials.

You will need your **DD form 214** to verify your veteran status when applying.

This is an all day trip.

THERE ARE TWO (2) UPCOMING FLIGHTS PLANNED: OCT 12, 2019 (Funds Pending) and MAY 30, 2020.

The **VETERAN** flies **FREE** and the **GUARDIAN** cost is **\$675.00.**

Applications for both **VETERAN** and **GUARDIAN** can be found on-line at:

VETERAN:

www.midwesthonorflight.org/veterans.html

GUARDIANS:

www.midwesthonorflight.org/guardians.html

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Midwest Honor Flight

282 1st Ave. N.E.

Sioux Center, IA 51250

712-463-2020

www.midwesthonorflight.org



IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION ON-LINE OR PAPER APPLICATION PLEASE CALL OR E-MAIL:

Betty Jass, Post #7, Adjutant – 507-351-1241 or

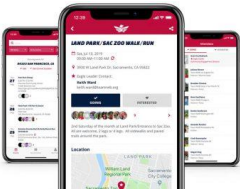
bettyusaf@gmail.com

Rick Mages, Post #7, Commander – 320-583-7442 or

rickmages@formafeed.com

FIND FREE LOCAL EVENTS BY YOUR PHONE

Find free local events with Team RWB's new app



Looking for free local events?

Maybe ruck with other Veterans in your community, or a run with some kindred spirits while traveling for work? Perhaps you're looking to perform some

community service with others in your city?

No problem. Team Red, White, & Blue's new app provides access to thousands of physical, social, and service-oriented events led by volunteer leaders and members throughout the country. Team RWB's app makes it simple to quickly search for all types of activities. Running, hiking, cycling, yoga, functional fitness, rock climbing, rucking, mountain biking and many more.

Team RWB designed the app to combat isolation that many Veterans face, and provides Veterans and supporters with thousands of opportunities to participate in local activities across the country.

With the Team RWB app, you can:

- Register for a new account and manage your profile.
- Discover thousands of different events taking place across the nation.
- Filter and search for events by keyword, location, distance, activity category, and chapter affiliation.
- View event details including the time, location, and host.
- Identify your interest in attending events and check-in after participating in a Team RWB event.

- View other individuals attending events.
- Access your event history, both upcoming and past events.
- Share events with other Veterans and civilian supporters.

Joining Team RWB is easy! Begin by downloading the Team RWB App! It can be downloaded from Google Play or the Apple App Store.

Then go to on-line <https://www.teamrwb.org/>

Team Red, White & Blue is a nonprofit founded by Veterans working to solve the epidemic of loneliness through physical activity. Team RWB is the bridge connecting communities where Veterans and civilians work together to gain common understanding. They take the best of military service—the camaraderie and physical challenges—and create a new family of Eagles connected through physical activity.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE BY VETERANS



The rate of substance abuse among veterans is increasing over time!

Yes, many of us like to relax with a drink now and then. Others prefer the euphoria of marijuana and some like the harder drugs. Aside from the legal issues involved with the illicit drugs and the danger or cost of all of the above substances they can cause a myriad of other problems overall.



Substance abuse (or *Substance Use Disorder* or *SUD*) is an equal opportunity destroyer not limited to social status, profession, gender, race, religion or even age. Like the old adage goes, **“once it gets ya, it's got ya”!** It's a hard habit to kick, it makes your body crave it and your brain think you cannot live or function without it.



Addiction goes beyond drugs and alcohol. The dictionary defines it as:

- 1) *a compulsive, chronic, physiological or psychological need for a habit-forming substance, behavior, or activity having harmful physical, psychological, or social effects and typically causing well-defined symptoms (such as anxiety, irritability, tremors, or nausea) upon withdrawal or abstinence*
- 2) *a strong inclination to do, use, or indulge in something repeatedly*

Addiction includes, but is not limited to, alcohol, prescription painkillers, illicit drugs, gambling, sex, gaming, Internet, tobacco, food, texting, social media, etc.

It can be “kicked”! There is help out there, you just have to 1) realize there is a problem and 2) ask for help. I am a good example of this after experiencing two DUI's and heart by-pass surgery. I chose to embrace life and everything that goes with it.. **Help is the key, most times it's hard to “Just Say No”.**

The cost in dollars, relationships and lost-time or non-productivity at your job notwithstanding, substance abuse is physically unhealthy as well as leading to a higher incident of depression and suicidal tendencies, especially if it gets out of hand or you are unable to curb your use.



SUD can affect anyone but especially those in the military, law enforcement and EMS. They see things which aren't normal and have to react to those situations in a hands-on manner. If debriefing or counseling following an event is offered take it! It will help to diffuse the emotions you are experiencing.

(The information below can be found on-line at www.help.org/substance-abuse-rehab-for-veterans/)

In the last 10 years, the number of veterans who have been diagnosed with a substance use disorder (SUD) has increased, meaning that more are using illegal drugs or using alcohol in excess. Non-medical prescription drug usage and binge drinking are becoming especially problematic. For example, 35% of service members in 1998 reported binge drinking regularly compared to 47% in 2008.

As you can see in the table below, the number of diagnoses grew for veterans between 2008 and 2010. For instance, there was an increase of nearly 60,000 substance abuse diagnoses relating to alcohol in that time frame.

Veteran Substance Abuse Diagnoses

| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| Opioid | 35,240 | 39,020 | 43,332 |
| Cocaine | 74,995 | 77,371 | 80,348 |
| Any Drug | 182,003 | 198,989 | 216,173 |
| Alcohol | 303,488 | 334,130 | 362,737 |

To read more on this you can go their website at www.help.org/substance-abuse-rehab-for-veterans/ or just go to www.help.org.

**Remember, help is available!
Just call 800.273.8255
OR TEXT TO “838255” 24/7**

For more information and/or how to get connected with a facility to help you become “healthy” again you can call my office at 507.847.4774 or my cellular at 507.530.8378, all calls are confidential.

What do you call a soldier who survived mustard gas AND pepper spray?

“A Seasoned Veteran...”

~~SUICIDE~~ WHAT DO I DO???????

Have you ever come into contact with someone who is considering suicide and/or at the point he or she has decided to act on it? I hope you never do...



You ask yourself, “what do I do” or “what do I say”? None of us are experts nor is any two situations the same. You try to “read” what's going on and form your dialogue from that. It's even what the “experts” do!



I am not advocating for you to take these matters into your own hands but if you are put in that position and you feel comfortable enough with the situation please follow the below guidelines.

First and foremost secure the area and assess the threat to your own safety, the safety of others and safety of the person in crises. If weapons are present you may wish to **call '911'** and allow the authorities to intervene.

Then proceed in a slow calming voice:

- *Introduce yourself*
- *Ask them their name and if it is OK to call them by their first name*
- *Remain calm*
- **Listen more than you speak**
- *Maintain eye contact*
- *Use open body language*
- *Use supportive and encouraging comments*
- *Be honest – there are no quick solutions, but help is available*

Be sure you have the 24/7 Crisis Hotline available to provide them or to call yourself and put them on the phone. I'd keep a card or note in your wallet.

After the crisis is over, reassure the attempters giving them praise for cooperating and telling them that they did the right thing

Notes of interest for Veterans

SYNOPSIS: Non-deployed: 964,493 total Veterans, 7,703 total deaths. **19.7%** death by suicide. 80.3% death by other causes. **Deployed Veterans showed a lower risk of suicide** compared to non-deployed Veterans. Female Veteran suicide rates were about a third of the suicide rate of male Veterans.

While veterans have a suicide rate 50% higher than those who did not serve in the military, the rate of suicide was, as the LA Times reported, “...slightly higher among veterans who never deployed to Afghanistan or Iraq, suggesting that the causes extend beyond the trauma of war.” (<https://taskandpurpose.com>)



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://vva.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

MDVA SW MN Higher Education Coordinator 507.537.7213

MDVA Tribal VSO, SW MN 507.637.1534

MDVA Veterans Linkage Line 888.546.5838
Senior Linkage Line 800.333.2433

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

Defense Finance & Acc't. Svcs 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.

196th MEB, Sioux Falls, SD 605.357.2900 or 2985
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

Happy Halloween

Are you prepared for all those little ghosts, witches and hobgoblins?

After wondering all these years what the heck a hobgoblin was, I finally I looked it up. In the dictionary it is described as a noun; in mythological stories and fairy tales it's a mischievous imp or sprite. Well, that explains it, a little guy who likes to drink a soft beverage that is much like 7Up! Maybe I misunderstood...



Regardless, it's that time of year again where there will be children galore out and about in the dark wielding bags full of sweet delights! Listen pumpkin head, be careful out there, especially as you drive, you wouldn't want to run any of them over!

Be a welcome site for your tricks or treatsters, leave your porch light on so they know you have candy for them. It's also for their safety...



Best treats to give away are ones that come individually wrapped. There are some geek-a-zoids out there who spoil the fun by sabotaging treats so the ones which are factory wrapped should be safe. Don't be that geek, keep it fun and safe for the kids!



Halloween is also a party night for adults. Be sure that if you do dress up and go out you have a designated driver or limit the intake of your "BOO"ZE!

HALLOWEEN FUN FACTS!

- **Jack-o-lanterns were originally carved into turnips.**
- **Trick-or-treating likely evolved from the medieval custom of "souling" in England.**
- **Cats, especially black cats, have been part of the history of Halloween for centuries.**
- **The "bon" in bonfire is a reference to bones.**
- **Samhainophobia is the fear of Halloween. ...**
- **Halloween has also been called All Hallows Eve, Witches Night, Lamswool, Snap-Apple Night, Samhain and Summer's End.**
- **During medieval times in Ireland and Scotland, the Samhain festival was held at sunset on October 31st and lasted through daylight on November 1st.**

CHIROPRACTIC CARE SOON?

I got a crick in my neck, is "crick" really a word? Well, I looked it up and lo and behold it is really a word!

I haz a crick in mai neck!



The dictionary defines it as a painful, stiff feeling in the neck or back caused by a muscle spasm or contraction. Or a twist or strain causing painful stiffness.

For generations we've relied on a chiropractor to "crack" it free in order to get immediate relief. Many of us have turned to acupuncture as well. I really love my chiropractor, she just "cracks me up"! OK, poor pun...

This can be a good news/bad news situation depending on your insurance.

If you have TRICARE medical insurance (for those still serving or for military retirees) this has not been an option as chiropractic or acupuncture is not an approved treatment option.



In an article I read the other day there may be relief on the horizon. It seems that TRICARE, under a proposed new policy ready to forward to Congress in the next few months, these services may become approved for use.

The official proposal may not be issued no later than early next year. It's unclear what the verbiage will be but with luck we may be able to see these services soon.

A FEW HEALTH FACTS FORM THE VA

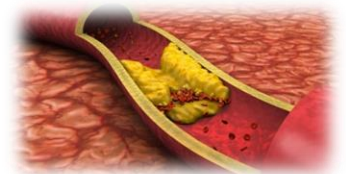
With winter fast approaching we need to think about our health and how to best stay healthy while being cooped up! Exercise is difficult at best in the winter so focusing on nutrition is primary. Yes, walking the pooch can be considered exercise...



Below is an article from the VA written by Anne Koth, RD

What most influences your cholesterol levels? Fat? Cholesterol? It's challenging to know what to look for on food labels. If you think you are making a good choice because the package "contains no cholesterol," the food companies have succeeded in distracting you from the two culprits: saturated fat and trans-fat.

Experts report that there isn't enough evidence to recommend an 'upper limit' of cholesterol (in foods) that we should consume. But the American College of



Cardiology/American Heart Association's most updated guidelines for reducing heart disease risk tell us which fat is dangerous: *trans*-fat. This fat raises LDL (the "bad" cholesterol) and lowers HDL (the "good" cholesterol) in our blood (the AHA website explains these terms). Some think of it this way: LDL is Lousy; HDL is Healthy. Saturated fat is another unhealthy choice, because eating it causes the liver to send cholesterol into the bloodstream, causing a build-up or plaque inside our arteries.

SATURATED FATS

For optimal heart health, eat less saturated fat and as little *trans*-fat as possible. Saturated fat is found in foods that come from animals and some plants. Saturated fats are found in high amounts in fatty cuts of meat, poultry with skin, whole-milk dairy foods, butter, lard, and coconut and palm oils. But wait: Isn't coconut oil a "health food?" Why does this blog post say that we should limit it in our diet? There is a lot of buzz about the health benefits of coconut products. The reality is that coconut oil is a highly saturated oil and therefore will raise your blood cholesterol. If you like to eat coconut, make it an occasional treat rather than using it as an everyday cooking ingredient.

TRANS FATS

Limit intake of trans fats to very little or none. Trans fats are found in high amounts in foods made with partially hydrogenated oils, such as some desserts, microwave popcorn, frozen pizza, stick margarines, and coffee creamers. You may be thinking: Didn't our government recently ban *trans*-fat from food products? Well, because of that law, the Nutrition Facts Label on any package will state: *trans*-fat: 0 grams.

Unfortunately, that doesn't always mean zero grams, because the FDA (writer of the Food Label law) says "The Nutrition Facts Label can state 0 g of trans fat if the food product contains less than 0.5 g of trans fat per serving". So, the more servings you eat, the more *trans*-fat you could be consuming in many processed foods. A summary of food sources of healthy vs. unhealthy fats can be found here.

Your VA dietitian can help you with lifestyle changes to lower your cholesterol and your risk for heart disease. He or she can really help clear the confusion. Call your VA and request a visit with a Registered Dietitian today!

Anne Koth, RD, hails from Wisconsin and provides nutrition care to Veterans at the Rockford, IL Community-Based Outpatient Clinic and at the Milwaukee VA Medical Center in Wisconsin. She is also a Veteran of the U.S. Navy Reserve.

What did one sailor say to the other when they had the same problem?

"I guess we're both in the same boat!"

What do you call a Marine with an open head wound?

"Ajar head..."

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



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

OR TEXT TO "838255"



Veterans Linkage Line
your link to experts
minnesotaveteran.org | 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838)

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! OIT!

See y'all next month!



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