

# SILVERLINES

VFW DEPARTMENT OF NEVADA

1899 1999

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

The Official Publication of the Nevada Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Volume 11 Issue 1

December 2011

## State Commander



**Bruce Hollinger**  
State Commander

Season's greetings to all comrades!

Thanksgiving is behind us, Christmas is only days away...then we are into 2012. Three weeks after that we gather for the Mid-Winter Conference in Las Vegas to honor our students who performed well in our essay contests and to recognize those Posts who have stood out from the pack in the first half of the 2011-12 program year. Come join in the honoring of our students and Posts that have excelled.

If you have not yet sent your application and made room reservations for Mid-Winter, it is not too late to submit your application to attend. Cutoff date is 31 December 2011. It may be too late for room reservations but hey, give it a try. Call Arizona Charlie's and see if you can still book a room. An application is available in this edition.

The last edition of *Silverlines* was the first online version available at [www.vfwnevada.org](http://www.vfwnevada.org), under the *Silverlines* button on the home page. This edition is the second to be available online or by e-mail if requested. I would like those of you who received an email copy to mention where to find it during "Good of the Order" at your regular meetings. Help us spread the word to those who missed the June 2011 *Silverlines* announcement.

By now, almost all of the required programs for All-State and All-American are finished: Patriot's Pen, Voice of Democracy and Citizenship Education Teachers of the Year programs. Now is the time to ensure that your Post completes the other requirements: recruiting and retention drives, district meeting attendance, etc. Remember this year, each Post is competing only with itself for All-State honors and recognition at the 2012 State Convention in Reno.

**Community Service Grace Period:** More Posts reported some community service monthly than in the last several years. However, the requirement was for a Post to report all six months from May to October 2011. Only eight Posts met the stated requirement. However, I have heard that several Posts submitted, but they missed the deadline of 5 November to get their reports to the Community Service Chair. At least one other Post had the wrong reporting e-mail address. Several Posts reported monthly, but missed one or two months. Regardless, I have provided a status report in this paper and a grace period until 31 December 2011 for

Posts to deliver all six months (May through October) of reporting to the Community Service Chair.

**Membership:** We need to grow to better support our members and veterans. I have mentioned the demographics before: About 225,000 veterans need our organization's support; approximately 100,000 of them are eligible for the VFW; just under 8,000 of those eligible are Nevada VFW members. How many of those 225,000 do you interact with each day? How many of them do you ask if they are set with their entitled VA benefits? How many of them do you ask if they are among the 100,000 eligible for the VFW? Of those, how many do you ask to join our great organization? How many blank applications do you carry so that you can "close" a membership deal? Just asking!

Membership has two aspects: Recruiting new or reinstated members and retaining the members we already have. We have provided you with the tools to work retention...a strategy and process is available on the Web site under the **Documents and Forms** button. Implement it and I guarantee that you will get more to renew and more to participate in your Posts and their functions. It is **way too late** in December to contact a member for the first time in a year and ask him or her to renew.

Current membership statistics are provided in the paper. There are five Posts at, or in excess of, 100% and there could be up to 20 at or over the 100% mark by Mid-Winter. The Department traditionally exceeds expectations for recruiting new members and fails

expectations for retaining current members. We have already recruited more than our 5% goal, but have renewed less than 40% of our annual members, well short of the 80% goal. We should all work our continuous members to reach the goal of 80% renewal rate. If we would get that done, we would grow the Department about 105% every year.

**Other Activities:** I mentioned before that the Department expects to create up to three new Posts this year. However, that has been modified to have only two new Posts and rebuild a Post in the Smith and Mason Valley areas. Our newest Post, Post 12116 in Winnemucca, will be instituted on January 10. This Post was conceived, planned and implemented by Senior Vice Commander Joe Rigby, with assistance from District 2 Commander Larry Hire and Post 2350 members. We have a schedule for a central-west Las Vegas Post to be chartered before Mid-Winter. More Posts mean more opportunity for new members and more visibility throughout the state. If you have an opportunity to assist state officers in the recruiting required to establish new Posts, let State Membership Chair Herman Hagen know.

Remember, this year there is no competition for All-State honors. If your Post meets the requirements for All-State, it will be recognized as an All-State Post at the State Convention in Reno.

Bless you in all you do for the nation, your community and for the VFW, and bless our troops wherever they may be serving our great nation.

## National Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief



**William A. Thien**  
Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief

William "Bill" A. Thien was elected Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars on September 1, 2011 at the VFW's 111th National Convention, held in San Antonio, Texas.

Thien served in the U.S. Navy from 1969-1974 and served five years in the Indiana National Guard. His decorations include the Vietnam Service Medal with 3 stars, Vietnam Campaign Medal with 1960 Bar, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Korea), National Defense Service Medal and several from the National Guard.

Thien joined the VFW in 1971 at Post 3281 in New Albany, Indiana, where he maintains his Gold Legacy Life Membership. He has served the VFW in many leadership positions, including

All-American Post Commander, All-State District Commander and All-American State Commander. He has also held positions on numerous National committees, including Vice Chairman of Citizenship Education and Community Service, and as Chairman of National Scholarship and Recognition.

Thien attended Indiana University Southeast. He worked as a Team Leader/Shift Supervisor at Duke Energy and is now retired.

Thien is a member of The American Legion, Veterans of Vietnam War Post 1, National Rifle Association, Patriot Guard Riders, Military Order of the Cootie Pup Tent 51 and VFW National Home.

He and his wife, Linda, reside in Georgetown, Indiana.

**NEVADA  
VFW  
AUXILIARY  
WEB PAGE**

[www.vfwnevada.org](http://www.vfwnevada.org)

## State Senior Vice Commander

Comrades, July started our year out with a scary accident, but with the excellent hospital and doctor's care and all of your prayers, Kathy Hollinger is on the mend. She still has some issues, but she is getting better every day.

After almost dying of heat stroke and then coming close to frostbite, Larry Hire, District 2 Commander, Dennis Fobes, Post 2350 Sr. Vice Commander and myself have recruited 42 new members in Winnemucca. The charter has been approved by National, and Post 12116 in District 2 will be up and operational by the first of the year. A huge THANK YOU to Post 2350 for the use of their tent, tables, chairs and recruiting equipment.

Our first six months of the year are gone and I do not have the reports yet, but from what I have heard around the state, the VOD/PP is going very well. Community Service reporting is up 50%. Our membership is keeping pace with last year. I will have a complete report of the programs at the Mid-Winter Conference. We still have programs (Safety, NMS, National Home, Scouting and continued Community Service reporting) that need attention and, of course—MEMBERSHIP.

Our hard work throughout the year does three things.

1. First and foremost, of the 54 VFW Departments, Nevada has (for many years past) been among the leaders in Programs, Community Service and Membership.
2. Awards, All-State to Posts and Districts.
3. Awards, All-American to the State, Districts, Posts.



**Joe Rigsby**  
State Senior Vice Commander

We all must continue to do what Nevada does best and keep our state strong and tax-exempt for the future.

A lot of questions that I have been asked this year would not have been asked if you had attended the State Convention, District and Post meetings. There is a reason for these meetings and that is "information." The Mid-Winter Conference will be January 20-21, 2012. I encourage all to attend, because there will be a lot of information given out. The highlight will be the banquet and the VOD/PP state winners will be announced. We also have District meetings coming up, so get together and attend these meetings!

Thank you for what you do for the VFW.

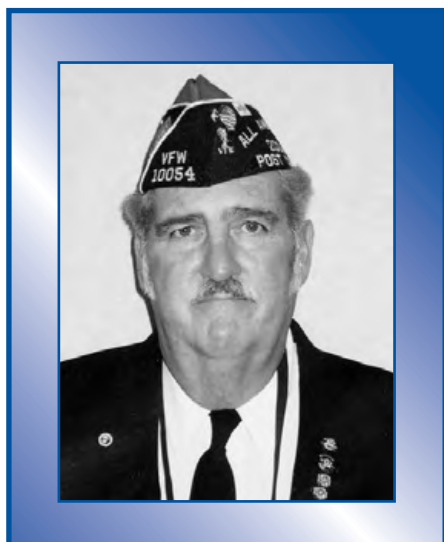
## State Surgeon

As the Department Surgeon, I would first like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Second, I would like to express my get-well wishes to all who have been under the weather.

As the District 5 VOD and Patriot's Pen Chairman, I want to thank all the Posts in District 5 for a job well done and 100% participation.

Thank you all.



**Tom Vick**  
State Surgeon

## State Junior Vice Commander

So far this year, we have held a very successful American Patriot Run, which donated \$2,515 to the VA Volunteer Services for use with the new super clinics and the hospital and we participated in the second Fall-Winter Stand Down and served over 675 people at no cost! Everything was donated and we were very successful in getting housing, medical, dental and vision care, as well as clothing, shoes, food, blankets and other items for those in need.

VFW National has made some recent changes to the Post Service Officer duties and responsibilities and you will be hearing about them at the Post Service Officer training sessions. These changes have been made to protect the Post Service Officer, Post, Department and VFW National, due to the decision by the VA General Counsel. Our Southern Nevada VA Volunteer Services (VAVS) continues to grow and we can use many more volunteers to help man the new Community Clinics and the new VA Hospital. The new clinics are opening or have opened, and we have gotten several new volunteers to help in these, but we need more. It takes 85 volunteers to support each clinic. The new hospital will be opening up next year and we will need a whole lot more to support the new hospital. If you can spare some time, please contact Katherine Budding, VAVS at 702-636-3034.

Continue working membership as this is the lifeblood of our organization! New members, reinstates...and concentrate on retention, retention, retention!!

Finally, I'd like to switch hats to my Chairman of the Nevada Veterans Assistance League hat and say that the Nevada State Veterans Home in Boulder City is really doing an outstanding job "Caring for Our Heroes" and has been evaluated as the number one nursing home in the entire state, as well as the number one veterans home in the entire nation! Gary Bermeosolo, the administrator for the past nine years, retired on October



**Bob Garlow**  
State Junior Vice Commander

23rd and was replaced by Frank Bellinger. Frank has 27 years experience in leading nursing homes, many as a regional head of several homes, and the last 14 years right here in Las Vegas! This is a 180-resident facility, which provides outstanding care for veterans, their spouses, and Gold Star parents who require 24-hour skilled nursing care.

There currently is no waiting list, but this may change in the near future, so you need to check if new residents can be accepted. There are many volunteers who assist daily with activities and outings for the residents, and help to make their stay a little bit better. If you wish to volunteer, please contact Angela Metcalf, Volunteer Coordinator at 702-332-6741. If you know of someone who might need to go into the home, you can have them contact Shirley Pfannebecker, Admissions at 702-332-6717 and/or they can visit the NOVS Web site at [www.veterans.nv.org](http://www.veterans.nv.org) and click the Veterans Home link. On the link they will find all of the forms and necessary information for admission. If you have any other questions, please give me a call on my cell at 702-808-4750.

## State and National Legislative Chair

I want to congratulate all Posts that got their entries to their Post Chairperson and on to their District Commanders for judging for the Teacher Awards. All District and Post Commanders have a copy of the Programs on a CD to guide you in what has to be done. I did hear from some Chairpersons and hope I was able to help them. If you need more help, please feel free to e-mail me or contact me at my contact information in the Roster. Good luck to all winners who will be at Mid-Winter.

I know we have more than 15 Posts that have done something to be recognized for participating in Americanism. So let's work on this before State Convention. I need to also have the names of those Veterans that participate in schools as Veterans in the Classroom before State Convention. Let's make our State and Department Commander Bruce Hollinger look good.

Now, switching hats...as your National Legislative Chairperson, we have been



**Gil Hernandez**  
State and National Legislative Chair

busy protecting our rights. Somewhere in this *Silverlines* you will see we approved  
**LEGISLATIVE CHAIR, continued on page 3**



**They gave then!**  
**Will you give NOW!**  
**WEAR A BUDDY POPPY**

PROCEEDS TO VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE U.S.

**LEGISLATIVE CHAIR, continued from page 2**

the 2012 Legislative Priority Goals. These goals include our "10 for 10" and other items as many of you will note from last year.

Since we no longer have a VFW PAC, it's up to every one of you to let your Representatives know what's happening with our concerns and make sure they support us in protecting our rights, as well as those of the individuals serving now. It's going to take all to make a difference, so get involved. Let those Senators on the Armed Services Committee know how you feel. They can be contacted at <http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/members.htm>. Please refer to the VFW Web site for constant updates and the "10 for 10" issues we have raised, along with sample letters for your use. Because the Super Committee threw in the towel, mandatory cuts will now take place across all Federal Departments and Agencies beginning January 2013.

I can also let you know, with your support, we were able to get Congress to unite to help unemployed Veterans by passage of the Vow to Hire Heroes Act of 2011. The Bill will include expanding education and training, improves re-employment rights for Guard and Reservists, makes attendance mandatory for Transition Assistance Programs, and provides employer tax credits ranging from \$5,600.00 per veteran hired to \$9,600.00 for hiring disabled Veterans. For a better look at the bill details, go to <http://veterans.gov/vow>. Again, let our Representatives know how you feel. It can make a difference. Thank you for what you do for Veterans.

I would like to thank the VFW Members and Auxiliaries that made me an All-American Commander. I would also like to let you know I will be running for Nevada Councilperson, so there will be a choice at Department Convention.

**National Military Services Chair**

**Jon Fennych**  
National Military  
Services Chair

It is hard to believe that the year is almost over and we're going into 2012. Our NMS programs have been going strong, having a lot of events with our Active, Guard and Reserve Units.

We have supported numerous Halloween Events, Christmas Events and even Breakfast with Santa. At our National Guard Armory we even had the Haunted Armory with over 850 Troopers and their families attending.

Our enrollment in the Adopt-A-Unit Program has increased. Our Department being Battle Born, Combat Tested NMS takes pride in supporting troops and veterans in Nevada. Through troop support events, free phone time and financial grants, we're here to make sure service members and veterans from Nevada are getting the support they deserve.

Operation Uplink Connections = 45,499

*NMS CHAIR, continued on page 4*

**VFW 2012 Legislative Priority Goals****VA Healthcare**

- Insist Congress provide sufficient funding to the Department of Veterans Affairs so it continues providing the highest quality care to wounded, ill and injured veterans.
- Ensure Congress provides sufficient funding for VA research into the identification, prevention and treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress, Traumatic Brain Injuries, and other wounds to the mind, as well as to insist VA continue to explore all viable treatment options, to include the use of Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy to treat both mild and acute cases of Traumatic Brain Injuries.
- Urge Congress to keep women's issues at the forefront of legislation to continually improve availability and access to VA programs, services and specialists, as well as eliminate shortfalls in gender-specific care, such as Post-Traumatic Stress and Military Sexual Trauma.
- Work with Congress to adequately fund VA outreach programs so that all veterans are fully aware of the health services and disability benefits they have earned as a result of their honorable service. Reaching women veterans and veterans in extremely rural areas is especially important, as is reaching homeless veterans and those who lack Internet-access.
- Oppose all efforts to eliminate or reduce presumptive service-connected conditions for wounded, ill and injured veterans, as well as to defeat any proposal that would lock out or increase fees on VA Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans.
- Provide adequate funding to maintain current building structures and continue to reduce the backlog of critical infrastructure gaps.

**Suicides & Homelessness**

- Address the national crisis where 18 veterans commit suicide every day by ensuring that Congress properly fund DOD and VA awareness and support programs.

- Ensure effective suicide prevention programs require access to all health providers, to include substance abuse and marriage counselors, and mental health providers.
- Push Congress to properly oversee and fund homeless programs by increasing per diem rates, providing education and career training opportunities and making available substance abuse counseling and mental health treatment services.
- Ensure available permanent housing solutions for all homeless veterans—especially female veterans with children.

**VA Compensation and Benefits**

- Urge Congress to use its funding and oversight authority to require the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) to reduce the claims backlog while improving the overall quality of ratings decisions that, depending on the Regional Office, can range from 60 to 90-percent accuracy rates.
- Work to pass legislation in Congress that offers workable solutions, not quick fixes, to the VBA system. This would include upgrading current training programs and standards to reduce employee turnover and improve quality. Holding employees and their supervisors professionally accountable for failing to improve their individual and/or collectively ratings decisions.
- Call on Congress to require VA to install an IT infrastructure that will help transform VA into a 21st century agency. A timely, accurate claim should be what every veteran, service member and eligible family members receive.

**Seamless Transition**

- Demand a clear path from DOD healthcare to the VA. The current system requires new veterans to enroll in the VA after they separate or retiree from the military. The seamless transition the VFW calls for requires the creation of one integrated electronic medical and service record that will follow members from the time they raise their right hands to the time they are buried in a VA cemetery.
- Urge Congress and the Administration to improve Transition Assistance

Programs to help new veterans successfully transition into civilian life with a detailed road map. At a minimum, the road map must include Post-9/11 GI Bill and vocational training opportunities, VA compensation and benefits enrollment, and employment and placement assistance. Attendance at the individual service Transition Assistance Programs must also be made mandatory for all active-duty personnel, as well as Guard and Reservists.

**Military Quality of Life**

- Call on Congress to remain fully committed to improving the quality of life for all active duty and Reserve Component members and their families.
- Support efforts to lower the Reserve Component retirement pay age to 55. VFW opposes all proposals that will damage morale and decimate the all-volunteer force. We must ensure our service men and women are provided increased pay, affordable health care, and adequate housing and work facilities for themselves and their families.

**\*\*Note this will be placed as a standalone in the PG brochure\*\***

Recently, deficit hawks in Washington, D.C., have called on Congress to cut 10 specific military and veterans' quality of life benefits to pay for the last 10 years of war. The VFW considers this a breach of faith with America's war-fighters and will continue to fight against these toxic proposals. The 10 for 10 proposals are:

- Increase healthcare premiums for military retirees on TRICARE
- Increase pharmaceutical fees for troops, families and retirees
- Eliminate presumptive service-connected conditions for disabled and ill veterans
- Lock out or increase fees for Department of Veterans Affairs Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans
- Reduce cost-of-living allowances
- Freeze military pay
- End government subsidies to military commissaries
- Eliminate Department of Defense

- elementary schools stateside
- Eliminate the 20-year military retirement plan
- Eliminate DOD tuition reimbursement programs for service members

**Education and Employment**

- Urge Congress to immediately address the highest unemployment rates among veterans in recent history by ensuring Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits are being utilized effectively by clamping down on predatory schools that seek to exploit veterans. Today's GI Bill offers newest generation of veterans unprecedented access to resources to compete in the job market, which is why the VFW will fight to ensure that these benefits are sustained and that veterans receive the opportunities they have earned.
- Encourage and work with Congress to pass comprehensive veterans' jobs legislation to offer additional resources to unemployable veterans, implement new metrics to measure employment program efficiency, and mandate transition assistance programs for troops leaving active duty.
- Ask Congress to pass legislation that will strengthen USERRA and reverse legal decisions that tended to favor employers and undermine the employability of our National Guard and Reserve forces. The Department of Labor must also be more thorough and timely in its USERRA investigations.
- Ensure Congress mandates that all federal agencies use whatever means at their disposal to reach the 3-percent government-wide procurement goal for Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, and that agencies be required to report their procurement levels and be held accountable if they fail to meet that benchmark.

**Defense/Homeland Security**

- Fully support U.S. troops and their mission to prosecute the war on terrorism, as well as to protect our nation's citizens and interests around the world.
- Ensure defense funding fully supports personnel Quality of Life initiatives, troop end strength requirements, and needed weapons systems development

*LEGISLATIVE GOALS, continued on page 4*



## DEADLINE FOR NEWS, PHOTO SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for submissions of columns and photographs for the next

*Silverlines* is **3/30/12**.

Please submit columns by e-mail to

**jman@aivc.com**

in Microsoft Word or

Fax 775-423-8662.

Please submit photographs

by mail to:

**Jack McMIndes**

**2090 Bafford Lane**

**Fallon, NV 89406-7497**

**Telephone 775-423-8662.**

Visit the Nevada Web Page at:

**www.vfwnevada.org**

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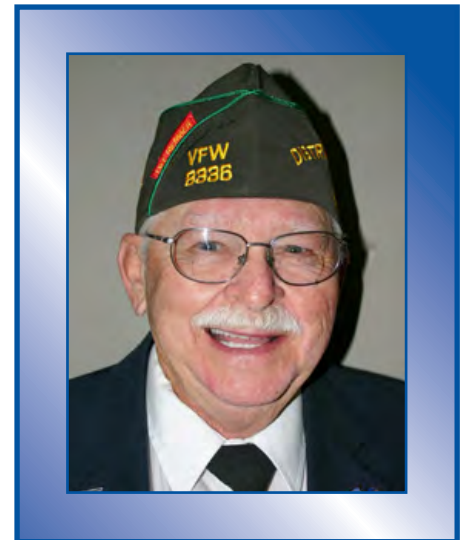
## State Chaplain

As we go into this holiday season our thoughts are not on ourselves but on our families, comrades and organization. I'd also like us to think on a couple of other things.

At every Post, District and State meeting we open the meeting with the opening of the Bible and prayer. It is so customary that hardly any thought goes into why we do this. Is it just ritual or does it have real meaning?

I read a story one time about a father and son who were traveling in the west and stopped for the night at a place that offered a rustic old cabin to sleep in. It wasn't much. As a matter of fact, one could see through the boards of the cabin right into the next cabin. Not long after the father and son got in the cabin, the boy noticed that a couple of rough-looking characters were in the cabin next to theirs. The boy began to be afraid because of how rough these men in the next cabin looked. He told his father that he was afraid and his father took a look in the next cabin through the cabin walls. What he witnessed was a different sight from the son's. What the father saw was a couple of men on their hands and knees praying. So he turned to his son and said, "No need to worry son, I don't think that we have anything to worry about as these men seem to be very righteous men." As a rule, people who pray are good persons.

The Bible is full of prayers for all sorts of things. I hope that all of you comrades use the Bible for what it was intended; to further your spiritual progress. If the



*Charles Jamison*  
State Chaplain

VFW is to progress, it must progress spiritually as well as grow in numbers.

A person is not judged by how many members they bring into the VFW, but by the spirit they show to the world. In other words, it is how we act that makes a difference in the community. In this holiday season I hope and pray that your spirit is such that everyone you come in contact with can say (as the father of the son in the cabin did) that you are not a person to be afraid of, but a person of good character and spirit.

May the God of all mankind bless you this holiday season and throughout 2012.

God bless our troops and those who lead this great country and organization.

### LEGISLATIVE GOALS, continued from page 3

and replacement programs.

- Halt the development and/or proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or material by rogue nation, while continuing to develop and deploy a ballistic missile defense system to protect the U.S. and our allies.
- Secure U.S. borders, shorelines and all ports of entry against foreign national's intent on doing us harm who enter the U.S. illegally, as well as those who enter legally but intentionally overstay their work, education or tourist visas. Homeland security protections must also counter potential threats from U.S. citizens who belong to organized extremist groups or who act as lone wolves for religious, ideological and/or personal reasons.

### POW/MIA

- Achieve the fullest possible accounting of U.S. military personnel missing from all wars.
- Ensure the U.S. Government keeps the POW/MIA issue elevated as a national priority.
- Urge the President and Congress to fully fund the requested amounts for all organizations involved in the Full Accounting Mission, and to protect the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command budget from being redirected by U.S. Pacific Command and reduced by the Defense Department. To also keep the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs intact, in both mission funding and personnel.

### NMS CHAIR, continued from page 3

Total Minutes = 434,453

Service Members Assisted in Unmet Needs:

Total Grants Provided = \$19,000

Troop Support Events = 32

Service members and families = 14,442

Coming up is our Mid-Winter Conference; this will be the time to kick off our fundraiser for National Military Service. There are many ways for us to be able to provide a nice check to our

National Program and State Program. I will be discussing these issues with our Comrades and Leaders at the Mid-Winter on January 21-22, 2012.

As you have read the amounts and numbers stated above for Nevada, we will always be ready to "Shoot, Move and Communicate".

Remember Comrade, it is all for your "Battle Buddy".

## Buddy Poppy Chairman Bill Aubry

Comrades, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that it is most important that your Post purchase the required number of Poppies. Poppies provide not only a means for us to communicate with the community, but a source of income and employment for our Veterans in need who help produce the Poppies.

Poppy purchase is also a requirement for All-State. I will be announcing at Mid-Winter the Posts who are delinquent in the purchase, as a reminder to all.

As we approach the holidays, I would like to wish everyone a very happy holiday season and above all, make it a safe one.

## District I Commander

Comrades, greetings from District I! First, I would like to thank you for letting me serve as your District Commander. It is my honor to work with such great people, from our Posts to my fellow District officers and to the most supportive State officers ever – thank you all. As we look towards what I believe to be a great 2012, let us not forget our mission...our Veterans and their families.

A lot has been happening in our District over the past six months; a lot to be proud of such as The Nevada Day Parade in Carson City, Dayton Days, all the Veterans Day celebrations – our Posts have outdone themselves. We have started the VFW Riders up here with much help from Post 3819 and we hope for others to get involved. We also have been working together as a team with District 3; this is something I have been waiting for a very long time. Thanks Bob, it is a pleasure to work with you and your District; let's keep it going.

I hope to see ya'll at the Mid-Winter Convention in January, we have a lot to be



*Cullin Knight*  
District I Commander

proud of, plus we need your suggestions and ideas.

To our District, keep up the good work and may God bless you, your families and most of all...our troops. Happy Holidays!

– NEVADA VFW –  
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## District 6 Commander



**Chuck Riley**  
District 6 Commander

Greetings, Comrades. Thanks for all your efforts in our ongoing (new and reinstated membership) recruiting.

Also thanks for the support with selling or buying of the Department Raffle tickets we were assigned.

Community service is going well; remember, anything you do to support the community at large or veterans (such as Buddy Poppy drives) is reportable as community service.

Mid-Winter is scheduled for January 20 and 21 at Arizona Charlie's Casino, located on Decatur Avenue in Las Vegas.

## Youth Scholarship Programs Chair



**Sandi Clum**  
Youth Scholarship Programs Chair

their Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen essay judging and forwarded them to their District Chairman.

The deadline to Department is December 6 and the judging for the Department winners will be conducted the following week, but the results will not be revealed until Mid-Winter Banquet. That secret is the hardest to keep for six weeks.

I have heard from some of the Posts that they have had outstanding participation for both programs and I am so excited to share those statistics with you at the Mid-Winter Conference. I want to thank everyone for all the work that you have done for these programs, and I can't tell you how much I have enjoyed doing this. It's one of those programs that has a really happy ending, and we are helping the youth in our communities further their education. This is my passion, and I love doing it! Every year it has gotten better and better. So how do I top last year's banquet? If you have any ideas, let me know!!

**Sandi Clum**  
775-293-0806

## Youth Activities Chair



**James Dorsey**  
Youth Activities Chair

The Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen programs have been executed and sent forward to District for judging. It is now time to remind you of the other Youth Programs available. Scouting, JROTC, Civil Air Patrol, NRA Rifle Matches, just to name a few of the activities for the Post to consider.

I would like to ask the Post Youth Chairman to log onto [www.vfwnevada.org](http://www.vfwnevada.org) and review the Youth Activities Guide to get ideas on what the Post can do to assist the youth of our community.

Please take a close look at the Scouting Program, as it has merit for monetary gain for the scout to further his education. The Deadlines for this program are: May 1st application to the Post; April 1st to the Department (me); and May 1st to National.

Please have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## National Home for Children Chair



**Walt Dybeck**  
National Home for Children Chair

Greetings and happy holidays to all. I thank all the Posts and Districts that have sent reports regarding support for the National Home for Children.

I will once again have information available at our Mid-Winter Conference regarding Life Memberships and individual and Post awards available.

Posts might consider presenting a Life Membership as a way of thanking members for chairing or serving on Post committees.

I have recently received the quarterly financial report for the California-Nevada house. When making donations to the National Home, if you want the monies to be used on our house, earmark it as a donation to the California-Nevada house. It will be put into a restricted fund.

Thanks for all you do to support our National Home for Children. Have a safe New Year. Hope to see everyone at Mid-Winter.

## State "She Serves" Chair



**Dottie Marsh**  
State "She Serves" Chair

wanting to claim Gulf War Syndrome would need to do so by December 31st of this year. I have been told by a VA representative that that date has been extended until 2014. I will provide information as it becomes available.

We have an all-woman PTSD Group that meets at the Owens clinic in Las Vegas every Tuesday from 9 to 10:30 a.m. This is a drop-in group, so you do not need to call ahead or have an appointment. This is a great way to get the assistance you need. I will be getting information on the Reno Group as soon as possible.

Dog Tags, Dog Tags, Dog Tags: I will be placing an order in the next few weeks to get everyone their Dog Tags by Mid-Winter. If you do not have one, please let me know and I will add you to the list. All funds for tags must go to the State Quartermaster, Jack McMIndes. It is recommended to do it as a Post versus each individual, but I will have a limited quantity of tags for sale at the Convention. Remember the fund for the tags goes to support the Women Veteran Outreach project.

Until Mid-Winter, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**Dottie Marsh**  
State Women Veterans Advocate  
and National Women Veterans  
Committee Member

Greetings, Comrades. In January at our Mid-Winter Conference it will be the Commander's honor to Host a Women Veterans and Iraq/Afghanistan Meet and Greet in the Hospitality Room. We will have more details to come and we would love to see you there.

This year's Convention is local Las Vegas, so there should be no reason that we can't attend. Attention Desert Storm and Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans: It was previously rumored that anyone

## Military Order of the Cootie Grand Commander

Greetings, fellow Cooties! I wish to take the opportunity to wish all the Cooties of the Grand of Nevada a heartfelt holiday season. We will hold our Mid-Winter Conference scratch on Friday, January 20th commencing with the Joint Opening with our MOCA ladies at 1400 hours at the VFW Post 10047 business annex. The business annex is located adjacent to Post 10047 behind the Memphis Barbecue. If you're not sure of this location, go to the Post Home located at 4337 N. Las Vegas Boulevard and the staff of the Canteen will direct you to the business annex. It's only about 100 yards from the Post Home. Following the Joint Opening, the MOCA will adjourn to the Post Home for their business meeting and the MOC will remain in the business annex. I request all Cooties attend the VFW Mid-Winter Conference Post Home night at Arizona Charlie's following our scratch. Post Home night will begin at 1800 hours. You can find reservation forms on the Web site at [vfwnevada.org](http://vfwnevada.org)

Post 10047 held a Veterans Swap Meet last month, where your Grand Commander

sponsored a booth to raise funds for the Grand. After three windy days of raffle items and silent auction items given away, the Grand raised \$341. These funds are safely in our Grand Quartermaster Slick Slider's possession. I wish to bring discussion at our Mid-Winter on plausible ways to utilize these funds to help our Pup Tents for next year. Please show up with your ideas and let's use these funds to assist our Pup Tents.

Finally, I received an e-mail from our Supreme Quartermaster requesting all Pup Tents pay their scholarship dues. It was passed at last year's Supreme Scratch in San Antonio to pay \$1.00 for every Cootie in good standing for the scholarship fund to assist the children at our National Home with the cost of going to college. Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

I look forward to greeting all in Vegas next month.

**Jerry Chamlee**  
Grand Commander

## Past State Commander



**Jerry Chamlee**  
Past State Commander

Comrades, it's time to address our members of the great Dept. of Nevada as we prepare to convene at our Mid-Winter Conference next month. I hope all officers have registered to attend the conference, as there is much business to cover for the second half of Commander Hollinger's year. We will also be crowning our Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen program winners at the banquet on Saturday evening. This is one of the highlights of all the programs that the VFW sponsors each year, so please plan on attending the banquet.

I would like to announce at this time that I am a candidate for the National Council to represent the Department of Nevada, which we will

elect at our State Convention in June of 2012. I feel that I am qualified for this position after having served as your Dept. Commander last year and achieving All-American status. My feelings on this position is that the comrade elected to represent our Department over the next four years must keep all members of this Department informed as to what is being passed at the National level, and voice their opinions on the goals set by National. I think the organization is moving in the right direction, as we continue to support our active duty, guard and reserve service members, and thus gain their confidence resulting in these younger members joining our VFW.

As we approach the next few years

and find our very own John Stroud working his way to becoming the Commander-in-Chief in 2014 we will have, for the first time, a chief that is not a Vietnam service-period veteran. We need to support the changes that will come forward from his administration, which is sure to bring our younger veterans into our fold. Therefore, I request your support as I run for this critical position.



## VFW Department of Nevada 2011 Membership Statistics Week Ending 3 December 2011

Dist	Post	Location	Life	% LM	Prior Life	% LM +	N/R Life	New	Re-Up	% N/R	Cont.	Prior Cont.	% Cont.	Current	Prior	% of Prior	To 100%	To 105%
1	3630	TOPAZ RANCH	71	84.52%	72	-1.39%	0	0	0	0.00%	9	12	75.00%	80	84	95.24%	4	8
1	3726	CARSON CITY	80	82.47%	83	-3.61%	0	2	0	2.06%	9	17	52.94%	91	97	93.81%	6	11
1	3819	RENO	217	79.78%	215	0.93%	3	15	4	8.09%	14	57	24.56%	250	272	91.91%	22	36
1	8071	VIRGINIA CITY	41	95.35%	41	0.00%	0	1	0	2.33%	0	2	0.00%	42	43	97.67%	1	3
1	8084	SMITH	25	83.33%	24	4.17%	1	0	0	3.33%	2	6	33.33%	27	30	90.00%	3	5
1	8583	GARDNERVILLE	89	79.46%	89	0.00%	0	7	1	7.14%	11	23	47.83%	108	112	96.43%	4	10
1	8660	DAYTON	57	78.08%	60	-5.00%	0	2	0	2.74%	6	13	46.15%	65	73	89.04%	8	12
District 1			580	81.58%	584	-0.68%	4	27	5	5.06%	51	127	40.16%	663	711	93.25%	48	84
2	2350	ELKO	223	78.25%	228	-2.19%	0	4	3	2.46%	29	57	50.88%	259	285	90.88%	26	40
2	3547	ELY	98	69.50%	94	4.26%	2	5	0	4.96%	22	47	46.81%	125	141	88.65%	16	23
2	7114	CALIENTE	55	80.88%	54	1.85%	0	0	0	0.00%	13	14	92.86%	68	68	100.00%	0	3
2	8194	EUREKA	14	53.85%	12	16.67%	0	0	0	0.00%	6	14	42.86%	20	26	76.92%	6	7
2	9165	BATTLE MOUNTAIN	27	87.10%	28	-3.57%	0	0	0	0.00%	1	3	33.33%	28	31	90.32%	3	5
2	12116	WINNEMUCCA	2	NA	0	NA	2	31	4	NA	0	0	NA	37	0	NA	NA	NA
District 2			419	76.04%	416	0.72%	4	40	7	9.26%	71	135	52.59%	537	551	97.46%	14	42
3	3396	SPARKS	122	54.71%	117	4.27%	2	13	1	7.17%	86	106	81.13%	222	223	99.55%	1	12
3	9211	RENO	301	80.27%	308	-2.27%	2	6	4	3.20%	34	67	50.75%	345	375	92.00%	30	49
3	10031	GERLACH	11	64.71%	11	0.00%	0	0	0	0.00%	4	6	66.67%	15	17	88.24%	2	3
3	10053	VERDI	130	84.97%	138	-5.80%	0	0	0	0.00%	5	15	33.33%	135	153	88.24%	18	26
3	10247	FERNLEY	45	83.33%	46	-2.17%	1	7	2	18.52%	6	8	75.00%	60	54	111.11%	0	0
District 3			609	74.09%	620	-1.77%	5	26	7	4.62%	135	202	66.83%	777	822	94.53%	45	86
4	1002	FALLON	223	79.64%	227	-1.76%	0	9	5	5.00%	28	53	52.83%	265	280	94.64%	15	29
4	1103	TONOPAH	35	53.03%	40	-12.50%	0	4	0	6.06%	20	26	76.92%	59	66	89.39%	7	10
4	2313	HAWTHORNE	195	50.65%	194	0.52%	2	22	1	6.49%	16	191	8.38%	234	385	60.78%	151	170
4	2668	MINA	20	57.14%	20	0.00%	1	1	0	5.71%	11	15	73.33%	32	35	91.43%	3	5
4	3677	GABBS	32	72.73%	34	-5.88%	0	0	0	0.00%	5	10	50.00%	37	44	84.09%	7	9
4	6825	SCHURZ	14	73.68%	14	0.00%	0	0	0	0.00%	1	5	20.00%	15	19	78.95%	4	5
4	12108	BEATTY	13	36.11%	0	0.00%	0	1	0	2.78%	10	36	27.78%	24	36	66.67%	12	14
District 4			532	61.50%	529	0.57%	3	37	6	5.32%	91	336	27.08%	666	865	76.99%	199	242
5	983	HENDERSON	34	69.39%	29	17.24%	1	9	1	22.45%	12	20	60.00%	56	49	114.29%	0	0
5	1753	LAS VEGAS	535	79.97%	542	-1.29%	0	16	13	4.33%	46	127	36.22%	610	669	91.18%	59	92
5	6826	AMARGOSA VALLEY	77	77.78%	80	-3.75%	0	1	1	2.02%	9	19	47.37%	88	99	88.89%	11	16
5	8250	LAS VEGAS	58	59.18%	65	-10.77%	0	2	2	4.08%	17	33	51.52%	79	98	80.61%	19	24
5	10054	PAHRUMP	403	80.12%	410	-1.71%	0	10	4	2.78%	28	93	30.11%	445	503	88.47%	58	83
5	12093	LAS VEGAS	45	31.91%	22	104.55%	0	8	3	7.80%	22	119	18.49%	78	141	55.32%	63	70
5	12101	LAS VEGAS	31	67.39%	5	520.00%	5	36	1	91.30%	20	41	48.78%	88	46	191.30%	0	0
District 5			1183	73.71%	1153	2.60%	6	82	25	7.04%	154	452	34.07%	1444	1605	89.97%	161	241
6	36	BOULDER CITY	53	59.55%	59	-10.17%	0	1	1	2.25%	16	30	53.33%	71	89	79.78%	18	22
6	243	LAUGHLIN	37	66.07%	41	-9.76%	0	1	0	1.79%	5	15	35.71%	43	56	76.79%	13	16
6	3848	HENDERSON	466	71.80%	457	1.97%	3	21	4	4.31%	63	192	32.81%	554	649	85.36%	95	127
6	7385	MESQUITE	65	68.42%	67	-2.99%	0	1	0	1.05%	15	28	53.57%	81	95	85.26%	14	19
6	8336	MOAPA VALLEY	81	65.32%	82	-1.22%	2	8	1	8.87%	28	42	66.67%	118	124	95.16%	6	12
6	10047	NORTH LAS VEGAS	936	73.58%	915	2.30%	5	65	5	5.90%	99	357	27.81%	1105	1272	86.87%	167	231
6	10468	SEARCHLIGHT	70	72.16%	66	6.06%	0	12	6	18.56%	18	31	58.06%	106	97	109.28%	0	0
District 6			1708	71.70%	1687	1.24%	10	109	17	5.71%	244	695	35.11%	2078	2382	87.24%	304	423
Post & District Total			5031	72.53%	4989	0.84%	32	321	67	6.06%	746	1947	38.32%	6165	6936	88.88%	771	1118
99	15029	AT LARGE	633	66.08%	648	-2.31%	10	47	13	7.31%	129	310	41.61%	822	958	85.80%	136	184
Department Total			5664	71.75%	5637	0.48%	42	368	80	6.21%	875	2257	38.77%	6987	7894	88.51%	907	1302

	Life	New Life	New	Re-up	Total New	Cont.	Total Mbrs
2011 Final	5637	80	675	233	988	1349	7894
YTD Difference	27	(38)	(307)	(153)	(498)	(474)	(907)

# News for and About Veterans



Department of Veteran Affairs



## What Does Super Committee's Failure Mean to VFW?

By Bob Wallace, Executive Director, VFW Washington Office

The congressional Super Committee has thrown in the towel and admitted they cannot reach a bipartisan agreement to cut a minimum of \$1.2 trillion from the federal budget over the next decade. Under the law passed this summer, mandatory cuts will now take place across all federal departments and agencies beginning January 2013.

Where and how much, however, is still to be determined. Each cabinet secretary will decide where the cuts will be made after the White House Office of Management and Budget identifies which, if any, programs are exempt. Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare have been mentioned as being exempt, as have veterans programs, but no one has yet identified which veterans programs.

The VFW believes that veterans' healthcare programs and benefits will be exempt from any cuts. Questions remain, however, about increased co-payments for visits and prescriptions, as well as charging VA category 7 and 8 veterans an annual enrollment fee. We will continue to monitor and report any new developments as they occur.

Over at the Defense Department are

recommendations to change the pay and benefits of those currently serving and military retirees. The threats include changing the military retirement system for future enlistees, limiting retiree healthcare program enrollment, and imposing or increasing healthcare fees on all TRICARE programs, regardless of age. These proposals are in addition to possible reductions in force and cuts to other quality of life programs. The budget crisis has also forced defense hawks to choose between supporting people programs and new weapon systems development. Sadly, some have forgotten that it still takes people to occupy territory and to operate their shiny new aircraft, ships and tanks.

Our nation hollowed out its force after Vietnam and again after the first Gulf War. If the past 10 years have proven anything, it is that the All Volunteer Force works, but it comes with a price and a promise to maintain the quality of life programs for those few who serve. Since 9/11, many of the less than 1 percent of the population who volunteered to serve their nation have been deployed into the fight numerous times. The service-connected disabilities thousands have

already received will require a strong and viable military healthcare system to return them to duty, and a strong and viable VA healthcare system to meet their lifetime care needs.

Traumatic Brain Injury, Post-Traumatic Stress, amputations, and the risk of suicide are predominate issues of a military force at war. The preservation of military and veteran benefits, improved quality and accessible healthcare, and continued medical research into alternative treatments is how our nation can properly repay those who go into harm's way.

Over the next year, many in Congress as well as thousands of registered lobbyists will be working hard to protect their special interests and programs. We must all work hard to protect the Department of Veterans Affairs health, benefits and cemetery administrations, as well as all military quality of life programs for the troops, their families and military retirees.

I ask each of you to contact your respective members of the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate to demand that these programs be protected. State Commanders and members of the National Legislative Committee

must arrange individual face-to-face meetings with every member of their Congressional Delegation to alert them to our concerns. These meetings should be in addition to your visits to your Congressional delegations during the March 2012 Legislative Conference. I also ask that you report the responses you receive back to the VFW Action Corps at [vfwac@vfw.org](mailto:vfwac@vfw.org)

These meetings will be in addition to a massive outreach campaign to the entire U.S. Congress that I ask National Legislative Committee members to spearhead in each state and department. We need Congress to be flooded with letters and phone calls to protect veterans' programs and military quality of life programs from any cuts. This is an obligation of every member of the VFW and their families to keep the faith with our comrades who need us to be their collective voice in Washington. Please refer to the VFW Web site for constant updates and the "10 for 10" issues we have raised, along with sample letters for your use.

The VFW needs you to make your voice heard now, because the most powerful message Congress can receive is from the folks who employ them – their voting constituents.

## Gulf War Presumptive Disease Update



from the Persian Gulf War.

The basic purpose of the law was to ensure that veterans were able to apply for health care and other benefits for the decades following their time in combat. Sometimes health conditions are caused by circumstances while in a war zone, but do not manifest until many years later. This law was to ensure that if this was the case, these veterans were still able to receive benefits and compensation. This law expired on September 30, 2011.

The VA apparently received a lot of concern from Gulf War veterans. Like all laws, there is a bit of ambiguity in the wording of the expiration date. What this date does mean is that some protections that were offered to Gulf War veterans may no longer be in effect. Also, prior to September 30, 2011, if any scientific report was published that had studied specific effects of service in the Southwest Asian theater, the VA

was required to assess and respond to the report. There is no longer a requirement to publish a response.

What this date does not mean is a benefits termination. No Gulf War veteran who is currently receiving benefits will have those benefits terminated. (Sometimes veterans are determined to be in recovery, or have recovered to a great enough degree that the VA warrants a reduction in benefits. This is not the same thing, and can still happen.)

Additionally, Gulf War veterans are still able to apply for benefits when service related conditions are discovered. What all this really means for the average Gulf War veteran is that he or she will continue to receive their benefits, and veterans will continue to be able to apply.

There is one important date that Gulf War veterans do need to know about.

Initially, the VA determined that if a condition that was shown to be connected to Gulf War service (aka, presumed exposure) did not manifest by December 31, 2011, then it was more likely that the condition was due to other circumstances.

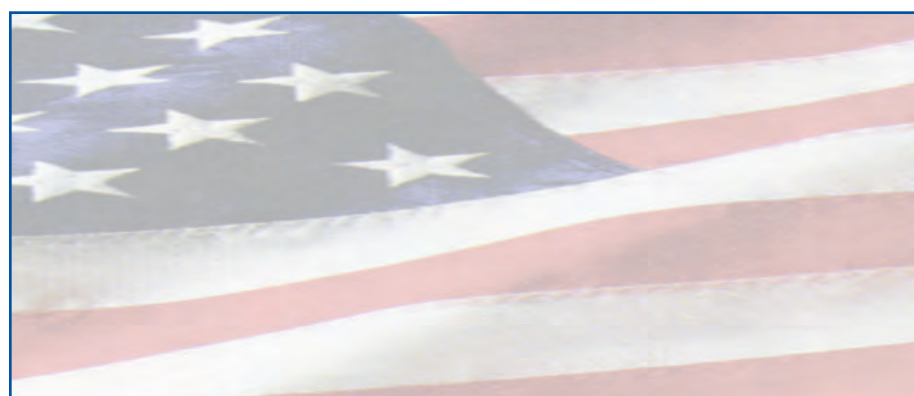
The VA is currently addressing this date, and has drafted a new version of this rule, to state an expiration date for presumed exposure of 2018. What does this date mean for Gulf War veterans? If you, or another veteran who fought in the Gulf War, has begun to develop any health conditions related to your time in service, you may eventually run out of time to submit your claim as a presumed exposure health problem. When the rule becomes finalized, you will have a few more years to submit a claim, but sooner is definitely better.

[Source: VA Benefit Blog <http://www.VABenefitBlog.Com> article 14 Sep 2011]

## Marine Veterans Stationed at Camp Lejeune Before 1987



If you were stationed or worked at Camp Lejeune before 1987, you may have been exposed to contaminants in the drinking water supply. Visit the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water site at <https://clnr.hqi.usmc.mil/clwater/index.aspx> for more information and to register for water testing notifications.





# News for and About Veterans

## Nevada Veteran of the Month



Governor Brian Sandoval announced the start of a new program during Veterans Day ceremonies at the Nevada State Veterans Home in Boulder City on Veterans Day, November 11, 2011. The Veteran of the Month award will recognize Nevada veterans who contribute their time and energy to support the veteran and military communities.

"Men and women across Nevada who have made a significant contribution will have achieved excellence by going above and beyond the call of duty specifically with respect to volunteer work in support of veterans and the military, we're going to recognize their service," stated Governor Sandoval in his presentation. "It will be an opportunity for all of us to shine a bright light on the work veterans continue to do for our nation."

The program is managed by the Nevada Office of Veterans Services and Director Caleb Cage asks for your help in nominating possible candidates so

that veterans who contribute time and effort for the betterment of our state and the veteran community may be recognized. The nomination guidelines can be found on the NOVS website at [www.veterans.nv.gov](http://www.veterans.nv.gov). Submissions will be reviewed and chosen by the members of the Veterans Service Commission (VSC).

The first award is January 2012. Governor Sandoval and Director Cage will sign each certificate and the award will be presented to the recipient each month at a presentation ceremony.

Your nomination form can be received by:

- Mailing to the NOVS office address noted on the form.
- Faxed to: 775-688-1656
- Scanned and e-mailed to [minoreh@veterans.nv.gov](mailto:minoreh@veterans.nv.gov)

Everyone is encouraged to send any nominations as soon as possible so they may be reviewed for consideration.

## New TRICARE Prime Enrollees Pay Adjusted Annual Fees



WASHINGTON – Military retirees enrolling in the TRICARE Prime health plan after Oct. 1 will begin paying slightly higher annual fees, Pentagon officials announced Sept. 29.

The fee change for fiscal 2012 means the plan will cost \$260 per year for members and \$520 per year for members and family. The increase amounts to an additional \$2.50 per month for individual members and \$5 per month for members and family, officials said. Active-duty service members receive health care with no out-of-pocket costs.

Annual fees for retirees enrolled in TRICARE Prime before the Oct. 1 change will remain at \$230 and \$460 until Oct. 1, 2012, officials said. Retirees in TRICARE Prime have a catastrophic cap of \$3,000, and TRICARE Prime co-pays are not changing, they added.

"We are committed to offering the best possible health care system for our entire military family," said Dr.

Jonathan Woodson, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. "This modest annual fee increase allows us to responsibly manage our costs in line with other secretary of defense initiatives announced earlier this year."

Survivors of active-duty deceased sponsors and medically retired services members and their dependents will be exempt from an annual increase, effective from the time they renew their enrollment or first enroll in TRICARE Prime, officials said, noting that the TRICARE benefit is among the nation's most affordable health care plans. All service members, military retirees and their eligible family members have TRICARE benefits regardless of prior health conditions.

"The department is committed to maintaining the same unique health care protection we have always offered our warriors, both current and retired," Woodson said. "To sustain our military health system we are working hard to streamline, become more efficient, and achieve cost savings. Together, we can manage our costs responsibly and continue to provide care for our service members, retirees and their families."

(From a Defense Department News Release)

## VA News

### VA Urges Veterans to Sign Up for Direct Deposits

The Department of the Treasury announced a new rule that will extend the safety and convenience of electronic payments to millions of Americans and phase out paper checks for Federal benefits by March 1, 2013. Officials at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) urge Veterans to sign up for electronic payment of their benefits.

"Receiving VA benefits electronically will increase the security, convenience, and reliability of these vital payments," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "VA encourages Veterans who are now receiving their benefits in paper checks to set up direct deposits before the deadline."

On March 1, 2013, VA will stop issuing paper checks. People who do not have electronic payments for their Federal benefits by that time will receive their funds via a pre-paid debit card. Called the Direct Express card, it is issued by Comerica Bank as the financial agent of the U.S. Treasury.

Another deadline affects people receiving VA's compensation or pensions for the first time after May 1, 2011. Those people will automatically receive the benefits electronically. Anyone already receiving Federal benefit payments electronically will be unaffected by the changes.

To learn more about the Federal Government's switch to direct deposit – or to change VA benefits to direct deposit – visit the Web site at [www.GoDirect.org](http://www.GoDirect.org). Information about the Federal Government's "Go Direct" campaign is also available at 1-800-333-1795.

### VA Launching New Personalized Veterans Health Benefits Handbook

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is piloting new, personalized Veterans Health Benefits Handbooks. The handbooks are tailored to provide enrolled Veterans with the most relevant health benefits information based on their own specific eligibility. In essence, each handbook will be written for the individual Veteran.

"These handbooks will give Veterans everything they need to know and leave out everything that doesn't apply to them," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "Our Veterans will now have a comprehensive, easy-to-understand roadmap to the medical benefits they earned with their service."

In addition to highlighting each Veteran's specific health benefits, the handbook also provides contact information for the Veteran's preferred local facility, ways to schedule personal appointments, guidelines for communicating treatment needs, and an explanation of the Veteran's responsibilities, such as copayments when applicable.

"Enhancing access isn't just about expanding the kinds of services VA provides. It also includes making sure we do everything we can to ensure Veterans have a clear understanding of the benefits available to them so they can make full use of the services

they have earned," Shinseki said.

The new handbooks are currently being piloted with Veterans receiving care at the VA medical center in

Dayton, Ohio. For additional information, visit the Web site at <http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/> or call VA's toll-free number at 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

### Spouse Telephone Support Program Demonstrates Improved Quality of Life

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs is implementing a telephone support program to help the spouses of returning Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans, after a pilot telephone support program showed significant reduction in stress for spouses.

"Returning to civilian life after living in constant combat readiness can be a shocking transition, and it is the immediate family, the spouses and children, who bear that brunt of that transition with those who served," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "The more support we can provide to the family, the better the outcome will be for our Veterans."

The spouse telephone support program, which is part of VA's Caregiver Support Program, builds spouses' ability to cope with the challenges that reintegration to civilian society can bring, helps them serve as a pillar of support for returning Veterans, and eases the transition for families after deployments. Spouses in the pilot program reported decreased symptoms of depression and anxiety, with an increase in social support.

Spouses participate in 12 telephone support groups over six months. The focus is on problem-solving and communication, relationships, mental health and resilience. A trained, nationwide team of VA medical center staff members, including many caregiver support coordinators, will lead the support groups.

Typical issues spouses and Veterans face after deployment include communication difficulties, the need to renegotiate family roles and responsibilities and the added stress of combat related injury. Spouses of Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan have reported feeling overwhelmed, depressed, anxious and frustrated.

"Providing support to family caregivers is the right thing for VA to do," said Dr. Robert Petzel, VA's under secretary for health. "A simple series of phone calls can do so much good. Certainly, those who fought for our nation and the spouses who allowed them to make that sacrifice deserve this support."

The program is based on research by VA researchers Dr. Linda Nichols and Dr. Jennifer Martindale-Adams, of the Memphis VA Medical Center and the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. Both researchers developed and studied interventions for family members of Veterans and military personnel. Their

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work with spouses of post-deployed and deployed military personnel is funded through the Defense Health Program, managed by the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command.

Local caregiver support coordinators are available to assist Veterans and their caregivers in understanding and applying for VA's many caregiver benefits. VA also has a Web page, [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov), with general information on spouse telephone support and other caregiver support programs available through VA and the community.

**VA Study on Women Vietnam Veterans**

The study "Long-Term Health Outcomes of Women Veteran's Service During the Vietnam Era" otherwise known as HealthViEWS (the Health of Vietnam Era Women's Study) is sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs. This study will seek to contact approximately 10,000 women to participate in a mail survey, a telephone interview, and a medical records review. The study aims to determine: the prevalence of lifetime and current psychiatric conditions including PTSD among women who served during the Vietnam Era; the physical health of women who served during the Vietnam Era; and the level of current disability in women who served during the Vietnam Era. For more detailed information on the study, please call the Perry Point Coordinating Center at 1-800-949-1003, Ext. 6122 or 5291.



Dr. Stacy Garrett-Ray (left) and Dr. Patricia Hayes.

**VA National Leader in Providing Mammograms**

Two very important words can save lives: Early detection.

Women Veterans are encouraged to keep those two words in mind every month,

not just in October during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. And then to follow up by talking with their health care provider about appropriate breast cancer screenings, such as regular mammograms.

Dr. Stacy Garrett-Ray stresses that, "Mammograms can detect breast cancer early, and early detection makes a big difference in a woman's chance of surviving."

Garrett-Ray is the Deputy Director of Comprehensive Women's Health for VA's Women Veterans Health Strategic Health Care Group and she is proud of VA's record of caring for female Veterans.

"VA leads the nation in breast cancer screening for women...and we have for over 15 years. We have had the highest scores of making sure women get their mammograms."

VA encourages all women between ages 50 and 75 to get mammograms every two years. Women ages 40 to 50 and those older than 75 should talk with their providers about the risks and benefits of having mammograms and make a decision based on their individual risk factors.

Both men and women can develop breast cancer, though male breast cancer is rare.

Dr. Patricia Hayes thinks Breast Cancer Awareness Month is important, but "Women Veterans should be aware of breast cancer all year. And not just cancer, but their overall health, their heart, other gender specific issues, everything." Hayes is VA's Chief Consultant for Women Veterans Health.

"It's important that they keep their own prevention scorecard and talk to their providers all year long." The value of early detection is borne out in the statistics: The overall five-year survival rate from breast cancer is nearly 90 percent. If the cancer is caught while it is still located only in the breast, the survival rate increases to nearly 99 percent.

Women Veterans who develop breast cancer have their treatment completely coordinated through VA. "We perform breast cancer surgery at seven of our medical centers," Hayes notes. "And because cancer treatment is such a specialized service, for Vets in other areas we make sure the highest quality care is provided to them. And coordinate everything."

A regular mammogram is one of the most effective ways to detect breast cancer early. VA excels at breast cancer screenings, outperforming private health care systems with 87 percent of eligible women receiving

screening mammograms on time.

State-of-the-art digital mammography equipment is available at 32 VA Medical Centers, while each VA hospital has a designated women's health care provider. Today VA is enhancing health care delivery to ensure that women Veterans will see the same doctor and case manager for years to come.

Breast cancer risk factors include getting older, having a close family member with breast cancer, being overweight or obese, previous radiation therapy/exposure to the breasts or chest, not exercising, and having certain gene mutations such as BRCA1 and BRCA2.

Having these risk factors does not mean that a woman or man will develop breast cancer, but may increase your chance of getting breast cancer in the future and should be discussed with your health care provider.

"I know a breast cancer diagnosis can be a frightening experience" Garrett-Ray says. "I tell patients that when we find the cancer early, there is approximately a 95 percent chance they will survive. I also want them to know that we have people to support them, that they are not by themselves."

VA wants every woman to get appropriate screening. The VA directory, [www.va.gov/directory](http://www.va.gov/directory), helps Veterans find their nearest facility. Non-Veterans can find local screening resources through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's early detection program: <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp>

**Big Changes Have Been Made**

Hayes admits that she encounters situations where women Veterans who have not used VA are unsure what to expect, but should know that the care they would receive at VA medical centers will be top quality.

She states: "They will get excellent care through VA. If a Vet has not checked out the VA because of that misperception, I urge them to do so."

"We did a telephone survey of 3,500 women who had received VA medical care and the results were overwhelmingly positive."

Hayes came to her current VA job with more than 20 years of experience working every day with Veterans at the Pittsburgh VA.

As she described in a recent blog, "I had seen firsthand the areas in VA women's

health care that needed improvement, such as reproductive care, maternity care, emergency room services, and so on. And I worried that a woman might come to a VA facility, have a negative experience, and be instantly turned off and go away...that she would never receive the excellent health care she deserves.

"Well, big changes have been made in just the few short years since the launch of VA's Women Veterans Health Initiative in 2008," Dr. Hayes adds.

This progress includes:

- Improving access to care and enhancing services for women Veterans through new policies
  - Publishing handbooks for Health Care Services for Women Veterans including maternity and reproductive care, as well as infertility evaluation and treatment
  - Implementing comprehensive primary care for women Veterans
  - Conducting cutting-edge research on the effects of military service on women's lives
  - Improving communication and outreach to women Veterans
  - Providing mental health, homelessness prevention, and other services designed to meet the unique needs of women Veterans
  - Training more than 1,100 providers in Women Veterans' Primary Health Care to ensure women Veterans are offered a women's health provider who is skilled in taking care of her health care needs
  - Initiating training for VA emergency rooms to improve triage and diagnosis for conditions more common in women, including aspects of pregnancy and maternity care
  - Including in VA pharmacies more of the contraception drugs that women need
  - Adding women's shoes, glasses, and wigs to medical equipment supplies
  - Spending over \$390 million on remodeling and construction to ensure that exam and inpatient rooms are private and provide dignity to all Veterans' hospital experiences
  - Placing a Women Veterans Program Manager (WVPM) in every VA Health Care facility to lead in the roll-out of enhanced services for women, act as an advocate and resource for women Veterans, and ensure delivery of the care they deserve.
- Learn more about Women Veterans Health Care at [www.womenshealth.va.gov](http://www.womenshealth.va.gov) and at My HealtheVet.

**Women in Combat**



The Defense Department sent to the Armed Services panels in October 2011 a review of the roles women should play in the military, and of the existing combat exclusion, according to a senior Pentagon leader. There are indications the report

could call for lifting some, if not all, combat exclusions, according to senior congressional aides and military officials.

The review was ordered in the fiscal 2011 defense authorization bill (PL 111-383) and follows a 2011 Military Leadership Diversity Commission report that recommended lifting all combat restrictions on women. The diversity commission was created as part of the fiscal 2009 defense authorization law (PL 110-417). The review was due in April, but the Defense Department at the time told Congress that it was conducting a deep review of all policies affecting women in the military and required more time, which created an expectation that

significant changes may be proposed, senior congressional aides said. "It certainly has raised expectations," one aide said.

Ashton B. Carter, the Pentagon's top acquisitions official who has been nominated to become deputy Defense secretary, told the Senate Armed Services Committee that as the nature of the combat environment has evolved, the roles of women in the military have expanded, and will continue to do so. In written response to questions posed by the panel, Carter said the Pentagon "believes it has sufficient flexibility under current law to make appropriate assignment policy for women."

The department will continue to monitor combat needs, and if the services recommend expanding combat roles for woman, the department will notify Congress accordingly as required by statute.

Further raising expectations was the recently confirmed next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, who told the Senate Armed Services Committee in July, "the nature of current conflict is there's no front line and back line. And so some of the rules we have in place on co-location, for example, are simply outdated and need to be revised."

A senior congressional aide who specializes in military women issues



## WOMEN IN COMBAT, continued from page 9

noted that should the Pentagon make policy changes, Congress would have about 30 days to stop the action. But to date, when the military has opened certain positions to women, Congress has not intervened. The Navy, for example, opened service on submarines to women, and the Marine Corps recently expanded service opportunities for women in intelligence specialties. Any decision regarding opening additional specialties for service by women should be based on obligations to maintain a high state of mission readiness of our all-volunteer force.

The Pentagon review was conducted by the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and looked at the direct combat assignment policy in coordination with the military departments and the Joint Staff.

"If confirmed, I would examine proposed policy changes as a result of this review and work with the Congress to implement them," Carter said.

A senior congressional aide said that if

changes were proposed they would have to be based on specific standards. Female candidates for combat roles probably would be required to meet all the performance requirements that men are required to meet. If changes are coming, the aide said, they probably would be phased in, keeping in mind that training would be required to sensitize the existing combat force to the coming changes. The phasing would ease concerns related to a combat force engaged in significant combat operations. There also would be a host of administrative changes in policy that could take some time to implement.

Restrictions on women in combat, called the Ground Combat Exclusion Policy, were put in place in 1994 by Defense Secretary Les Aspin. But both the Iraq and Afghanistan wars and the proliferation of women in combat support roles exposed women to significant combat, whether they were performing military policing or convoy protection in a battle zone with no clear battle lines, which effectively has changed perceptions of women in warfare. The Diversity Commission noted in its report,

"While we find the promotion policies and practices of the Department of Defense and the services to be fair, we find also that there are some barriers to improving demographic representation among military leaders. As a result, a key recommendation of the report is that DoD and the services should eliminate the combat exclusion policy for women, including the removal of barriers and inconsistencies, to create a level playing field for all qualified service members. The commission recommended a time-phased approach for opening all units to women, and to take deliberate steps to open additional career fields and units involved in direct combat to qualified women.

The commission found that women were underrepresented across the services. Restrictions on women were greater in the Army and Marine Corps, with 91 percent of career fields in the Army and 94 percent of the Marine Corps open to women compared with 99 percent of the Air Force and 94 percent of the Navy.

The Navy percentage is actually higher today since the opening of the submarine

field to women. In both the Army and Marines the restricted areas all involve combat roles. But the commission did not advocate for a lowering of standards, saying that qualifications for combat roles should remain in place.

The commission brushed aside arguments that the presence of women would somehow affect morale and unit cohesion in combat units. The panel noted how in other areas where women have been integrated, the same concerns were raised ahead of time, but did not materialize. Studies conducted regarding women serving in combat situations in Iraq and Afghanistan found that a majority of focus group participants felt that women serving in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan have had a positive effect on mission accomplishment. In the end, the commission found that current combat exclusions no longer fit the modern, more fluid operational combat environment where there are no clear front lines.

[Source: CQ Today Online News Frank Oliveri 16 Sep 2011]

## Nevada Vet Cemetery Update



Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Fernley or the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Boulder City. There is no charge for the plot or for opening and closing of the gravesite of a veteran. A \$450.00 fee is charged for the burial of a family member.

Headstones are provided at no cost by the federal government. Military honors are provided by military units, however, a cemetery staff member can assist in making these arrangements.

Both cemeteries are located in quiet, peaceful surroundings, and provide an atmosphere of respect and dignity to those who have served. The cemeteries were established in 1990 and have become the final resting place for over 10,000 veterans and their family members. One plot is allowed for the interment of each eligible veteran and for each member of their immediate family, except where soil conditions or the number of decedents of the family require more than one plot.

Specific plots may not be reserved as plots are assigned by the cemetery superintendent. Casket and cremation burials can be accommodated at both cemeteries. For more info refer to <http://www.veterans.nv.gov/cemeteries.html> or contact: Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery, 1900 Buchanan Boulevard, Boulder City, NV 89005 Tel: 702-486-5920/5923FAX and Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery, P.O. Box 1919, Fernley, NV 89408; Tel: 775-575-4441/5713 (FAX).

[Source: Las Vegas Review-Journal Ed Vogel article 26 Sep 2011]

The Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery can expand by 17.3 acres thanks to a \$3.4 million grant received 26 SEP from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs. With the funds, the 39-acre cemetery in Boulder City also can add an administration building, roads, a shelter and landscaping. Burial plots for 4,801 cremated remains also will be built.

"This is wonderful," said Chris Naylor, superintendent of the cemetery, who noted that the entrance to the cemetery appropriately will be relocated to Veterans Memorial Drive, not the current Buchanan Avenue.

Naylor said about 28,000 people are buried in the cemetery, which opened in 1990. Space remains for burials for 40 more years. On a typical day, eight people are buried in the cemetery. About 60 percent of the veterans now choose cremation, Naylor said, which creates the need for expanded burial areas for their remains.

The cemetery has 40 acres available for expansion, including the 17.3 acres that will be developed with the grant. Gov. Brian Sandoval said the grant will allow Nevada to "continue to provide dignified service to Nevada veterans and their dependents."

In Nevada eligible veterans and their spouse, may be buried at either the



## DD 214 Increased Social Security Benefits for Vets

DD FORM 214 – EXTRA SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT for those with active duty between January 1957 to December 31, 2001.

See the Web site and notes below to possibly increase your Social Security Benefits.

Please share this with anyone who had active duty service between January 1957 to December 31, 2001 and is planning for retirement.

**In a nutshell, it boils down to this:** You qualify for a higher social security payment because of your Military service, for active duty anytime from 1957 through 2001 (the program was done away with 1 January 2002). Up to \$1,200 per year of earnings credit credited at time of application – which can make a substantial difference in social security monthly payments upon your retirement. **You must bring your DD-214 to the Social Security Office and you must ask for this benefit to receive it!**

The Social Security Web site is <http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm>

This is something to put in your files for when you apply for Social Security down the road. It is NOT just for retirees, BUT anyone who has served on active duty between January 1957 to December 31, 2001.

**FYI – this benefit is not automatic, you must ask for it!** We've all been on active duty between 1957 and 2001 or know someone who has.

I'm passing on this good information for all you military folks when you apply for social security. I know this may be too early for some of you to think about, but keep living and you will get there.

**Regional Resource Coordinator  
Maryland's Commitment  
to Veterans Project  
State of Maryland-Southern Region  
Human Services Partnership Building  
La Plata, MD 20646**

## How About One Web site for Combat Stress Info?



That's the take of the Senate Appropriations Committee in its report on the 2012 Defense budget bill, which found the Pentagon and military services have set up a confusing mess of websites that purport to provide support for service members and their families struggling to deal with combat stress.

For example, the report said, the Navy published one pamphlet explaining how to combat operational stress that listed 16 different Web sites and phone numbers for outreach. Yet another Navy pamphlet listed eight additional websites, while an Air Force pamphlet listed 13 sites and points of contact and an Army information sheet on combat stress and mental health assistance listed 19 sites. But, as the report pointed out, the website descriptions contains little information as to what services the sites will provide, thus requiring users to read through them to find one that meets his or her needs.

Rather than consolidating these efforts and streamlining this information for service members, the Department continues to

**COMBAT STRESS, continued from page 10**

approve new programs, resulting in a maze of information that poses a significant challenge to navigate, the report added.

The committee believes the Army, Navy and Air Force, as well as the Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, and the Department of Veterans Affairs

need to work together with the private sector to consolidate these efforts and develop a single portal.

Getting all these folks into the same room, let alone reaching an agreement, sounds like a task that could take years.

[Source: NextGov.com Bob Brewin article 22 Sep 2011]

**Caring for a Veteran?**  
Call VA's Caregiver Support Line for help toll-free:  
**1-855-260-3274**  
Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 11:00 pm ET  
Saturday, 10:30 am - 6:00 pm ET  
VA Caregiver Support Program  
Department of Veterans Affairs

## Suicide, the "Silent Epidemic"

In 1974 First Lady Betty Ford coined the phrase "Silent Epidemic" referring to breast cancer. Each year this cancer was killing thousands of men and women and no one was willing to talk about it until she as a survivor started to make it public. This awareness has spread and has saved many lives. We now have the complete month of October for cancer awareness.

Today we have another "Silent Epidemic" and this one is affecting our Veterans. PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) from war has its own set of symptoms; one of those is depression, which can and unfortunately does, lead to some veterans thinking about suicide. We as veterans need to be talking to the public, to other veterans and to anyone who will listen. This will help our veterans understand that they are not alone. Our vets need to know there are other vets to talk to and who have learned to understand it and have learned to live with it. Making the public more aware of what PTSD is, can help them understand which can ultimately bring a more positive approach to veterans' needs and perhaps save more veterans from the long term solution (suicide) for what could be a short-term problem. I believe that it is very important for our younger veterans to see that it is alright to talk about PTSD and seek help and to see that it is not a form of weakness to ask for help. "It takes the courage and strength of a warrior to ask for help" and talk about it.

This is why it is so important for the

friends and family of our veterans to gain a better understanding of PTSD and to at least help our veterans to seek help for depression which can lead to suicide.

There are two different categories of veteran suicide, those who are serving and those who are no longer serving in the armed forces. The fact is if you are a veteran you are twice as likely to complete suicide.

Nationally, it is estimated that 12,000 veterans under VA care attempt suicide yearly and 6,000 succeed. Studies show that suicide is a multi-dimensional, multi-determined, and multifactorial behavior. More than one condition of mental health problems such as substance abuse disorder and/or depression can affect the veterans who attempt suicide. The stressors of the 18-64 age group usually are listed as problems with their intimate partner, and for the over 65 it is usually health problems. Veterans 18-64 have accounted for 30% of the suicides and 20% are veterans over 65 in VA care. One thing which has been recently disclosed is that some of the VA's antidepressant drugs cause side effects which include suicidal thoughts. We need to ask what medications these veterans are taking and what the side effects are.

Suicide and PTSD are known to be connected, per a RAND Corporation study. There are approximately 300,000 veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan who are suffering from PTSD and only 20% have asked for help, so you can see the problem will be ongoing for

some time. Some of the reasons given for PTSD are the long deployments, multiple deployments, death of a friend killed in combat, and combat trauma. The suicide rate for active duty members of the armed forces is higher than it has ever been and has gone up each year for the last ten years. Suicide accounts for 15% of all casualties in OEF/OIF active forces. The Marines have reported that suicide has also gone up. The numbers for the DoD and the VA are that in September of 2008, there had been 4,700+ American casualties and 821 suicides on record. We know that we have lost over 5,000, but I could not find the total number of suicides. I do know that in Afghanistan ending in September 2010 we had lost 861 by combat and 731 by suicide. As more veterans will be returning home soon the problem can, and will, only get closer to home.

If you suspect a veteran is depressed, remember the word A.C.E. "A" = ASK the veteran how he/she is doing, ASK if they are thinking about hurting themselves; "C" = CARE enough to talk to them, listen, share your own personal experiences and gain their trust; and "E" = ESCORT them to get help, do not let them promise to get help. Then check up on them at a later date.

I write this now because of the upcoming holiday season. The number of suicides goes up for all segments of society during this time of the year. I hope that we, as veterans, can help other fellow veterans through this time. I hope that this can be

published in Department newspapers and Post newsletters, along with the SUICIDE HOT LINE NUMBERS. VA HOT LINE 1-800-TALK (8255) or the DoD HOT LINE 1-800-1020. Some states have hot lines within their own state Veterans Department. Place them in your local newsletter.

**SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS:**

- THINKING ABOUT HURTING OR KILLING THEMSELVES
- LOOKING FOR WAYS TO KILL THEMSELVES
- SELF-DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR SUCH AS DRUG ABUSE, WEAPONS, ETC.
- HOPELESS, FEELING LIKE THERE'S NO WAY OUT
- ANXIETY, AGITATION, SLEEP-LESSNESS, MOOD SWINGS
- FEELING LIKE THERE IS NO REASON TO LIVE
- RAGE OR ANGER
- ENGAGING IN RISKY ACTIVITIES WITHOUT THINKING
- INCREASING ALCOHOL OR DRUG ABUSE
- WITHDRAWING FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS
- GIVING AWAY PERSONAL ITEMS OR PETS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO THEM.

Any of the above could show a need for help and the more symptoms which are present, the more chance a suicide attempt could be building. These are only a guideline for the signs, and many other problems could add to the mix.

**Commemorate your Post, District or Department's** anniversary in Buddy Poppy style! As your Post celebrates 25, 50 or 75 years, order special silver-, gold- or diamond-colored Poppies for distribution throughout this monumental year.

**Remember: With Buddy Poppy, every day is Veterans Day.**

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**VFW**  
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS



## Community Service Reporting

The State Commander announced a grace period for Community Service reporting for the first report period covering May to October 2011.

Each Post's performance for the period is provided in the accompanying chart.

To take advantage of the grace period, a Post must:

1. Complete a community service report for each of the six months from May to October.
2. Submit the reports to the Community Service Chair no later than 1 January 2012.

The grace period applies to Posts that under-reported their community service, as well as those that missed the reporting

deadline or that did not report at all. Every Post can submit or resubmit the six months of reports by the deadline and receive credit for this specific criterion toward the All-State Program.

There will be no grace period for the Community Service reporting for the second report period. That deadline is 5 May 2012.

### Background

The purposes of community service reporting are to ensure VFW's reputation as a service organization and to define and protect our charitable, not-for-profit status. Both of these purposes are important; not only to the VFW, but to each Post.

Making reporting of a Post's community service efforts as a contributor (as in previous program years), or making reporting of a Post's community service efforts as a requirement in the 2011-12 program year to a Post's recognition by the Department's All-State Program is the primary instrument the Department uses to encourage Posts to put forth the effort to report community service.

In 2011-12, the Department changed the community service reporting as part of the All-State program. The requirement is to report monthly community service to the Community Service Chair at least twice a year, with deadlines on 5 November and 5 May. This change has

produced an increase of over 50 percent in Posts reporting at least one month of community service and has convinced the Department that it made a productive change.

Ideally, the Department would have all Posts reporting. The reason for the grace period is to move the Department toward that goal. Since VFW Headquarters does not report externally until June, Posts that take advantage of the grace period can significantly increase the Department of Nevada's community service totals in the end of the year report to Headquarters, while meeting the first half year community service reporting requirement for the All-State Program.

## 2011-12 Department of Nevada Community Service Report

Post	Location	Projects	Members	Money	Hours	Miles	Met All-State Requirement?	Performance Analysis
<b>District 1</b>								
3630	Topaz	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
3726	Carson City	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
3819	Truckee Meadows	61	84	\$11,979	6,287	6,095	No	Submitted 5 months
8071	Virginia City	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
8084	Smith Valley	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
8583	Gardnerville	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
8660	Dayton	144	249	8,369	998	4,855	No	Submitted 5 months
<b>District 1 Totals</b>		<b>205</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>\$20,348</b>	<b>7,285</b>	<b>10,950</b>		
<b>District 2</b>								
2350	Elko	120	1,303	\$84,071	3,300	19,062	Yes	Submitted 6 months
3547	Ely	22	37	820	96	195	No	Submitted 2 months
7114	Caliente	3	26	175	40	50	No	Submitted 1 months
8194	Eureka	3	16	217	57	80	No	Submitted 1 months
9165	Battle Mountain	7	2	0	4	20	No	Submitted 1 months
<b>District 2 Totals</b>		<b>155</b>	<b>1,384</b>	<b>\$85,283</b>	<b>3,497</b>	<b>19,407</b>		
<b>District 3</b>								
3396	Sparks	294	64	\$21,844	13,593	12,304	No	Submitted 4 months
9211	Reno	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
10031	Gerlach	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
10053	Verdi	15	72	10,603	712	1,300	No	Submitted 3 months
10247	Fernley	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
<b>District 3 Totals</b>		<b>309</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>\$32,447</b>	<b>14,305</b>	<b>13,604</b>		
<b>District 4</b>								
1002	Fallon	48	337	5,290	1,378	3,424	Yes	Submitted 6 months
1103	Tonopah	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
2313	Hawthorne	24	117	100	339	166	No	Submitted 2 months
2668	Mina	114	272	2,890	1,068	8,733	No	Submitted 5 months
3677	Gabbs	17	43	900	93	2,391	Yes	Submitted 6 months
6825	Schurz	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
<b>District 4 Totals</b>		<b>203</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>\$9,180</b>	<b>2,878</b>	<b>14,714</b>		
<b>District 5</b>								
5983	Henderson	140	50	\$3,476	1,031	140	Yes	Submitted 6 months
51753	Las Vegas	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
6826	Amargosa	78	107	224	674	3,215	No	Submitted 4 months
8250	Summerlin	20	32	87	322	1,420	No	Submitted 1 months
10054	Pahrump	24	190	5,300	632	600	No	Submitted 4 months
12093	Las Vegas	39	118	738	303	714	No	Submitted 5 months
12101	Las Vegas	23	34	251	303	1,275	Yes	Submitted 6 months
<b>District 5 Totals</b>		<b>324</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>\$10,076</b>	<b>3,265</b>	<b>7,364</b>		
<b>District 6</b>								
36	Boulder City	276	1,303	\$10,494	9,215	8,671	Yes	Submitted 6 months
243	Laughlin	0	0	0	0	0	No	Submitted 0 months
3848	Henderson	9	8	1,747	28	80	No	Submitted 1 months
7385	Mesquite	127	124	550	2,133	12,894	Yes	Submitted 6 months
8336	Moapa Valley	134	298	1,096	3,138	13,864	Yes	Submitted 6 months
10047	North Las Vegas	539	713	7,659	1,535	15,543	Yes	Submitted 6 months
10468	Searchlight	21	10	995	299	465	No	Submitted 1 months
<b>District 6 Totals</b>		<b>1,106</b>	<b>2,456</b>	<b>\$22,541</b>	<b>16,348</b>	<b>51,517</b>		
<b>VFW Totals</b>		<b>2,302</b>	<b>5,609</b>	<b>\$179,875</b>	<b>47,578</b>	<b>117,556</b>		



# Department of Nevada Mid-Winter Conference January 20-21, 2012

### Friday, January 20, 2012

2:00-4:00 p.m.	MOC and MOCA Meetings	VFW Post 10047
3:00 p.m.	Hotel check-in	Arizona Charlie's (Decatur) 740 S. Decatur Boulevard
4:00-6:00 p.m.	Pre-Registration	Arizona Charlie's Diamond Mae's Ballroom
6:00 p.m.	Post Home Night	Arizona Charlie's Diamond Mae's Ballroom
7:00 p.m.	LAVFW COA Meeting	Arizona Charlie's – Room Number 4711

### Saturday, January 21, 2012

8:00-10:00 a.m.	Registration	Arizona Charlie's Diamond Mae's Ballroom
8:00 a.m.	Joint Opening	Arizona Charlie's Diamond Mae's Ballroom
10:00 a.m.	Break	
10:15 a.m.	VFW Business Session	Diamond Mae's Ballroom
10:15 a.m.	LAVFW Business Session	Ron's Steakhouse
12 Noon	Lunch	
1:00 p.m.	Resume Officer Reports	Arizona Charlie's Diamond Mae's Ballroom
2:00 p.m.	Council of Administration Meeting	
3:30 p.m.	Women Veterans and Iraq/Afghanistan Veterans	Meeting Room 4711
5:00 p.m.	No Host Bar	Arizona Charlie's Elbow Creek Bar
6:00 p.m.	Voice of Democracy Dinner and Program	Diamond Mae's Ballroom

### Sunday, January 22, 2012

Depart for Home – Have a Safe Trip

# 2012 Department of Nevada Mid-Winter Conference Book Ad Order Form

Please fill out the order blank. Then send the order, ad copy and payment to:

VFW Post 12093  
6632 Gazelle Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89108

Make checks payable to: **VFW Post 12093 Mid-Winter**

Ad copy in digital format (jpg) preferred.  
E-mail to: [VFWPost12093@yahoo.com](mailto:VFWPost12093@yahoo.com)

Item	Quantity	Price	Total Price
Full Page (5" x 7.5")	_____	\$100.00	_____
Half Page (5" x 3.75")	_____	\$75.00	_____
Quarter Page (2.5" x 3.75")	_____	\$50.00	_____
Eighth Page (2.5" x 1.75")	_____	\$25.00	_____
Full Page Color (Inside Front Cover)	_____	\$150.00	_____
Full Page Color (Inside Back Cover)	_____	\$150.00	_____
Full Page Color (Back Cover)	_____	\$200.00	<b>SOLD</b>
		<b>Total:</b>	_____

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

**The DEADLINE for Ads is December 27, 2011**

## VFW Department of Nevada Mid-Winter Conference January 20-21, 2012 Arizona Charlie's Casino (Decatur) Las Vegas, Nevada Hosted by John Lukac VFW Post 12093 and Ladies Auxiliary

### Meal Order & Conference Registration Form

Please complete the form and mail with payment to:  
VFW Post 12093, 6632 Gazelle Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89108

Make check payable to: **VFW Post 12093**

(Please print all information)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Meal Order

Meal order cut-off date is December 30, 2011. No exceptions!

Date	Meal	Cost	Name #1	Name #2	Total
Jan. 20	Pasta Bar Buffet	\$20.00	_____	_____	_____
	Taco Bar Buffet	\$20.00	_____	_____	_____
Jan. 21	Prime Rib	\$29.00	_____	_____	_____
	Orange Roughy	\$29.00	_____	_____	_____
	Chicken Marsala	\$29.00	_____	_____	_____

#### Conference Registration

Name	Title Desired on Badge	Cost
_____	_____	\$2.00
_____	_____	\$2.00

If you are registering or ordering meals for more than two (2) people, please use a separate registration/meal order form for the additional people.

**Total Food: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Registration: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ GRAND TOTAL: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**For hotel reservations:** Please contact Arizona Charlie's Casino (Decatur) at 800-342-2695.  
Refer to reference group code "C-VFW11" or mention VFW State Mid-Winter Conference to receive guaranteed room rates.

#### Room rates

**Standard room: \$56.00** (tax included) Friday and Saturday nights.

**Note: Reservation cutoff date is December 16, 2011.**



*Pictured are Post 3677 Doug Turley Gabbs, Judge Advocate John Gifford, Rhalda Lewis and Bill Terry of Post 1002 conducting a membership drive during the Veterans Fair at the Fallon Convention Center on November 5, 2011.*



*Pictured is Post 3848 Commander Ken Veith displaying a Comrade Veteran Wreath made by the Post for the holidays.*



*John Franklin Shain, VFW Post 2313, was honored to hold a War Dog Memorial Service to honor "Benny", the bomb and attack dog, who served three tours in Iraq and was adopted by the Ramirez Family of Hawthorne after his retirement.*



*Post Commander John Dougherty and Senior Vice Jack Horner prepare for the Flag Retirement Ceremony and services to honor fallen heroes at the Veterans Cemetery in Caliente, Nevada.*



*State Commander Hollinger receiving an award from CIC DeNoyer, presented by PCIC Pouliot at the Homecoming.*



*VFW Post 8071 participates in the Veterans Day Parade in Virginia City, Nevada.*



*Post 3819 and the VFW Riders during the Reno Veterans Day Parade.*



*State President Carol Hagen being honored at the Homecoming by the Auxiliary members.*

## VFW Nevada Invites Excelsior College Rep to Mid-Winter Conference

On Saturday, January 21, Diana Quinones, Excelsior College Representative, will be attending the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Nevada Mid-Winter Conference at Arizona Charlie's in Las Vegas. Quinones will be discussing the VFW Nevada education partnership with Excelsior College at the conference and be available throughout the day to answer questions on the partnership and provide

information on Excelsior College degree programs. The education partnership provides reduced tuition and fees at Excelsior College (an online regionally accredited college) on associate and bachelor degrees for veterans and their spouses belonging to a VFW in Nevada. Excelsior College was recently recognized by Military Times' *EDGE* magazine as a "Best for Vets" college.

Excelsior College has several education partnerships, which include Department of New York Veterans of Foreign Wars, Capital District Chapter of the Association of the United States Army, National Association of Uniformed Services and Non-Commissioned Officer Association.

For more information on the veteran partnerships, go to: <http://www.excelsior.edu/welcome-veterans>



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