



# The Perimeter Guard

Vietnam Veterans of America  
Chapter 17



Sept./Oct 2011

**Vietnam Veterans of America**

Vol. 2 No. 5



We Will Always Remember  
September 11, 2001.

Photo by  
Det. Greg Sennelager  
NYC Police Aviation Unit

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CHAPTER 17  
VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

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Newsletter  
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***And now a word  
from your  
President and  
Publisher...***



***Region 9  
Director Report  
By Dick  
Southern.***

Hello and Good Bye!

I bet that sounds like a strange opening to my report.

The truth of the matter is that I just returned from a week in Indianapolis, Indiana for advanced VSO training. P.J. Cantrell and I were treated to intense training sponsored by the American Legion and conducted by the National Veterans Legal Services Program. NVLSP is a leader in the fight for Veterans benefits spearheading many of the court actions brought against the VA. You can rest assured your VSO's have the most current benefits information available.

Since the last newsletter, Chapter 17 held its 4th annual Fireworks booth fundraiser. We did quite well and managed to avoid taking any funny money thanks to our new counterfeit bill detector. Part of the profits went to the AVVA for their help in making the booth such a big success. A big "thank you" to all who volunteered to work the booth.

And now I am getting ready to leave for Reno and VVA's National Convention. Chapter 17 is honored to provide the marshals for the 4th consecutive convention. It's a good feeling knowing that VVA National is pleased with the professional service the marshals provide. I hope to see many of you in Reno this year. It's going to a great convention.

I have to cut this short for now. Time to pack for Reno.

By the time you read this the 15th VVA Convention will be over and the complexion of VVA will have changed. Did we have the best seats in the house? Was the entertainment the greatest? Did your candidate win? Did you have a good time? You know the answers to those questions now.

With the convention behind us, we can now continue with our mission of serving America as we help our fellow veterans and their families have a better life as we reach out to them in the ways we do the best and that is at the grassroots level in our communities. Veterans need to be connected to a Veteran Service Officer and pursue what is due to them for their military service. Healthcare is a primary concern for our generation and, in most cases, a VSO can help with getting healthcare from the VA.

I would encourage chapters to do some fundraising to fund what they do in their communities. Car shows, concerts, golf tournaments and other fundraisers can pump up that treasury to be able to help vets and their families. An active chapter is a true asset to the community. Become an active chapter now.

In closing, I also want to encourage you to keep up your recruiting and retention of members in VVA. It is the time for us to keep adding numbers to our membership totals.

As always, I am available on email at [southern@lodelink.com](mailto:southern@lodelink.com) or by phone at either 209-928-3848 or 209-768-9841 if needed for anything



## Duct tape may help stop infection spread



BALTIMORE — A simple roll of duct tape may offer an inexpensive way to help reduce the spread of infections in U.S. hospitals, researchers suggest.

The infection prevention team at the Trinity Medical Center in the Quad Cities on the Iowa/Illinois border say they created a “Red Box” safe zone — a 3-foot square of red duct tape extending from the threshold of the door of patients who have infections — to facilitate communication with patients in isolation or with “contact precautions.”

“This is a simple but very effective mechanism to conserve resources and yet remain in touch with the patient,” Russell N. Olmsted, president of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control, says in a statement. “It can serve as a model for healthcare providers who strive to deliver better care and reduce costs.”

The study, conducted in a 504-bed Midwestern health system, saved as much as 2,700 hours and \$110,000 a year by creating the safe zone. Typically, healthcare professionals must wear personal protective equipment before entering an isolated patient’s room for any type of communication, but donning gowns and gloves before each interaction is time-consuming and costly, and creates communication barriers with patients, the researchers say. The box also serves as an additional visual cue to remind hospital staff that they are entering an isolation room, which is usually only indicated by a small sign outside the patient’s room, the study says.

The findings were presented at the 38th Annual Educational Conference and International Meeting of the APIC.



## Based on Kandahar hospital, TV’s ‘Combat Hospital’ tries to keep it real

By Jon R. Anderson  
Staff writer

Whether ABC’s new war-zone drama “Combat Hospital” is curing your summer TV season blues or making matters worse, in many ways you can thank Canadian Regimental Sgt. Maj. Chris Kaye.

As most military viewers know, “Combat Hospital” is a fictional show about a very real hospital in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Of course, some know it far better than most. One of the few top-tier trauma centers in the war zone, tens of thousands of wounded — along with the legions of military medical staff who have stitched them up — have passed through its operating rooms over the past 10 years.

Kaye is one of them.

An infantryman-turned-warrant officer and physician assistant, Kaye was among the leadership at the hospital during his tour there in 2007, as the Canadian military was assuming primary responsibility in running the hospital.

“We were holding down the fort for about three years until the Americans could get back from Iraq,” he says. The U.S. Navy took the lead there about a year ago.

Although Kaye is still serving part time in the Canadian army reserve, he’s now the full-time military adviser to “Combat Hospital.”

Producers, he says, have taken pains to build the show’s sprawling set — just outside Toronto — with exacting detail.

“I’ve brought other veterans who’ve served on Kandahar on set and they’re amazed,” he says. “Standing in the middle of the trauma bays can feel like déjà vu. Sometimes I find myself drifting back.”

But if you’re among those who’ve chafed at some of the liberties producers have taken, he doesn’t blame you.

Say's I t A l l !!!!!!!!!!!!!

So... where ARE we going, and why ARE we in this handbasket?

## ***Institute of Medicine Study Acknowledges Plausible Routes for Agent Orange Exposure in Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans; VA Should Grant Presumptive Status, VVA Argues***

“Every military prides itself on discipline — so when you see things like the fraternization or alcohol on the show, of course it makes you cringe,” he says.

During the script-writing, he fights the good fight to keep it as real as possible. Sometimes he wins, sometimes he loses.

“I have to keep reminding myself that this is a TV drama and it’s meant to entertain,” he says.

Some of the plot lines may be more realistic many realize. A mystery infection that plagues patients in the second episode, for example, was based on the real-life battles physicians faced trying to diagnose legions of unfamiliar bacteria and fungi.

“As far as I know, we’re the first production that has official cooperation from both the Canadian forces medical service and the U.S. Defense Department,” says co-producer and writer Daniel Petrie Jr. The opening scenes in the pilot episode, for example, were aboard an Air Force C-17 on loan at March Joint Air Reserve Base in California.

“But it doesn’t mean we don’t get things wrong,” he says. Head-smackers have included the lieutenant colonel who was unintentionally frocked to full bird and an Australian major who’s bearing lieutenant’s rank. “No one caught it and now we’re practically finished filming.”

In return for military assistance, the Pentagon and Canadian brass get final chop on all scripts before filming begins, says Petrie.

“The script reviews haven’t been burdensome at all, because they want things to be accurate and so do we,” he says. “But they also understand that we have to make a show, and that we’re not making a documentary.”

Despite all the military cooperation, it’s unclear if hospital staff now stationed at Kandahar even like the show. Officials there declined interview requests about the show, ignored written questions on their involvement and refused to allow troops there to discuss it.

“They have heard about the show,” conceded hospital spokesman Army Lt. Col. Randy Taylor in an email, but added “it probably is not prudent to have hospital members, in their official capacity, commenting on the show.”

(Washington, D.C.)— On May 20, the Institute of Medicine Committee on Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans and Agent Orange Exposure released their final report. The committee was asked “to consider whether Blue Water Navy veterans might have been exposed to herbicides used in Vietnam, specifically Agent Orange and its contaminant, 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin, and whether this exposure could lead to an increased risk of long-term adverse health outcomes.”

“While there is purported to be no positive findings for the Blue Water veterans, this is not the case,” said John Rowan, National President of Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). The committee verified an Australian study showing a plausible means of exposure through desalination of the ships’ water supplies. The committee was able to verify that dioxin was made ten times more toxic during the desalination process.

“While it will likely never be determined how much and how far out Agent Orange drifted or wafted, or how much of this deadly toxin compromised the distillation process converting marine water into potable water,” Rowan said, “science has yet to reveal how much of an exposure might not be safe, or might lead to health problems years later – the same health conditions that afflict boots-on-the-ground veterans of the Vietnam War.”

The committee also concluded that it “could not state with certainty that exposures to Blue Water Navy personnel, taken as a group, were qualitatively different from their Brown Water Navy and ground troop counterparts.”

Nor could the committee “find enough data to

determine whether or not particular Blue Water Navy personnel were exposed to Agent Orange-associated dioxin. At the same time, the committee could not clearly delineate whether there were overlapping exposures between personnel categories.”

Said Rowan, “We believe that the conclusions of the IOM panel recognize that Blue Water veterans had the same presumptive exposure to Agent Orange herbicides and dioxin as their in-country and Brown Water Navy comrades. These Blue Water Navy veterans deserve the same presumptive eligibility for health-care and disability compensation as their land-based brethren, and we call upon VA Secretary Eric Shinseki to change the current policy of unfairly excluding these veterans. The operative phrase should be the strong statement made in both the 2006 IOM Biennial Review and the 2008 IOM Biennial Review, to wit, ‘There is no valid scientific reason to exclude Blue Water Navy veterans from the presumptive group of Vietnam veterans for exposure to Agent Orange.’ “



## ***Actor Gary Sinise forms foundation to aid disabled veterans***

By Richard Lee

Actor Gary Sinise announces the formation of the Gary Sinise Foundation to benefit disabled veterans.

The Foundation, with a newly assembled staff and offices located in Los Angeles, is a culmination of Sinise’s decades-long efforts with the USO, Disabled American Veterans, Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, Operation International Children and various other groups to give aid, comfort and, just as importantly, recognition, to disabled war veterans and their families for the sacrifices they made, and continue to make, in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“We’re a staff-specific mission,” Sinise said. “We’ll be working with a lot of different organizations.”

Sinise, who stars in the hit CBS series, “CSI:

New York,” is probably best known for his Oscar-nominated performance in the 1994 movie “Forrest Gump,” in which he played Lt. Dan, a commanding officer who loses both legs in the Vietnam War.

The Foundation announcement coincides with the July 4 release online and on pay-per-view of “Lt. Dan Band: For The Common Good,” a chronicle of the musical journey Sinise and fellow musicians took to far-flung, often dangerous war zones to entertain the military.

When the film is downloaded, one out of every four dollars will go to The Gary Sinise Foundation. For details, go to [www.LtDanBandMovie.com](http://www.LtDanBandMovie.com)

The Jonathan Flora film was screened at the Club on June 29. It, too, was an outgrowth of Sinise’s memorable portrayal in the “Forrest Gump” movie, which won Tom Hanks a Best Actor Oscar and also won the Best Picture award.

Sinise and his wife, Moira, are both from families with long histories of military service. But, as Sinise told his sold-out audience, he was like many Americans growing up in the Sixties.

“The Vietnam war was a distant war,” he recalled. “I was not really paying that much attention.”

But in 1980, in Chicago, when Sinise saw a group of young Vietnam veterans perform a play they had written that was based on their war experiences, “a tremendous feeling of guilt and sadness came over me,” he said.

Sinise subsequently directed another Vietnam-themed play at the Steppenwolf Theatre Company he co-founded in Chicago.

“It left a lasting impression on me, and I have stayed involved with veterans ever since,” he said.

Sinise has been honored by both Democrat and Republican presidents for his efforts. In 2008, he received the Presidential Citizens Medal, the second highest civilian honor, “for exemplary deed performed in the service of the nation.” Sinise is only the second actor among the 110 people who have received the award.

Sinise’s guests at the head table included Kevin Wensing of the USO, Art Wilson, chief



executive of Disabled American Veterans, and Mary Eisenhower, president and CEO of People to People International and granddaughter of President Dwight Eisenhower.

Answering questions from President Mark Hamrick at the end of his remarks, Sinise said he “has no interest at all” in running for political office.

But he did urge Congress to step up its support for returning veterans facing difficulties.

“Cut through all the red tape, all the bureaucracy, and just get down to business,” Sinise said. “The government can only do so much, I realize that. But it shouldn’t take forever to get your benefits. There are a lot of veterans in need out there. We have three million of them who are disabled. The country must take responsibility, find that returning warrior a job. That community support is critical.”

Sinese is becoming accustomed to being referred to as Lt. Dan by the disabled troops he visits.

“It’s just something that happened, that movie,” he said. “It was so popular, ‘Forrest Gump.’ About a month after I did the film, I got introduced to the Disabled American Veterans. They liked the way I did it. They saw it as a kind of therapy for shattered veterans. He’s successful. He goes on with his life. So how could I say, ‘Hey, don’t call me that’? The character is alive for them. How can you not be grateful for that?”

## ***FDA reveals bigger, graphic warning labels for cigarette packages.***

By Sandra Young  
CNN

***The new graphic labels must cover half the area on cigarette packages. Tobacco company R.J. Reynolds says new requirements violate the First and Fifth Amendments***



Washington (CNN) — Nine new graphic cigarette warning labels showing cancerous lesions and other impacts of smoking were unveiled Tuesday by the Food and Drug Administration, part of the agency’s sweeping new powers to regulate tobacco and tobacco products.

“With these warnings, every person who picks up a pack of cigarettes is going to know exactly what risk they’re taking,” Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius told reporters.

Sebelius called smoking and other tobacco use the “number one cause of preventable death” in America, claiming more than 440,000 lives a year.

Cigarette packages will now carry one vivid color image and one of these warnings about the consequences of smoking: “Cigarettes are addictive”; “Tobacco smoke can harm your children”; “Cigarettes cause fatal lung disease”; “Cigarettes cause cancer”; “Cigarettes cause strokes and heart disease”; “Smoking during pregnancy can harm your baby”; “Smoking can kill you”; “Tobacco smoke causes fatal lung disease in non-smokers”; and “Quitting smoking now greatly reduces serious risks to your health.”

The warnings, which must be in place by September 2012, will cover the upper portion of the pack both front and back. At least 50% of the package will have to be covered.

In addition, the warnings will have to cover at least 20% of a cigarette ad. Small ads less than 12 inches don’t require the 20% coverage, but must still have a warning. Each warning will also

Can You Explain This ?



have a phone number — 1-800-QUIT-NOW — that smokers can call to get help if they want to quit.

According to Sebelius, a stall in the downward trend of smoking in America, particularly among young people, prompted President Barack Obama to renew the focus on getting Americans to kick the habit or never start smoking in the first place. It is the first government-mandated label change for cigarettes in 25 years, she said, adding that a major motivation was targeting young people from wanting to smoke.

“Somebody said when they first saw the warning, these are really gross, and they are,” Sebelius said. “We want kids to understand smoking is gross, not cool.”

The new packaging and ads, which must be in place by September 2012, result from the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act (FSPTCA), which mandates cigarette packs and advertisements have larger and “more visible graphic health warnings” as part of an effort to educate the public about the health risks associated with smoking.

Margaret Hamburg, the commissioner of food and drugs at the federal Food and Drug Administration, said the nine images chosen for the new packaging requirements were tested for their impact on various target groups, such as teenagers and pregnant women. She noted that a pack-a-day smoker will confront the graphic photos more than 7,000 times a year.

“This will be a dramatic change in what a cigarette package looks like, no doubt about it,” Hamburg said, later adding: “It will change the consumer response to a package of cigarettes, but frankly, that’s what we want.”

Thomas Glynn, director of cancer science and trends for the American Cancer Society, said the old labels have been virtually invisible because they’re small and have been around for so long. He said people have become immune and don’t really “see” them any more, but the new labels will be hard to ignore and will help focus attention on the problem.

“This is going to be a very important element in the tobacco control tool box, but it’s not a panacea,” Glynn said. “For smokers, it’s a new and very visible reminder that smoking can harm them, harm people around them, including chil-

dren. For nonsmokers, it’s a reminder that smokers need their help and concern as far as quitting. The labels are not just for smokers, the labels are for anyone interested in public health.”

Glynn says about 20% of the population still smokes, a number that has been pretty steady over the past five years. He hopes the new labels will jump-start a downward trend and reignite discussions about tobacco use.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 443,000 people in the U.S. die from smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke annually and more than 8 million are living with a disease that’s directly tied to smoking. The CDC says smoking is responsible for 90% of all lung cancer deaths in men and 80% in women. It estimates smoking causes 90% of all chronic obstructive lung disease deaths such as bronchitis and emphysema.

In January, both R.J. Reynolds and Philip Morris, the two largest tobacco companies in the United States, opposed the required warnings in letters to the FDA.

R.J. Reynolds, maker of some of the country’s best-selling brands such as Camel, Kool, Winston and Salem, said the new requirements violate the First and Fifth Amendments.

The company said, in part, “The anti-smoking message is not intended to provide information that smokers and potential smokers can consider rationally in weighing the risks and perceived benefits from smoking. Rather, it plainly conveys — through graphic images and designs intended to elicit loathing, disgust, and repulsion — the government’s viewpoint that the risks associated with smoking cigarettes outweigh the pleasure that smokers derive from them and, therefore, that no one should use these lawful products.”

R.J. Reynolds said “by confiscating” the top 50% of the package and 20% of the ads, the government is not warning consumers about smoking risks — it is telling consumers, ‘Don’t buy or use this product.’ “The company is asking the FDA to withdraw the new rule, which it says is flawed, and issue a new one.

Philip Morris, the country’s largest tobacco company, supported the FSPTCA legislation. But in its letter, the company raised questions about the constitutionality of the labels.

“Any government requirement that compels a

private entity to carry a message not of its own choosing raises constitutional concerns ... To the extent that FDA were to select warnings based on their ability to evoke negative or cognitive reactions — not their ability to objectively inform consumers about the health risks of smoking — such warnings would not pass constitutional muster,” the company wrote.

It said the sheer size of the warnings violates the First Amendment.

The tobacco companies are footing the bill for the new labels.

However, Glynn noted that tobacco-related disease and health problems cost \$95 billion a year.

“The cost of putting the pictures on is at the expense of the tobacco industry; there is no cost to the government,” Glynn said. “So this is not the government spending money, and yet what we are going to gain from it is less death and less disease — and that’s going to save the government money.”

With this new move, the United States will be the 40th country to have picture warnings on our cigarette packs, making the country compliant with the World Health Organization’s global treaty on tobacco. Under the treaty, 35% of a cigarette pack must have warnings and pictures.

The treaty has already been ratified by 173 of 192 member nations of the United Nations. The United States is one of 19 countries that has not ratified the treaty, but with the new labels, will be compliant.

Countries such as Canada, Brazil and Australia have long been leaders in tobacco control and have had very graphic art on their packaging for years.

### Think About This !!!!

I think part of a best friend’s job should be to immediately clear your computer history if you die.

How the hell are you supposed to fold a fitted sheet?

You never know when it will strike, but there comes a moment at work when you know that you just aren’t going to do anything productive for the rest of the day.

## Local School Gets Offers Of Help.

(Las Vegas, NV) — A Vegas elementary school where 85-percent of the students are homeless has received offers of help.

Whitney Elementary and its principal Sherrie Gahn were profiled on the “CBS Evening News.” The “Las Vegas Review-Journal” says hundreds of calls have flooded Gahn’s office since the story aired, and nearly one and half million dollars arrived in the mail.

Efforts are under way to provide new shoes for the kids, and a man in Ireland wants to hold fundraisers. Ghan called the offers quote “very humbling.”

The AVVA members of Chapter 17 hold several fundraisers during the year to support Whitney Elementary as well.



## Tammy Duckworth Resigns At VA, Illinois Congressional Run Could Be In The Cards

A former congressional candidate and wounded Iraq war veteran resigned a prominent post at the Department of Veterans Affairs, leading to speculation that she will again run for Congress.

But Tammy Duckworth won’t have a cakewalk to the nomination in Illinois’s Eighth District, as an established statewide candidate has already earned a handful of endorsements from prominent local Democrats.

In 2006, Duckworth ran against Republican Peter Roskam. Her campaign earned national attention, in large part because of her story: an officer in the Illinois National Guard, she became a helicopter pilot, and lost both legs and the partial use of an arm when her Blackhawk was shot down in Iraq in 2004.

Roskam narrowly beat her in that race, by a

51-49 margin. If Duckworth were to run again this time around, it would be in a district that was drawn without an incumbent representative in this year's redistricting, a process that Illinois Democrats controlled and steered toward their heavy favor.

The district appears to favor Democrats: Obama won it with around 61 percent of the vote, and it looks to be around D+7 on the Cook partisan voter index, indicating a significant blue lean.

The Thailand-born Duckworth isn't alone in her interest in getting her hands on this newly lucrative district for Democrats, though. Raja Krishnamoorthi, a former advisor to Barack Obama and a narrowly failed candidate for state comptroller, has already announced his intention to run for the Democratic nomination.

And he has a sizable list of endorsements, including Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, five of the six Cook County Democratic committeemen and the Democratic leaders in DuPage and Kane Counties.

He also won over the voters in the new Eighth District during his run for comptroller, earning 62 percent among voters in the district despite losing statewide by a 47-46 margin, the Capitol Fax blog reports.

There had been some speculation that Duckworth, who attended high school and college in Hawaii, might run for that state's U.S. Senate seat, soon to be vacated by Sen. Daniel Akaka. She put that speculation to bed two weeks ago, saying, "My home and my National Guard unit are in Illinois. And if I run for office again, it'll be there." Her resignation from her post as an assistant secretary at the VA makes that seem quite likely at this point.

The prospective Democratic primary battle in IL-8 will pit the two formidable Asian-American candidates against one another, making it likely that the district — of which one in every eight residents is Asian-American — will be represented by a member of that group.

Have You Ever Wondered ????

Politicians are the only people in the world who create problems and then campaign against them.

## Man Eats 25,000th Big Mac, 39 Years After His 1st

By CARRIE ANTLFINGER  
Associated Press



FOND DU LAC, Wis. - A retired prison guard ate his 25,000th Big Mac on Tuesday, June 28th, 39 years to the day after eating his first ... nine.

Don Gorske was honored after reaching the meaty milestone during a ceremony at a McDonald's in his hometown of Fond du Lac. Surely McDonald's most loyal customer, Guinness World Records recognized Gorske's feat three years and 2,000 Big Macs ago, and the 57-year-old says he has no desire to stop.

"I plan on eating Big Macs until I die," he said. "I have no intentions of changing. It's still my favorite food. Nothing has changed in 39 years. I look forward to it every day."

The sign beneath the golden arches Tuesday read "Congrats Don Gorske 25000 Big Macs."

Before he ate No. 25,000, he showed dozens of onlookers many of the different styles of cartons he has collected over the years and other Big Mac-related stories.

Before biting into the sandwich, he said, "It's been seven years since 20,000. Same thing goes this year folks. You can't have the carton and it probably still takes 16 bites for me to finish a Big Mac."

The crowd erupted into applause.

Gorske, who appeared in the 2004 documentary "Super Size Me," which examined the fast food industry, looks nothing like one might expect of a fast food junkie. He's trim and walks regularly for exercise, and he attributes his build to being "hyperactive." He said he was recently given a clean bill of health and that his cholesterol is low.

Gorske's obsession with the burger - two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions on a sesame seed bun, for those not familiar with the once-ubiquitous ads - started May 17, 1972, when he bought three Big Macs to celebrate the purchase of a new car. He was hooked, and went back to McDonald's twice more

that day, eating nine before they closed.

He's only gone eight days since without a Big Mac, and most days he eats two. Among the reasons he skipped a day was to grant his mother a dying wish. His last Big Mac-less day was Thanksgiving 2000, when he forgot to stock up and the store was closed for the holiday.

Gorske said he loves numbers and counting things and was inspired to start counting his burgers because McDonald's noted how many hamburgers were served on their sign.

He said he is probably obsessive compulsive and that he likes repetition and doesn't like change. He said he's kept many of the Big Mac boxes and receipts over the years, and has noted his purchases in calendars he's kept.

McDonald's says there are 540 calories in a Big Mac, which is more than a quarter of the calories a person on a 2,000-calorie diet would consume. The burger also contains 29 grams of fat and 1,040 grams of sodium, which are both more than 40 percent of the Food and Drug Administration's daily recommended value for a 2,000-calorie diet.

Tara Gidus, a registered dietitian in Orlando, Fla., said she wouldn't recommend Gorske's Big Mac diet, and that he's likely stayed relatively healthy because of good genetics and because he doesn't order a lot of extras, such as fries and sodas.

She said the Big Mac provides protein and grains, which the body needs, and that she would be "less concerned about the bad stuff in the Big Mac and more concerned about the good stuff he's missing," such as fruits and vegetables.

Gorske said he normally buys six on Monday and eight on Thursday and freezes or refrigerates them and warms them when he wants to eat them, so he doesn't have to run to the restaurant all the time.

Gorske said he likes other foods, including bratwurst and lobsters, but that he loves Big Macs and his wife Mary, a nurse, never has to worry about making him a meal.

"I really do enjoy every Big Mac," he said.

He said his wife jokes about ending his streak.

"She says ... when she has to put them in a blender, it's over," he said.

## ***Supreme Court to consider military medical malpractice case.***

WASHINGTON – Sacramento Valley native Dean Patrick Witt died unnecessarily at Travis Air Force Base seven years ago. Now, his name momentarily haunts the U.S. Supreme Court.

Today justices will consider the death of Dean Witt and its connection to the controversial legal doctrine that shields military personnel from lawsuits.

"If the court chooses to re-examine this issue, thousands of service members would finally have the opportunity to have their day in court," said Laurie Higginbotham, an attorney for the late Air Force staff sergeant's widow, Alexis.

The case challenges a 61-year-old rule that protects the federal government against lawsuits by military personnel injured on active duty. Those protected can include, as in Witt's case, military nurses and doctors who may have acted negligently.

The lawsuit immunity potentially saves the federal government from having to pay hundreds of millions of dollars annually. It avoids judges second-guessing military decisions.

But sometimes, it also compels judges to lament their own rulings.

"A 25-year-old man who devoted his life to serving his country is dead through no fault of his own and his widow cannot sue to recover for her loss," Sacramento-based U.S. District Judge John A. Mendez wrote in February 2009 when he reluctantly rejected a Witt family lawsuit.

The result, Mendez added, "can only be characterized as unfair and irrational."

In the closed-door session, Supreme Court justices will decide whether to accept the Witt family's case and conduct a full hearing next term. Most Supreme Court petitions fail; a decision should be made public soon.

Born in Yuba City, Witt graduated from Oroville High School and then joined the Air Force. In September 2001, he married Alexis.

In October 2003, Witt was at Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield, preparing to move his wife and two young children from Utah. He began feeling



severe pain in his lower right abdomen and went to the base's David Grant Medical Center, where doctors diagnosed him with acute appendicitis.

On Oct. 10, 2003, doctors operated successfully. Then, Witt began having difficulty breathing.

He turned blue. A nurse mistakenly tried to use pediatric equipment to open his airway. It failed.

The nurse next found the right breathing tube, but placed it in Witt's esophagus rather than his trachea. For several crucial minutes, no oxygen reached Witt's brain. He collapsed into a persistent vegetative state. He died Jan. 9, 2004, after being disconnected from life-saving machinery.

The supervising nurse subsequently admitted error and surrendered her license. If Witt were a civilian, his family would probably have a slam-dunk malpractice case.

But in three 1950 cases, one involving an Army surgeon leaving a 30-inch towel inside a patient's abdomen, the Supreme Court specified that military personnel could not sue for injuries occurring "incident to service."

Current Acting Solicitor General Neal Katyal said active-duty medical malpractice suits "could substantially disrupt the military mission ... ."

He added that the Witt family already has received federal benefits: \$250,000 from life insurance, a \$100,000 death payment and tax-free monthly payments for Alexis Witt and her two children.

Congress could change the rules, but it would be expensive. Legislation that would allow medical malpractice lawsuits by military personnel would result in an additional 750 lawsuits annually and cost the government an estimated \$2.7 billion over 10 years, according to the Congressional Budget Office.



**A  
ROYAL  
Marine  
killed  
by a**

**Taliban bomb left  
£100,000 (\$164,338.53) to  
send all his mates to Las  
Vegas.**

David Hart, 23, took out life insurance before he went to Afghanistan.

And he wrote a letter saying a chunk of the £250,000 (\$410,711.35) policy proceeds should pay for his pals and their girlfriends to go on a party trip in his memory if he died.

Now 32 friends are jetting to the US - a year after David died in the Helmand danger spot of Sangin.

Pal Andy Hare, 25, said: "He loved going away with his mates - it was always the best two weeks of the year. They were lads' holidays and great times."

Construction manager Andy added: "In his letter David said he had had a great life and had no regrets about anything. He always said he would do something like this if something bad happened.

"He said, 'Go and have a good time and spend all this money'. All the lads said, 'What a guy'."

David, of 40 Commando, also left a large sum to his family and £50,000 (\$82,000) to his favorite charity for injured Marines. The keen footballer lived with parents Chris, 60, and Dilys, 54, in Poppleton, near York, before joining up in 2009.

Chris said: "Since his death, all of his friends have been round to see us. It's nice they have been there to support us." David's sister Sarah, 27, said: "He was the best brother I could have wished for. He was caring, funny and had an infamous grin.

"He would always be there for you. I'm proud to have been his sister and of his career as a commando."

David had qualified as a combat medic. After

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his death, Lt Col Paul James described him as “the perfect Marine - magnificent in personality and profession”.

Chris, Sarah and David’s pals will cycle 170 miles in September to raise cash for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

## ***25th Anniversary of Chicago’s Vietnam Veterans Parade.***

CHICAGO – June 17, 2011 marked the 25th anniversary of a huge patriotic parade in Chicago, the first of its kind.

In June of 1986, hundreds of thousands of Vietnam veterans and their families were honored for the service. Many are now in town to mark the anniversary of that celebration.

Chicago played a pivotal role in the healing process following the Vietnam War. In the 1970s, as American soldiers started returning home from Vietnam, many received a cold and sometimes hostile reception.

After years of many veterans being shunned, Chicago held a huge ‘Welcome Home’ parade. Over 200,000 veterans and their families marched in the parade in the Loop on June 13th, 1986 with more than 300,000 others watching along the route. It was the largest parade of its kind in U.S. history.

“It was very emotional, because you felt of the love the city and the people,” said Vietnam veteran Julie Viduya.

Those who died in Vietnam are named on the “Moving Wall,” which is currently situated at Navy Pier.

“The Moving Wall is so emotional for so many people because it’s a healing place. This is 58,000 men and women who have died for our country. This is a place of respect right here,” said Mike LoRocco.

For Jack Shiffler, one name stands out. One of his best friends died within weeks of battle. He saw that name the first time he ever looked at the original wall in Washington, D.C.

“So I turned and... the name just jumped out at me... Jack Sutton... and I thought, my God, how can this happen,” said Shiffler. “I knew he was

dead, but I didn’t believe it until I saw the name on the wall.”

Shiffler organized the ceremony, which will honor the men and eight women on the half-size replica of the original wall. It is all part of several events which will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the 1986 Chicago parade which honored Vietnam vets.

“Chicago was so gracious to us and it opened the eyes of the world - that we weren’t the bad guys - what the government does the government does,” said Shiffler. “When you’re in the military, it’s a dictatorship - you go where they send you.”

Eleventh Ward Alderman and Vietnam vet Jim Balcer was on hand to welcome the crowd.

“It symbolizes the sacrifice for our nation, the men and women that died in the defense of our nation,” said Balcer.

Gold Star mom Susan Weingler lost her son, Sgt. Robert Weingler, in Afghanistan in 2009 and came to pay tribute to her son and the fallen heroes of Vietnam.

“You never forget. There are the reason we are walking free,” said Weinger.

The onlookers at the original parade were supportive and welcoming - far different from the treatment most veterans experienced when the war ended.

“We didn’t know what to expect that morning,” said Marine veteran Jack Hosey. “The first veteran I met, he said, ‘What do you think they’re going to throw at us?’ I said rocks, he said, maybe books... there was a lot of animosity.”

Hosey came to Chicago from Elgin alone to place flags by each panel of names, just like he did in 1986.

Other onlookers had different reasons for showing their respects to the fallen warriors of Vietnam.

“My son is a veteran, and he’s from Iraq, two tours of duty and he’s a purple heart, and I believe that they’re all one,” said Mary Steinberg.

At the ceremony, veterans placed eight roses by the Moving Wall. The eight roses represent the eight women, all nurses, who died during the war.

“A lot of people didn’t expect that women actually served in Vietnam. Women did serve in Vietnam and in fact, all the women who are recognized on the wall are nurses,” said Col. Constance Edwards, retired .

Organizers believe the 1986 celebration changed the country's mood, and that spirit now benefits soldiers today.

"We wanna make sure that they don't have the same kind of treatment that we did, with not getting health benefits, with not recognizing that there is problems with PTSD," said Vietnam veteran Mike McMeel.

The 1986 parade was held eleven years after the war ended. Ceremonies and events to commemorate it began Friday afternoon at Navy Pier and continued through weekend.

## *How Might the Death of Osama bin Laden Affect Nevada?*

by Scott Smith, Executive Director  
UNLV Institute for Security Studies

Without question the killing of Osama bin Laden constitutes one of the most notable military operational successes since 9/11. It's right there with the seizure of Baghdad, the toppling of Saddam's large monument, Saddam's capture, and the capture of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. It has doubtless soothed the souls of many of the next-of-kin of the victims of 9/11. The entire enterprise—starting with the unearthing of intelligence, the tracking of couriers, the pinpointing of OBL's location, the rehearsals, the logistical preparations, the attack itself and then the backhaul and burial-at-sea—is worthy of the Nation's highest praise. Heck, someone's probably purchased the movie rights already.

Now the questions topmost in the minds of many are (a) does this mean that the war on terrorism is won, (b) does it mean that al Qaeda and the jihadist movement-at-large are substantially impaired, and (c) does it have any significance for the citizens of Nevada?

Whereas this largest of clandestine successes (with the admirable SEAL Team Six at the tip of the spear) is eminently newsworthy, most analysts agree that the answers to (a) and (b) above are rather disappointing. It has been said, recently and rightly, that although winning the war on terror is impossible with OBL alive, merely killing him by no means ends the war. Common sense tells

us that anti-American jihad-ism is spreading so widely both on foreign shores and in our own country (think lone wolves) that the death of any one leader—even so symbolic a one as OBL—changes little.

Starting a few years back, both government (the U.S. Department of Homeland Security) and private (the well-known and highly-regarded RAND Corporation) entities assessed Las Vegas as one of the U.S. cities most likely to experience acts of terrorism. The fine work of the Nevada Threat Assessment Center, the Northern Nevada Counter-Terrorism Center, the Southern Nevada Counter-Terrorism Center, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, the Nevada Commission on Homeland Security, and many other public and private bodies, corporations and individuals has doubtless helped prevent terrorist acts within Nevada.

Nevada's Congressional delegation's interest and support have been essential to this effort and have contributed to the many actions taken to safeguard our institutions, businesses and people. Very recently our newly-elected Governor, Brian Sandoval, has shown his commitment to the state's safety and security by assuming the position of Chairman of the Nevada Commission on Homeland Security, retaining the services of the highly-effective and widely-admired Dr. Dale Carrison as Vice Chair.

One of the preventive measures a state can take to ensure its safety is to educate its people about the threat, about the early warning signs of terrorist activity, and about the existence and functioning of the agencies that can convert information about unusual or suspicious behavior into actionable intelligence and then into preventive measures. These actions have been underway in Nevada for some time—moved forward by Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Sheriff Doug Gillespie and his associates. The most recent of these actions is the "See Something, Say Something" campaign...now more important than ever.

**See Something Say Something** (let's call it "4S") is an expression that signals to the public-at-large that one way of preventing bad things from happening is for all of us to be more aware of activities that go on around us and to be sensitive to behaviors that don't look, sound, smell or feel

right. 4S is not a camouflaged form of racial profiling; its intent is to focus on behaviors, not on people. Terrorists come in all sizes and shapes, both genders, and all ethnicities. It is suspicious behaviors that are the indicators of harmful acts.

The 4S message is intended for all of us. Rural postal workers, taxi drivers, desk clerks, retired persons...each of us who comes in contact with a portion of the world around us on a regular basis. We can all heighten our situational awareness and become protectors of our loved ones, our neighbors and our communities. The 4S program is the capstone that ties our individual situational awareness to the agencies that are doing their utmost to protect Nevada and keep us safe and secure.

To learn more about 4S or to submit a suspicious activity report, go to: [www.snctc.org](http://www.snctc.org) or telephone 702-828-8386.

## ***CO Cautions Bin Laden Burial Crew to Be Careful***

### **USS Carl Vinson**

SAN DIEGO — The commanding officer of the USS Carl Vinson aircraft carrier that buried Osama bin Laden's body at sea said he is returning home with one message for his 5,500 Sailors, pilots and crew: Be safe.

Capt. Bruce Lindsey talked to reporters in a teleconference call from the ship. It was scheduled to return to San Diego, ending a six-month deployment.

Lindsey wouldn't comment on bin Laden's burial, except to say appropriate precautions are being taken for the crew's safety. He said the Navy teaches Sailors about situational awareness on the flight deck, advising them to keep their heads on a swivel at all times so they are never caught off guard.

"We try to bring that [idea] into a Sailor's everyday life too," he said, so when they are off the ship, off the base, they maintain an acute awareness of everything around them.

He remembered in 1989 when the wife of the captain of the USS Vincennes narrowly escaped unharmed after a pipebomb blew up under her mini-van as she drove to work in San Diego, nine

months after the ship had shot down Iran Air Flight 655 in the Persian Gulf, killing 290 civilians.

The FBI later said the pipebomb case appeared to be someone with a personal vendetta against former Navy Capt. William C. Rogers III.

Lindsey said he also has been working with family readiness groups to ensure no details slip out on Facebook or other social media sites that would compromise their safety. He said there have been two incidences when things that raised a red flag appeared on the ship's Facebook page — which has more than 31,000 friends — but they were quickly removed.

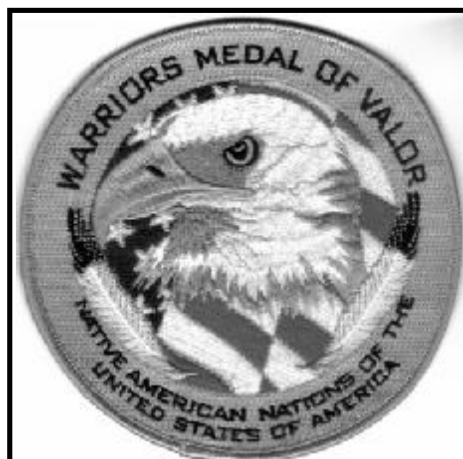
The USS Carl Vinson was in the North Arabian Sea last month when it received a Navy SEAL team carrying the body of the mastermind of the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

Pentagon officials speaking about the burial have said that bin Laden's body was placed in a weighted bag on the carrier and that an officer made religious remarks before the remains were put on a board and tipped into the sea.

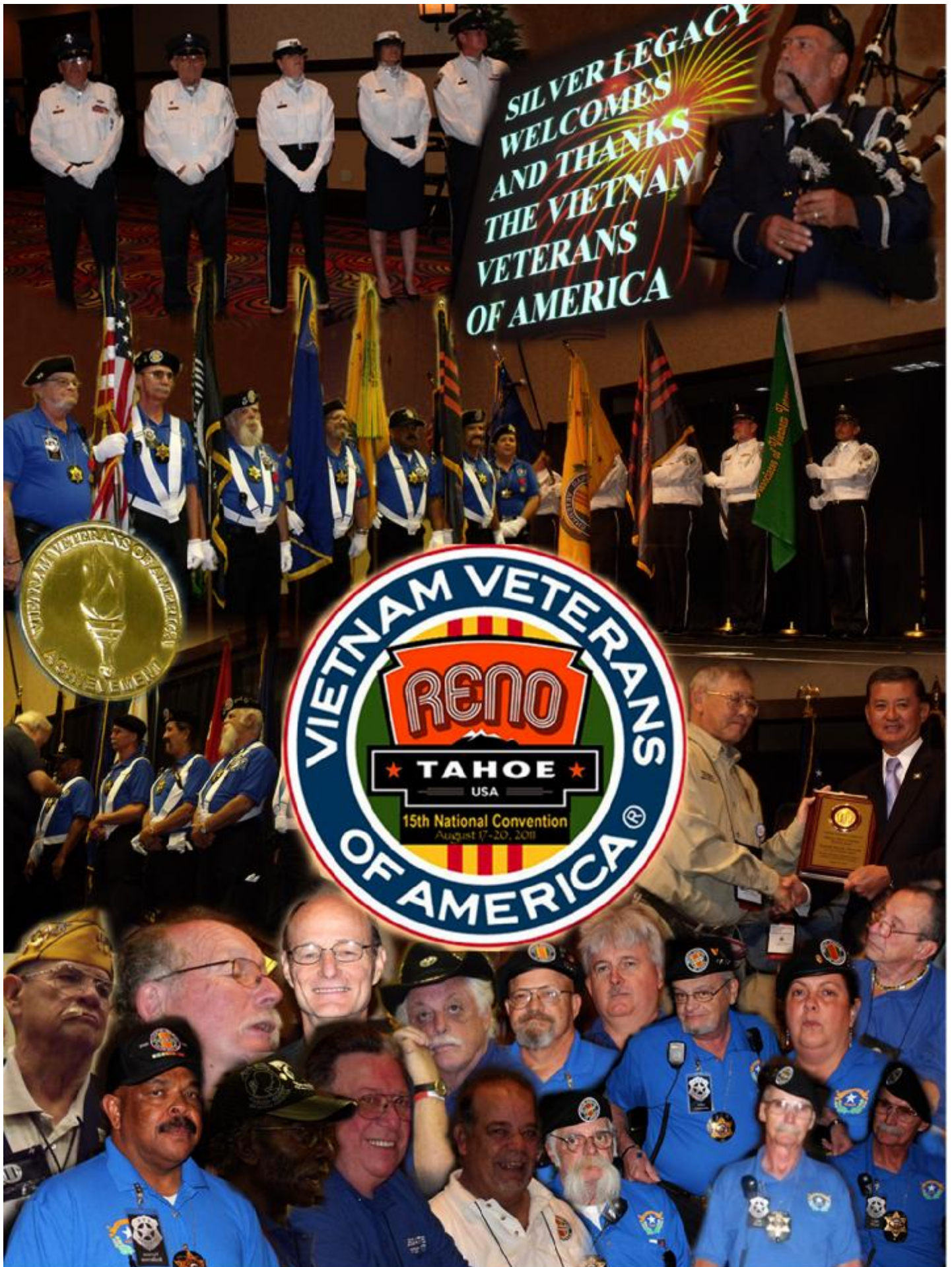
The massive Vinson deployed to the Middle East and Asia spent 171 of 191 days at sea and sailed more than 52,340 nautical miles.

Because of the long time out at sea, Lindsey said the crew was allowed two beers per Sailor and given the chance to swim off the stern dock more than once. For many of the Sailors, it was their first deployment out of the shipyards.

During its deployment, the ship also helped civilian mariners under attack by pirates and conducted training exercises with coalition nations, including Australia, Britain, France, the Republic of Korea, Japan, and Singapore, Britain, France and Australia.



The Warriors Medal of Valor patch is now available for purchase from chapter 17. They come in two sizes, 5 " and 10". The 5" will sell for \$10 and the 10" will sell for \$20. These patches will be available in the company store during the regular chapter meetings









# Disabled troops, vets misled on service dogs.

By Rick Maze  
Staff writer

Some service members and veterans are being misled and possibly harmed by well-meaning charities promising to provide a trained service dog to help with medical needs, according to representatives of a major veterans service organization.

What often happens, according to officials from the organization AmVets, is that disabled veterans who might benefit from a dog trained to do certain tasks may end up with an animal that a charity group has rescued from a pound, has been taught no special skills and might not be a true "service dog" for legal purposes.

"A dog with little or no training might be a great companion, but that's all," said Cristina Roof, AmVets legislative director.

## Is it a real service dog?

Minimum training standards for service dogs established by Assistance Dogs of America:

\* 90% of the time, a service dog must respond the first time it is asked to do a basic obedience and skill task.

\* By voice command or hand signal, a service dog must sit, stay, lie down, come and heel.

\* A service dog must perform at least three tasks to mitigate a disability.

\* The dog must be clean, well-groomed and not have an "offensive odor."

\* Unnecessary barking, growling, whining or soliciting attention from other people is not allowed. That includes begging for or stealing food from the general public.

\* When working, a dog should be calm and quiet, and not distracted (even by cats or squirrels). When not working, it should lie quietly without blocking aisles or doorways.

\* Unless told otherwise, a dog should be within two feet of its handler at all times.

\* In public, a service dog must wear a cape, harness, backpack or other clothing or equipment identifying it as a service dog.

Roof said some media stories about nonprofit groups providing veterans with dogs rescued from shelters give the incorrect impression that an untrained dog is essentially the same as a trained service dog.

"It is incredibly important to remember a service dog may not be a good fit for everyone," Roof said. "It is also crucial to remember that a service dog is in no way a replacement for your rehabilitation, either."

Roof said service members and veterans should never pay for a service dog and should try to deal only with groups accredited by Assistance Dogs International <<http://www.assistedogsinternational.org>>, which sets training guidelines and placement standards.

Dogs not officially recognized as service dogs - sometimes called therapy dogs or emotional support dogs - are pets, and although they may have some basic training, they are not covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. They may not have access to public spaces and may not enter military and veterans hospitals and clinics.

Roof said ADA rules cover guide dogs for the blind or deaf, seizure-alert dogs, and mobility dogs trained to pull a wheelchair, pick up dropped items and perform similar tasks. A month-old ADA policy revision now also allows public access for psychiatric service dogs if they are trained to perform a specific task.

The Veterans Affairs and Defense departments don't have to abide by ADA rules, Roof said. VA operates on rules dating to 1994 that allow only seeing-eye dogs into VA facilities, but allow case-by-case access

for other types of service dogs.

DoD has similar rules, giving discretion about allowing dogs into hospitals and clinics to base commanders, Roof said.

Roof said access restrictions on dogs can be embarrassing for service members and veterans who believe they have a trained and officially rec-

**Dogs not officially recognized as service dogs - sometimes called therapy dogs or emotional support dogs - are pets, and although they may have some basic training, they are not covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. They may not have access to public spaces and may not enter military and veterans hospitals and clinics.**

ognized dog but are later barred from bringing the animal into public buildings and medical facilities.

Having a companion dog rather than a recognized service dog also can make a difference in terms of benefits. VA can provide financial help to veterans for service dogs, covering some costs for food and health care, but those benefits don't extend to emotional support or therapy dogs, said AmVets spokesman Ryan Gallucci.

"It's a confusing situation," Gallucci said.

One example of a potentially confusing message is from Pets For Vets, a California based charity that takes animals from shelters and pairs them with veterans.

Pets for Vets does not claim its dogs are certified as service dogs, but says in promotional material that their program is "a win-win way to give back to our troops who have given so much to us."

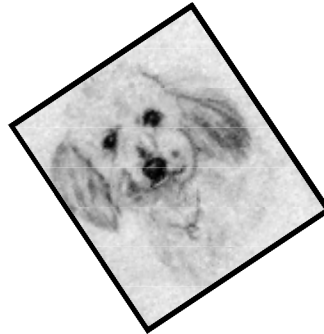
Veterans with physical and mental injuries can have a difficult transition to civilian life, and having a companion can help, the group says. "Our goal is to heal their wounds by bringing together man's best friend and our returning soldiers while showing them both that we have not forgotten," the group says.

Roof said there is no industrywide standard for what skills a dog may need to be certified to help a veteran with post-traumatic stress disorder or other mental health issues. VA is in the early stages of research to devise standard requirements for dogs to be trained to help veterans suffering from PTSD.

A Laurel, Md., nonprofit group, Fidos for Freedom, trains dogs in specific skills. They can be trained to open and close doors, retrieve objects, help someone keep their balance while walking, help someone get in or out of a chair, pull a wheelchair for short distances, assist in dressing or undressing, or help someone who has fallen get back on their feet.

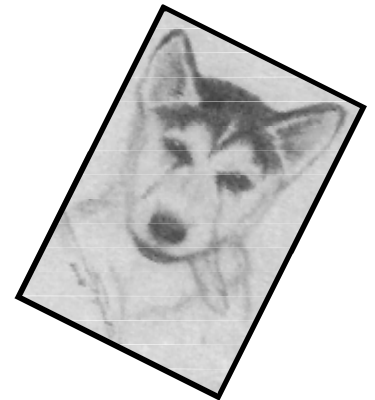
The group also trains dogs to help the deaf or hearing impaired by responding to the phone, smoke detector, alarm clock, microwave, someone knocking at the door or calling a name, the sound of something being dropped or even a baby's cry.

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# *Houston VA accused of censoring religious speech*

By LINDSAY WISE  
HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Local veterans and volunteer groups accuse Department of Veterans Affairs officials of censoring religious speech — including the word “God” — at Houston National Cemetery.

In one example cited in documents filed this week in federal court, cemetery director Arleen Ocasio reportedly told volunteers with the National Memorial Ladies that they had to stop telling families “God bless you” at funerals and that they had to remove the words “God bless” from condolence cards.

“It’s just unfair that somebody would ask us to take God out of our vocabulary,” said Cheryl Whitfield, founder of Houston National Memorial Ladies.

“I could’ve kept my mouth shut and let things happen, but when it comes to standing up for your belief in God and giving comfort to the families, I don’t want to regret not saying anything,” Whitfield said. “We all had to stand up for what we believe in.”

The new allegations of “religious hostility” by VA and cemetery officials follow on the heels of a controversy over Pastor Scott Rainey’s prayer in Jesus’ name at a Memorial Day service in the cemetery.

U.S. District Judge Lynn Hughes ruled May 26 that the government couldn’t stop Rainey from using the words “Jesus Christ” in his invocation. Hughes issued a temporary restraining order to prevent VA from censoring Rainey’s prayer.

## **Discrimination alleged.**

Attorneys with the nonprofit Liberty Institute, which represented Rainey, filed an amended complaint after allegedly finding other instances of religious discrimination by cemetery officials against members of The American Legion Post 586, Veterans of Foreign Wars District 4 and the National Memorial Ladies, a volunteer group that attends funerals of fallen service members.

The complaint accuses VA of “a widespread and consistent practice of discriminating against

private religious speech” at the cemetery.

Ocasio is on vacation and could not be reached for comment. Her assistant, Amanda Rhodes-Wharton, said she could not discuss the matter due to ongoing litigation.

According to court documents, Ocasio banned veterans organizations and volunteer groups from using certain religious words such as “God” or “Jesus,” censored the content of prayer and forbade the use of religious messages in burial rituals unless the deceased’s family submitted the text for prior approval.

The documents allege that VA prohibited volunteer honor guards from providing optional recitations to families for consideration, and that when burial teams conduct military honors for a veteran’s funeral, a government official monitors what is said.

## **Chapel a ‘meeting facility’**

Court documents also describe the closure of the cemetery’s chapel after Ocasio’s appointment as director two years ago.

“The doors remain locked during Houston National Cemetery operating hours, the cross and the Bible have been removed, and the Chapel bells, which tolled at least twice a day, are now inoperative,” the complaint reads. “Director Ocasio only unlocks the chapel doors when meetings or training sessions are held at the building. Furthermore, it is no longer called a ‘chapel’ but a ‘meeting facility.’”

VA spokeswoman Jessica Jacobsen confirmed the chapel is closed but she said it has nothing to do with the litigation. “It was closed prior to Memorial Day, and it was closed because of construction,” she said.

The chapel is scheduled to reopen in September when construction is complete, she said.

Jeff Mateer, general counsel for Liberty Institute, doesn’t buy that explanation. The chapel’s closure predates any construction, he said.

## **Judge grills VA’s attorney**

A standing-room only crowd jammed a federal courtroom in downtown Houston for a status conference on the case. White-haired vets lined the pews, decked out in honor guard uniforms or blue blazers decorated with American flag lapel pins. Crammed next to them were people wearing T-

shirts emblazoned with eagles and Old Glory, and women costumed in the trademark black vests and white blouses of the Memorial Ladies.

Judge Hughes denied the government's motion to dismiss the case, but not before upbraiding VA's attorney, Fred Hinrichs, for being unable to answer his questions.

When Hughes asked whether the chapel was open, Hinrichs said he didn't know.

"Why not?" the judge shot back. "A phone call to the cemetery could ascertain if that is true or not."

"Yes, your honor," the attorney said.

"So the VA has been investigating for a month and hasn't come to any conclusions?" the judge pressed.

Hinrichs said some of the claims in the complaint aren't factually correct, but he wasn't prepared to give specifics.

"I don't know that they're true," the judge said, "but an afternoon on Veterans Memorial Drive and you should be able to document most of this stuff."

He gave the government until July 21 to investigate and respond to the claims in the complaint.

Veteran feels belittled

After the hearing, Vietnam veteran Nobleton Jones spoke up at a Liberty Institute press conference.

Jones said he has presented shell casings from the gun salute to veterans' grieving family members at funerals in Houston National Cemetery for the past three years.

But after a burial ceremony May 16, Jones said a government official told him he could no longer recite the words he always says when he hands over the shells: "We ask that God grant you and your family grace, mercy and peace."

The 66-year-old Houstonian said he felt belittled.

"That makes me feel smaller, even after I spent my time in the military, fighting so that people should be able to say that," he said.

"I did all this for my country and you are going to tell me what I can and can't say?"



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**Richard Small, (702) 513-0215**



"The Nevada chapter of the 1st Cavalry Division Association meets at 10:00 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month at American Legion Post 8 located at 733 Veterans Memorial Drive, Las Vegas 89101.

The chapter president is Ken Gallagher ([abnrngnam71@hotmail.com](mailto:abnrngnam71@hotmail.com)), the vice president is Virgie Hibbler ([vvastatecouncil@aol.com](mailto:vvastatecouncil@aol.com)), the treasurer is John Lyles ([jlyles@lasvegascolor.com](mailto:jlyles@lasvegascolor.com)), and the secretary is Jeff McCracken ([luckmac7@cox.net](mailto:luckmac7@cox.net)).

Troopers from all eras are welcome.

**"FIRST TEAM! "**

# Officials Continue Arlington Cemetery Investigation



By Army Sgt. 1st Class  
Tyrone C. Marshall Jr.  
American Forces  
Press Service

WASHINGTON, - The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command will continue its inquiry into any potential crimes or other improprieties committed at Arlington National Cemetery, a spokesman for CID announced.

“Secretary of the Army John McHugh stated a year ago that the Army was not done investigating problems at Arlington National Cemetery,” Chris Grey, CID’s chief of public affairs, said at a news conference at the cemetery here. “We are vigorously pursuing any wrongdoing, and if criminal conduct is found, the Army will take appropriate action.”

The CID is investigating several allegations involving former employees and activities at Arlington National Cemetery since October 2010, Grey said.

“Army CID currently has ongoing criminal investigations into ... the burial of eight sets of cremated remains in one single location at the cemetery, improper burial reservations and possible contract fraud,” he explained.

While CID is the lead agency in the investigation, Grey said the command is working with other agencies to assist with its inquiry into the operation of the national cemetery.

“We have asked for, and are currently working, a joint investigation with the FBI,” he said. Grey said the investigation does not include current administrators and workers at the national cemetery.

He also discussed efforts to identify the eight sets of cremated remains discovered during the investigation.

“CID, in coordination with ANC ... was able to identify three of the cremated remains,” he said, noting that cemetery officials have notified the

families.

“Two of the three sets of those remains have been reinterred at the families’ request,” Grey said. One set of cremated remains is still unknown, he said, and three sets were unidentifiable.

“CID is still investigating and working hard to determine the identity of one set of remaining cremated remains,” he said.

Although placing multiple remains in a single grave site is improper, Grey said it was not a chargeable offense.

“Although we are very upset and concerned about the discovery of multiple urns in one grave, our discussions with an assistant U.S. attorney determined that the burial of multiple cremated remains in one grave site does not constitute a criminal violation,” he explained.

The inquiry also led investigators to a storage facility in Virginia, Grey said.

“More recently, 69 boxes of records related to Arlington National Cemetery were found in a storage facility in Falls Church, Virginia,” he said. “[Of those,] 68 were duplicate copies of existing records, and Army CID kept one box containing contract-related information.”

CID officials do not believe the boxes are linked to any potential criminal conduct. With ongoing investigations into other allegations, Grey said the Army CID would go wherever the investigation leads the organization.

“CID, along with senior Army leadership, to include the secretary of the Army, and the new leadership here at [Arlington National Cemetery], takes these issues very seriously,” he said. “[We] are fully committed to investigating all allegations and evidence ... that come to light concerning matters of our nation’s most hallowed ground.”



# ***Recycling, not reefs, in store for old aircraft carriers***

***Environmental group worried about sea pollutants welcomes choice***



The decommissioned USS Forrestal is towed last June to a Navy site in Philadelphia for aging vessels.

By Miguel Llanos  
Reporter  
msnbc.com

It's a heave-ho, U.S. Navy style. After several years during which turning old warships into artificial reefs was fashionable, four decommissioned aircraft carriers will instead be dismantled, and recycled, at shipyards.

An environmental group that's been championing the shift said it makes sense: creating shipyard jobs in the U.S., instead of a potential toxic mess at sea.

"The Obama administration's new plan to recycle these four aircraft carriers appears to be a signal that the administration may be correcting long-standing misguided policies that not only squander resources, but American jobs as well," stated Colby Self of the Basel Action Network, a group that monitors global toxic issues and that last December issued a report critical of the artificial reefs.

The four decommissioned carriers are:

**USS Constellation**  
**USS Forrestal**  
**USS Independence**  
**USS Saratoga**

The Navy would not comment but Navy records show that bids are being accepted to dismantle the veteran ships.

Self said the Forrestal alone has some 40,000

tons of recyclable steel, copper and aluminum.

"With a strong metal market, these recoverable metals could bring a return of up to \$30 million," Self told msnbc.com. "After accounting for the ship purchase price by competitive bid, towing, environmental remediation of toxic materials and labor rates, the recycling of this vessel should be a profitable venture for the domestic ship recycling industry and should give the local economy a great boost."

Dozens of other warships have previously been dumped at sea or turned into reefs after efforts were made to remove toxic material.

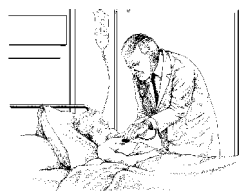
BAN said that the environmental work on two recent aircraft carriers to meet that fate — the America and the Oriskany — cost more than \$20 million each and that not all contaminants were removed.

The Oriskany was sunk off Pensacola, Fla., in May 2006 at a depth of 210 feet with the purpose of becoming an artificial reef.

The America was used for live-fire tests and scuttled in May 2005 at a depth of nearly 17,000 feet about 250 miles off the coast of North Carolina.

BAN estimates that recycling the Forrestal will save millions of taxpayer dollars and sustain about 1,900 jobs for one year.

BAN said it was still concerned that plans might still be in place to sink the decommissioned destroyer USS Arthur W. Radford in August in waters off Delaware, New Jersey and Maryland.



## ***Rare lung disease diagnosed in soldiers***

***Nashville doctors try to pinpoint cause***

Written by  
Tom Wilemon  
The Tennessean

Jimmy Williams didn't realize his military service might be the reason for his breathing problems when he retired from the U.S. Army in 2007

after two tours in Iraq.

He thought he was simply out of shape. "I was really tired all the time, wore out," he said. "I was just feeling run down, gasping for air. I could hardly mow my yard."

Williams now knows he suffers from constrictive bronchiolitis, a rare condition that cannot be diagnosed with X-rays or pulmonary function tests. A team of Tennessee researchers discovered scarring inside the small airways of his lungs and those of other soldiers who served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Their findings, published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, could help veterans prove disabilities stemming from their war service.

"These guys had very believable stories," said Dr. Robert F. Miller of Vanderbilt University Medical Center. "In a large majority of cases, they were elite athletes at the time of deployment. Now, they can't run two miles."

Although many of the soldiers were exposed to a 2003 sulfur-mine fire near Mosul, Iraq, not all were, so the exact cause of the lung damage remains a mystery. Another big question is how many undiagnosed veterans are suffering from the ailment.

Although Williams had brief exposure to the mine fire, he believes a burn pit at Balad, Iraq, to dispose of garbage, debris and military equipment caused his condition.

"I would wake up at night choking," he said. "I had black soot on everything I owned, but we didn't think about it. We just did our jobs."

Miller first noticed the illness in 2004 when perplexed doctors at Blanchfield Army Community Hospital in Fort Campbell referred some soldiers to Vanderbilt. He and colleague Dr. Matthew S. King, who is now at Meharry Medical College, started looking for the cause along with other lung specialists.

It took surgery — open lung biopsies — for the physicians to make the diagnoses.

"I think the whole situation was kind of surprising because this constrictive bronchiolitis is a very uncommon disease in people who are otherwise healthy," said King, the lead author of the study. "It is common in people who have had lung or bone marrow transplants. It is common in people who have lupus. It is common in people who have autoimmune disease. But it is not at all common

in fit, young military personnel or other healthy people."

Cause unknown

The disorder, however, can result from inhaling irritants. Workers in factories where diacetyl is used to make microwavable popcorn have been diagnosed with the condition.

The study was conducted from February 2004 through December 2009.

It began with 80 soldiers. Forty-nine of them agreed to undergo the open lung biopsies. Of that number, 38 were diagnosed with constrictive bronchiolitis. Twenty-eight of those soldiers had been exposed to the sulfur-mine fire.

Other exposures included dust storms, burn pits and combat smoke.

"I don't think our study links this disorder to burn pits," Miller said. "Burn pits may be a problem that contributes to this disorder. I think what we can say is that this disorder is linked to service in the Middle East. We haven't been able to definitively link what the cause is for this."

The patients who have been treated have not shown improvement, King said, but their conditions have not worsened since they have been stateside.

Vanderbilt is shipping 45 slides to National Jewish Hospital in Denver, where a researcher has received a U.S. Department of Defense grant to try to determine what substances are lodged in the tissues of the lung samples.

Miller is urging the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to recognize this disorder in making decisions about disability.

Williams went to a VA center to apply for disability assistance, but the representative told him the request probably would be denied because of the lack of medical data about the condition.

"It's not just me," he said. "It's the other soldiers out there that have the same problem but are afraid to come forward. ... They are fathers with families. What do they have for the future to look for?"

Working Together

**Coming together is a beginning,  
Keeping together is progress,  
Working together is success.**

# Thank You, Vietnam Veterans

By LTC. Carolyn Abell,  
US Army, Retired



“No event in American history is more misunderstood than the Vietnam War. It was misreported then, and it is misremembered now. Rarely have so many people been so wrong about so much. Never have the consequences of their misunderstanding been so tragic.” – Richard Nixon from his book, “No More Vietnams”

Early in March, the United States Senate declared March 30, 2011 as “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” This particular date was chosen because on March 30, 1973, remaining U. S. troops withdrew from Vietnam under the terms of the Treaty of Paris.

In a resolution introduced by Senator Richard Burr of North Carolina and co-sponsored by five other senators, including Georgia’s Johnny Isakson, the Senate is encouraging Americans across the country to recognize Vietnam veterans for their sacrifice and to make them feel the gratitude of a country that sent them to fight. “It’s time they receive the recognition they have earned and deserve,” declared Senator Burr.

While Richard Nixon might have had his faults as President, the above statement about the Vietnam War is spot on. Largely due to intentional misreporting by anti-war press members, a number of myths and falsehoods were generated and have continued to be perpetuated about this war and the men who fought it.

Statistical evidence contradicts most of these lies. For one, the majority of Vietnam veterans declare they are glad they served (91percent), with 74 percent saying they would serve again, even knowing the outcome.

In contrast to the popular notion that a great number of Vietnam veterans were drug users, a myth promoted by such movies as “Apocalypse Now,” information from the Veterans’ Administration indicates that there is no difference in drug usage between Vietnam veterans and non-veterans from the same age group.

The few isolated atrocities committed by

American servicemen were blown out of proportion, causing the general public to wonder if they had evolved into savage and inhumane beasts reminiscent of the degenerate boys in “Lord of the Flies.” The truth is that while we had a few incidents, the North Vietnamese routinely committed such atrocities against our side—a fact that seldom got reported. Former service members such as Charles Henderson have documented some of the most heinous acts of torture imaginable inflicted on United States soldiers and Marines by a female North Vietnamese Captain, whose cruel and deviant brutality earned her the nickname, “Apache Woman.” Thanks to Carlos Hathcock, one of the most talented and self-disciplined Marine snipers of all time, “Apache Woman” did not live to make Major.

A 97 percent rate of honorable discharges among Vietnam veterans should quell any myths that they were largely lawless heathens.

According to a speech by Lt. Gen. Barry McCaffrey in 1993, 85 percent of Vietnam veterans made a successful transition to civilian life. General McCaffrey further stated that these veterans’ personal income levels exceeded their non-veteran counterparts of the same age group by more than 18 percent. He added that Vietnam veterans had a lower unemployment rate than the non-vet age group.

Another prevailing myth is that a disproportionate number of blacks were killed in the Vietnam War. Statistical evidence shows that 86 percent of the men who died in Vietnam were Caucasians. Only 12.5 percent were black, while the remainder were “other races.” These percentages were in direct proportion to general population statistics at that time.

A lot of people think, too, that the Vietnam War was fought by the poor and uneducated. In actuality, these veterans were the best educated forces our country had ever sent into combat, with 79 percent having at least a high school diploma or equivalent. Many had taken some college courses or even earned a degree.

The survival rate of Vietnam veterans was also much higher than in previous wars, thanks largely to MEDEVAC helicopters. Pilots of these birds flew nearly 500,000 missions, airlifting over 900,000 patients. The average time lapse between wounding to hospitalization was less

than one hour. As a result less than one percent of all American wounded who survived the first 24 hours, became fatalities.

Perhaps the highest testimonial to the quality of our Vietnam veterans, is that so many former draft-dodgers and cowards now want to claim credit for military service they never gave. And there is no greater insult to the ones who actually served.

I think the average American appreciates the sacrifices of all veterans. There is nothing more noble and honorable than serving one's country in the armed forces. Vietnam veterans answered the call to duty, and they continue to serve today with acts of national patriotism, community involvement and serving in elected offices.

Make it a point to thank a Vietnam veteran. Tell him "Welcome home."

My goal for the book is to preserve the memories of men who died too young—who gave all they could give for a cause they believed in. It is because of them that I sit here in a land of freedom and plenty. May they never be forgotten!

## *The ups and downs of blood pressure measurement*

### *Does your clinic get it right?*

You've just been to the doctor and your blood pressure is a bit high.

Or is it?

A recent study at the Durham VA Medical Center and Duke University confirms that people's blood pressure tends to be higher at the doctor's office than when they check it themselves at home.

The difference can often be as much as 10 or 15 points in the systolic, or top, number. So if your reading at the doctor's office is hypertensive—say, 140 over 90—it could well be only pre-hypertensive at home—130 over 85, for example. That's a bigger spread than the five-point gap between home and clinic that clinical guidelines recognize and advise doctors to account for in their decision-making.

But that's only part of the story. The VA-Duke study also suggests that regardless of where blood pressure is taken, the best way to get an accurate reading—to know a patient's "true" pressure—is to take at least five or six measurements on different days and use the average.

According to lead author Benjamin Powers, MD, MHS, an internist with VA and Duke, the only realistic way to get multiple measurements is to rely on home monitoring.

"Practically speaking, we can't bring people into the clinic more frequently to do this, and taking blood pressure five times during a single clinic visit is not going to accomplish the same thing."

The VA-Duke hypertension study involved several hundred Veterans. It was mainly intended to test the effects of home blood pressure monitoring and phone calls from nurses that aimed to help patients improve behaviors such as diet, exercise, and prescription adherence.

The newest phase of the analysis, published in the June 21 *Annals of Internal Medicine*, zeroed in on the ideal way to measure blood pressure. How can providers get the most accurate information on which to base treatment decisions? The study compared results obtained through three methods: clinic measurements, home monitoring, and measurements by research assistants as part of a carefully controlled study protocol.

An editorial that accompanied the VA-Duke article, by a group with Johns Hopkins University, painted a disturbing picture of how hypertension treatment decisions are commonly made for U.S. adults. Aside from "white coat syndrome"—most patients' pressure spikes higher at the doctor's office, usually because they are nervous about their appointment—there is a fair degree of variation, and sloppiness, in how clinic readings are typically taken.

"In practice, blood pressure measurement is remarkably casual," wrote the Hopkins team. "As clinicians and patients, we have personally observed major deviations from accepted standards: Cuffs are applied over clothing, [blood pressures] are obtained without allowing the patient to rest for 5 minutes, and measurements are taken while the patient sits hunched over an examination table with his or her legs dangling. Training is minimal, and monitoring to check technique is nonexistent. Devices, even if initially val-



idated, are not checked and, if needed, recalibrated.”

Citing several studies that back their conclusion, the Hopkins authors say the result is that “suboptimal measurement of [blood pressure] is remarkably commonplace.”

Powers concurs: “When people have looked at how well providers follow protocol in routine practice, it’s usually pretty disappointing. Even small differences in the patient’s arm position can make a difference of a few millimeters of mercury.”

Many patients could be misdiagnosed as hypertensive

In the VA-Duke study, only one in three patients was consistently classified across all three methods used in the study. Based on home measurements, for example, about half the patients were found to have well-controlled pressure. Based on clinic measurements, the figure dropped to below one-third.

If such a trend were taking place at medical practices across America—as it likely is—millions of patients could be on hypertension drugs they don’t really need.

Powers, an assistant professor of medicine at Duke, uses the analogy of diabetes. “What if you had to make your treatment decision for your patient with diabetes based on one random blood sugar measurement that you got in the clinic, and based only on that, you had to determine how to change their medication?”

He points out that hypertension is even more common than diabetes, and that the scope of the problem is potentially huge. “This occurs all the time,” he says. “High blood pressure is the most common reason older adults visit the doctor. We’ve been able to measure blood pressure for a long time and treat it, and some of the things covered in our article are fairly well-known, but I don’t know that on a regular basis we as clinicians in the U.S. are very mindful of the inherent error in measurement and the inherent variability in blood pressure, and how that impacts clinical decision-making.”

#### **VA in good position to tackle problem.**

VA, says Powers, is uniquely positioned to tackle the problem. With its shift to a model of primary care known as patient-aligned care teams (PACT), the agency will increasingly rely on home-based self-monitoring for hypertension and

other chronic conditions. Telehealth staples such as phone follow-up and secure email and Internet contact will play a bigger role. The goal is to improve access and continuity of care, especially for those who live in rural areas or otherwise can’t travel to VA care sites.

Powers has already figured out how to make good use of home monitoring with his hypertension patients.

“I get them a monitor that’s validated, that fits, that works for them. I ask them to get me some info on their home blood pressure. Those who are Internet-savvy can send me a secure message through myHealtheVet. Others write it down and bring it to me at the clinic visit. So even though I might be seeing them in the clinic, I’m still making a decision based on their home measurements—ideally, several of them.”

He notes that through VA’s electronic medical record system, multiple blood pressure readings could be easily tracked and combined for patients.

Also, unlike the private sector, VA is free to use telehealth wherever and whenever it makes the most sense for patients.

“It’s been difficult for private primary care providers to do because we’re still working out how to pay private fee-for-service doctors for care that doesn’t involve face to face interactions with patients,” says Powers. “We are free from that constraint in VA, and we can provide the highest quality, most efficient care possible without having to rely on seeing people face to face in order to get paid.”

OK !, Now Which Way Do  
We Go ?



## ARE YOU PREPARED ?

Throughout history wise people have made efforts to “prepare” for catastrophes, disasters or possible problems.

For example, many people purchase fire extinguishers in case of fire. People have purchased gas shut off wrenches to turn off the gas in case of and earthquake. We buy insurance knowing we may need it. Lifeboats and life preservers are carried on ships in case the ship goes down, so people can be saved from drowning. Smallpox vaccinations are given to children so they prevent them from catching smallpox.

Anciently, Pharaoh listened to Joseph interpret his dreams causing Egypt to prepare for a coming famine thereby saving Egypt and much of the surrounding area from destruction.

Natural disasters occur, governments unwisely spend funds they don't have.

Strikes occur. Economies fail. Illness strikes. Over 100 years ago, the Boy Scouts adopted as it's motto “Be Prepared”. Wise people know problems will arise, the only question to be answered is this.....will you be prepared for them?

To learn how and what to prepare for, contact your Chapter Preparedness Committee person or myself, Mike Chase at 702-373-2760. Email- [mikechasesr@yahoo.com](mailto:mikechasesr@yahoo.com)

### ***'Rescue Me' Donates 9/11 Items to Smithsonian***

BRETT ZONGKER



Dennis Leary's firefighter costume, helmet and tools are the first items included in the museum's entertainment collection relating to 9/11 as the 10th anniversary approaches. The FX firehouse drama is about firefighters dealing with the grief of losing friends and relatives at ground zero.

The show would have been impossible without help from New York firefighters to help the cast create fire scenes, learn their humor and see their work, Leary said.

“The thing that was attractive to me was brave men and what they do,” Leary told The Associated Press, recalling how he created the show after his cousin died on duty as a firefighter and how he had admired the firehouse culture that helped them carry on amid tragedy.

Leary also knew firefighters who were at ground zero on Sept. 11. About a year after the attacks, he and co-creator Peter Tolan moved forward with the idea of a firehouse drama.

“Because it was 9/11, it had a real national shadow of grief about it,” he said. “Peter and I were both attracted to the idea of having a long shot of repeatedly being able to examine these guys.”

The show had its final season premiere Wednesday night. It ends its seven-year run just before the 10th anniversary of the attacks.

Its “tough and gritty portraits” of the lives of firefighters drew the museum's attention, said Dwight Blocker Bowers, curator of the entertainment collections.

“The situations on the show perhaps add a little bit of soothing to the people who lived through 9/11 because the leading character is haunted by memories constantly,” he said.

The donation is the first in a series of events at the museum to mark the 10th anniversary of Sept. 11 and examine how it will be remembered and how life has changed.

Curators also have collected more than 350 real Sept. 11 objects from the World Trade Center site, the Pentagon, and the site of the Flight 93 plane crash in Pennsylvania, and some will be shown for the anniversary in September. The museum, which Congress designated as the national repository for 9/11 objects, also is seeking items that are still held as evidence in ongoing FBI cases relating to the Guantanamo Bay prison and others.

There are no immediate plans to display the items from “Rescue Me,” though Bowers said he expects the museum will find a space. He said it's an opportunity to examine the impact of Sept. 11 on popular culture and how TV can mirror real concerns in American life, delving into issues of depression and alcoholism.

Tolan, the show's executive producer, said “Rescue Me” won't be the last to examine 9/11.

“I think, if anything, we were a little bit before

our time,” he said. “Once enough time has passed, and people are able to look at this tragedy and embrace it a little bit more, this will be seen as just a small step in the road to healing and acceptance for an awful day in American history.”

Leary said he hopes the show’s props and costumes at the museum will be a reminder of the firefighters and “how great these guys are.”

“This is one of the few things in my career, my life that impressed my mother when I called and told her,” Leary said. “Thank you for allowing me to impress her at least one time.”

## ***States save by moving vets from Medicaid’s rolls to VA’s***



By Pamela M. Prah,  
Stateline Staff Writer

A growing number of states are shifting health care costs to the federal government by finding military veterans who receive Medicaid and signing them up for medical benefits through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Arizona, California and Texas are among the states that are working to replicate a program first launched in Washington State. That program, begun in 2003, has moved some 9,500 veterans from the state’s Medicaid rolls to the VA’s. Washington State has avoided paying \$27 million in health care bills this way — enough to make a small dent in a strained state budget. And veterans generally find that the benefits offered through the VA are more generous than what they were getting through the state.

“The fact that it saves Medicaid dollars is an added benefit,” says Bill Allman, who created the Washington State program and is its biggest advocate nationally. “That would appear to make it a no-brainer for each and every state.”

Of course, Allman’s program doesn’t result in less spending on health care — what saves money for the state costs money for the feds. But at a time when federal stimulus dollars have dried

up, it represents a clever way to get the federal government to pick up one of the states’ bills.

Generally, anyone who has served in the military for 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty, and meets other criteria set by Congress, is eligible for VA health benefits. Of the 22.6 million veterans nationwide, only 8.3 million received health care in VA facilities in 2010, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Many do not know they are eligible. Some 40 percent of current veterans are over the age of 65.

Allman came up with the idea for the program while working with a database intended to catch welfare fraud. Allman works in the Washington State Health Care Authority. He also served in Vietnam. He discovered that the federal database known as the “Public Assistance Reporting Information System,” or PARIS, could also tell him which Medicaid clients were veterans. With that information, Allman’s office could work with the state VA to determine which benefits those veterans were eligible for but not receiving and encourage them to sign up.

Under Allman’s program, the state spends less money and the veteran gets equal or more generous coverage. That’s particularly true when it comes to long-term care. If a veteran dies while receiving long-term care services from Medicaid, the state can claim assets such as a family home to repay taxpayers for the cost of their care. Veterans’ benefits don’t have that string attached because the veterans earned the benefits through their military service.

“Medicaid is a payer of last resort,” Allman says. “Speaking as a Vietnam veteran, I would much rather collect benefits that I earned than to request state aid.”

It costs states money to set up and manage a program like Washington’s. But Allman figures that for every \$1 spent on the program, the state gets back \$8 in health bills paid by the federal government. The experience was much the same in Montana, which copied the program in 2008 and shifted \$900,000 in costs off its books in the first year.



# *New Guide Helps Communities Aid Homeless Women Vets*

By Cheryl Pellerin  
American Forces  
Press Service

WASHINGTON, - The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor has released an online publication that will help community service providers aid homeless women veterans, Labor Secretary Hilda L. Solis said.

Solis addressed an audience of several hundred at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial Theater on the grounds of Arlington National Cemetery.

"Where we're falling short in meeting the challenge of service women is when they come home," Solis said.

"Too many women who once wore our uniform now go to sleep in our streets," she added. "It breaks my heart to see that because many of them are sick [and] in need of help, and many are hungry. And it isn't just them — some of them have children."

The publication, called Trauma-Informed Care for Women Veterans Experiencing Homelessness: A Guide for Service Providers, also known as the Trauma Guide, is the result of nationwide listening sessions with women veterans and service providers about the challenges of homelessness.

Women now make up 20 percent of new recruits, 14 percent of the military and 18 percent of the National Guard and Reserve.

Women represent only 8 percent of veterans, according to the guide, but they are at a four-times-greater risk of homelessness than their nonveteran male counterparts.

The female veteran population is estimated to grow from 1.8 million in 2010 to 2.1 million by 2036, according to Labor Department statistics, resulting in a greater likelihood that more women veterans will need physical and psychological services.

Today, service providers often treat women veterans using the same methods used for their male counterparts.

"This guide acknowledges the experiences and challenges facing women veterans," Solis said, "and will result in better assistance and better outcomes for these deserving women."

According to the guide, research suggests that up to 93 percent of female veterans have been exposed to some kind of trauma, including before they joined the military services. And Defense Department officials say one in three military women has been sexually assaulted, compared to one in six civilians.

Women in the military also have different kinds of problems from those of their male counterparts, the guide says.

"According to a report by Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, more than 40 percent [of women in the military] have children, and about 30,000 single mothers have been deployed," the guide says, and women report higher levels of stress over the impact of their deployment on family and relationships.

The needs of homeless women vets include therapy to address the impact of trauma, supportive services, transitional employment and job training, safe living environments and options for substance abuse treatment.

For those who provide services to these women, the principles of trauma-informed care include understanding trauma and its impact; promoting safety; ensuring cultural competence; supporting control, choice and autonomy; and understanding that recovery is possible.

"No one," Women's Bureau Director Sara Manzano-Díaz said, "pays a higher price for freedom than our veterans and their families and we owe them a debt of gratitude."

Solis said the new guide isn't just about the Labor Department.

"I want to thank the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, the Office of Personnel Management, the White House and ... all the branches that are here," Solis said, "because we're all in this together."

## **Law of Logical Argument**

Anything is possible if you don't know what you're talking about.

I had amnesia once -- or twice.

# Navy Veteran Devotes Life to Aiding Homeless

## Female Vets



By Elaine Sanchez  
American Forces  
Press Service

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. - When Barbara Marshall first set eyes on her new 5,000-square foot home here that would enable her to take in more homeless female veterans than ever before, a sense of relief washed over her and the word “astounding” came to mind. The home was living proof that help finally had arrived.

Marshall received the keys to the new and improved “Steps-N-Stages Jubilee House” July 22. First Lady Michelle Obama was there to help unveil the two-story, cabin-style home, which features a large resource center, dining hall, common areas and a greenhouse.

“When I saw Mrs. Obama and the new home, all I could think of was ‘Yay,’” she said. “I know that’s not that profound, but I said it in my heart and my mind and my spirit, and then I said, ‘Astounding. Help is here — tremendous help.’”

This help comes in the wake of years of selfless assistance to countless others. Marshall established the Jubilee House with her own funds in August to offer shelter and to pass on information and resources to homeless female veterans — the same information she felt she could have used when she fell on some tough times of her own.

Marshall left the Navy in 2001, and, four years later entered a time of crisis, she said, with financial, health and personal issues taking their toll.

“I was facing many of the issues that women who come to my door face,” she said. Marshall reached out to the community for help and sought resources aimed at helping female veterans, but came up short.

“Some parts of it were just a bit uncertain,” she

said. “I saw a need to have a place where women veterans could actually get access to the types of resources and information they need.”

Marshall eventually found her way through her own crises, and, with her own struggles in mind, turned her attention to helping others.

“It came from my own desire to see women make a successful transition,” she said. “A homeless woman has children — brings with her homeless children. I think that our nation is not prepared for that kind of legacy. We need to leave a good, positive legacy for our women vets and for their children.”

Marshall began to visit libraries and other areas frequented by homeless women and offered her help with everything from VA claims and transportation to food and shelter.

“The top of my vehicle became my office,” she said.

Marshall took women into her own home, offering them food and shelter while caring for her own two children. She eventually saved enough money to purchase a foreclosure on Langdon Street here last summer.

“We do an assessment and see what they’re most in need of,” she said of the veterans, “what services we can assist with directly and indirectly. At all costs we stay in touch with that women veteran until her life and her children’s lives are stabilized.”

The Jubilee House has assisted female veterans from all eras and conflicts, with a recent, and disturbing, onslaught of veterans from recent wars, she noted.

“A lot of these women veterans are coming back with post-traumatic stress, with family changes and situations that are uncertain, and many are ending up homeless,” she said.

The small, 1,500-square-foot home housed up to five veterans and their families, but Marshall struggled to meet the demand as word spread of her services. The Veterans Affairs Department basically had her on their speed dial, she said, and frequently referred women to her.

As the Jubilee House’s popularity grew, Marshall found herself in a tough spot — having to turn homeless veterans away.



Meanwhile, word of her dedication to veterans had spread. Producers from “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” heard of Marshall’s work and came knocking on her door two weeks ago with some good news. She would be the recipient of a new and improved Jubilee House.

Marshall accepted the new home July 21 with several of the home’s residents at her side, including Judy Hilburn.

Hilburn was left homeless several years ago after her husband’s death and an illness that left her without a job and with massive medical and personal bills to pay. For two years, Hilburn, a six-year Army veteran, lived in her truck.

“Just when you think everything is going so great, you get sideswiped,” she said.

With no end to her troubles in sight, Hilburn resigned herself to a difficult fate — that is, she said, until she found her miracle: the Jubilee House.

Hilburn met Marshall at a center that provides meals to the homeless, and she moved into the Jubilee House the next morning. “It’s been a miracle for me,” she said. “Barbara helped me get my VA disability approved; my first check is in my purse.

“If I’d known I was eligible for VA benefits then, I wouldn’t have gone broke paying doctor bills,” she added. “That’s what this place is all about: knowledge.”

The first lady expressed her admiration for Marshall and the work she’s doing to aid veterans during her visit here last week. “She is a strong, courageous woman,” Obama said of Marshall.

“It’s a powerful story of how veterans are continuing to serve this country even when they are no longer in uniform,” she added. “The fact that this woman has opened her home — which she didn’t have much — to other women who are struggling, is just a powerful statement of the courage and the strength that our veterans show.”

Marshall’s new Hollywood connection hasn’t altered the course of her local mission in aiding female veterans. But the new home will allow for a few major improvements. “I will not have to turn women veterans away, ever, as I’ve done this past week, this past month, and even at the beginning of this year,” she said.

Marshall said she won’t rest until female veteran homelessness is eradicated.

“My daughter is active-duty Army,” she said. “What’s happening to these women could happen to my daughter. We need to join forces as a community — as agencies, the various five [service] branches, veteran service organizations, faith groups — we need to join hands and make a difference in the lives of homeless veterans.

“I see this organization, this agency, being part of this fight all the way to the end,” she added.

The episode of “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” featuring Marshall is scheduled to air in October.

## ***Sen. Coburn to Vietnam Veterans: No More Agent Orange Claims***



(Washington, D.C.) Sooner or later, some senator or congressman was going to target benefits earned by veterans, said John Rowan, National President of Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). It seems that Senator Tom Coburn (R-Oklahoma) is the one who has taken aim and fired.

Senator Coburn, a medical doctor with a well-earned reputation as a fiscal conservative, has offered an amendment to H.R. 2055, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012. His amendment would require proof of a causal relationship rather than a positive association of certain illnesses to Agent Orange exposure. If enacted, this measure will significantly restrict Agent Orange benefits and care. VVA vigorously opposes this amendment, Rowan said

This measure is wrong-headed. It is out of touch with science and with the intent of the Agent Orange Act of 1991. It attempts to undo two decades of policy. Currently, veterans are presumed to have been exposed to Agent Orange if they served boots-on-the-ground in Vietnam and, in some instances, along the demilitarized zone in Korea, Rowan said. If they develop certain maladies that the VA Secretary has deter-

mined, on the basis of sound scientific and epidemiological research, that a positive association exists between the exposure and the occurrence of the disease, they are entitled to health-care and disability compensation.

Congress, in part, settled on this mechanism because it was nearly impossible for Vietnam veterans to prove that their exposure to Agent Orange caused their health conditions, many of which are ultimately fatal, Rowan said. Requiring a causal relationship, which is well nigh impossible to demonstrate, would essentially mean that benefits due to Agent Orange exposure would be out of reach for Vietnam veterans.

If the senator feels that Agent Orange benefits and needed medical care ought to be stripped from Vietnam veterans and their families, then he should introduce a bill and arrange to hold a hearing, Rowan said. But there has been no bill, and no hearing. And if his colleagues really do care about the health of Vietnam veterans, they ought to stand with Vietnam Veterans of America, with all Vietnam veterans and our families, and with most of our colleagues in other Veterans Service Organizations. We call on a bipartisan majority of Senators to reject the ill-advised Coburn amendment out of hand.



## *How to Retire Your Flag*

Military.com

We raised our flags September 11, 2001 and flew them proudly. Our flags stand tall as we leave our mark on foreign soil. Each year, Americans across the nation unfurl their flags on Independence Day, Memorial Day, and Flag Day. For some, the Stars and Stripes decorates their porches all year as a daily reminder of what it means to be an American.

But what do we do when our flags become tattered and torn, and can fly no longer?

There is a justified reason and dignified way of burning the flag when the time has come for Old Glory.

The Council for Okinawa Protection and Police Services (C.O.P.P.S.) did just that when they retired Old Glory in fiery fashion during a flag

retirement ceremony on Flag Day.

“U.S. Flag Code 1 simply reads: ‘The flag, when it is in such a condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning,’” said Les Donoho of Boy Scout Pack 133, who participated in the ceremony.

Lt. Col. Kevan Kvenlog, Provost Marshal, Marine Corps Base, opened the ceremony by discussing the tradition of retiring the flag, the conditions for the retirement and expressed his gratitude to those in attendance.

After opening comments, one representative from each military branch held a corner of Old Glory, the post flag flown over Building 1, as it was inspected by 2nd Lt. Leroy Corte-Real, district officer in charge, central district provost marshal’s office, Camp Foster.

Corte-Real reported to Kvenlog that the flag had been found unserviceable and unsuitable to be displayed. Kvenlog then gave the order for the retirement of the flag to commence.

The four Servicemembers carried it to a burn barrel, lit it on fire and saluted the flag one last time.

Following the retirement of the Building 1 post flag, members of local Boy Scout packs and Girl Scout troops brought forward other tattered flags to be disposed of properly.

Along with Boy Scout and Girl Scout representatives in attendance, some junior enlisted Marines made their way out to observe the occasion for the first time.

According to Kvenlog, having representatives from the four military services and local law enforcement agencies in attendance displayed the working cooperation between each. He said the ceremony was the first for C.O.P.P.S. and it was sponsored by all law enforcement agencies on the island.

“We held this ceremony for public service and to show honor to the flag,” Kvenlog said. “It was an opportunity to show the four services and local agencies working together.”

“I’ve never been to a flag retirement ceremony and I wanted to pay respects to my flag,” said Lance Cpl. Christopher Jose, multi-channel equipment repairman, Marine Wing Communication Squadron 18, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

