

Call 1-800-562-2308 for Statewide Assistance

Summer/Fall 2015

ARE YOU A VETERAN IN CHELAN, FERRY, OKANOGAN OR STEVENS COUNTY NEEDING HELP BECAUSE OF THE WILDFIRES?

If so, your County Veterans Assistance Programs and WDVA are ready to help. Please reach out to your County Program to find out what resources are available to you and your family.

(<http://www.dva.wa.gov/benefits/county-map>)

If you were affected by a wildfire outside these four counties and are in need of help, call WDVA at 1-800-562-2308.

Spirit of '45 70th Anniversary of the End of WWII

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII. Organizations and individuals are keeping the Spirit of '45 Alive by coming together to say "Thank you!" to the men and women of our "greatest generation". August 14, 1945 – the day World War II ended and America began laying the foundations to ensure a better future for their children and their children's children.

WDVA was honored to share the day with two members of the Washington State World War II Memorial Fundraising Committee, and witness the unveiling of the name of Naval Aviator William F. Heinen. Lt. Heinen's brother James (pictured left) traveled from Spokane to participate in the unveiling.

In addition to the Washington State World War II Memorial in Olympia, the second greatest legacy the members of the WWII Memorial Committee have left the State are two DVD's of interviews from Washington WWII veterans and those who served on the homefront.

See additional photos of the day on the WDVA Facebook page album

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10153495941270629.1073742000.157561335628&type=3>

or view the DVD's "When We Were Kids We Went to War" and

"During the War Women Went to Work" at <http://www.wiichistoryclass.com/home/index.html>





A Note from the Director

Lourdes E. Alvarado-Ramos (Alfie)

alfie@dva.wa.gov

September 2015 is also known as National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month which helps promote resources and awareness around the issues of suicide prevention, how you can help others and how to talk about suicide without increasing the risk of harm.

Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender or background. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people and is often the result of mental health conditions that affect people when they are most vulnerable.

Suicidal thoughts and suicide occur too frequently, and can often indicate other serious issues. In many cases, the individuals, friends and families affected by suicide are left in the dark, feeling shame or stigma that prevents talking openly about issues dealing with suicide.

Veterans are at higher risk of suicide than the general population because of many factors associated with their military service. Issues like depression, loneliness, illness, PTS make our veterans and their families vulnerable.

There are 220 veterans who commit suicide in our state every year, many of those are over the age of 65. We are losing a veteran every 1.6 days in our state. At WDVA, we are focusing on professional development and tools that will allow many of us to better serve those who may have need of us in that most difficult time.

Please see more at: <https://www.nami.org/Find-Support/Family-Members-and-Caregivers/Preventing-Suicide>

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Alvarado-Ramos'.

Lourdes E. Alvarado Ramos (Alfie)
Director

Get Help

For emergencies please call 911 or one of these hotlines:

Suicide Prevention Lifeline

No matter what problems you are dealing with, we want to help you find a reason to keep living. By calling **1-800-273-TALK (8255)** you'll be connected to a skilled, trained counselor at a crisis center in your area, anytime 24/7.

- **Veterans** - call **1-800-273-TALK (8255)** - Press 1.
- **Ayuda en Español** - 1-888-628-9454

#TheVeteransFarm - Just the beginning!

Prairie Restoration Native Tree Nursery and Agripreneurship

Wetland Mitigation and Preservation



Huge thanks to @WestCare @TeamDepot for great work at #TheVeteransFarm September 19!

<http://www.komonews.com/news/local/Giving-Back-To-Veterans-328302931.html>

Want to know More?
Jasona@dva.wa.gov

2015-16 Washington VetCorps Navigators
<http://www.dva.wa.gov/benefits/veterans-conservation-corps-vetcorps>





*****SAVE THE DATE*****

**3rd Annual
Service for Service: Washington Goes to the Dogs
Thursday, November 5, 2015
9:00am- 4:00pm**

Welcome to the 3rd annual Service for Service: Washington Goes to the Dogs. This event will focus on the use of Service Dogs with combat veterans suffering with the invisible wounds of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Military Sexual Trauma.

The focus this year is on how all dogs serve veterans (and others with disabilities). In addition to presenting on Service Dogs, we will also have presentations on Emotional Support Dogs, Therapy Dogs, and even Dogs of War such as bomb sniffing dogs.

This event is free to the public and lunch is provided. Registration is open to anyone and we will be talking about public access in businesses and organizations who train dogs. Anyone interested in learning more about service dogs, and all veterans and their family members are welcome to attend.

Attendee and Exhibitor Registration here:

<http://www.dva.wa.gov/program/service-service-washington-goes-dogs>

**Emerald Queen Casino Conference Center
5700 Pacific Highway E.
Fife, Washington 98424**

- **Do you have a Service Animal?
Do you know your rights in Washington State?**
- **Are you a Business Owner?
Do you know the rules concerning Service Dogs in Washington State?**

Check out these two new videos from Your WDVA on You Tube!

<https://www.youtube.com/user/WAVeteransAffairs>

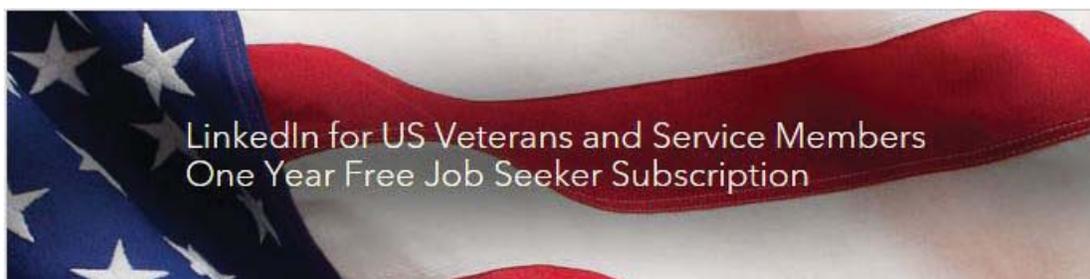


Never Forgotten.

Korean War Veterans came together with family and friends to lay a wreath for the 22nd year at the Washington Korean War Veterans Memorial in Olympia on Saturday, July 25, 2015. The Memorial was dedicated on July 24, 1993, and every year since the dedication, these amazing men and women have returned on the Saturday closest to July 27 - the date the Korean War Armistice was signed - to pay their respects and remember.



<https://specialedition.linkedin.com/veteran-job-seeker/>



Are you registered and certified as a Veteran Owned Business?

<http://www.dva.wa.gov/program/business-registry>

A free workshop was recently held for Washington State Veteran Owned Businesses (VOBs) at WDVA headquarters in Olympia.

Stephanie Scott (pictured right), a Washington PTAC Government Contracting Specialist certified through the VA's Verification

Assistance Program, shared important tips to help VOBs leverage their business owned status with Washington State and USDVA.



Hard Work Meets Success!

Contributed by Marny Howell, MA, CRC

American Lake VA marny.howell2@va.gov



American Lake division of VA Puget Sound Healthcare System would like to share a positive story about a formerly homeless and unemployed Veteran to help highlight his accomplishments and the strength of the supports offered by the Compensated Work Therapy/Transitions Residence (CWT/TR) program available at this location! The Veteran's name and some details have been changed to protect privacy in retelling his accomplishments.

Mr. Vigor* was referred to the CWT/TR program in May of this year as a Veteran who was homeless and unemployed. He recently relocated to WA from another state because he liked the area. Mr. Vigor shared during the program screening appointment that he had not had his own place to live since the mid 1980's. His goal was to leave this program with employment and his own, single unit apartment. Mr. Vigor had a past problem with substance abuse which had been a complicating factor throughout his working life.

Upon entering into CWT/TR, Mr. Vigor was placed in one of five VA-owned Transitional Residence homes in the Pierce County area. He was also provided with a work therapy position at American Lake. The stability of having housing and temporary work therapy provided Mr. Vigor with the extra boost he needed to then see more meaningful returns from the hard work, effort, and organization necessary to secure stable employment. He performed well in his work therapy assignment and received positive feedback from work site supervisors. This provided Mr. Vigor with a surge in self confidence and personal value as an employee. Mr. Vigor also had the fortune of possessing valuable work skills with experience as a journeyman plumber. With help from vocational staff he quickly learned how market himself more effectively. He engaged in job search quickly, making face to face contacts with employers and utilizing the WorkSource we have co-located in our building at American Lake. In time, he began to obtain interviews which further improved his self esteem. He saved up enough funds while in the program to purchase an inexpensive, yet reliable used vehicle, and by July he had multiple job offers to choose from, all paying over \$20 an hour.

Mr. Vigor transitioned well into his community employment and remained in the transitional housing program for another few months. This time allowed him to become comfortable with his new employer and save up further funds in order to move into his own apartment this month which had been one of his long term goals.

*Veteran's name has been changed as well as some story details to protect patient privacy.

For further information about CRS and Vocational Services, please review our webpage at:

<http://www.pugetsound.va.gov/services/CRS.asp>

Or you can reach us on the telephone in Seattle at 206-227-5569 or at American Lake at 253-583-1800.

DO YOU HAVE A REUNION COMING UP?

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) needs your help to put a face with each of the 58,307 names listed on The Wall. Pictures collected so far are online on The Wall of Faces where family and friends can leave remembrances, and will be displayed permanently in the future Education Center at The Wall. Each "face" is a story of a life cut short that is to be remembered and honored.

To See If Photo(s) Are Needed: <http://www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces/>

To Submit a Photo: <http://www.vvmf.org/how-to-submit>

To Download the Template below for your Reunion:

<http://www.vvmf.org/userfiles/files/PDF/Call%20for%20Photos%20Ad%20for%20Reunions%20with%20Field%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

They were
our brothers and sisters,
our neighbors, our classmates,
and our heroes.
Let's make sure their memories
never fade.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund
is creating a truly personal experience
by matching a photo and a face to
every one of the more than
58,000 names on The Wall.

Please help. Bring photos of your
friends, family members, and combat
buddies to our upcoming reunion.


 VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL FUND

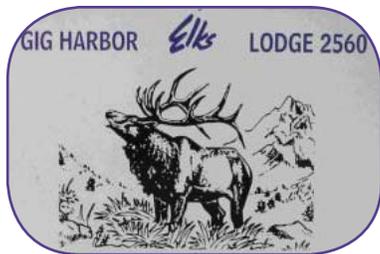
Residents at the Spokane Veterans Home had a blast July 23, as they hosted



Can you smell the BBQ?



Take a look at all the photos, courtesy of Krem!
<http://www.krem.com/weather/toms-barbeque-forecast/>



Check out the Gig Harbor Elks website for more photos of the event!

<http://gigharborelks.weebly.com/elks-in-action.html>



Thank you to Gig Harbor Elks for brining special treats for the residents at the Washington Veterans Home. There is nothing that will keep you cool like a delicious bowl of ice cream! The residents enjoyed strawberry and vanilla ice cream with all sorts of fresh toppings. It was delicious!





Share a Photo—Honor a Veteran!



Do you hold a photograph of a World War II veteran?

Include the photo in Washington Remembers' **Faces of Heroes**, an online collection recognizing individuals who served during WWII.

www.sos.wa.gov/LegacyProject/Washington-Remembers

Upload your photo by clicking on "Share an Image"

View the photos by clicking on "Faces of Heroes"

Please, share with others!

Questions? Contact Lori Larson:
Lori.Larson@sos.wa.gov or (360) 704-7142
P.O. Box 40243
Olympia, WA 98504



Navy Hospital Pastoral Care has been visiting the residents at Washington Veterans Home once a month for over a year, and it has become something the residents look forward to each month.

The visits bring some pretty heated games of dominoes and farkle, because our residents take their games seriously and plan to destroy all opponents!

Thank you to the U.S. Navy volunteers for arriving every month ready to take on the challenge!



Thanks to **Girl Scout Troop 40931** for their creative visit last month to the Washington Soldiers Home! The residents were all smiles as they spent time with the troop, sharing the craft of making Ojo de Dios.

Hot August Nights at the Washington Soldiers Home

Residents were excited to check out the beautiful classic cars and vintage motorcycles while listening to live sock hop music and enjoying ice cream. Thank you to Rod



Knockers Car Club, Kingsman Car Club, DeMonos Car Club, Independent car owners, Vintage Motorcycle Enthusiasts, Boeing Management Association, VFW Auxiliary, individual volunteers and staff for a memorable evening.

The Kitsap Women's Bowling Association (KWBA)

President Lisa Barfield stopped by Retsil with a special gift for the Veterans Home. Ron Bergstrom, Superintendent accepted the check for \$1077.00 on behalf of the resident council.



Throughout the year the KWBA organizes many fundraising events to benefit veterans. The continued support of our community through donations is another indicator of how much people in Kitsap county support our military and veterans in general.

Thank you again to the KWBA, for supporting the Washington Veterans Home.



Spokane Veterans Home residents spent the day at Deer Lake, fishing and having a great time. The day was hosted by the West Bay Resort. Besides the fishing on pontoon boats, (caught a few and a few got away :)) the residents enjoyed a wonderful BBQ. Thank you West Bay Resort!



1-877-838-7787
Washington Veterans Homes
<http://www.dva.wa.gov/veteran-homes/veterans-homes>



Residents at the Washington Veterans Home enjoyed a fabulous Fourth of July with families, food and great entertainment! Thanks to a nice breeze off the bay and many different cool beverages, the residents were able to beat the heat and fully enjoy the day outside for the hamburger BBQ! The festivities were highlighted by great entertainment including Mike Sweedler playing the steel guitar, and our traditional performance by the Samara Dancers. Thank you to all the staff and volunteers who made the day special for our residents.

A couple of our therapy dogs decided to strike a pose where they work. Augie and Chia are the best of friends and coworkers who visit with our veterans regularly. Their smiling faces and wagging tails are another great reason to visit your Washington Veterans Home.



Thank you to the Puyallup Elks Lodge 1450 for hosting a delicious barbecue picnic for the residents at the WA Soldiers Home! The ongoing support of the Puyallup Elks for the WA Soldiers Home residents is always appreciated!



Elks CARE
Elks SHARE



Scan the QR code below with your smartphone to go directly to the new WDVA webpage!



Follow VetBikes.org to watch the amazing service they are providing for veterans and meet Mike the Mechanic!

<https://www.facebook.com/VetBikesorg-264477240330969/timeline/>

VetBikes.org
September 3 at 8:49pm · 🌐

We really value our partnership with the WA Dept of Veterans Affairs. That's Ray Switzer, the Director of Building 9 for Veterans placing two VetBikes with veterans recovering from homelessness. They will use the bikes for fitness, reducing isolation, and for transportation to job and school programs.



Check out our new mechanical repair forum on our website, led by our own awesome and famous Mike the Mechanic, who builds so many of our bikes with more love than you can imagine!

<http://www.vetbikes.org/forums>



Checkout our newly updated website with a private forum for women only to discuss the benefits of cycling therapy for women-specific recovery!

<http://www.vetbikes.org/forums>

Keep informed about upcoming Veteran events by checking our Calendar/Public Events Page often

<http://www.dva.wa.gov/calendar>

Have an event of interest to Veterans you want others to know about? Send fliers and information to communications@dva.wa.gov

WDVA Veteran Voices
PO Box 41150
1102 Quince Street SE
Olympia, WA 98504-1150

1-800-562-0132 opt. 1
communications@dva.wa.gov

Veterans Voices is published every other month for Washington veterans and all interested in news affecting veterans and their families. View previous editions here:
<http://www.dva.wa.gov/about-wdva/brochures-and-newsletters>

Governor of Washington
Jay Inslee

WDVA Director
Lourdes E. Alvarado-Ramos (Alfie)
alfie@dva.wa.gov

WDVA Deputy Director
Gary Condra
garyc@dva.wa.gov

WDVA Assistant Director
Mary Forbes
maryf@dva.wa.gov

Communications Director
Heidi Audette
heidia@dva.wa.gov

Community & Media Relations
Colleen Gilbert
colleen@dva.wa.gov

Web & Graphic Designer
Jennifer Montgomery
jenniferm@dva.wa.gov



Like us!
Follow us!

