

Call 1-800-562-2308 for Statewide Assistance

August/September 2014

MIAP Interment Service Honors 47 American Heroes

photos courtesy of Diana Postwaite

The Washington State Veterans Cemetery in Medical Lake, Washington held its fourth Missing In America Interment (MIAP) service on August 8.



This annual event culminated many weeks of work by cemetery staff and members of the community to identify unclaimed veterans and verify their eligibility for burial.

One of the individuals most involved was Bob Patrick, Washington State's Missing in America coordinator. Bob played a significant role in identifying and recovering 34 veterans for interment. He subsequently coordinated a Patriot Guard escort to transport their remains from throughout the state to Medical Lake, WA for this service.

MIAP continued on page 3



Keep informed about upcoming Veteran events by checking our Public Events Page often
http://www.dva.wa.gov/public_events.html

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



A Note from the Director

Lourdes E. Alvarado-Ramos (Alfie)

alfie@dva.wa.gov

Recently I had the opportunity to meet with County representatives from across the state to talk about the County Veterans Assistance Programs and how each has its own unique way to serve its local veterans. I was thrilled that 33 of Washington's 39 Counties were able to attend our one-day County Veterans Programs Summit and am excited about our future work together.

In case you're not familiar with them, each County has a locally levied fund known as the Veterans Assistance Program. These funds have been around for decades and are often referred to by their original name, the Soldiers and Sailors Relief Fund. Funds are collected through local property tax levies using one of several methods available to the County Legislative Authority. Chapter 73.08 RCW provides Counties with some broad definitions and eligibility requirements; however, Counties have considerable discretion over how they serve veterans in their local area.

My goal in holding this statewide summit was to bring County Veterans Assistance Program employees and volunteers from each County Veterans Advisory Board together to share best practices and develop better ways for us to communicate across the state. Topics included:

- How to conduct County-Level Demographic Research (to support County Grant applications or other funding requests)
- Understanding the Tax Levy Authorization
- How we can use the WDVA Website to share County Level Information
- Should the Definition of Veteran for County Programs be Updated?
- A briefing from the Northwest Justice Project
- How to Manage and Sustain County Veterans Assistance Programs

It was amazing to see so many dedicated professionals from every corner of our State together, sharing best practices and moving new ideas forward. At the end of the day, we divided into regions so that these County representatives could continue meeting locally to further discuss opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

I'd like to thank each and every County that participated and I sincerely look forward to seeing representatives from all 39 Counties next year!



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

Director, WDVA

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The ride was met at Ritzville, WA and escorted to the cemetery by motorcycle riders from a number of Eastern Washington organizations such as the Patriot Guard Riders and the Combat Vet Riders. All of these individuals gave of their time to personally ensure their brothers and sisters in arms received the honors they were due, so that they are not forgotten.

The remaining 13 veterans resided in Eastern Washington communities of Spokane, Clarkston and Othello. Some of these individuals originated in faraway places like London England, Glasgow Scotland and Helsinki Finland. Others not native to Washington made their way to the state after growing up in NY, VA, CA, AK and other states. The majority of these veterans served combat tours in distant and foreign lands, making sacrifices and enduring hardships on behalf of the country. All served their nation proudly. Among them were many members of our nation's "Greatest Generation", with combat service spanning WWI & WWII, Korea and Vietnam and several earning Bronze Star medals for valor.

An interment service of this magnitude takes a considerable amount of effort on the part of many dedicated individuals. A collaborative effort with a number of state and federal agencies, private funeral homes, as well as veteran service organizations state-wide is required to positively identify and recover these individuals.

All five branches of the military provided Honor Guard teams for the interment service. Each member in their crisp uniform standing proudly, paying tribute to the men and women from their service branch. The teams simultaneously unfurled five American flags, collectively honoring all 47. A USMC rifle team broke the silence with a 21 gun salute, followed by the solemn 24 notes of taps bugled by LtCol (Ret) Phil Kowzan.

Veterans attending the service took part in ceremoniously placing all 47 cremains in columbarium niches joining 122 other veterans interred previously through this program. As their names were called out one by one, patriotic hymns played softly in the background.

A very special thanks to Kelly, Naomi, Joe and Rick for sharing their musical talents, along with members of the Angus Scott Pipe and Drum Band who opened with a hymn and closed the service with *Amazing Grace*.

We would also like to acknowledge LtCol (Ret) Jerry Malone for his services as minister and Wes Anderson of VFW Post 51 for offering the VFW Tribute. As well as Christeen Olsen and Julie Pittman for representing the Daughters of the American Revolution and reciting the names.

A very heartfelt thank you to all who participated and attended this service, so that they may be remembered.

A Special Thank You to all of the MIAP Partners:

- Pierce County Medical Examiner's Office
- Washington State Patrol - Marysville, WA
- Piper Morley Funeral Home - Tacoma, WA
- Tacoma Mausoleum - Tacoma, WA
- Edwards Memorial - University Place, WA
- Merchant Funeral Home - Clarkston, WA
- Stevens Funeral Chapel - Othello, WA
- Heritage Funeral Home - Spokane, WA
- Spokane Cremation & Funeral Service - Spokane, WA
- Community Cremation - Spokane, WA
- Burley Funeral Chapel - Oak Harbor, WA
- Jones-Moles Funeral Home - Bellingham, WA
- Kern Funeral Home - Mount Vernon, WA
- Westford Funeral Home - Bellingham, WA
- Visser Funeral Home - Langley, WA
- Private Parties who by circumstance came across abandoned remains and made the effort to get them laid to rest.





The WDVA Accounting Team from central office recently spent the day as volunteers at the Boots2Work Job Fair held at Cheney Stadium. "Everything the WDVA staff does provides an important service to our state's more than 600,000 veterans," said WDVA Chief Financial Officer Erwin Vidallon. "We want to make sure that all of our team get the opportunity to actually make the connection with our veterans and see first-hand the difference we are making."

The Gig Harbor Film Festival & Canterwood Golf Course hosted their 2nd Wounded Warrior Invitational. Veterans with multiple amputation played because they have special golf carts designed for them! Pictured with WDVA director Alfie Alvarado-Ramos are (l) Aaron Boyle - Afghanistan Vet and (r) Jim Martinson - Vietnam Vet.






STATE OF WASHINGTON
Office of the Governor

Greetings from the Governor

August 17, 2014

I am pleased to extend warm greetings to all of those gathered here today to recognize the *Leatherneck Honor Guard* for their service, patriotism and American spirit. I am honored to join with you in paying tribute to Jack Colman, John Desjarlais, Max Diamond, Mike Kavanaugh, Don Larsen and Al Rasmussen, who have voluntarily served the residents of the state of Washington with honor and distinction for over 28 years.

In 1986, six U.S. Marine Corps combat veterans voluntarily formed the *Leatherneck Honor Guard* to provide funeral services for Armed Services veterans in the military tradition of respect and dignity and to represent the best tradition of the U.S. Marine Corps in patriotic events.

Following the opening of Washington State's only national cemetery, Tahoma National Cemetery, in 1997, the *Leatherneck Honor Guard* again answered the call and continues to provide ceremonies in a manner that maintains military traditions and demonstrates pride for the United States of America, the Marine Corps, and veterans past and present.

I applaud the *Leatherneck Honor Guard* for their selfless service to their fellow Washingtonians and to our nation as a whole. In addition to funeral services, the *Leatherneck Honor Guard* has participated in a number of patriotic events over the past 28 years and, for the past 10 years, has regularly visited the VA Hospital in Seattle, significantly enhancing morale.

The members of the *Leatherneck Honor Guard* are truly men of honor and character, and their example is an inspiration to Washingtonians and all Americans.

Very truly yours,



Jay Inslee
Governor

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The Leatherneck Honor Guard was recently recognized for more than 28 years of service, providing funeral services for military veterans and representing the US Marine Corps in patriotic events. top row l-r Al Rasmussen, Jack Coleman, Mike Kavanaugh. bottom row l-r John Desjarlais, Don Larsen and Max Diamond.

Agencies Partner to Provide Support for Veterans Who Experience Homelessness:

By Eric Bruckbauer, Grant Writer, Metropolitan Development Council

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimates that nearly 58,000 veterans experience homelessness on any given night. Many veterans live with mental health challenges, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), alcohol and/or substance abuse, or a combination of issues. Additionally, military occupations and training are not always transferable to the civilian workforce, placing some veterans at a disadvantage when competing for employment. About 1.4 million other veterans, meanwhile, are considered at risk of homelessness due to poverty, lack of support networks, and dismal living conditions in overcrowded or substandard housing. A top priority for veterans experiencing homelessness is to secure, safe, clean housing that offers a supportive environment free of drugs and alcohol (National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, http://nchv.org/index.php/news/media/background_and_statistics/).

A challenge in providing services to veterans experiencing homelessness is locating them and making them aware of the services available to them. Some veterans experiencing homelessness live in camps in wooded areas and do not have the ability to travel to Tacoma, where many of Pierce County's services are located. Services are only helpful if they reach the people for whom they were designed. This often means outreach must be conducted at hot meal sites, shelters, in camps, or even as a referral through another agency. Service providers must gain the trust of the people they serve, and this often begins with offering a caring and compassionate ear to listen to their personal stories and understand their challenges.

It takes a coordinated effort between various community groups and agencies, who know the local areas and people best, sharing their combined knowledge and resources, to successfully locate and provide services to veterans in Pierce County. Two local programs, the Metropolitan Development Council's (MDC) Veterans Services Program, and Comprehensive Life Resources' Project for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH), have partnered to do just that. Both programs have years of experience in providing services to people experiencing homelessness, and are now using their combined resources and expertise to help more veterans than either program could on their own.

Twice monthly, teams of three members – typically two from the Veterans Services Program, and one from PATH - search wooded areas in Eastern Pierce County to find veterans who need help. Once veterans are located and trust is established, they are immediately connected to a wide network of support services that can provide food, safe, affordable housing, and can address other barriers veterans may face in regards to their health, education, and employment. Outreach is also conducted through shelters, the local Veterans Administration Hospital, police, food banks, hot meal sites, health clinics that focus on individuals experiencing homelessness, libraries, and local colleges.

Services to veterans who are experiencing homelessness are improved when agencies work together, pool their resources, share information, and take the time to get to know the people they serve. Together, we are confident that the coordinated efforts of the Veterans Service Program and PATH will achieve the best results possible in providing services to veterans experiencing homelessness in Pierce County.

Contact Valerie Knight at 253-284-9051 for additional information.

VA Puget Sound Health Care System Sets Veteran Town Hall Dates

VA Puget Sound leaders want to hear from Veterans from around the region regarding issues they believe are impacting Veteran care at the hospital sites in Seattle and American Lake and throughout the Puget Sound at our regional clinics.

Two meetings will be held:

- Tuesday, September 16, 2014 from 6-8 p.m. at the American Lake VA Campus auditorium, building 9.
- Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2014 from 6-8 p.m. at the Southcenter Doubletree, 16500 Southcenter Parkway, Seattle, WA. 98188

Veterans who attend either of the Town Hall meetings will have the opportunity to write down questions for a panel of VA experts to answer or the Veteran can ask questions live during an open mic period at each meeting. VA Director Michael Murphy will open each night's meeting with a short presentation on the current status of wait times and other pertinent topics.

For additional information contact Chad Hutson, Office of Public Affairs at (206) 764-2589 or publicaffairspugetsound@va.gov

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs Media Release

Director Lourdes E. Alvarado-Ramos

Heidi Audette
Communications Director
(360) 725-2154 – office
(360) 791-8966 – cell
heidia@dva.wa.gov
<http://www.dva.wa.gov>



For Immediate Release

Date: August 28, 2014
Contact: Heidi Audette
Phone: 360-725-2154

Women Veterans Advisory Committee Holds Statewide Women Veteran's Summit in Spokane, WA September 20, 2014

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Women Veterans Advisory Committee is asking women veterans to register today for the free “Dare to Dream – A Celebration of the Warrior Within”, Saturday, September 20th from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at the Spokane Convention Center, in Spokane, WA.

This free summit will provide women veterans with comprehensive information regarding the opportunities and challenges women veterans face today, information on benefits and services they might be entitled to and the opportunity to renew old acquaintances and make new ones.

“This will be a fun and informative day honoring Women Veterans of all ages, National Guard and Reserve, and transitioning military,” said WDVA Director Lourdes “Alfie” Alvarado-Ramos. “If you served your country honorably, you are a veteran and we are here to serve you.”

All women veterans present will be entered in a drawing for a Smooth Jazz cruise and the first 300 in attendance at the afternoon’s Runway Show - featuring Audrey’s Boutique fashions - will receive a Ben Bridge *Flawless* eau de parfum give away.

The WDVA Women Veterans Advisory Committee goal is holding this annual summit to provide women veterans with the tools they need to succeed and thrive in a challenging economy.

Other partners include the WestCare Foundation, and sponsors – to date - Ben Bridge, Standard Process, Entertainment Cruise Productions, The Smooth Jazz Cruise, Soul Train Cruise, Washington State Elks Association, Walmart, All for the Encore, Brothers-in-Arms North Thurston County Chapter, Dept. of Washington American Legion, Audrey’s Boutique, and Confident Boomer Health Coaching. The Committee is also inviting participation by local sponsors and businesses. There will be information booths and an opportunity for businesses to provide sponsorship at several levels, including direct financial support through donations, booth sponsorship, and in-kind donations.

There is no registration fee; however, pre-registration is required. <http://www.dva.wa.gov/2014womensummit.html>

For more information or to sign up for the conference, you may also contact:

Barbara Logan
WA Department of Veterans Affairs
360-725-2227
barb@dva.wa.gov

###

August 2014 - Big Changes to Veteran Owned Business Registration!

WDVA and WEBS (Washington's Electronic Business Solution) have teamed up to streamline the registration and certification process for vendors who want to do business with Washington State agencies or municipalities. The WDVA list of Certified Veteran or Servicemember Owned Businesses will now come directly from WEBS. **So now, you only have to register in one place, the WEBS portal.** Veteran or Servicemember Owned Businesses registered in WEBS and certified by WDVA will be listed on the [WDVA website](#).

What does my business need to do to be sure I am listed as a WDVA Certified Veteran or Servicemember Owned Business?

- **If you were already registered in WEBS and certified by WDVA**, it's likely that you don't need to do anything! But, it is a good idea to go to the [WEBS portal](#) and be sure your profile indicates you are a Veteran Owned Business. *(Servicemembers, there is not a separate designation for a Servicemember Owned Business – for purposes of this registry, Servicemembers may check 'yes' when asked if the business is veteran owned.)*
- **If you were already registered in WEBS but had not completed your certification with WDVA**, log into your [WEBS Account](#). Click on 'update my profile' and check the box indicating you are a Veteran or Servicemember Owned Business. After you save your changes in WEBS, you will receive an email with instructions on how to complete your WDVA Certification.
- **If you were registered with WDVA but not registered in WEBS**, go to the [WEBS portal](#) and complete your online registration. Be sure to click 'yes' when asked if you want to be certified as a WDVA Veteran or Servicemember Owned Business. After you complete your WEBS registration, you will receive an email with instructions on how to complete your WDVA Certification.
- **If you are already certified by WDVA and registered in WEBS, but your certification is not showing in WEBS** you do not need to resubmit your paperwork. Please email VOB@dva.wa.gov with the business name and we will correct the issue.

What if I don't ever plan to do business with the State of Washington, but I still want to be listed as a WDVA Certified Veteran or Servicemember Owned Business?

[WEBS](#) is still the place to register so that you will be listed on the WDVA Web Site as a Certified Veteran or Servicemember Owned Business. Be sure to click 'yes' when asked if you want to be certified as a WDVA Veteran or Servicemember Owned Business. After you complete your WEBS registration, you will receive an email with instructions on how to complete your WDVA Certification. You can contact WEBS Customer Service by email (WebsCustomerService@des.wa.gov) or by phone (360-902-7400) for assistance with configuring your WEBS account.

VOB changes continued on page 8



WEBS



<https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/home.html>

<http://www.dva.wa.gov/VOB.html>

VOB changes *continued from page 7*

Why get certified as a WDVA Veteran or Servicemember Owned Business?

Washington State agencies have been asked by Governor Inslee to do 5% of their purchasing from Veteran or Servicemember Owned Businesses. By linking the WDVA Certified Veteran and Servicemember Owned Business list to WEBS, state agencies will now have a way to identify WDVA Certified Businesses AND keep track of how they're doing toward their purchasing goals.

It will also help private businesses and citizens across the state with easy access to your business information through the list of WDVA Certified Veteran or Servicemember Owned Businesses in their communities.

And it makes you eligible to apply for the Veterans Linked Deposit Program which can improve access to capital for certified Veteran and Servicemember Owned Business enterprises by decreasing interest rates on small business loans up to 2%!

Why can't I just register my business on the WDVA website?

Changes to the Veteran Owned Business laws mean that in order to be listed on the WDVA website, the business must complete the certification process. Certification is free and requires only basic veteran discharge status and business information to complete.

- **Proof of Honorable Veteran Status** (copy of 1 of the following items*)- DD214 member 4 copy, Retired VA ID Card, Retirement Certificate, Discharge Certificate - or if currently serving your military ID, badge, recent paystub, or letter on military letterhead. If you need to order a new copy of your DD214 you can do so at www.archives.gov.
- **Proof of 51% ownership** (copy of 1 of the following items*)- Master Business application, business plan, operating agreement, meeting minutes, shares report, stock certificate breakdown, tax forms with ownership %, or if sole proprietorship your license. If a community property or 2 veteran 50/50 split you are eligible as long as the veteran maintains day to day operational control of the business.
 - **Proof the business is a Washington State Enterprise** which is defined as an enterprise which is incorporated in the state of Washington as a Washington domestic corporation, or an enterprise whose principal place of business is located within the state of Washington for enterprises which are not incorporated.

You are able to send the certification documentation several ways:

- **Email** documents to vob@dva.wa.gov
- **Fax** Attn: Communications 360-725-2197
- **US Mail** WDVA Business Registry
PO Box 41150
Olympia, WA 98504-1150

(Documentation is destroyed after the eligibility review is complete, please send copies only. If questions occur in the future, WDVA may request similar or additional information to re-verify eligibility.)*

If you have any questions, please let us know at vob@dva.wa.gov.



**To request Certification as a
 Veteran or Servicemember Owned Business
 register at the
 Washington Electronic Business Solution website
 (WEBS)
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/home.html>
 360-902-7400**





50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Vietnam War

**Joint Base Lewis-McChord
Salutes Vietnam-era Veterans**

October 9, 2014

1-5 pm

Welcome Home!

- Salute Ceremony to honor Vietnam-era Veterans and a Massing of the Colors at Watkins Field begins at 1 pm
- Ceremony keynote speaker is General (Retired) Barry McCaffrey
- Enter at DuPont Gate Exit 119, Interstate 5
- Parking opens at 11 am
- Events include interactive displays with service members and a Pinning Ceremony
- Families and friends are invited
- Vietnam-era Veterans are asked to pre-register at:
<https://einvitations.afit.edu/inv/anim.cfm?i=210707&k=0060420E7B50>
- For more information, please call 593rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command at 253-967-5171 or 253-967-3570



Vietnam and Vietnam-era Veterans can register here:

<https://einvitations.afit.edu/inv/anim.cfm?i=210707&k=0060420E7B50>

Massing of the Colors Organizations can register by filling out this form:

<http://www.dva.wa.gov/PDF%20files/events/2014%20massing%20of%20the%20colors%20docs.pdf>

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



WDVA Welcomes the 2014-2015 VetCorps

Vet Corps members help veterans achieve their higher education goals by:

- Providing training and support to college faculty, staff and administration to increase awareness of student veterans' needs;
- Providing a peer connection for veterans new to higher education;
- Helping the college to meet the needs of student veterans; and
- Providing veterans with connections to federal, state or local veteran's benefits.

http://www.dva.wa.gov/vet_conservation_corps.html

National POW/MIA Recognition Day
September 19, 2014
Winged Victory Memorial
Capitol Plaza, Olympia
Motorcade - 0945
Ceremony - 1000

In conjunction with the Vietnam 50th Commemoration

In addition to the POW/MIA Ceremony at the Capitol, the POW/MIA Living Memorial and Bracelet Repository at the Washington Memorial Cemetery in SeaTac will observe the day with a public ceremony at 3:00 pm, at which time the Repository will be opened to place POW/MIA bracelets of someone accounted for or bracelets that are broken. The Repository will then be sealed again until next year.

Washington Memorial Park Cemetery
 16445 International Boulevard
 Seatac, WA (just north of SeaTac Airport.)

For additional information on the Repository program, contact Darrell Pilat, spilat@q.com or 253-813-8441.



For additional information on the POW/MIA Ceremony at the Capitol in Olympia, contact CPT Joseph Siemandel (253)-512-8989 joseph.siemandel@us.army.mil

Download a map of the Capitol Campus here:
<http://des.wa.gov/services/facilities/CapitolCampus/MemorialsArt/Pages/default.aspx>

Summertime at the State Veterans Homes

Laughter



Petting Zoos

Fun

Family



Picnics



grandkids

2014 WASHINGTON SMALL BUSINESS FAIR

Saturday, September 27, 2014
8:00 am to 3:30 pm



One day, one place –
learn how to form and
run a small business

- Sharpen your skills - attend seminars that cover topics for all stages of business ownership
- Savvy business experts share their knowledge and real-life experiences with you
- Save valuable time - connect with government agencies and business organizations to get the information you need

www.bizfair.org
FREE

RENTON TECHNICAL COLLEGE
3000 NE 4TH STREET, RENTON, WA 98056

Washington State Veteran Service Officer Training & Information Session

Monday September 29th, 2014

AMVETS Alvah R. Davis Post 1
5717 South Tyler St, Tacoma WA 98409

Agenda

- 8:30 – 9:00 Registration/Check-In
- 9:00 – 9:15 Welcoming
- 9:15 – 12:00 VA Pension – VA Pension Center
- 12:00 – 1:00 Lunch: On Your Own
- 1:00 – 2:30 Traumatic Brain Injury – Scott Bloom, WDVA
- 2:30 – 4:00 Military Sexual Trauma – Dorothy Hanson, WDVA

Register online at:

<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/washington-state-veteran-service-officer-training-information-session-tickets-12376192525>

Sponsored by:



Keep informed about upcoming Veteran events by checking our Public Events Page often
http://www.dva.wa.gov/public_events.html

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/publications.html>

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



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