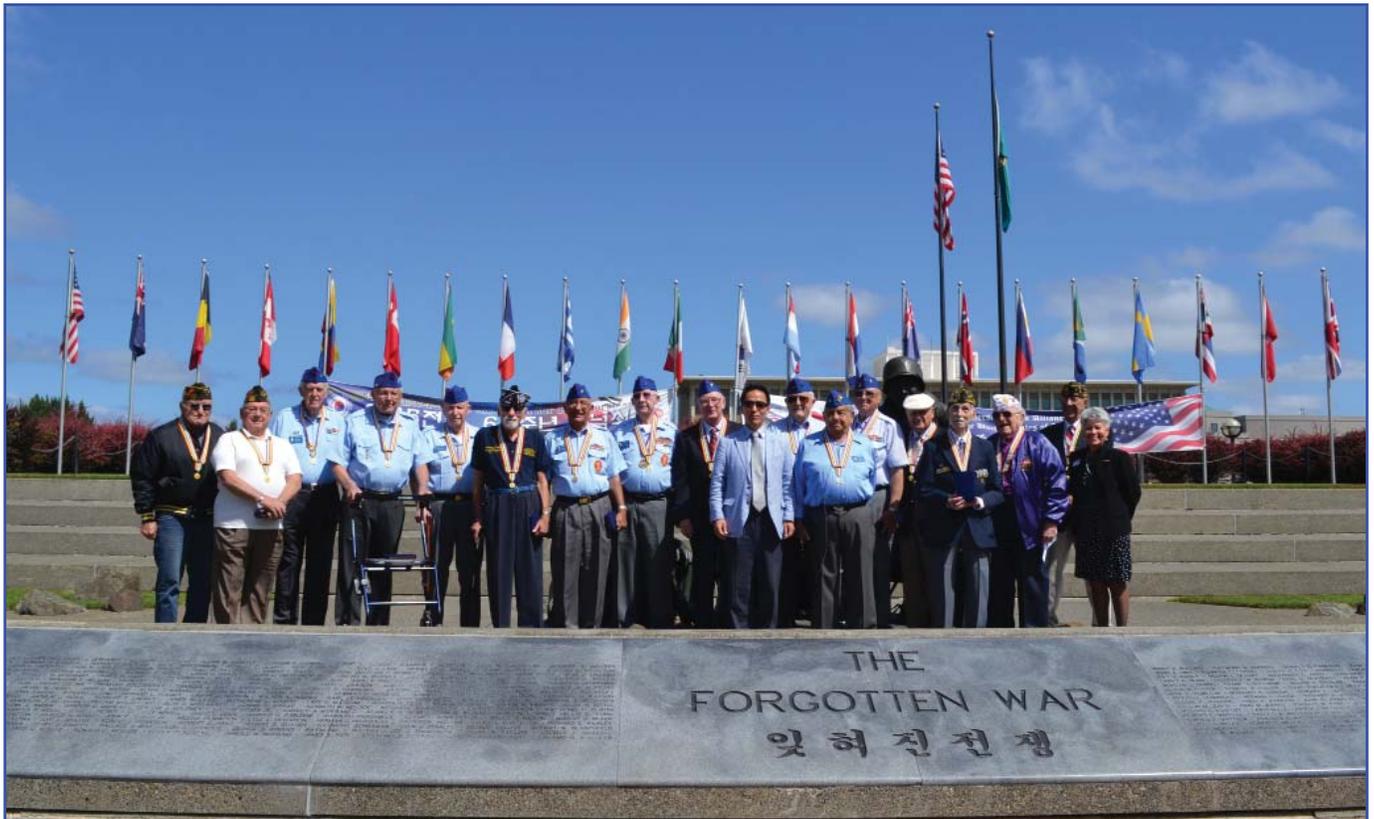


Call 1-800-562-2308 for Statewide Assistance

Summer 2013



Korean War Veterans Remember 60th Anniversary of War



Korean War Veterans with Consul Chan-sik Yoon, Republic of Korea Consulate in Seattle and Alfie Alvarado-Ramos, WDVA director after receiving Ambassador of Peace Medal on behalf of the Republic of Korea. The medals were presented during the Annual Wreathlaying Ceremony in Olympia on July 27, 2013.



Alfie Meets Alfie!!

WDVA director Alfie Alvarado-Ramos recently had the opportunity to visit with Alfie, a Golden Doodle service dog, who made himself at home in the Director's office! Alfie's owner, military veteran John George, has had the dog for about six months. Alfie completed his training with Brigadoon Service Dogs in Bellingham. <http://www.brigadoondogs.org>





A Note from the Director

Lourdes E. Alvarado-Ramos (Alfie)

alfie@dva.wa.gov

Over the past few months, I had the chance to talk with veterans from across the state. From Veterans Service Organization conventions, to stand downs, town halls and of course the Women Veterans Conference, I have really enjoyed hearing the different perspectives of our state's veterans.

Regardless of what community I'm in though, one thing remains constant. Our veterans deserve the very best we can give them! So as we sat down to plan how we will serve veterans over the next few years, I shared with my WDVA Team what we are calling The WDVA Way! Below you will see the vision and goals we've laid out. You are probably right to think that this isn't new, and it isn't rocket science either. But it is a visible commitment and a reminder of how we strive to serve veterans and their families, our priorities as an agency and what veterans and their families can expect from us.

In the coming weeks, we will be adding more detail to this plan showing the steps we will take to achieve each goal. You will find the information on our [website](#) (click on the [About WDVA](#) tab) so you can stay current with our plan for progress, but I also encourage you to ask questions and give us feedback. We're here for you, so take a moment to let us know what you think and how we're doing!

Thank you!

= THE MOST VETERAN-FRIENDLY STATE

MISSION
Serving Those Who Served

VISION
All Washington Veterans and their families connected to the benefits and services they earned.

THE WDVA WAY

- We inspire each other to fulfill WDVA's mission and vision.
- We value everyone we serve.
- We earn the trust, respect and confidence of those we serve by being honest and professional every day.
- We create a culture that attracts and retains the best people.
- We always conduct ourselves in a safe manner.
- We share information and seek clarification when the message is not clear.

OUTREACH AND ACCESS
Providing information and opportunities for veterans to connect with the benefits they earned.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
Helping veterans prepare for and achieve family wage employment.

EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE
Treating our customers with the dignity and respect they deserve.

QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES
Providing first-rate care and services to meet the needs of our veteran population.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
Working efficiently and developing creative and innovative approaches to serve more veterans and families.

Veteran Owned Businesses may be able to reduce interest rates on business loans!



The Washington State Veteran Linked Deposit Program improves access to capital for certified Veteran and Servicemember owned businesses by decreasing interest rates on small business loans up to 2%!

Any firm currently certified by the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) as a Veteran or Servicemember Owned Business is entitled to the Linked Deposit benefit. Any business related loan carried by a certified firm, and made by a participating lender, is eligible for enrollment in the program. A firm must be certified by WDVA before their business loan can be enrolled in the program.

Find out more at: <http://www.dva.wa.gov/Linked%20Deposit.html>

Are you interested in serving on a VA Puget Sound Institutional Review Board (IRB)?

An IRB is an independent body made up of medical, scientific, and non-scientific members, whose job it is to ensure the protection of the rights, safety, and well-being of human subjects involved in research.

VA Puget Sound has two IRBs to review research conducted by VA Puget Sound researchers.

IRB Committees #1 and #2 meet at the Medical Center (Seattle Division) every third Wednesday throughout the year. Committee meetings typically last from 2.5 to 4 hours and require from 6-8 hours of preparation. Committee members are appointed by the Medical Center Director for a minimum of three years. The IRB welcomes scientists and non-scientists, those affiliated with VA, and non-affiliates. We currently have a need for community members, preferably a Veteran or Veteran representative as part of the fulfillment of the requirement of relevant diversity of experience and expertise.

Contact the Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) Director for more information at 206-764-2670.

VA Reaches Out to Veterans about the Health Care Law

WASHINGTON (Aug. 6, 2013) – The Department of Veterans Affairs has launched an awareness campaign and a new website, www.va.gov/aca, to let Veterans know what the Affordable Care Act means for them and their families. Veterans receiving health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs will see no change in their benefits or out-of-pocket costs when portions of the Affordable Care Act take effect next year.

Veterans can apply for VA health care at any time by visiting www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll, calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387), or visiting their local VA health care facility. Full details on eligibility are available at www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book

VA's health care system for Veterans has no enrollment fee, no monthly premiums and no deductibles. Most Veterans also have no out-of-pocket costs, though some may have small copayments for some health care or prescription drugs.

The Affordable Care Act was created to expand access to coverage, reduce rising health care costs, and improve health care quality and care coordination. The Affordable Care Act creates new opportunities for coverage for uninsured Veterans and their families.

Most uninsured Veterans are eligible for VA health care. For those who are not eligible for VA care – such as Veterans' family members – the law created a new Health Insurance Marketplace.

For information about VA health care and the Affordable Care Act, VA encourages Veterans and family members to visit the new website at www.va.gov/aca, or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. or Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Eastern time. The new website includes a Health Benefits Explorer, where Veterans can learn about the benefits they can receive if they enroll in VA care.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY DRIVERS NEEDED

SERVE THOSE WHO SERVED

Throughout the State of Washington there is a need for volunteer drivers to assist in the transportation network provided in cooperation of the DAV and Veterans Administration.

Your local DAV Chapter's have worked long and hard to provide the funding needed to purchase vehicles for the volunteer services at the local Veterans Medical Centers and now need your support and assistance utilizing these vehicles to provide our Veterans transportation to and from medical appointments.

The VA provides care, security, fuel and many other related expenses to keep these vehicles on the road for our Veterans. But, we need you to help keep the wheels turning by volunteering your time and effort to drive the vehicles.

Our Volunteer Transportation Network has coordinators throughout the state and this information can be obtained from your DAV.org website or local volunteer office at the Veterans Medical Centers.

It doesn't pay well in the means of money, but the work helping Veterans pays tenfold. You do not have to be a Veteran or a member of a Veteran Organization. Any amount of time available will be appreciated as we need help keeping these vehicles going.

The Veteran you help today will appreciate everything you do.

Help us serve those that have given so much to serve our country.

AMERICAN LAKE VAMC (253) 583 -1343
SEATTLE VAMC (206) 764-2564
SPOKANE VAMC (509) 434-7019
JONATHAN M. WAINWRIGHT VAMC (509) 525-5200

South Seattle Community College Opens Vets Center

Dixon McReynolds, program manager from the King County Homeless & Incarcerated Services of WDVA, and staff, recently attended the Grand Opening of the Veterans Students Center at South Seattle Community College.

Before the ribbon cutting there was a Veterans Meet and Greet. Senator Patty Murray's King County Director was in attendance, as well as Peter Schmidt, Psy.D. and Whitney Mason, Lt Col, U.S. Army Reserve.

"We had a great discussion on what the vet center means to veterans and how we can better support veterans on our college campuses," said Dixon.



VA Benefits Book Now Available

Week of August 12, 2013

The new 2013 Online Edition of the Federal Benefits for Veterans Dependents and Survivors is now available online and on select mobile devices.

For more information, visit VA's 'Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors' webpage at

www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp



On Saturday July 27th Amtrak held their "Rail Day" at the King Street Station in Seattle. They unveiled Veterans' Locomotive #42. Amtrak has made a commitment to ensure that 25% of its new hires be Veterans by 2015.

Pictured here is Dixon McReynolds, WDVA Program Manager King County Homeless & Incarcerated Services.

Contact Dixon at dixonm@dva.wa.gov or 206-682-3025 or 206-643-6539.

Exalted Ruler Sandra Reed from the Bremerton Elks Lodge, presented a \$500.00 check to Ray Switzer, WDVA Program Manager of Building 9.

The Bremerton Elks have been continually supportive during the past 7 years the Building 9 Transition Program has been in existence. Thank you Bremerton Elks!



Walla Walla Veterans State Home Site Dedication



On May 28th, the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs and the Jonathan M. Wainwright Federal VA Medical Center invited veterans, their families and community members to ceremonies highlighting some new additions at the Walla Walla VAMC!

WDVA held a site blessing, conducted by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, on the ground where the Veterans Home will be constructed. The blessing, “KII-ILAKA-WIN-WEETES-HIIWES-HAAWTNIN”, translates to “This Lighted Earth is Sacred” and is traditionally performed prior to the beginning of construction. In addition to several local

elected officials, State Senator Mike Hewitt, State Representative Maureen Walsh and State Representative Terry Nealey were in attendance to witness the blessing of the land.

The Veterans Home is in the design phase now with design firm NBBJ. Design is scheduled to be complete this summer allowing WDVA to begin construction in the winter and open the facility in 2015. The new Veterans Home is being designed using the Federal VA’s Community Living Center model and will include eight individual houses with ten veterans living in each home. The Veterans Home will serve the ten counties nearest Walla Walla where about 50,000 veterans live. The Home will employ 100 staff members who will care for residents 24/7 and maintain the facility.

Construction costs will be paid through a combination of state and federal sources. A Federal State Veterans Home Construction Grant will pay 65% (\$21.8 million) of the construction costs with the remaining 35% (\$11.7 million) coming from Washington State’s Capital Budget.



What is a “Fully Developed Claim”?

Claims are considered “fully developed” when Veterans submit all available supporting evidence, such as private treatment records, at the time they first file a formal claim and certify they have no additional evidence to submit. VA can typically complete FDCs in half the time of traditionally filed claims.

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/fdc/>

VA announced on August 1 that Veterans filing an original FDC may be entitled to up to one year of retroactive disability benefits. The retroactive benefits, which are in effect Aug. 6, 2013, through Aug. 5, 2015, are a result of a comprehensive legislative package passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama last year.

For more information contact WDVA by emailing benefits@dva.wa.gov or by calling 1-800-562-2308 Monday-Thursday 7:00am-6:00pm.

NEXT VAAC TOWN HALL MEETING TO BE HELD IN SPOKANE, SEPTEMBER 11



Please join the Governor’s Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee for a Town Hall meeting at the Spokane Vet Center from 6pm – 8pm on September 11. In addition to the regular VAAC Meeting, we will receive presentations on services provided at the Spokane Vet Center, Veterans Court, County Veterans Assistance Fund and Spokane VAMC Homeless Veterans Program. We hope to see you there! For additional information, please contact heidia@dva.wa.gov.



MASSING OF THE COLORS



Remember 9/11 2001. Massing of the Colors is a 93 year old patriotic ceremony honoring our nation’s defenders. The 2013 Massing of the Colors ceremony will be conducted September 11, 2013 at 3:00 p.m. at Watkins Field at JBLM Lewis Main. Please share this information with patriotic organizations. Organizations desiring to participate in the ceremony should provide the name and email address of their point of contact to CarrollDickson@comcast.net so they can receive registration forms.



SEATTLE STANDDOWN



September 11, 2013 from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm at the Seattle Central Community College Mitchell Activities Center and Broadway Performance Hall(for women specific services). 1701 Broadway, Seattle WA 98122.

<http://www.theseattlestanddown.com/>



TIME IS RUNNING OUT! GET YOUR NOMINATIONS IN FOR [OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO VETERANS AWARD](#)

Do you know a veteran’s advocate who goes above and beyond to serve veterans and their families? The Governor’s Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee is asking you to nominate them for the annual Outstanding Service to Veterans Awards! [Click here](#) for the Nomination form and be sure to have it in by September 13, 2013. Award winners are honored at an annual luncheon following the Auburn Veterans Day Parade. For more information contact Veronica Jarvis at 360-725-2167 or veronicaj@dva.wa.gov.

Washington Veterans Home Receives Donation of Cutting-Edge Rehab Equipment

ICARE: Intelligently Controlled Assisted Rehabilitation Elliptical - Talk about a mouth-full!

The Madonna ICARE by Sports Art is a highly functional and affordable, therapeutic, motorized elliptical trainer used in hospitals, fitness facilities and homes to help people of all abilities, even those with very limited mobility, regain or improve their ability to walk and enhance their cardiovascular fitness.

The ICARE was delivered and installed into the Rehabilitation Gym at the Washington Veterans Home last week, possible through a generous donation of the equipment from SportsArt Fitness in Woodinville, WA.

The ICARE system is the product of collaboration between Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, one of the nation's foremost facilities for medical rehabilitation and research, and SportsArt Fitness, an international manufacturer of premium exercise and rehabilitation equipment.

Mr. Kourtney Kerr, ICARE sales representative came all the way from Pompano Beach FL to help set-up the machine and deliver training to the Skilled Therapy staff and the Restorative staff.

We are really excited to have this equipment and have a chance to partner with Dr. Judith Burnfield, PT, PhD; director of the Institute for Rehabilitation Science and Engineering and the Movement and Neurosciences Center at the Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln, Nebraska and developer of this particular piece of equipment.

Our Veterans and their family members will definitely benefit from this very generous donation.

<http://www.sportsartamerica.com/ICARE/>



Kourtney Kerr-ICARE Sales Rep, instructs WDVA staff on use of ICARE machine. (l-r)Mr. Kerr, Tina Chilson-RA, Bella Rose-PT/A, Tracy Parker-RA, Luis Balbosa-RA.

She was
STRONG
for us.

Let's be
STRONG
for her.

The needs of women veterans are different. Their unique experiences often impact their ability to readjust to civilian life. Women veterans have a greater risk of homelessness as compared to their civilian counterparts.

To learn more on the ways you can help go to www.dol.gov/wb/trauma and download *Trauma-Informed Care for Women Veterans Experiencing Homelessness*.

Photo by Elliot Birmingham



WOMEN'S BUREAU
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
www.dol.gov/wb/trauma

'Wonderful Day' for All Attending 2013 Women Veterans Summit!!



The 2013 Washington Women Veterans Summit was held June 29 at the Greater Tacoma Convention And Trade Center. This year's theme, Women in the Military - Honoring the Past... Driving into the Future, brought together almost 500 women of all ages with one common goal - to share their military experience with others who served.

Special guests included BG (Ret) Rebecca Halstead, Alex Quade, Yvonne Lucas, WASPS - Betty Dybbro, Mary Jean Sturdevant, and Dorothy Olsen, as well as many talented individuals presenting the day's variety of workshops.

Thank You to all who made the Summit a success and thank you to all who attended!



Our thanks to Jean Perkins for singing the National Anthem. What a way to begin the day!

The Washington National Guard supported the summit by providing an all woman Color Guard.



90 year-old WAVE Mar-Le Wendt enjoyed the day with fellow American Legionnaires.



Deb Jennings provides a workshop on the history of WASP's and everyone was honored to have WWII Women Air Force Service Pilots giving real-life experiences. (l-r) Mary Jean Sturdevant, Betty Dybbro, and Dorothy Olsen

Thank You Sponsors!

The WA State Department of Veterans Affairs and the WestCare Foundation would like to thank all of our 2013 Women Veterans Summit sponsors. Their participation and support has not only helped to make this year's event possible, but has aided in helping connect veterans to the resources available to them.

Platinum Sponsors (\$5,000 and Up)



Gold Sponsors (\$1,000 - \$4,999)



Silver Sponsors (\$500 - \$999)



Special Thanks to our Exhibitors

Bronze Sponsors (\$100 - \$499)



Special Thanks to the following:



4th of July - Fun Times and Good Food for Residents and Staff!



The smoky aroma of the barbecue fare--- mouthwatering hamburgers and monster hotdogs- filled the air while the residents at the Washington Soldiers Home in Orting listened to the foot stompin' country beat from the Country Western Music Association musicians. The residents enjoyed the delicious barbecue picnic prepared by the Dietary Staff, as well as the playful antics of Melon-E the Clown. The Washington Soldiers Home would like to thank the Country Western Music Association, Melon-E the Clown, the Air Force Sergeants Association for set-up, and the volunteers and staff for honoring the residents and making the 4th of July Picnic very exciting!



The Residents and staff at Washington Veterans Home had an outstanding day celebrating Independence Day. The Farragut Brass Band played and our dietary staff cooked the best hamburgers and hot dogs of all time. Seriously, those burgers were AMAZING! The Samara dancers entertained during the picnic as they have done since 1985. Most importantly family and friends had an opportunity to share this holiday with their family members living at the veterans home. The Musselman family were all together for the first time in 20 years, we were so glad to celebrate with them!



Spare Wheelchairs find New Purpose

WDVA recently partnered with Veterans & Friends of Puget Sound and the Disabled American Veterans Chapter 23 to donate wheelchairs left behind by veterans or their families at the Washington Veterans Home, Retsil or the Washington Soldiers Home, Orting.



DAV Chapter 23 was able to offer many of these wheelchairs to the VA Medical Center Seattle Campus where they will help transport veterans to and from appointments at the VAMC.

Our Veterans Homes will continue working with the Veterans & Friends of Puget Sound and DAV Chapter 23 to ensure any chairs donated by veterans or their family members are provided to organizations or veterans who need them.

Pictured (l-r) Lael Hepworth, Superintendent of the WA Soldiers Home; Marvin Burnett, Commander DAV Post 23 and Jeff Spocstra, DAV Chapter 23.

Thurston County Medical Equipment Bank

The Thurston County Medical Equipment Bank works hard to provide free medical equipment for those who cannot afford to purchase their own. All equipment is lent on a temporary basis to any person that is in need, for as long as they need. We ask that the borrower return the equipment when finished.

The Thurston County Medical Equipment Bank is here to serve you. If you are in need of medical equipment or medical supplies (or you have items to donate), call us at our message line: (360) 456-8810; we will answer your message within 48 hours.

<http://medicalequipmentbank.org/>

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>

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