

# SOUND OFF!



VOL. VI, NO 11

THE NEWSLETTER OF VETERANS UNITED FOR TRUTH, INC.

*“VETERANS STANDING UP FOR EACH OTHER”*

20 JULY 2011

## FIRST CALL – NOTES FROM THE FRONT

### PLUS ÇA CHANGE, PLUS C’EST LA MÊME CHOSE: THE MORE IT CHANGES, THE MORE IT’S THE SAME THING

This quotation from Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr (1808-1890) reminds us that no matter how hard we try, we cannot change the world beyond the limitations of human nature. Our progress is limited by the inherent human traits of lust for power and greed which will always take us back to a more primitive state, regardless of any modern trappings we surround ourselves with.

22 million veterans, their needs, and the needs of their families, who are often also their caretakers, cannot compete with the greed of the politically and financially powerful. They—the politicians and the financiers—must continue to accrue wealth and power and we veterans are just a drag on that most important force.

So when the country is in crisis, we must cut back on veterans’ benefits, and charge more for veterans’ medical care; we even must consider charging for active duty dependent medical care. But God (or whomever) forbid that we touch a dime of the accrued wealth of those who brought us to this end. That would be un-American.

Let me share a passage that may resonate with you, at least in part, and that may conform to your experience, or with the experience of a veteran whom you know:

**“Upon poor women and children, upon soldiers who are toiling and bleeding for liberty, upon salaried men who have not the time, or who desire to speculate, the whole weight of this fearful struggle falls. Men of wealth, who are hoarding thousands, put up the piteous cry of exorbitant rates—more bitterly than ever just after increasing the prices one thousand fold, while upon ragged blood drenched**

**soldiers, upon weary, despairing, heart sick women, and those whose only dependence is a pitiful yearly sum must be made to bitterly suffer.**

**Non producers alone feel the war. Others can meet high rates with the same—those who speculate not, must shift as best they can. What matters life or death so avarice can be gratified? What is honor unattended by wealth? What is liberty, unless money can be hoarded by millions? What, if the country be ruined, its women ravished, its homes desolated, its altars violated and freedom forever perish—what matters all so the almighty dollar may be amassed in piles? What care men of the present day whether their country sinks so property may be secured, and the price at which liberty is bought rests as light as possible upon their patriotic shoulders?**

**That is right. Pile up wealth—no matter whether bread be drawn from the mouth of the soldier’s orphan or the one-armed, one limbed hero who hungry walks your streets—take every dollar you can, pay out as little as possible, deprive your noble warriors of every comfort and luxury, increase in every way the necessaries of life, make everybody but yourself and non-producers bear the taxes of the war; but be careful to parade everything you give before the public—talk boldly on the street corners of your love of country, be a grand home general—and, when the war is over, point to your princely palace and its magnificent surroundings and exclaim with pompous swell “These are the results of my patriotism.”**

That quotation is not from our time, but much of it applies. It is from an editorial written in response to the attack on a government food depot by hungry veterans’ wives as reported in the Columbus [OH] *Sun*, 17 February 1865.

Sometime in the distant past when (notionally) a large group of humans stood in a field and contemplated how they might improve their lot they said (again notionally) we need something above the level of the individual to take on the problems that we individuals cannot handle well by ourselves. We also need that entity to protect us from the privation of others—to provide us security in all its forms.

That is what governments are for. Government in our democratic republic, as Lincoln said, is “of the people, by the people, and for the people”. It has become, “of the people, by a few important people, and for the chosen few.” We veterans are not in that class.

Now before someone accuses me of fomenting class warfare, I reject the charge on two counts. One, we are or should be a “classless” society. And, two, if there is warfare it has been declared on us already, not just as veterans but as citizens.

This is not a political argument—politicians on both sides have stolen our government—the government “by the people”—from us, and have given it to those who long ago decided it was “for some people”, and the rest of us need not apply.

I have tired of the constant raging about the “middle class”. The existence of a “middle” class implies the necessary existence of an “upper” class and a “lower” class, otherwise, what is there a middle of? The concept of “upper” and “lower” classes is anathema to me as an American, so how can “middle” make sense?

I am a citizen, an inhabitant of no “class”. I am a veteran who has earned a certain consideration from my fellow citizens. That consideration must be enacted into law by my representatives—those whom I have hired to execute my sovereignty as a citizen—and the provisions of those laws must be arduously overseen by these hired hands of mine.

That consideration must be acted upon professionally by the executive that I have hired to run my nation day by day.

That consideration must be protected by the courts that I, through my constitution, have established to protect each of us from one another.

So our executive says that my benefits, or at least as they are in their present form, are “on the table”, but the speculators’ bonuses are not. (Sorry, I forgot that they are “job creators”—give ‘em a million and they’ll hire a second pool boy.)

So our representatives enact laws whose execution they refuse to monitor. But they will tell us every day just how much veterans mean to the nation. They weep at the thought of any veteran going without. But what do they really do? Let me give you two very recent examples:

On 26 May S. RES. 202 was introduced—a resolution not a bill. This resolution “Designat[es] June 27, 2011, as **National Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Day**”.

The resolution was referred on that day to the Committee on the Judiciary where it sat for a month. It passed out of committee and was agreed to in the Senate on 21 June, just in time. It only could pass after amendment because apparently someone at the VA was offended by the phrase,

“...urges the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense to continue working to educate servicemembers, veterans, the families of servicemembers and veterans, and the public about the causes, symptoms, and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder”,

Such an inflammatory statement could be interpreted as being a negative comment on the VA. They had to replace it with the words “...supports the efforts of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense to educate ...”.

Now that this great day has come and gone, did you all hear about it? No? That’s too bad. You must rest assured, though, that your Senate is “**aware**”, and wants everyone to be “**aware**” of PTSD and its causes. I guess the Senate thought we needed to be reminded, and the rest of the country deeded to be **AWARE**.

I guess that means everyone except the VA.

On 12 July H. R. 2498 was introduced, which is titled “**The Veterans Day Moment of Silence Act**”. The bill did not establish the day as a national holiday, it merely was designed “to encourage the ...observance” of the day.

On the same day it was referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and on 7/15/2011 it was further referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs where it now sits.

Well at least these do-nothing acts don’t raise the deficit, which is certainly far more important than really taking care of veterans.

I for one don’t want a moment of silence. I want a moment of rage—a moment of outcry—a moment of shouting-to-high-heaven.

I have had enough of memorials, thank you. The memorializing by a mealy mouthed politician who forgets the words as soon as they are uttered does not make the memory of my fallen comrades more sacred.

The waving of the flag on those occasions most often uses the flag to mask hypocrisy and ignorance. What has the flag come to mean anyway? Since politicians must wear one on their lapel or be called out as being unpatriotic, how can wearing the flag out of fear of criticism leave it with any meaning at all?

Finally, our courts have established almost once and for all that they have no place in directing the

actions of the executive and that likewise Congress has no place. The executive must be allowed to operate without oversight and without influence from outside, albeit governmental sources.

I leave you with one more quotation:

**“...no drug, not even alcohol, causes the fundamental ills of society. If we're looking for the source of our troubles, we shouldn't test people for drugs, we should test them for stupidity, ignorance, greed and love of power.”**

**P. J. O'Rourke**

[Ed.]

**NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO NEWSLETTER IN AUGUST.  
THE NEXT ISSUE WILL BE 20 SEPTEMBER**

### REVEILLE - WAKE-UP CALLS – CALLS TO ACTION

#### **NEED LEGAL HELP IN AN APPEAL TO THE DVA?**

Try these two organizations: **Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program** [www.vetsprobono.net/](http://www.vetsprobono.net/); **National Organization of Veterans' Advocates (NOVA)** [www.vetadvocates.com](http://www.vetadvocates.com) .

Also, **United States Court of appeals for Veterans Claims “Public List of Practitioners”** are members of the court's bar [www.vetapp.gov/practitioners/](http://www.vetapp.gov/practitioners/). Also see this site for west coasters [www.chapman.edu/law/programs/clinics/amvets.asp](http://www.chapman.edu/law/programs/clinics/amvets.asp).

### ASSEMBLY - PROGRESS OF THE ORGANIZATION

#### **VCS - VUFT LAWSUIT UPDATE:**

**Class Action Suit:** On 12 August 2009 we appeared before the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals. An article from the LA Times on 24 August summarizes the results so far < [http://latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/healthcare/la-me-veterans-suit24-2009aug24\\_0,1423297.stor](http://latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/healthcare/la-me-veterans-suit24-2009aug24_0,1423297.stor)>

#### **.Case Progress to Date:**

**7/23/2007**Suit filed w/**Federal District Court**

9/25/2007 Defendant's Motion to Dismiss

2/11/2208 Motion for Preliminary Injunction

2/25/2008 Preliminary Injunction Hearing

4/21/2008 Trial

6/25/2008 Judgment based on jurisdiction

**7/25/2008 Appeal notice filed w/9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals**

12/10/2008 Appeal brief filed

12/15/2008 *Swords to Plowshares* and *Vietnam Veterans of America* file amicus briefs

12/22/2008 *Military Spouses for Change* and *United Spinal Association* file amicus briefs

3/4/2009 Appeal will not be subject to Mediation

4/6/2009 Requested an extension to reply to the DVA response to our brief

4/22/09 Extension granted to 1 May 2009

5/1/09 Appellants' Reply Brief filed

6/11/09 Oral Arguments Scheduled for 12 August 2009

8/12/09 Oral arguments

9/14/09 Reply on mediation [changed date]

9/14/09 No agreement on mediation. 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit accepts the case.

05/20/11 The 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled in part in our favor, specifically on the Constitutional issues in our claim.

27 May Case Management Conference before the original trial judge, Judge Conti, in Federal District Court in San Francisco.

6/20/11 Waiting for Judge Conti to call out the next step

7/20/11 Still waiting. The VA has requested a hearing by the full court.

**WE WILL KEEP YOU POSTED**

Here is a link to the legal documents on the lawsuit. [www.veteransptsdclassaction.org/](http://www.veteransptsdclassaction.org/)

**BE A MEMBER** If you are getting this newsletter and have not yet joined, please go to [www.vuft.org/membership.html](http://www.vuft.org/membership.html) and join. Membership is free. The more our numbers grow, the greater voice we have. It shouldn't be that way, but it is, so join us and help us take the fight to Congress and the state legislatures. Please encourage your friends who either are veterans, are related to veterans, or who support veterans' causes to join VUFT, Inc. at [www.vuft.org/membership.html](http://www.vuft.org/membership.html)

**SUPPORTING THE CAUSE** If you wish to donate to our work you may now do so via PayPal or Visa on our website "Donate" page at [www.vuft.org/donate.html](http://www.vuft.org/donate.html). Every little bit helps. We are a 501(c)(3): your donations are deductible on your federal taxes. You can also buy our handsome pins using the same method.

**The case is moving on and we must support our legal team.  
Please dig down and help us if you can. Any amount helps.**

**P L E A S E D O N A T E!**  
[www.vuft.org/donate.html](http://www.vuft.org/donate.html)

#### **MAIL CALL - LETTERS FROM MEMBERS AND OTHERS [SOME EDITED FOR LENGTH]**

None this issue

#### **RECALL - FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATION AND LEGISLATORS**

##### **HOUSE ATTEMPTS TO BLOCK SAME-SEX MARRIAGES IN MILITARY**

Daniel Blake - Christian Post Contributor - Jul. 08 2011

The ... House of Representatives on Friday made a last-ditch effort to undermine the new policy of allowing gays to serve openly in the military. The move has ignited a fierce debate over same-sex marriage as the Pentagon orders the armed forces to commence the admittance of service members with no regard to sexual orientation.

The House passed a \$649 billion defense spending bill today, and also pushed through amendments to block training funds for personnel on how to deal with the termination of the "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

... The move is seen as an attempt to reignite the debate which seemingly had reached its conclusion when Congress repealed the law last year. A second amendment, which was submitted by Rep. Tim Huelskamp (R-Kan.), blocks funding for the training of military chaplains. Huelskamp said, "I fear that chaplains who refuse to perform these ceremonies may find themselves under attack and their careers threatened.

"Repealing 'don't ask, don't tell' was supposed to be about allowing people in the military to serve openly, not about promoting same-sex marriage in contravention of the Defense of Marriage Act," he said.

<More at: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/house-attempts-to-block-same-sex-marriages-in-military-52060/>>

##### **THIS ONE SITS IN COMMITTEE WHILE THE HOUSE PLAYS CHICKEN ON THE DEFICIT VOWING TO ACT FOR VETERANS**

Rep. Jeff Miller (R-Fla.) - 07/15/11

60,000 veterans were added to the unemployment rolls in June. That brought the total number of America's out-of-work veterans to more than 1 million — a staggering figure. That is why I have introduced the Veteran Opportunity to Work Act of 2011 (H.R. 2433), or the VOW Act. All of us have an obligation to find solutions to get America's veterans back to work. These men and women have defended our nation, only to return home to stand in an unemployment line. That is not the homecoming we promised them. <More at: <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/economy-a-budget/171685-vowing-to-act-for-veterans>> <More at: <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/economy-a-budget/171685-vowing-to-act-for-veterans>>

## **CONGRESS SET TO ROB WOUNDED WARRIORS**

Jason - June 18th, 2011

Congress is getting ready to rob Servicemembers and Veterans the opportunity to effectively challenge erroneous disability ratings. The proposed law is shocking enough on its face. What is more shocking is the weak justification for this idea that the Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman, Senator Carl Levin described as "a bill that supports the men and women of the armed forces and their families." What is more telling is his later statement "that we were able to support our troops and their families while finding savings of more than \$6 billion." It seems some of those savings will come from denying Wounded Warriors just compensation for their injuries.

Section 531 amends the law for Boards for Correction of Military Records ("BCMR") to make it much more difficult for Wounded Warriors to challenge erroneous disability findings. This is what the law does:

- Changes the current rule that members who have had Physical Evaluation Board may sue directly in Federal Court. The new law requires members to first apply to the BCMR before suing the government.
- Instead of the current six year statute of limitations for filing a lawsuit against the US government for failing to award the correct disability benefits or to challenge a wrongful discharge, the new law only gives one year to file after the decision of a BCMR.
- Sets a strict six year limitation to file BCMR claims. Currently, a claim must be reviewed by the BCMR if filed within three years of the discovery of the error or injustice. However, the BCMR must excuse a late filing if it is in the "interest of justice." The new law would deny judicial review of meritorious cases that are filed three years after discharge and would deny courts the power to review the denial of the BCMR to review cases filed after three years.

To summarize, the new law would require members to file a claim first with the BCMR before going to court. This means that for wrongful discharge claims, the current six year statute of limitations would be shortened to three years, unless the BCMR agrees to hear the case. If they deny the claim as filed late, that is the end of the case.

<More at: [www.pebforum.com/content/congress-set-rob-wounded-warriors-76/](http://www.pebforum.com/content/congress-set-rob-wounded-warriors-76/)>

## **THE FEDS GIVETH WHILE THE STATES TAKETH AWAY**

### **COLLECTIVE BARGAINING LAW PASSED FOR VA MEDICAL PRO'S**

PRNewswire-USNewswire - June 30, 2011

The American Federation of Government Employees today applauded the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs for yesterday passing Senate Bill 572, aimed at restoring the collective bargaining rights of VA medical professionals under Title 38. This legislation will allow VA clinicians to exercise the same rights to bargain over routine pay matters, as other federal employees are allowed, and hold the agency accountable for its own pay regulations.

<More at: [www.veteransresources.org/2011/07/collective-bargaining-law-passed-for-va-medical-pros/](http://www.veteransresources.org/2011/07/collective-bargaining-law-passed-for-va-medical-pros/)>

## **RETREAT – NEWS**

### **FEMALE SPECIAL OPERATORS NOW IN COMBAT**

Christian Lowe - Military.com - June 29, 2011

Army Special Operations Command has deployed its first teams of female Soldiers assigned to commando units in Afghanistan, and military officials are assessing their initial performance in theater as "off the charts."

In a controversial move early this year, the Army created a new avenue for women to serve with front-line combat units in some of the most specialized and covert missions. The so-called "Cultural Support Teams" are attached to Special Forces and Ranger units to interface with the female population to gain vital intelligence and provide social outreach.

"When I send an [SF team] in to follow up on a Taliban hit ... wouldn't it be nice to have access to about 50 percent of that target population -- the women?" said Maj. Gen. Bennet Sacolick, commander of the Army Special Warfare Center and School, which runs the CST program.

"And now we're doing that with huge success," Sacolick said. "They are in Afghanistan right now and the reviews are off the charts. They're doing great." <More at: [www.military.com/news/article/female-special-operators-now-in-combat.html](http://www.military.com/news/article/female-special-operators-now-in-combat.html)>

## **LAW SUIT CLAIM: WEST LA VA ABANDONS HOMELESS VETS**

Katharine Russ - 06.13.2011

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), along with several other attorneys, filed the first-of-its-kind lawsuit against Eric Shinseki, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs and Donna M. Beitner, Director- VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System. (ACLU release, see below) The suit was filed on behalf of the Viet Nam Veterans of America, several homeless veterans and Carolina Winston Barrie, whose ancestor, Arcadia B. de Baker, and Senator John P. Jones donated 387 acres of land to what is now the Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System (WLAVA).

The suit contends, among other things, that the WLAVA used land through sharing agreements and enhance-use leases illegally and denied veterans a “permanent home” to which they could go to begin their recovery. The filing claims that the VA, as the successor to the National Home, holds the donated land only in the capacity as a trustee, with a legally imposed fiduciary duty to permanently use the donated land expressly for that purpose.

... On multiple occasions, in past years, these misuse-of-land issues have been raised before the VA. **Robert M. Handy and Sanford D. Cook, Chair and Vice Chair of Veterans United For Truth**, wrote in their joint letter to Shinseki,

“The greatest commitment, after 13 years of deep contemplation, is that there are “Projects Under Consideration” and there is a “potential” for renovation and construction. We had expected far more after 13 years. This is why we call it an embarrassment—it is an embarrassment to us as citizens, veterans, and taxpayers that after all this it is “a tale full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.” <More at: [www.citywatchla.com/4box-left/1791-law-suit-claim-west-la-va-abandons-homeless-vets](http://www.citywatchla.com/4box-left/1791-law-suit-claim-west-la-va-abandons-homeless-vets)>

## **LOOKS LIKE THE PR GUYS ARE WORKING OVERTIME**

### **THE V.A. TRIES TO GET BEYOND ITS CULTURE OF NO**

Lawrence Downes - July 16, 2011

The Veterans Affairs Department says that it is not only making strides in treating post-traumatic stress disorder and brain injuries and in preventing suicides, but is also upending its reputation for bureaucratic delays and unresponsiveness.

<More at: [www.nytimes.com/2011/07/17/opinion/sunday/17sun4.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/17/opinion/sunday/17sun4.html)>

## **OBAMA NAMES OPENLY GAY VETERAN TO WEST POINT ADVISORY BOARD**

Laura Meckler - Wall Street Journal Blogs – 5 July 2011

President Barack Obama named Brenda S. “Sue” Fulton, an Army veteran who campaigned to end the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy, to the Board of Visitors of the United States Military Academy on Tuesday, putting the first openly gay or lesbian person onto the board that advises him on West Point.

<More at: [http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2011/07/05/obama-names-openly-gay-veteran-to-west-point-advisory-board/?mod=google\\_news\\_blog](http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2011/07/05/obama-names-openly-gay-veteran-to-west-point-advisory-board/?mod=google_news_blog)>

## **SPIKE IN U.S. DEATHS IN IRAQ RAISES WORRIES**

Tim Arango - June 26, 2011

BAGHDAD — Two American soldiers were killed Sunday in Iraq, the military command said, making June the worst month in combat-related fatalities for United States forces in Iraq in more than two years. The casualties also reflected the dangers ahead as the United States prepares to withdraw all its troops from Iraq by the end of the year.

The June total of so-called hostile-related deaths of American soldiers is now 11, the most since May 2009, when 12 were killed, according to icasualties.org, an online database that tracks the deaths of foreign forces in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. <More at: [www.nytimes.com/2011/06/27/world/middleeast/27iraq.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/27/world/middleeast/27iraq.html)>

## **THEY CAN’T PROTECT CIVILIANS EITHER**

### **WOMAN GANG-RAPED BY 7 HALLIBURTON EMPLOYEES “SIGNED AWAY” HER RIGHT TO SUE? HOW JUSTICE HAS BECOME THE PRIVILEGE OF CORPORATIONS**

Laura Flanders - June 29, 2011 |

Worried about the influence of money in American politics, the huge cash payouts that the US supreme court waved through by its Citizens United decision – the decision that lifted most limits on election campaign spending? Corporations are having their way with American elections just as they’ve already had their way with our media.

But at least we have the courts, right?

Wrong. The third branch of government's in trouble, too. In fact, access to justice – like access to elected office, let alone a pundit's perch – is becoming a perk just for the rich and powerful.

Take the young woman now testifying in court in Texas. Jamie Leigh Jones claims she was drugged and gang-raped while working for military contractor KBR in Iraq (at the time, a division of Halliburton). Jones, now 26, was on her fourth day in post in Baghdad in 2005 when she says she was assaulted by seven contractors and held captive, under armed guard by two KBR police, in a shipping container. <More at: [www.alternet.org/story/151452/woman\\_gang-raped\\_by\\_7\\_halliburton\\_employees\\_%22signed\\_away%22\\_her\\_right\\_to\\_sue\\_how\\_justice\\_has\\_become\\_the\\_privilege\\_of\\_corporations](http://www.alternet.org/story/151452/woman_gang-raped_by_7_halliburton_employees_%22signed_away%22_her_right_to_sue_how_justice_has_become_the_privilege_of_corporations)>

### **ARMY PROGRAM WORKS TO MAKE SOLDIERS FIT IN BODY AND MIND**

Michael E. Ruane -: July 4 2011

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — The soldiers crowd around a large conference table, their maroon berets scattered on top. A digital clock on the wall shows the time in Afghanistan and Iraq. The unit's flag, hung with battle streamers, rests at one end of the room. Outside, not far away, stands the 16-foot bronze statue of World War II paratrooper "Iron Mike," grim-faced with submachine gun in hand — the epitome of the rugged American soldier. But the training here this morning has little to do with war.

A young soldier from Rhode Island is telling how his wife walked out on him when she was two months pregnant and he fell into depression and alcoholism. A burly soldier with red hair admits that he has a bad temper, which leads to disputes with his spouse. There are murmurs of assent around the room, and other problems galore.

It feels like an intense group-therapy session. In a way, it is.

It's also a radical shift in the Army's approach to mental health, a switch from the just-suck-it-up tradition of the past and a change that was expected to get a grumpy reception from rank-and-file "Joes."

... The idea for the program was that of Gen. George W. Casey Jr., the recently retired Army chief of staff, who Cornum said was dismayed by the cases of suicide, post-traumatic stress disorder and family violence.

"We've got to have something besides the Whack-a-Mole theory," Cornum quoted Casey as saying. "We need a strategy to teach people to do better and not just wait till they do badly."

<More at: [www.washingtonpost.com/local/army-program-works-to-make-soldiers-fit-in-body-and-mind/2011/05/13/gHQAVsCqxH\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/army-program-works-to-make-soldiers-fit-in-body-and-mind/2011/05/13/gHQAVsCqxH_story.html)>

### **MEMORY OF MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT COULD SOON FADE AWAY AT WALTER REED**

Jason Ukman - 07/14/2011

For 20 years, Walter Reed Army Medical Center has celebrated the memory of Deborah Joel's father, the first African American combat medic to receive the Medal of Honor. But the honor, it seems, is about to come to an end.

Her father, Lawrence Joel, who served in the Army in the Vietnam War, was presented with the distinction in 1967. And for the past two decades, the Joel Auditorium at Walter Reed has been a testament to his service. But the hospital is moving in the fall. And when the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center opens in Bethesda, there will be no more auditorium named in her father's honor. The Joel head bust and bronze wall plaque kept at the old hospital will be returned to his family.

Deborah Joel said it was shocking for her and her mother to learn that Walter Reed would not re-designate a new space in Bethesda in the name of her father. He received the Medal of Honor for crawling, while wounded, through a hail of machine-gun fire to treat his comrades in Vietnam.

"My father's name has been there for 20 years – 20 years," Deborah Joel said. "I thought it would have been very courteous to give an explanation."

All Joel has received is an e-mailed letter from the Department of the Army's Northern Regional Medical Command, which stated that "there are no plans to re-designate the Joel Auditorium at the new hospital" but that there "was some discussion of that possibility at the new hospital at Ft. Belvoir," where other personnel from Walter Reed will be moving.

<More at: [www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/checkpoint-washington/post/memory-of-medal-of-honor-winner-could-fade-at-walter-reed/2011/07/13/glQA5Rm4DI\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/checkpoint-washington/post/memory-of-medal-of-honor-winner-could-fade-at-walter-reed/2011/07/13/glQA5Rm4DI_blog.html)>

## **THIS IS THE KIND OF TREATMENT THOSE TO WHOM THE FLAG REALLY DOES HAVE A MEANING GET FROM THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS**

### **DISABLED VET BANNED FROM DISPLAYING U.S. FLAG BY APARTMENT COMPLEX**

Archith Seshadri - July 06, 2011

Augusta, GA -- A disabled war veteran put up an American flag outside his apartment unit but property managers told him he had to take it down because it violates the decorum of the parking lot. The veteran lives at the Brigham Woods apartments off Skinner Mill Road. <More at: [www2.wjbf.com/news/2011/jul/06/9/disabled-vet-banned-displaying-us-flag-apartment-c-ar-2074888/](http://www2.wjbf.com/news/2011/jul/06/9/disabled-vet-banned-displaying-us-flag-apartment-c-ar-2074888/)>

### **FLAG TAKEN DOWN FROM COLLEGE CAMPUS**

KOAT - 15, 2011, 2011

#### **Veteran Who Put Up Flag Reassigned To Different Campus**

RIO RANCHO, N.M. -- A flag put up by a veteran at a well-known local college to celebrate the Fourth of July has been taken down. The Central New Mexico Community College Rio Rancho campus yanked down the American flag draped above an entrance within the last couple of days. Action 7 News has learned the employee who put it up, an Iraq war veteran, has also been temporarily reassigned to a different campus. <More at: [www.koat.com/news/28569106/detail.html#xzz1SUMYTefi](http://www.koat.com/news/28569106/detail.html#xzz1SUMYTefi)>

### **GEORGIA HOA BLOCKS HOME FOR DISABLED VET**

Steven D - Jul 1st, 2011

Imagine you served your country as an Army sergeant who served two tours of duty in Iraq. Imagine that during that second tour in 2008 an IED device exploded, causing you to sustain lifelong disabilities: paralysis on your right side and the inability to speak brought about by a stroke tied to the injuries from the blast.

Imagine that a non-profit charity dedicated to providing homes to wounded and disabled veterans offered to build you a 2,785 square foot home, free and clear, with all the amenities needed to make your life better. A home where your family could take care of you. A home that would be built in a nice neighborhood in a suburb of Augusta, Georgia. Imagine your family moved to that suburb and rented a home while they waited for your new home to be built. You even started sending your children to the local schools. Life was looking up. Now imagine your worst nightmare: the local homeowners association (HOA) of the subdivision where your home was to be built decided it didn't want you there and did everything in its power to keep you out. <More at: [www.boomantribune.com/story/2011/7/1/133649/4624](http://www.boomantribune.com/story/2011/7/1/133649/4624)>

### **THE MILITARY CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND: DECREPIT SCHOOLS, BROKEN PROMISES**

Kristen Lombardi - June 27, 2011

While parents make sacrifices, sons and daughters endure overcrowding, disrepair and budgetary neglect at school

Tens of thousands of children attend schools on military installations that are falling apart from age and neglect, and fail to meet Defense Department standards.

Over 10 years, school conditions on bases have worsened while parents endured an average three deployments, each lasting 15 to 18 months.

Three in four schools run by the Pentagon are either beyond repair or would require extensive renovation to meet minimum standards. (See the full list at [www.iwatchnews.org/2011/06/24/5023/grading-schools](http://www.iwatchnews.org/2011/06/24/5023/grading-schools)) More at <[www.iwatchnews.org/2011/06/26/5012/military-children-left-behind-decrepit-schools-broken-promises](http://www.iwatchnews.org/2011/06/26/5012/military-children-left-behind-decrepit-schools-broken-promises)>

## **YOU JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND! IF WE DIDN'T TAKE 16 MONTHS TO FIGURE THIS OUT WE WOULDN'T HAVE JOBS!**

### **PENSION COMES JUST IN TIME FOR DISABLED SOUTH BEND VETERAN**

Kevin Allen - South Bend Tribune Staff Writer - July 07, 2011

SOUTH BEND — Eileen Sullivan looks back a little more than a month ago and, understandably, says she was a basket case.

Her husband, John, suffers from seizures, debilitating joint and muscle pain, and other health issues he blames on exposure to contaminated water while serving in the Marine Corps in the 1980s.

John already was unable to work, as his health was declining. Eileen was spending so much time caring for him, she couldn't find a job on the side.

The Sullivans had been waiting 16 months for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to determine John's eligibility for a pension.

The couple were on the verge of losing their home near Edison Park. They struggled to fill their car's gas tank, not to mention buy food for themselves and their two daughters, ages 8 and 13.

Then, on June 4, they received some relief.

Eileen said a VA official called to say John's pension request was approved. The 45-year-old was classified as disabled and would begin receiving a monthly check of about \$1,600 as well as a lump sum of roughly \$11,000 in retroactive pension payments. <More at: [http://articles.southbendtribune.com/2011-07-07/news/29750035\\_1\\_pension-johns-waste-disposal](http://articles.southbendtribune.com/2011-07-07/news/29750035_1_pension-johns-waste-disposal)>

## TO THE COLORS – GATHERINGS

Date	Time	Where	What	Who	Notes
Every Sunday	1300-1600	Wilson & San Vicente Blvds. NE Corner, Los Angeles, CA	Save Our Veterans Land	Veterans Revolution	
7/27		San Antonio	Veteran Access to Housing Summit	Home Depot Foundation and National Coalition for Homeless Veterans	<a href="mailto:info@nchv.org">info@nchv.org</a> 202-546-1969
7/29		Ventura CA	Resource Fair	Claire L. Hope <a href="mailto:clhope@aol.com">clhope@aol.com</a>	805-987-3118
8/2-8/3		Minneapolis MN	Resource Fair	Nathaniel Saltz <a href="mailto:nsaltz@mac-v.org">nsaltz@mac-v.org</a>	612-726-1327
8/8-8/14		Broken Spoke Campground* Sturgis, SD	The Wall That Heals	Broken Spoke Saloon	
8/12		Grand Rapids MI	Stand Down	Richard McDonald <a href="mailto:Richard.Mcdonald2@va.gov">Richard.Mcdonald2@va.gov</a>	616-234-0220
8/12		Altoona, PA	Resource Fair	James E. Van Zandt	814-943-8164
8/18-8/21		Rimrock Auto Arena, Billings, MT	The Wall That Heals	County of Yellowstone	
8/20		Fairbanks AK	Resource Fair	Nancy Smoyer <a href="mailto:nrsmoyer@alaska.edu">nrsmoyer@alaska.edu</a>	907-479-7940
8/20		Pittsburgh PA	Resource Fair	Emily Boots <a href="mailto:bootse@vlpwpa.org">bootse@vlpwpa.org</a>	412-481-8200
8/20		Hamilton MT	Resource Fair	Al Fox <a href="mailto:vva938@gmail.com">vva938@gmail.com</a>	406-360-543
8/24		Duluth MN	Resource Fair	Paul Pedersen <a href="mailto:ppedersen@mac-v.org">ppedersen@mac-v.org</a>	218-722-8763
8/25		Marysville CA	Stand Down	Michael Nichols <a href="mailto:nichols.mikea@comcast.net">nichols.mikea@comcast.net</a>	530-749-1036
8/25-8/28		Veterans Memorial Park Richmond IN	The Wall That Heals	Wayne County Veterans Memorial Committee	
9/1-9/6		Westside Branch Library Evansville IN	The Wall That Heals	Rolling Thunder Chapter 6	
9/7		Honolulu HI	Resource Fair	Noe Foster <a href="mailto:nfoster@thestrategist.tv">nfoster@thestrategist.tv</a>	808-753-7223
9/8*9/11		Lander University Greenwood SC	The Wall That Heals		Laurens County Veterans Affairs
9/9		Coos Bay OR	Resource Fair	Heather Partipilo <a href="mailto:heather.m.partipilo@state.or.us">heather.m.partipilo@state.or.us</a>	541-751-8518
9/9		Levittown PA	Stand Down	Edward Speller <a href="mailto:edads@comcast.net">edads@comcast.net</a>	267-560-5011
9/9		Indianapolis IN	Resource Fair	Cindy Thomas <a href="mailto:cthoma@hvaf.org">cthoma@hvaf.org</a>	317-951-0688
9/10-9/11		Holiday Inn Mart Plaza Chicago, IL	Reunion staff and patients 3 <sup>rd</sup> Field Hospital Saigon	Duane Thompson <a href="mailto:Info@3field.rmhc.org">Info@3field.rmhc.org</a>	
9/13		Akron OH	Resource Fair	Laura Williams Dunlop <a href="mailto:williams.ld@hotmail.com">williams.ld@hotmail.com</a>	330-762-7328
9/13		Savannah GA	Resource Fair	Nicholas Pecone <a href="mailto:npecone@goodwillsavannahga.org">npecone@goodwillsavannahga.org</a>	912-354-6611
9/13-9/19		Emma Webb Park Kinston NC	The Wall That Heals	VVA Chapter 892	
9/14-9/15		Montgomery AL	Resource Fair	Marashia McCormick <a href="mailto:marashia.mccormick@va.gov">marashia.mccormick@va.gov</a>	334-558-8543

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9/15		Seattle WA	Resource Fair	Sam Barrett <a href="mailto:samuelbarrett81@gmail.com">samuelbarrett81@gmail.com</a>	253-320-4736
9/16-9/17		Salem OR	Resource Fair	Wayne Crowder <a href="mailto:wayjacrowder@yahoo.com">wayjacrowder@yahoo.com</a>	503-363-4238
9/16-9/17		Hillsboro OR	Resource Fair	Lacey Palmer <a href="mailto:laceyshouse@hotmail.com">laceyshouse@hotmail.com</a>	503-757-5655
9/16		Cumberland RI	Stand Down	Anthony "Tony" DeQuattro <a href="mailto:TDeQuattro@osdri.com">TDeQuattro@osdri.com</a>	800-861-8387
9/16		Sacramento CA	Stand Down	Barbara Ross <a href="mailto:ross4834@comcast.net">ross4834@comcast.net</a>	916-646-6004
9/16		White City OR	Stand Down	Rick Freund <a href="mailto:huey619@charter.net">huey619@charter.net</a>	541-643-0254
9/16-9/17		Petersburg VA	Resource Fair	Virginia Byerson <a href="mailto:whispersoflove@comcast.net">whispersoflove@comcast.net</a>	804-943-8511
9/17		Sidney MT	Resource Fair	Shannon Kadrmas <a href="mailto:skadrmas@mt.gov">skadrmas@mt.gov</a>	406-377-3314 x205
9/17-9/18		Santa Ana CA	Resource Fair	Deanne Tate <a href="mailto:dtate@veteransfirstoc.org">dtate@veteransfirstoc.org</a>	714-547-0615
9/20		Portland OR	Resource Fair	Jennifer Wilcox <a href="mailto:jennifer.wilcox@cccconcern.org">jennifer.wilcox@cccconcern.org</a>	503-226-7387
9/21		Fresno CA	Stand Down	Melvin Leslie <a href="mailto:mleslie.oaks1@gmail.com">mleslie.oaks1@gmail.com</a>	510-861-7801
9/21		Fresno CA	Stand Down	John Schuler <a href="mailto:bigjohn44@hotmail.com">bigjohn44@hotmail.com</a>	559-977-3697

**We are a non-partisan organization. We will advertise all legitimate veterans' events, regardless of purpose or affiliation.**

## TATTOO - CURRENT ISSUES

### NOW HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF MATH ACCORDING TO THE VA

#### **HOMELESS VETERAN NUMBERS DROP BY 55,000: VA**

Molly O'Toole - 7/15/11

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The number of homeless veterans on any given night has dropped by over 55,000, the Department of Veterans Affairs said on Friday, due in part to programs like the \$46.2 million announced Thursday to provide permanent housing for 6,790 homeless veterans.

Despite a still-stagnant economy and increased troop drawdowns leading to potentially higher numbers of homeless veterans, VA Deputy Press Secretary Drew Brookie said the number of veterans that are homeless each night has dropped from an estimated 131,000 in 2009 to 75,700 as of June this year.

<More at: [www.reuters.com/article/2011/07/15/us-veterans-housing-idUSTRE76E5RX20110715](http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/07/15/us-veterans-housing-idUSTRE76E5RX20110715)>

Just over a year ago the VA reported 107,000 homeless vets [www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/chaleng/chaleng\\_sixteenth\\_annual\\_report.pdf](http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/chaleng/chaleng_sixteenth_annual_report.pdf), but now, after getting 6,790 off the street, they claim that the numbers have dropped by 55,000, of course that is from a number this article claims was 131,000. The important point is that it is all bullshit and made up numbers to serve whatever the current public relations or budgetary goal is. In any event, you can't subtract 6,790 from either 131,000 or 107,000 and call it a 55,000 person improvement. Most homeless service organizations say that veterans comprise 25% of the homeless population, based on their own empiric evidence. [Veterans are only 11% of the general population.] HUD estimates that in 2009, the time of the cited earlier report, there were 643,067 homeless on a single night. 25% of that number is 160,767.

I guess with all this bull shit there has to be a steak or a roast or at least a hamburger in there someplace.

#### **10 WORST STATES FOR UNEMPLOYED 9/11 VETERANS**

Dan Burrows - Jun 22, 2011

As bad as the Great Recession has been for civilians, it's been even tougher on veterans. The jobless recovery for 9/11 veterans — unemployed servicemen and women who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan — is much worse than the national average and shockingly bad in a number of states, a new Senate report shows.

Even among all former U.S. military service members, 9/11 veterans have the highest rates of unemployment, according to the latest report from the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee. The numbers are more appalling when measured against the total U.S. workforce. The unemployment rate for 9/11 veterans stood at 10.9 percent at the end of April (the latest date for which data were available) vs. 8.5 percent for the non-veterans, according to the report. (Seasonally adjusted figures put the total U.S. unemployment rate at 9 percent for April.)

May was even more dismal for 9/11 veterans, according to Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), when their unemployment rate jumped to more than 12 percent vs. a national average of 9.1 percent. “[The unemployment rate for 9/11 veterans] generally trends more than three percentage points higher than the national average, and spikes to nearly 20 percent for male veterans ages 18 to 24,” says Matt Gallagher, IAVA senior writing manager and a former Army captain, via email. <More at: <http://moneywatch.bnet.com/investing/blog/investment-insights/10-worst-states-for-unemployed-911-veterans/1302/#ixzz1QnLvWw7n> >

### **VETS FACE SHORTAGE OF THERAPISTS**

Peter Cameron - Special to the Tribune - July 20, 2011

When Daniel Brautigam tried to tell therapists how he felt having urine thrown in his face at Guantanamo Bay, he experienced the same frustration as thousands of other returning veterans who have sought counseling.

"They had no idea how to respond to that. It looked like to me that they were grossed out, and they're supposed to be helping me," said Brautigam, 31, who was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and depression following his return to Hoffman Estates from tours with the Navy in the Northern Arabian Gulf and Cuba.

The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that 11 percent to 20 percent of veterans from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are suffering from PTSD. Others think the number is higher.

<More at: [www.chicagotribune.com/health/ct-x-0720-vets-mental-health-20110720.0.66678\\_story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/health/ct-x-0720-vets-mental-health-20110720.0.66678_story)>

### **WHY ISN'T THE VA FUNDING THESE AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES? THEY OBVIOUSLY WORK!**

### **RACKED BY PTSD, A VETERAN FINDS CALM IN A POUND PUP NAMED CHEYENNE**

Steve Hendrix -: June 21, 2011

David Sharpe finally hit bottom on the bedroom floor of his apartment in Yorktown, Va. That's where he sat, legs folded, ready to finish the fight with the demons that had followed him back from the war zone: the sudden rages; the punched walls; the profanities tossed at anyone who tried to help. There was little in the room but dirty Air Force uniforms, some empty Jägermeister bottles and a crushing despair. He took a deep breath. Shut his eyes. Closed his lips a little tighter around the cool steel.

And then something licked his ear. He looked around, and locked gazes with a pair of brown eyes. Cheyenne cocked her head to one side.

"It was just one of those looks dogs give you," Sharpe recalls. "It was like 'What are you doing? Who's going to take care of me? Who else is going to let me sleep in this bed?'"

For a long minute, Sharpe stared into the puzzled face of his 6-month-old pit bull. And then slowly, reluctantly, he backed the barrel of the .45 out of his mouth.

"There's no doubt about it," he says now. "I owe her my life."

<More at: [www.washingtonpost.com/local/racked-by-ptsd-a-veteran-finds-calm-in-a-pound-pup-named-cheyenne/2011/06/16/AGLiYeH\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/racked-by-ptsd-a-veteran-finds-calm-in-a-pound-pup-named-cheyenne/2011/06/16/AGLiYeH_story.html)>

### **SERVICE DOG 'SAVED LIFE' OF MECHANICSBURG VETERAN WITH POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER**

Beth Anne Heesen, - The Patriot-News - July 17, 2011

When Douglas Maugans is plagued by nightmares of war, he can always count on Tanner to wake him up.

Maugans of Mechanicsburg, who has post-traumatic stress disorder, worked in air traffic control with the Army National Guard. He has a special bond with Tanner, whom he taught to be a service dog with training from Helping Hounds.

The 5-year-old English springer spaniel presses the touch pad on Maugans' nightstand with his nose to turn the light on, gets up on his master's chest and lies there for as long as he's needed.

<More at: [www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2011/07/service\\_dog\\_saved\\_life\\_of\\_mech.html](http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2011/07/service_dog_saved_life_of_mech.html)>

## **MILITARY PRAISES 'FANTASTIC' NEW POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS THERAPY**

David Kupelian - WorldNetDaily - July 19, 2011

### **Simple technique 'going viral,' bringing 'rapid improvement' to soldiers, families**

For the American soldier, it's become the sneakiest of all sneak attacks to watch out for – the enemy's final chance to wreak havoc by secretly following the soldier home and attacking him and his loved ones there.

... Fortunately, a new technique for coping with PTSD and other stress-related syndromes – involving neither drugs nor, in many cases, even the psychiatrist's couch – is now spreading rapidly throughout the various service branches. Although it has proliferated almost entirely by word of mouth – given to soldiers and family members by psychologists, nurses, military chaplains, fellow soldiers and senior officers – its simplicity, privacy and remarkable track record are being noticed at the highest levels.

"In my own experience as a commander who mobilized and returned thousands of wartime veterans, I have seen soldiers make rapid improvement through use of these CDs," said Maj. Gen. George R. Harris.

"CDs"? Help for a serious condition like post-traumatic stress disorder, just from listening to a compact disc? Really?

Harris – a recently retired West Point general assigned to the Office of the Secretary of the Army – is indeed talking about a single compact disc, playable on any CD player or computer, titled "Coping Strategies," distributed to the military by a 501 (c)3 nonprofit called Patriot Outreach. The CD, which helps users overcome the negative effects of stress, is sent free upon request to military service personnel, veterans and their families, and also made available to the general public at a nominal cost, which in turn helps pay for the manufacturing and free distribution to military families.

<More at: [www.wnd.com/?pageId=319737#ixzz1SfKUqpAr](http://www.wnd.com/?pageId=319737#ixzz1SfKUqpAr)>

## **MARIJUANA TREATMENT SOUGHT FOR CHRONIC PTSD SUFFERERS**

Stars and Stripes - July 20, 2011

Researchers are seeking federal approval for what is believed to be the first study to examine the therapeutic effects of marijuana on veterans with chronic post-traumatic stress disorder, according to a report in The New York Times.

The proposal, from the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies in Santa Cruz, Calif., and a researcher at the University of Arizona College of Medicine, would look at the potential benefits of cannabis by examining 50 combat veterans who have not responded to other treatment, the paper reported Monday.

<More at: [www.stripes.com/news/special-reports/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/marijuana-treatment-sought-for-chronic-ptsd-sufferers-1.149688](http://www.stripes.com/news/special-reports/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/marijuana-treatment-sought-for-chronic-ptsd-sufferers-1.149688)>

### **CLICK THROUGH FOR THE FULL ARTICLE BELOW AS A GOOD PRIMER ON WHAT THIS IS AND HOW THE SERVICES HAVE BEEN MISHANDLING IT**

## **EPIDEMIC: OVER 400,000 TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURIES FOR VETS COMING FROM IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN**

Conn Hallinan – AlterNet - June 21, 2011

According to official Defense Department (DOD) figures, 332,000 soldiers have suffered brain injuries since 2000, although most independent experts estimate that the number is over 400,000. Many of these are mild traumatic brain injuries (mTBI), a term that is profoundly misleading.

As David Hovda, director of the Brain Injury Research Center at the University of California at Los Angeles, points out, "I don't know what makes it 'mild,' because it can evolve into anxiety disorders, personality changes, and depression." It can also set off a constellation of physical disabilities from chronic pain to sexual dysfunction and insomnia.

MTBI is defined as any incident that produces unconsciousness lasting for up to a half hour or creates an altered state consciousness. It is the signature wound for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, where roadside bombs are the principal weapon for insurgents.

Most soldiers recover from mTBI, but between five and 15 percent do not. According to Dr. Elaine Peskind of the University of Washington Medical School, "The estimate of the number who returned with symptomatic mild traumatic brain injury due to

blast exposure has varied from the official VA [Veterans Administration] number of 9 percent officially diagnosed with mTBI to over 20 percent, and, I think, ultimately it will be higher than that."

Serious consequences from mTBI are increased when troops are subjected to multiple explosions and "just get blasted and blasted and blasted," in the words of Maj. Connie Johnmeyer. Out of two million troops who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, over 800,000 have had multiple deployments, many up to five times or more.

But mTBI is difficult to diagnose because it does not show up on standard CAT scans and MRIs. "Our scans show nothing," says Dr. Michael Weiner, professor of radiology, psychiatry and neurology at the University of California at San Francisco and director of the Center for Imaging Neurodegenerative Disease at the Veteran's Administration Medical Center. They do now. An MRI set to track the flow of water through the brain's neurons, has turned up anomalies that indicate the presence of mTBI. However, the military has blocked informing patients of results of the research, and if history is any guide, the Pentagon will do its best to shelve or ignore the results.

The DOD has long resisted the diagnosis of mTBI, as it has avoided paying for a successful - but expensive - way to treat it. The price of that resistance is escalating suicide rates and domestic violence incidents among returning soldiers. In 2010, almost as many soldiers committed suicide as fell in battle.

<More at: [www.altemet.org/story/151376/epidemic%3A\\_over\\_400%2C000\\_traumatic\\_brain\\_injuries\\_for\\_vets\\_coming\\_from\\_iraq\\_and\\_afghanistan](http://www.altemet.org/story/151376/epidemic%3A_over_400%2C000_traumatic_brain_injuries_for_vets_coming_from_iraq_and_afghanistan)>

At VUFT we have been examining a program called: **Emotional Freedom**. The methods and their results are documented in a DVD titled "The Answer" which is available from the **Operation: Emotional Freedom** website at [www.operation-emotionalfreedom.com/](http://www.operation-emotionalfreedom.com/). This is another exciting alternative to conventional care, especially when we know that conventional care seems to have been reduced by the VA to "Drug 'em and send 'em home". We encourage anyone who is interested to purchase the DVD.

All of these methods defy the medical and military establishment's current methods, but almost all of them are cheaper than what is currently being provided (when it is provided).

It is well past time that the VA face the fact that they are failing our veterans and something else has to be done. Albert Einstein's quote has become a cliché, but apt that "Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results is madness." "Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

Einstein also said something else which is quite appropriate to this situation: "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

## **IRAQ WAR VETERAN SPARED FROM DEPORTATION, PROSECUTION**

Elise Foley - Huffpost Politics - 7/12/11

WASHINGTON -- A military veteran who was facing deportation will likely be allowed to stay in the United States after he was released from immigration detention earlier this month, in part thanks to help from Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-Fla.). Navy Reserve Petty Officer Elisha Dawkins, 26, entered a pre-trial diversion program on Tuesday that will spare him from federal charges for allegedly lying when he applied for a U.S. passport in 2006, a crime that could have landed him in prison for 10 years.

Dawkins, who served in Iraq and Guantanamo Bay in the Army and Navy Reserve, was born to a Bahamian woman in either the U.S. or the Bahamas, but has American birth certificates and knows no other country, his attorney Clark Mervis said. But he has unknowingly faced deportation since the age of 8 after his mother was deported back to the Bahamas.

<More at: [www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/12/iraq-war-veteran-deportation\\_n\\_896323.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/12/iraq-war-veteran-deportation_n_896323.html)>

## **US STUDY OF WAR VETERANS TIES BRAIN INJURY TO DEMENTIA RISK**

Marilynn Marchione - Associated Press - July 19, 2011

PARIS - A large study in older veterans raises fresh concern about mild brain injuries that hundreds of thousands of troops have suffered from explosions in recent wars. Even concussions seem to raise the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease or other dementia later in life, researchers found.

<More at: [http://articles.boston.com/2011-07-19/news/29791291\\_1\\_traumatic-brain-brain-injuries-dementia-risk](http://articles.boston.com/2011-07-19/news/29791291_1_traumatic-brain-brain-injuries-dementia-risk)>

## SHAM MARRIAGES GOT MARINES HOUSING MONEY

July 3, 2011

CAMP PENDLETON, Calif.—Military officials are charging three California-based Marine corporals with fraud and larceny for entering in a pair of sham marriages to collect housing funding, officials said. The military alleges that a lesbian couple -- one a Marine, the other a civilian -- decided to live together off base and wanted to collect the \$1,200 housing benefit granted to married Marines.

The female Marine found a male Marine willing to get married, allowing them to collect the housing benefit, and the civilian woman also eventually married a Marine and collected funds, 1st Lt. Maureen Dooley, a spokeswoman at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego, said Saturday. The female Marine, Cpl. Ashley Vice, told San Diego's KGTV-TV that she and her partner, Jaime Murphy, were forced to enter sham marriages because the military doesn't provide allowances for unmarried couples and they couldn't afford to live off base without the extra money. She and her partner only wanted to "be a family," Vice said.

"It doesn't matter what their sexual preferences are, if they're violating the law and making fraudulent use of government money, they will be held accountable," Dooley said. <More at: <http://news.yahoo.com/military-sham-marriages-got-marines-housing-money-125247001.html> <http://news.yahoo.com/military-sham-marriages-got-marines-housing-money-125247001.html>>

**WHAT SHOULD CHANGE WON'T ~ IT WILL STAY THE SAME.  
COME ON! IF ALL THE GAY SERVICE MEMBERS QUIT AND HAD TO BE REPLACED BY  
DRAFTING MARRIED PERSONNEL, THEN THE DRAFTEES WOULD ALL GET THE  
ALLOWANCES AND THE REASSIGNMENT CONSIDERATION WOULDN'T THEY?**

### MILITARY GAY COUPLES WON'T ENJOY BENEFITS

Julie Watson - Associated Press – 7/17/11

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Gay service members from Army soldiers to Air Force officers are planning to celebrate the official end of the military's 17-year policy that forced them to hide their sexual orientation with another official act — marriage.

... But in the eyes of the military the marriage will not be recognized and the couple will still be denied most of the benefits the Defense Department gives to heterosexual couples to ease the costs of medical care, travel, housing and other living expenses.

The Pentagon says the 1996 federal Defense of Marriage Act — which defines marriage for federal program purposes as a legal union between a man and woman — prohibits the Defense Department from extending those benefits to gay couples, even if they are married legally in certain states.

That means housing allowances and off-base living space for gay service members with partners could be decided as if they were living alone. Base transfers would not take into account their spouses. If two gay service members are married to each other they may be transferred to two different states or regions of the world. For heterosexual couples, the military tries to avoid that from happening. <More at: [www.sanluisobispo.com/2011/07/17/1685194/gay-military-couples-not-to-enjoy.html](http://www.sanluisobispo.com/2011/07/17/1685194/gay-military-couples-not-to-enjoy.html)>

## **TAPS – PASSINGS AND WAR STATISTICS**

### OIF/OEF – HACK DATE WEDNESDAY 20 JULY 2011

#### **OP'N IRAQI FREEDOM/NEW DAWN (2,721/323 DAYS)**

KILLED US	4,427/47
WOUNDED US [7/5/11]	31,931/224
OTHER US CASUALTIES [7/5/11]	40,422/1,672
DIED OF SELF-INFLICTED WOUNDS [7/5/11]	223/4
MISSING OR CAPTURED US	1
KILLED UK	179
KILLED OTHER COALITION	139
WOUNDED/INJURED COALITION	1,819
**KILLED CONTRACTORS [11/9/08]	1,182

KILLED IRAQI POLICE/MILITARY [1/25/09]	≥ 48,874
KILLED IRAQI CIVILIANS [7/20/11]	≥ 111,369–1,455,590
WOUNDED IRAQI MIL/CIVILIANS [9/20/10]	≥ 400K–1.556M
IRAQ REFUGEES INT./EXT. [9/27/07]	2.1M/2.5M

## OP'N ENDURING FREEDOM (3,574 DAYS)

KILLED US	1,675
WOUNDED US [7/5/11]	12,450
OTHER CASUALTIES US [7/5/11]	13,935
DIED OF SELF-INFLICTED WOUNDS [7/5/11]	62
MISSING OR CAPTURED US	0
KILLED COALITION	929
WOUNDED/INJURED COALITION (12/2/07)	1,602

KILLED AFGHANI POLICE/MILITARY [7/4/09]	≥ 11,152
KILLED AFGHANI CIVILIANS (9/10/2010)	≥ 8,813
WOUNDED AFGHANI MIL/CIVILIANS (2/24/2009)	46,322
AFGHAN REFUGEES INT./EXT. [9/27/07]	1.75M/4.8M
COST OF IRAQ WAR TO DATE	\$787,923,130,870
COST OF AFGHAN WAR TO DATE	\$435,632,564,032

NOTE: SOME NUMBERS DO NOT CHANGE BETWEEN ISSUES BECAUSE UPDATED FIGURES ARE NOT AVAILABLE AT PRESS TIME

\* This entry has been changed to "Non-mortal casualties" which includes wounded, non-hostile casualties, and diseased where medical air transport was required. \*\* Includes 280 additional contractor casualties reported in international press but not in US official figures

## NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE ACTIVATED AS OF MAY 10, 2011

This week the Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard announced a decrease in activated reservists, while the Army announced an increase. The net collective result is 372 fewer reservists activated than last week. At any given time, services may activate some units and individuals while deactivating others, making it possible for these figures to either increase or decrease. The total number currently on active duty from the Army National Guard and Army Reserve is 72,213; Navy Reserve, 4,961; Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, 9,873; Marine Corps Reserve, 6,137, and the Coast Guard Reserve, 777. This brings the total National Guard and Reserve personnel who have been activated to 93,961, including both units and individual augmentees. A cumulative roster of all National Guard and Reserve personnel who are currently activated may be found at [www.defense.gov/news/d20110712ngr.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/news/d20110712ngr.pdf).

## **AFTERTHOUGHTS ~ MISCELLANEOUS AND OTHER STUFF**

### **FOUR STAR LUXURY INCLUDES \$1.4M GROUNDS IMPROVEMENTS, \$300K PARTY ROOMS**

Bob Brewin 07/07/11

While many taxpayers struggle to make home mortgage payments, the Army requested more than \$2 million in its 2012 budget to lease, maintain and improve luxury housing for just three four-star officers.

This includes \$1.4 million for grounds renovations at a palatial house in Stuttgart, Germany and \$300,000 to "adequately size the official entertainment space" within the Coral Gables, Fla., home of Air Force General Douglas Fraser, commander of the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), according to the report on the 2012 Senate Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill released last week.

<More at: [http://whatsbrewin.nextgov.com/2011/07/four\\_star\\_luxury\\_includes\\_14m\\_grounds\\_improvements\\_300k\\_party\\_rooms.php](http://whatsbrewin.nextgov.com/2011/07/four_star_luxury_includes_14m_grounds_improvements_300k_party_rooms.php)>

## **ADD-ON ~ STUFF OF INTEREST**

### **FREE FRANCHISE FOR THE FORCES PROGRAM**

Las Vegas - June 29, 2011 - PRNewswire

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the unemployment rate for new veterans is 12.5 percent, far above the current national average of about 9 percent. There are more than 1 million unemployed veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and in order to combat this crisis, ActionCOACH has launched a program to provide veterans with better opportunities.

ActionCOACH, the world's number one business and executive coaching company, has launched a program that will provide business opportunities to 100 veterans, through its Free Franchise for the Forces program, which will give away \$7.6 million in free franchises to 100 eligible veterans in select U.S. states.

Interested Veterans can complete an online form at [www.actioncoachfranchise.com/franchisefortheforces/?page\\_id=42](http://www.actioncoachfranchise.com/franchisefortheforces/?page_id=42) to learn if they qualify. <More at: [www.veteransresources.org/2011/06/free-franchise-for-the-forces-program/](http://www.veteransresources.org/2011/06/free-franchise-for-the-forces-program/)>

## NOTICE

If at any time you cannot open a link in this newsletter to an article or web page that interests you, please let me know at [scook@vuft](mailto:scook@vuft); I keep a copy of most of the full articles, or can research an alternative route to the information. [Ed.]

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** I have been asked what guides my selection of articles. In general, I try to stick with articles that deal exclusively with our target group: serving military, veterans, retirees, and their families. I also favor articles that deal with the effect of Legislative or Executive inaction or bad actions that adversely affect our target group. I try not to pick those articles that have already been beaten to death in the regular press, but rather try to bring the reader articles that he or she might not run across in another medium. While we are non-partisan, I do not believe articles critical of government actions to be partisan as long as they are accurate and fair. Criticism, like dissent, is fair. Finally, I screen hundreds of articles for inclusions and for every article I include, I throw five or six away – good articles, but not as important as the ones selected.

I always appreciate contributions, whether it is opinion in Letter-to-the-Editor form, or articles that the reader believes would be good for our readership. Since I get a chance to vent once in awhile in these newsletters, I will certainly consider Op-Ed copy for inclusion. I always welcome reader comment or complaint. Sandy Cook, Editor <mailto:scook@vuft.org>

If you need to call us, our number is **1.805.530.6417**.

The phone is covered by a voice recorder 24 hours a day. We'll get back to you ASAP.