



AL233FL Newsletter



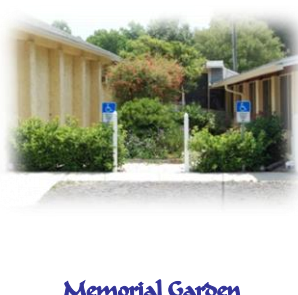
Volume 14, Issue 10

'SMOKE FREE POST'

OCTOBER 2014



Our Post Home



Memorial Garden



Commander Louis 'Pappy' Martin Pavilion

560 N. Wilderness Trail ~ Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082

Legionnaire meetings, first Thursday each month, 7:00pm

Auxiliary meetings, second Thursday each month, 7:00pm

Son's meetings, third Thursday each month, 6:30pm

Rider's meetings, first Sunday each month, 11:00am

Canteen hours:

MON-FRI: 10am until ?? hrs.

SAT: 4pm until ?? hrs. **Happy Hour 4-7pm**

On event Saturday's, call for opening time

SUN: 9am until ?? hrs. **Happy Hour 3-7pm**

(St.Johns County - closing hour is 2:00am)

Monday-Friday: Lunch 11:00am-1:00pm

Wednesday: Dinner 6:30pm-8:00pm

Friday: Dinner 6:30pm-8:00pm

Sunday: Breakfast 9:00am-11:30am

Website: www.AL233FL.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/AL233FL

Email: info@al233fl.org

Post telephone: 904.285.2484



We are a Smoke Free Post, 24/7



Smoking only allowed outside

In this issue:

Page 2	2014 - 2015 elected officers
Page 3	Officer reports - Legion
Page 4	Officer reports, Auxiliary & SAL
Page 5	Canteen, MIAP & Veterans Council reports,
Page 6	New members, Birthdays, Meal Sponsorship Program, Misc.
Page 7	Paid advertising business cards
Page 8	K9s September Graduation Class
Page 9	VA Benefits Series
Page 10	"
Page 11	"
Page 12	"
Page 13	Secretary of Defense Supplemental Guidance Letter - Discharges w/ PTSD
Page 14	Mailing Label



NEVER FORGET ~ POW's & MIA's



2014

OFFICERS

2015



Cdr. Roy Havekost



1st Vice Cdr. Dan Wortmann



2nd Vice Cdr. Don Mills



3rd Vice Cdr. & Adjutant
Sheri Martinez



4th Vice Cdr. Charlie Walker



Chaplain Wilbur Burnett



Finance Tom Leppeard



Sgt. at Arms Robert Scarlett



Service Officer & E-Board
Maury Lazenby



E-Board Jim Durnal



E-Board Mike Eatmon



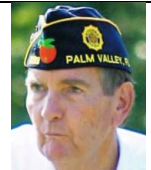
E-Board Ted Veber



E-Board Mike Williams

Vacant

Historian



Judge Advocate Ric Smith



Auxiliary President
Judy Mills

AUXILIARY:
1st V. President Kathy Helmly
2nd V. President *vacant*
Treasurer Allyson Bass
Secretary Angie Kees
Chaplain Celeste Sheble
SAA Sylvia Bass
Historian *vacant*
E-Board Dee Durnal
E-Board Debbie Eatmon
E-Board Patty Williams



SAL Cdr.
Jeff 'Tex' Ward



Riders Director
Bill Marshall

RIDERS:
Asst. Dir. Kevin Terranella
Treasurer Kathy Church
Secretary Virna Waldron
Chaplain Linda Williams
Road Capt. Bill Marshall
SAA Kevin Terranella
Historian Virna Waldron
Historian Kathy Helmly

SAL:

1st Vice Cdr. Howard Sheble
2nd Vice Cdr. Mike Shaar
Adjutant & Treas. Steve Willis
Chaplain Will Hurley
Historian John Gabbard



Canteen Mgr. Rita Connolly

BARTENDERS:

Anita
Allyson
Beth
Debbie
Lauren
Mike

Commanders corner:



I can't believe that September has already come and gone. I am glad it is over as I had to spend much time in bed with the flu and high fever, so I am glad its past. I would like to thank those members who attended and those who helped make this years' Law & Order Awards Ceremony a success. Congratulations go out to Cpl. Robbie Robertson, St. Johns Sheriff's Office and to Firefighter Art Naidzich, St. Johns Fire-Rescue, who were this years recipients of the Commendation Certificates and Law Enforcement Officer and Firefighter of the Year Awards. In addition Department Law & Order Chairman Tom Gora attended the ceremony and presented both men with Commendation Certificates from Department Commander Jay Conti Sr.

For God and Country,
Roy Havekost, Commander

Adjutant



As of September 25th, we are 64.455% with an October 1st goal of 65%. I have sent in 4 more so I fully expect to meet this goal. However, our next goal of 75% on November 5th is going to be challenging. We need will need 41 more renewals to meet this goal. My plans to address this is to mail out letters to all members who have not renewed for 2015 and let them know about our recent Post renovations and invite them down to see the Post. Many thanks to Al Hernandez for his assistance in getting members in Nocatee to renew!!

For God and Country,
Sheri Martinez, Adjutant

Service Officer



At the end of this newsletter I have included the 'First Installment' of my Service Officers VA Benefits Series. This is a four page document which covers, Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors. Please read this series, you may be eligible. Not sure if you qualify, you may call me for assistance.

For God and Country,
Sheri Martinez, Certified Service Officer

3rd Vice



Emergency preparedness is something we all must think about, especially during hurricane season. **Please help us help you!!** If you live alone or are housebound, please call or email me so we can create a "call list" for people that we will check on before, during and after a storm. My contact info is: (904) 790-2551 and adjutant@al233fl.org.

In the event of an emergency, you should already be prepared with the following items:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)
- Local maps

Other items to consider having ready if you know a storm is coming:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from www.ready.gov
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper – When diluted nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire Extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

For God and Country,
Sheri Martinez, 3rd Vice Commander

Auxiliary



Well folks the year is almost over and we are preparing for the holidays, oh I hate to think about it.

September we had some great meals on Wednesday night and helped on all Friday night dinners, which I would like to thank all who volunteer it is greatly appreciated.

September 20, 2014 the Auxiliary held a fundraiser with dinner of Ham and every kind of side dish you could imagine and don't forget the homemade desserts. I have heard nothing but great things about the dinner and would like to take the opportunity to thank all of you ladies and Robbie Bacom for his cornbread for the great job by all. The entertainment of Kenny Holliday and Mike Jagger with Pete and Sal in background was astronomical they rock the house and I don't think anyone was sitting down it was great. I would like to congratulate the gentleman who won the basket I don't know his name, but I know he is enjoying spoils of winning.

The Auxiliary needs cooks and or sponsors for October I will post the dates at a later date. October 25, 2014 will be the Auxiliary Halloween party you don't want to miss it, there will be prizes for costumes, great food and Karaoke by Wanda and John Be a Star. The Auxiliary is going to try and top last year's party so mark your calendars and get your costumes ready for a spooktacular good time. The flyers will be around the Legion and it will be posted on our Face book page and by emails.

The Auxiliary regular meeting is on October 9, 2014 at 7:00pm so plan on being there and help us finalize the plans for decorating the Legion and planning the party, hope to see you all there.

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY
Judy Mills ALA President
Unit 233

www.emblem.legion.org
the official Legion store



SAL



It is S.A.L. membership renewal time. This will be a major focus over the next few months as we endeavor to reach our 100+% membership goal. Due to an increase in the State fees we increased our dues to \$30. On that note, we are instigating an incentive plan for paying your dues early. For the next 2 months at the monthly meeting we will have a drawing. The winner will receive \$25 in drinks chips of their choice from the canteen and their name will appear in this column. Any member who has paid their dues will be eligible. YES, including those who have already paid and NO, you don't have to be in attendance (but it would sure be nice to see you there!) You can pay in cash (please put the money in an envelope along with your current phone number, mailing address and email) marked "Attention: Steve Willis" and give it to the bartender on duty. Or you can send a check made out to "American Legion – SAL" and send it to Steve Willis, 560 N. Wilderness Trail, Ponte Vedra, FL, 32082. Please include your phone number, current address and email. Remember that if you pay by November 11th you are automatically eligible to attend the **free** prime rib "Early Bird" dinner hosted by the Legion on January 10th! *The September winner was Ron Harbert. Congratulations!!*

Wilford Lyon sponsored AND cooked a delicious pasta dinner for our September of Wednesday Night Dinner (once a month – on the 3rd Wednesday). He was aided by Howard Sheble and John Paprelli. Please help us by volunteering at least once a year. That is not asking too much, is it? Even if you can't help out at least be there to buy a meal and support your Squadron and Post. Or, if you cannot afford the time to volunteer you can always contribute as a Gold Sponsor with a \$100. donation. This will help to pay for the food and someone to cook it. You also have the privilege to decide on the menu (within reason!) The next S.A.L. dinner is Wednesday, Oct. 22nd. Any ideas?

There are many exciting events and fundraisers coming in the near future so keep your eyes on the newsletter, visit the website (www.al233fl.org) or better yet, come in to your Post and have a drink and see what is happening! We also now have our own squadron Facebook page. If you are a social media aficionado go to "Sons Of The American Legion Squadron 233" and join the group. This will be a convenient and fun way to stay informed.

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding our Squadron or Post 233 issues, or are not receiving my email updates please contact me on my phone (904-233-0976) or email (flagman49@yahoo.com) – or better yet, attend the monthly meeting and share your thoughts and ideas with all of us! The next meeting is Thursday, Sept. 18th @ 6:30pm following the "K9's for Warriors" graduation ceremony. Now is the time to give back! If the same names keep showing up in this column it is because the same people are doing the volunteering.

REMEMBER: It is a privilege to be a member of the Sons of the American Legion organization! As male descendants we are honoring our fathers and forefathers who have served in the Armed Force, and in many cases gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

Please continue to keep all of our service men and women and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

God Bless Our Troops
Jeff "TEX" Ward, Commander – Squadron 233

Canteen



Special thanks to John Loughran, Carl and Janet Porcaro and Angie Kees for Publix bread pick-ups on Mondays and Thursdays. This is a great help. So many of our members are grateful for the Publix donations of pastries and bread each week.

We are still in need of volunteers for Sunday breakfast, Wednesday dinners and Friday dinners. If you can spare a couple hours to help out, it would be greatly appreciated. Just contact me at the Post at 285-2484.

October events will be:

Friday, October 3rd – Frankie Martin, Jr. will host karaoke
Friday, October 10 - Patrick Rose will be entertaining us with his music
Saturday, October 11 – Post 129 Legion Riders Poker Run
Friday, October 17 – Frankie Martin, Jr. will host karaoke
Thursday, October 23 – K-9 Graduation
Friday, October 24 – The Boz Man
Saturday, October 25 – ALA's Halloween Party
Friday, October 31 – Don Miniard will be on the keyboard and flute

I would like to acknowledge Greg Haagen of G&L Gasket Co. for donating and installing a new walkin cooler door seal. This has greatly improved the temperature in the cooler.

Rita Connolly, Canteen Manager

MIAP



Call to Honor #4 will be held on Friday, November 7, 2014 @ 1:00pm at the Jacksonville National Cemetery. Admiral Guillory, USN (retired), Director of Military Affairs for the City of Jacksonville asked us to take part in the city's "Week of Valor". We will be interring 18 veterans for this service which is open to everyone in our communities.

We are slowly making way getting a small amount of volunteers in other areas of FL but we are still in need of many more volunteers across the state. We will work with anyone, a volunteer does not have to be a member of any veterans organization. If you know of anyone who is interested with our program please send them my way.

As always MIAP – FL would like to thank the American Legion members of the 5th District for all the support we have been getting. It takes a team of people to get the work done to honor our "forgotten heroes".

Please go to our website for updates and more information about MIAP nationwide.

Kathy Church
MIAP- FL State Coordinator
miapjax@yahoo.com
www.miap.us

Veterans Council, St. Johns County



VETERANS TREATMENT COURT to start in St Johns County.
Veterans are needed to volunteer as mentors.

Another Super meeting tonight at the Veterans Council of St. Johns County. St Johns County, following in Volusia, Duval & Clay counties is starting a Veterans Treatment Court. I know you all you have seen the Drug Court on TV, well this is like this only it is for Veterans who have been arrested for DUI, Domestic Violence, Non payment of child support, etc. Instead of doing ti...me in prison they have an opportunity to go through a 9-12 month program (abiding by all the rules) and when they graduate they will have no record of their arrest. This is not a "Free Ticket" program.

The program has the support of the Sheriff Dept, Judges, DVA, & many more. This can be a win win program not only for the veteran (honorably discharged) but also good for the jail system and the counties that have to pay on an average of \$80/da/prisoner.

Veterans are needed who are willing to volunteer their time as mentors. If you are interested in helping with this program please let me know & I will put you in touch with the appropriate people. The commencement date for this program to start is all goes as planned is January 2015.

Duval County has had this program for about 21/2 yrs now and they have had 16 veterans graduate with only 2 that failed and were sent to prison. Currently they have about 30 others in the program right now.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Bill Dudley, Chairman of the Veterans Council St. Johns County @ ANUDAY00@aol.com.

Kathy Church, ALA 5th District FL - Secretary



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS & TRANSFERS

John Thomas Bell, Navy; Galen Steele, Army; Thomas Durkin, Army; Bill Joransen, Navy; Phillip Mock, Army; Michael D'Angelo, Army; Walle Waters, Air Force; Ronald Swanson, Navy; Terry Pasket, Navy; Theodore Rusnack, Army; Aaron Kaiser, Navy; Eliyanna Heilig, Marines; Mychale Fraser, Marines; and Daniel Moreland, Marines.



OCTOBER BIRTHDAY'S



- 2 Fred Harllee
- 3 Peyton Stockton
- 7 Susan Lamolinara (*In memoriam*)
- 9 Ray Root
Bob Duval
- 11 John "Cap'n Ski" Kozlowski
Patricia Jennings
Jason Bass
- 12 Chris Hogg
- 13 Shirley Mahoney

- 18 Charlie Walker
Beverly Beek
- 19 Dixie Kieffer
- 29 Dave Cook (*In memoriam*)
- 30 Judy Nagel
- 31 Billy Pinto

Your birthday can be listed here by sending your name, month and day to webmaster@al233fl.org or call Roy @ 287-6909

The Post 233 calendar of events is online at:

<http://www.al233fl.org/ecalendar.htm>

POST 233 "MEAL DEAL" SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Are you one of those people who would love to volunteer to help your Post but you don't trust your culinary skills or aren't able to manage the kitchen duties?

We've got a DEAL for you! There are others willing to do the work for you and better yet, you get all the credit. Become a Post 233 LEGIONNAIRE MEAL SPONSOR and all the planning, shopping, cooking, service and clean-up will be taken care of and you will be honored as that Wednesday evening's Meal Sponsor. Your dinner will be on the house and you can even request a favorite meal you would like to have prepared.

There is a Sponsorship Level for everyone and your Sponsorship is a tax deductible donation to American Legion Post 233. Your donation will be used to offset the food cost and compensate the evening's Chef for their time and effort on your behalf.

GOLD SPONSOR - 100.00 - SILVER SPONSOR - 50.00 - BRONZE SPONSOR - 25.00



Planning an outdoor Party ?



Consider renting our pavilion area for your next birthday, anniversary, family gathering, business meeting or picnic. For details contact our Canteen Manager or any of our bartenders for more details.

Go to AL233FL.org for pix. Call 285-2484.

Smoking is permitted outside and at the pavilion bar.

POST 233 is a FREE WiFi spot

SUPPORT THE BUSINESSES THAT HELP SUPPORT YOUR POST

PAGEAUTHORS
Web Design
 St. Johns, FL 32259
 MEMBER: IAWMD ~ HTMLWG ~ MSSBN

Roy Havekost
904-287-6909
www.PAGEAUTHORS.COM
 Established 1996

STEVEN M. BARNETT

INVESTMENT EXECUTIVE
 Phone: (904) 645-8350 | Cell: (904) 254-4334
 11949 Arbor Lake Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32225
steven.barnett@investfinancial.com
 Registered Representative of INVEST Financial Corporation, member
 FINRA/SIPC. INVEST and its affiliated insurance agencies offer
 securities and certain insurance products.


peyton stockton
 REALTOR

904-655-3554
Peyton.Stockton@gmail.com
 240 Ponte Vedra Park Dr., #201
 Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082
peytonstockton.net

COLDWELL BANKER
VANGUARD REALTY
Real Estate • Insurance • Mortgage

MLS

P.S. Service you can count on!
 over 25 years of experience.


COWGILL'S HOT SAUCE
 "THE BEST"

Brenda Cowgill
 Owner

Tel: 904-285-5954
 Cell: 904-860-8613
 Ponte Vedra Beach,
 Florida 32082

bmcowgill44@msn.com


Pink Cleaning, LLC
 "Everyday life just got easier"

Suzi Blazek
 Owner

904.716.1789
suziblazek@yahoo.com
www.facebook.com/PinkCleaningllc

VIDEO FOR FUN
 PRODUCTION, TRANSFER & DUPLICATION
 711 S. 3RD STREET, JACKSONVILLE BEACH, FL 32250, U.S. OF A.

904-241-7006

MBLAZEK@VIDEOFORFUN.NET
VIDEOFORFUN.NET


MIRO BLAZEK
 OWNER

PALM VALLEY GOLF CLUB
and Practice Range
 A Family Golf Learning Center



JACK HORD
 P.G.A. PROFESSIONAL
 SUPERINTENDENT
www.palmvalleygolfing.com

PROSHOP 824-9279
 MAINTENANCE 810-5054
 1075 PALM VALLEY RD.
 PONTE VEDRA 32081

Alhambra
 theatre & dining

904.641.1212
csmith@alhambrajax.com | CRAIG SMITH

\$25.00 per year to advertise your business card on both the monthly newsletter and Post website.

Make check payable to American Legion Post 233.
 Your check and business card can be left in the Commanders mailbox.

Business cards that missed the payment deadline will be posted immediately to the website when your payment is received.

More business card advertising available here...



September 2014 GRADUATING CLASS

Dan & Grayhawk, Blakely & Chance, David & Drake, and Jeremy & Trooper.
Thank you for your service and welcome home!



VA Benefits Series

Here is the first installment of Post 233's "VA Benefits" series. This series is copied and pasted right out of the VA's, "*Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors*" Handbook. There is no attempt to interpret or explain these benefits. If you feel you are eligible and would like some assistance in applying for benefits, please contact me at (904) 790-2551 and we will begin the process together.

VA Health Care Benefits

VA operates the nation's largest integrated health care system with more than 1,500 sites of care, including hospitals, community clinics, community living centers, domiciliaries, readjustment counseling centers, and various other facilities. For additional information on VA health care, visit: www.va.gov/health.

Basic Eligibility

A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable may qualify for VA health care benefits. Reservists and National Guard members may also qualify for VA health care benefits if they were called to active duty (other than for training only) by a Federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty.

Minimum Duty Requirements:

Veterans who enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980, or who entered active duty after Oct. 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty in order to be eligible. This minimum duty requirement may not apply to Veterans discharged for hardship, early out or a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

VA Enrollment

For most Veterans, entry into the VA health care system begins by applying for enrollment. Veterans can now apply and submit their application for enrollment (VA Form 1010EZ), online at www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez/. If assistance is needed while completing the on-line enrollment form, an online chat representative is available to answer questions Monday - Friday between 8 a.m. and 8 pm EST. Veterans can also enroll by calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387) Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern time, or at any VA health care facility or VA regional benefits office. Once enrolled, Veterans can receive health care at VA health care facilities anywhere in the country.

Veterans enrolled in the VA health care system are afforded privacy rights under federal law. VA's Notice of Privacy Practices, which describes how VA may use and disclose Veterans' medical information, is also available on line at:

www.va.gov/vhapublications/viewpublication.asp?pub_ID=1089

The following four categories of Veterans are not required to enroll, but are urged to do so to permit better planning of health resources:

1. Veterans with a service-connected disability of 50 percent or more.
2. Veterans seeking care for a disability the military determined was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, but which VA has not yet rated, within 12 months of discharge.
3. Veterans seeking care for a service-connected disability only.
4. Veterans seeking registry examinations (Ionizing Radiation, Agent Orange, Gulf War/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn and Depleted Uranium).

Priority Groups

During enrollment, each Veteran is assigned to a priority group. VA uses priority groups to balance demand for VA health care enrollment with resources. Changes in available resources may reduce the number of priority groups VA can enroll. If this occurs, VA will publicize the changes and notify affected enrollees. A description of priority groups follows:

Group 1:

- Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 50 percent or more and/or Veterans determined by VA to be unemployable due to service-connected conditions.

Group 2:

- Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 30 or 40 percent.

Group 3:

- Veterans who are former POWs.
- Veterans awarded the Purple Heart Medal.
- Veterans awarded the Medal of Honor.
- Veterans whose discharge was for a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.
- Veterans with VA service-connected disabilities rated 10 percent or 20 percent.
- Veterans awarded special eligibility classification under Title 38, U.S.C., § 1151, "benefits for individuals disabled by treatment or vocational rehabilitation."

Group 4:

- Veterans receiving increased compensation or pension based on their need for regular aid and attendance or by reason of being permanently housebound.
- Veterans determined by VA to be catastrophically disabled.

Group 5:

- Nonservice-connected Veterans and noncompensable service-connected Veterans rated 0 percent, whose annual income and/ or net worth are not greater than the VA financial thresholds.
- Veterans receiving VA Pension benefits.
- Veterans eligible for Medicaid benefits.

Group 6:

- Compensable 0 percent Service-connected Veterans.
- Veterans exposed to ionizing radiation during atmospheric testing or during the occupation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Project 112/SHAD participants.
- Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975.
- Veterans who served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations from Aug. 2, 1990, through Nov. 11, 1998.
- Veterans who served in a theater of combat operations after Nov.11, 1998, as follows:
- Veterans discharged from active duty on or after Jan. 28, 2003, for five years post discharge;
- Veterans who served on active duty at Camp Lejeune for not fewer than 30 days beginning Jan. 1, 1957 and ending Dec. 31, 1987.

Group 7:

- Veterans with incomes below the geographic means test income thresholds and who agree to pay the applicable copayment.

Group 8:

- Veterans with gross household incomes above the VA national income threshold and the geographically-adjusted income threshold for their resident location and who agrees to pay copayments. Veterans eligible for enrollment: Noncompensable 0-percent service-connected and:
 - Subpriority a: Enrolled as of Jan. 16, 2003, and who have remained enrolled since that date and/ or placed in this subpriority due to changed eligibility status.
 - Subpriority b: Enrolled on or after June 15, 2009 whose income exceeds the current VA National Income Thresholds or VA National Geographic Income Thresholds by 10 percent or less

Veterans eligible for enrollment:

- Nonservice-connected and Subpriority c: Enrolled as of Jan. 16, 2003, and who remained enrolled since that date and/ or placed in this subpriority due to changed eligibility status
- Subpriority d: Enrolled on or after June 15, 2009 whose income exceeds the current VA National Income Thresholds or VA National Geographic Income Thresholds by 10 percent or less

Veterans NOT eligible for enrollment:

- Veterans not meeting the criteria above:
- Subpriority e: Noncompensable 0 percent service-connected
- Subpriority f: Nonservice-connected

VA's current income thresholds can be located at: www.va.gov/healtheligibility/Library/AnnualThresholds.asp

Recently Discharged Combat Veterans

Veterans, including activated reservists and members of the National Guard, are eligible for the enhanced Combat Veteran benefits if they served on active duty in a theater of combat operations after Nov. 11, 1998, and have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

Effective Jan. 28, 2008, combat Veterans discharged from active duty on or after Jan. 28, 2003, are eligible for enhanced enrollment placement into Priority Group 6 (unless eligible for higher enrollment Priority Group placement) for five-years post discharge.

Veterans receive VA care and medication at no cost for any condition that may be related to their combat service.

Veterans who enroll with VA under this Combat Veteran authority will remain enrolled even after their five-year post discharge period ends. At the end of their post discharge period, VA will reassess the Veteran's information (including all applicable eligibility factors) and make a new enrollment decision. For additional information, call 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Eastern time.

Special Access to Care Service

Disabled Veterans: who are 50 percent or more disabled from service-connected conditions, unemployable due to service-connected conditions, or receiving care for a service-connected disability receive priority in scheduling of hospital or outpatient medical appointments. Women Veterans are eligible for the same VA benefits as male Veterans. Comprehensive health services are available to women Veterans including primary care, specialty care, mental health care, residential treatment and reproductive health care services

VA provides management of acute and chronic illnesses, preventive care, contraceptive and gynecology services, menopause management, and cancer screenings, including pap smears and mammograms. Maternity care is covered in the Medical Benefits package. Women Veterans can receive maternity care from an OB/GYN, family practitioner, or certified nurse midwife who provides pregnancy care.

VA covers the costs of care for newborn children of women Veterans for seven days after birth. Infertility evaluation and limited treatments are also available. Women Veterans Program Managers are available at all VA facilities to assist women Veterans in their health care and benefits. For more information, visit <http://www.womenshealth.va.gov/>.

Military Sexual Trauma

Military sexual trauma (MST) is the term that the Department of Veterans Affairs uses to refer to sexual assault or repeated, threatening sexual harassment that occurred while the Veteran was serving on active duty (or active duty for training if the service was in the National Guard or Reserves). VA health care professionals provide counseling and treatment to help Veterans overcome health issues related to MST. Veterans who are not otherwise eligible for VA health care may still receive these services. Appropriate services are provided for any injury, illness or psychological condition related to such trauma. For additional information visit: <http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome.asp>

Veterans with Spinal Cord Injury/Disorders There are 24 VA medical centers in the United States with specialized centers (called Spinal Cord Injury Centers) for Veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D). Comprehensive rehabilitation, SCI/D specialty care, medical, surgical, primary, preventive, psychological, respite, and home care are provided at these centers by interdisciplinary teams which include physicians, nurses, therapists (physical, occupational, kinesiotherapists, therapeutic recreation), psychologists, social workers, vocational counselors, dietitians, respiratory therapy, and other specialists as needed.

There are five Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Centers that provide long term care for Veterans with SCI/D. In VA facilities that do not have SCI Centers, there is a designated team that consists of a physician, nurse, and social worker to address primary care needs for Veterans with SCI/D and to make referrals to SCI Centers. These SCI Centers and the teams in facilities that do not have centers, comprise the VA SCI System of Care. Some of the services provided in this system of care include rehabilitation, prosthetics and durable medical equipment, orthotics, sensory aids, assistive technology, environmental modifications, telehealth, ventilator weaning and care, chronic pain management, mental health treatment, drivers training, peer counseling, substance abuse treatment, vocational counseling, and care-giver training and support.

There is a long-standing Memorandum of Agreement between VA and the Department of Defense (DoD) to provide specialized care at VA medical facilities for Active Duty Servicemembers who have sustained a spinal cord injury. Ongoing collaboration and education between VA and DoD ensures continuity of care and services. For more information about SCI/D care and the eligibility requirements for the above benefits and services, contact your local VA SCI/D Center and/or visit <http://www.sci.va.gov>.

OEF/OIF/OND Care Management

Each VA medical center has an OEF/OIF/OND Care Management team in place to coordinate patient care activities and ensure that Servicemembers and Veterans are receiving patient-centered, integrated care and benefits. OEF/OIF/OND clinical case managers screen all returning combat Veterans for the need for case management services to identify Veterans who may be at risk so VA can intervene early and provide assistance. Severely ill or injured Servicemembers/Veterans are provided with a case manager and other OEF/OIF/OND Servicemembers/Veterans are assigned a case manager as indicated by a positive screening assessment or upon request. OEF/OIF/OND case managers are experts at identifying and accessing resources within their health care system as well as in the local community to help Veterans recover from their injuries and readjust to civilian life.

Financial Assessment

Most Veterans not receiving VA disability compensation or pension payments must provide a financial assessment to determine whether they are below VA income thresholds. VA is currently not enrolling new applicants who decline to provide financial information unless they have a special eligibility factor exempting them from disclosure. VA's income thresholds are located at: www.va.gov/healtheligibility/Library/AnnualThresholds.asp

The financial assessment includes all household income and net worth, including Social Security, retirement pay, unemployment insurance, interest and dividends, workers' compensation, black lung benefits and any other income. Also considered are assets such as the market value of property that is not the primary residence, stocks, bonds, notes, individual retirement accounts, bank deposits, savings accounts and cash. Medical Services and Medication Copayments Some Veterans are required to make copayments (copays) to receive VA health care and/or medications.

Inpatient Care:

- Priority Group 7 and certain other Veterans are responsible for paying 20 percent of VA's inpatient copay or \$236.80 for the first 90 days of inpatient hospital care during any 365-day period. For each additional 90 days, the charge is \$118.40. In addition, there is a \$2 per diem charge.
- Priority Group 8 and certain other Veterans are responsible for VA's inpatient copay of \$1,184 for the first 90 days of care during any 365-day period. For each additional 90 days, the charge is \$592. In addition, there is a \$10 per diem charge.

Extended Care: Veterans may be subject to a copay for extended care services. The copay is determined by a calculation using information from completion of VA Form 10-10EC, Application for Extended Care Services.

VA social workers or case managers will counsel Veterans or their family representatives on their eligibility and copay requirements. The copay amount is based on the Veteran's financial situation determined upon application for extended care services and can range from \$0 to a maximum copayment amount of \$97 a day.

NOTE: Veterans determined to be catastrophically disabled are exempt from copays applicable to the receipt of noninstitutional respite care, noninstitutional geriatric evaluation, noninstitutional adult day health care, homemaker/home health aide, purchase skilled home care, home-based primary care, hospice services and any other noninstitutional alternative extended care services.

Outpatient Care:

While many Veterans qualify for free healthcare services based on a VA compensable service-connected condition or other qualifying factor, most Veterans are asked to complete an annual financial assessment, to determine if they qualify for free services. Veterans whose income exceeds the established VA Income Thresholds as well as those who choose not to complete the financial assessment must agree to pay required copays to become eligible for VA healthcare services.

- Primary Care Services: \$15
- Specialty Care Services: \$50

NOTE: Copay amount is limited to a single charge per visit regardless of the number of health care providers seen in a single day. The copay amount is based on the highest level of service received.

Outpatient Visits Not Requiring Copays:

Certain services are not charged a copay. Copays do not apply to publicly announced VA health fairs or outpatient visits solely for preventive screening and/or vaccinations, such as vaccinations for influenza and pneumococcal, or screening for hypertension, hepatitis B, tobacco, alcohol, hyperlipidemia, breast cancer, cervical cancer, Human papillomavirus (HPV), colorectal cancer by fecal occult blood testing, education about the risks and benefits of prostate cancer screening, HIV testing and prevention counseling (including the distribution of condoms), and weight reduction or smoking cessation counseling (individual and group). Laboratory, plain film radiology, electrocardiograms, and hospice care and in-home video telehealth are also exempt from copays. While hepatitis C screening and HIV testing and counseling are exempt, medical care for HIV and hepatitis C are NOT exempt from copays.

Medication:

While many Veterans are exempt for medication co-pays, nonservice-connected Veterans in Priority Groups 7 and 8 are charged \$9 for each 30-day or less supply of medication provided on an outpatient basis for the treatment of a nonservice-connected condition. Veterans enrolled in Priority Groups 2 through 6 are charged \$8 for each 30-day or less supply of medication; the maximum copay for medications that will be charged in calendar year 2013 is \$960 for nonservice-connected medications.

NOTE: Copays apply to prescription and over-the-counter medications, such as aspirin, cough syrup or vitamins, dispensed by a VA pharmacy. Copays are not charged for medical supplies, such as syringes or alcohol wipes. Copays do not apply to condoms.

Health Savings Accounts (HSA) can be utilized to make VA copayments. HSAs are usually linked to High Deductible Health Plans (HDHPs). Private Health Insurance Billing VA is required to bill private health insurance providers for medical care, supplies and medications provided for treatment of Veterans' non-service connected conditions. Generally, VA cannot bill Medicare, but can bill Medicare supplemental health insurance for covered services. VA is authorized to bill and accept reimbursement from High Deductible Health Plans (HDHPs) as well as employer-sponsored Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRAs) for care provided for non-service connected conditions.

All Veterans applying for VA medical care are required to provide information on their health insurance coverage, including coverage provided under policies of their spouses. Veterans are not responsible for paying any remaining balance of VA's insurance claim not paid or covered by their health insurance, and any payment received by VA may be used to offset "dollar for dollar" a Veteran's VA copayment responsibility.



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1 000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

SEP 03 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS

SUBJECT: Supplemental Guidance to Military Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records Considering Discharge Upgrade Requests by Veterans Claiming Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Recent attention has been focused upon the petitions of Vietnam veterans to Military Department Boards for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCM/NR) for the purposes of upgrading their discharges based on claims of previously unrecognized Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In these cases, PTSD was not recognized as a diagnosis at the time of service and, in many cases, diagnoses were not made until decades after service was completed. To help ensure consistency across the Services, this memorandum provides supplemental policy guidance for BCMR/NRs on these applications.

BCM/NRs will fully and carefully consider every petition based on PTSD brought by each veteran. This includes a comprehensive review of all materials and evidence provided by the petitioner. Quite often, however, the records of Service members who served before PTSD was recognized, including those who served in the Vietnam theater, do not contain substantive information concerning medical conditions in either Service treatment records or personnel records. It has therefore been extremely difficult to document conditions that form a basis for mitigation in punitive, administrative, or other legal actions or to establish a nexus between PTSD and the misconduct underlying the Service member's discharge with a characterization of service of under other than honorable conditions.

BCM/NRs are not courts, nor are they investigative agencies. To assist the BCM/NRs in the review of records and to ensure fidelity of the review protocol in these cases, the supplemental policy guidance which details medical considerations, mitigating factors, and procedures for review is provided (Attachment). This guidance is not intended to interfere with or impede the Boards' statutory independence to correct errors or remove injustices through the correction of military records.

This policy guidance, which is intended to ease the application process for veterans who are seeking redress and assist the Boards in reaching fair and consistent results in these difficult cases, shall be accompanied by a public messaging campaign by the Services throughout 2014 and 2015 that is targeted toward veterans groups and leverages existing relationships with the Department of Veterans Affairs.



OSD009883-14

Palm Valley Post #233
The American Legion
560 N. Wilderness Trail
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082

PLACE
U.S. POSTAGE
HERE



Mailing Address:

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED