

Pennsylvania
State Council



The PASC Newsletter

August, 2019

Vietnam Veterans of America Pennsylvania State Council

A Congressionally Chartered Veterans Service Organization

An acknowledgement is in order as Vice-President Barry Willever departs the VVA Pennsylvania State Council. The majority of his time was spent building VVA 415 in the Lehigh Valley until he was appointed 3rd VP at PASC. Through the years, Barry has recruited many veterans into the fold of VVA. In addition, he has gone into elementary, secondary and collegiate level classes to speak about his tour of duty. He has unselfishly transported countless veterans for treatment to Wilkes-Barre Medical Facility, the Allentown Clinic and other VA facilities.



Barry has worked tirelessly to enroll and advise Veterans about their claims and what they are entitled to. He has transported Veterans to events such as Rolling Thunder and encourages Veterans to participate in those types of activities. He has advocated for the POW/MIA issue and has encouraged facilities to fly the POW/MIA flag on their premises.



His Veteran advocacy will not end, however, because he will be channeling his efforts into the suicide prevention realm. Much must be done in that area and he is the right man to do it. We wish him well and God Speed.



Michelle Wilcox singing our National Anthem at the Convention in Spokane



This was billed as the “Last and Final Rolling Thunder.”

Although rumors have it that other organizations will be underwriting the increasing cost.

In memory of the Vietnam Veteran

During the war, the United States lost 58,220 military personnel, in which 47,434 were killed in action while 10,786 died by other causes.

Among the allies, South Korea suffered the highest casualties with 4,407 killed in action.

Australia had 500 deaths. The total of 500 deaths comprises 426 battle casualties and 74 non-battle casualties.

Approximately 20,000 Canadians served in Vietnam under the US flag. Of that number an estimated 12,000 saw combat in Vietnam, and at least 134 were killed or declared missing there. Canada however, only lists 125 as killed in Vietnam.

Thailand suffered 351 deaths.

More than 3000 New Zealand military and civilian personnel served in Vietnam between 1963 and 1975. At its peak in 1968, New Zealand's military force numbered only 548. Thirty-seven men died while on active service and 187 were wounded. Two civilians serving with the surgical and Red Cross teams also lost their lives. As many as 83 New Zealanders died in Vietnam to references.



A New Drinking Water Crises hits Military Bases Around The Country

The U.S. military's use of firefighting foam that contains potentially dangerous chemical compounds could have serious health consequences for the workers who handle it and those who live nearby.

The Department of Defense had identified 401 military bases that could be contaminated with the toxic compounds known as PFAS, as of August, 2017. The Environmental Working Group and Northeastern University have mapped at least 712 documented cases of PFAS contamination across 49 states as of July 2019. That map includes contamination on military bases along with industrial plants, commercial airports and firefighting training sites.

Dubbed "the forever chemical", PFAS don't naturally break down in the environment, which explains why some water sources are still contaminated from AFFF use decades ago.

The Centers for Disease control recognizes an array of health effects linked to PFAS exposure, such as lowering a woman's chance of getting pregnant, issues with childhood development and even cancer.

As of July, 2019, the Department of Defense has spent more than 550 Million of PFAS investigators and responses including providing bottled water and in-home water purification filters systems, according to their spokesperson. The DoD has not actually come up with a plan to actually clean up the PFAS contamination across the country. The rough estimate would be about 2 Billion dollars



PFAS are man-made compounds that do not break down and can stay in the environment and your body indefinitely.

Memorandum

From Jake
To VVA State Council
RE Tech For Troops

Tech for Troops

Tech For Troops is the Fastest Growing Veterans Organization Bridging the Digital Divide for Veterans and their Families in the USA. We are a Non-Partisan 501c-3 Non-Profit Corporation that provides veterans with skills, computers and IT workforce training. We will accomplish this by providing veterans and the children of veterans in need with free, refurbished computers and opportunities to partner through T4T with company businesses that provide training or networking experiences.

Jake can attest to their mission statement and has used them. In addition, many of us discard unused technology when it could be refurbished and put back into action. You can also donate so they can continue their wonderful public service.

Important Notification for Smokers and Tobacco users!

Beginning October 1, 2019, all employees, patients, residents, visitors, contractors, volunteers and vendors are no longer permitted to smoke or use tobacco at any VA medical center campus and outpatient clinics.

VHA Directives [1085](#) and [1085.01](#) cover all tobacco products and smoking materials, including, but not limited to:

- Cigarettes
- Electronic nicotine delivery systems including e-cigarettes and e-cigars
- Vape pens
- Cigars and pipes
- Matches, lighters and lighter fluid

Any other combustion of tobacco

You are strongly encouraged to leave all tobacco and smoking materials at home. To reduce the risk of ignition near oxygen or other flammable gases used at our facilities, some areas may require materials to be stored during your visit.

All medical centers throughout VA Healthcare-VISN 4 offer tobacco treatment services for Veterans. If you would like more information about tobacco treatment, please contact your VA primary care team or visit www.va.gov/health/smokefree/.

We appreciate your cooperation and compliance to this new policy, and we thank you for allowing us to serve your health care needs.

Charles R. Thilges
Acting Network Director
VA Healthcare-VISN 4



Adaptive Scuba Programs for Disabled Vets

LifeWaters is a non-profit that improves the lives of disabled Veterans by offering scuba diving and scuba certifications as part of recreational water therapy. A dedicated staff of volunteers, including Spinal Cord Injury therapists, doctors, nurses, Veterans and civilians provide different services depending on needs, desires and skill level. They have amputee scuba diving, disabled Veteran scuba diving and other scuba diving programs available



Visiting the VA system for whatever ailment you have, they just might recommend “Make the Connection” for you to read. There are brochures and you can go on line to listen to vets with the similar problem you have and what they did to ease the burden.



[Pilot Flies His Fallen Vietnam War Hero Dad Home](#)

[Another Pleads Guilty in Multi-million Dollar Scam of VA Spina Bifida Program](#)

[VA Cuts Off Assisted Living Home after Finding Veteran Dead for 4 Days](#)

[Pending Law Could Help Vets Get Treatment at the VA for Toxic Exposure](#)

[Coast Guard Members' Exposure to Dispersant Raised Likelihood of Neurological Symptoms in Study](#)

[VA Announces Updates to Disability Rating Schedule](#)

You can find the full, complete story at “Web Weekly” on line.



Get Your Digital Shadow Box on [TogetherWeServed.com](https://www.togetherweserved.com)

To help preserve the memories of service, Together We Served now offers a free digital shadow box to all Veterans. Each military service page displays a Veteran's photos, rank insignia, medals, awards, badges, patches, dates and locations of boot camp, training schools and unit assignments.

Together We Served (TWS) is an online community connecting and honoring every American who has worn the uniform of the United States military. Reconnect with old friends **(and even view your boot camp pictures!)** to share your service story as a lasting legacy for generations to come.

JOHN VETERAN, MSGT

USA RETIRED

RANK
Master Sergeant

SERVICE
1967 - 1992

MOS
18Z-Special Forces Senior Sergeant

PRIMARY UNIT
1968-1970, Detachment B-55 (5th Mobile Strike Force Command)/Detachment A-504 (2nd MSF Battalion)

UNITED STATES ARMY

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The digital shadow box features a central profile for John Veteran, MSGT. It includes a photo of him in military uniform, a Nike Force Airborne patch, and a collection of military medals and ribbons. On the right, there is a Special Forces beret with a crossed-sabers emblem and a sergeant's rank insignia. The background is dark green with gold text and VA seals in the corners.



VVA Chapters Coming Together!

Every year Chapters 678 and 415 come together with a fund raiser and membership drive with an association called:

Vettes-4-Vets

We set up tables, watch as they come rolling in and have a good time meeting new people and renewing old friendships.



President Donald Trump holds up a presidential memorandum that he signed that discharges the federal student loan debt of totally and permanently disabled veterans following his speech at the American Veterans (AMVETS) 75th National Convention in Louisville, Ky., WPresident Trump also said the federal income tax on the forgiven loans will be waived, imploring states to do the same. He commended the countless veterans who made great sacrifices to protect the United States, and called them incredible people.

“They’ve made a sacrifice that’s so great and they’re such incredible people, and they never complain, they never complain,” he stated.

The new executive order displays the president’s undying support for the armed services and veterans, joining the long list of pro-veteran legislation passed this term.

“We have also expanded the GI Bill so that veterans can use their benefits to get an education at any point in their lifetime,” the president continued. “A crucial reform to expand opportunity to veterans in every stage in their career — that’s a big thing.”



Please get your
Household Goods
Reports in
To Jake ASAP