

Friends of the San Jose Vet Center

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AROUND THE VET CENTER

Life isn't always easy after a deployment. That's where Vet Centers can help. They offer a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services to combat Veterans and their families. They can guide you through many of the major adjustments in lifestyle that often occur after you return from combat.

There is FREE and CONFIDENTIAL (Even From The VA) help available on all of these issues. You deserve Your Best Life Back. The SJVC is at **(408) 993-0729**

Adjustment Issues	Education	Isolation	Relationships
Aging	Emotional Injury	Job Problems	Retirement
Alcohol	Employment	Jobs	San Jose
Anger	Events	Legal Issues	Schizophrenia
Anxiety	Family Relationships	Light Sensitive	Sexual Trauma
Bereavement	Financial Issues	Loss of Interest	Sleep Issues
Bipolar Disorder	Flashbacks	Loss of Pleasure	Spirituality
Civilian Life	Food	Memory	Stress
Claims and Appeals	Gambling	Mourning	Suicide
Clothing	Group Counseling Schedule	Nightmares	TBI
Concentration	Guilt	Noise Sensitive	Training
Confusion	Headaches	Numbness	Transitioning from Service
CO-WORKERS	Homelessness	On Edge	Transportation
Depression	Hopelessness	Pain	Vet Center & San Jose
Dizziness	Hunger	Physical Injury	Weight
Drugs	Hyper Awareness	PTSD	Withdrawal
Eating	Irritability	Reckless Behavior	Women's Issues

The San Jose Vet Center (SJVC) is currently working with about 2,000 vets a month – One At A Time!

And, THE SAN JOSE VET CENTER IS THE #1 VET CENTER IN THE NATION.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Around the vet center – including 60 issues you and your family can get FREE AND CONFIDENTIALLY in the San Jose Vet Center Network

Vet happenings

- Your DD214
- GI Bill Update
- Camp Lejeune Water contamination update;
- Presumptive Agent Orange Diseases
- NEW Mental Health Care for OTH Discharged Veterans

Issue of the month - ANXIETY

Help a buddy

It's Up to You

Wrap-up of the 2017 Veterans Resource Fair

Aside from being the Only VC in the USA open 7 days a week, 85% of the staff are also Combat Veterans trained and certified to help you.

Don't let another day of pain or confusion rule your life. Take one step forward on a path that can give you relief from the torment. Contact The San Jose Vet Center today and allow them the privilege of helping you reclaim Your Best Life! **(408) 993-0729** You can even start off anonymously!

VET HAPPENINGS

is information and commentary from my good friend "pegleg", Jerry Donnellan of the VSA of Rockland NY.

Vietnam Vets - Don't be caught dead without your DD-214. I can't tell you how many calls our office gets from widows or family members when a vet has passed because they don't have a DD-214.

Why Vietnam vets? Actually it's all vets, but Vietnam vets are stepping off this planet at a rate of 390 per day – Yup, I didn't believe it either. We have surpassed the World War II vets who were at 372 a day. In the case of the World War II vets they would need a copy of their Discharge.

Let me see if I can briefly explain the difference:

You see, a WWII veteran didn't get a DD-214 because the DD stands for Defense Department, which didn't come to be until August of 1949. Prior to that, Discharges were issued by the War Department.

This may be more information than you need, but suffice it to say your family will already be upset and they don't need another headache like searching for paperwork. The lack of this paperwork can prevent you from getting a military funeral, being buried in a veterans' cemetery, getting the flag that covers the casket, a stone marker, and a number of other things.

So what I would strongly suggest is that you take your DD-214/ Discharge and give it to your closest relative and keep another copy with your will.

If you're not a vet, but the proud owner of one, ask him/her for a copy of their DD-214/Discharge – the reason being, even if it isn't death we're concerned about, that piece of paper is also what gets you into a VA Hospital, Clinic, etc. We've gotten calls on those too. We have had someone who has had a stroke or a heart attack and they want to come into a VA Hospital but they have no papers proving their veteran status.

So veterans, at least leave your family with a good last impression. If you're really feeling like getting organized, go to KnowAVet@regathon.com, and ask for the check sheet for those times of crisis and we would be happy to send it to you.

GI Bill

Most folks who haven't served believe that a person who serves in the military will get money for school from Uncle Sam. They also believe that this is at no cost to the soldier, aka, veteran.

Not anymore. That's the way it was when the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 was signed by FDR. Understand, even then it wasn't Uncle Sam being overly kind. Reason being in 1945 and 1946 over 16 million GIs were coming out of uniform and heading back to the work force where jobs were few.

The country was retooling from war-manufacturing to peacetime products. So if 16 million GIs came back looking for a job, it would have put us back into the Depression. Therefore, if Sam could get rid of say half of these folks for about 4 years in school, by that time manufacturing could have retooled. Further, after college or trade school these GIs would be better prepared for a greater array of jobs – not just working on an assembly line.

Most state colleges across the country were built on the back of the GI Bill. If you look at the seals at the bottom, you will see the founding dates are mostly in the late 1940's

The later Montgomery GI Bill the troops would have to pay for. Then in 2008 came the Post 9-11 GI Bill also at a cost to those who wore the uniform. The worst thing was that in the 1980's some bright light claimed a soldier shouldn't have to sign up for the GI Bill, especially since there was a cost attached.

Further, it violated their civil rights. So Uncle Sam made it optional, which had the result even Stevie Wonder could see coming. Since the GI Bill now cost the troops money, many decided not to take it. And as fate would have it, the ones who didn't take it were the ones who probably needed it the most.

Funny, in a way, now the SUNY system, which was largely built on that legislation, was offering free tuition with some hooks. One is that after graduation you would have to spend 4 years living in New York State, assuming you took 4 years of tuition-free education. This is scary in a couple of ways. First, it helps to take away some of the incentive to join the military. Second, it makes me wonder why New York State is giving away something they could sell. The only reason I can see is that SUNY's enrollment is falling off and they are in fact biting the hand that built them. Besides, who in their right mind would want to have to stay in New York for 4 years when they could go to Iraq or Afghanistan or some other cool place?

Camp Lejeune: Past Water Contamination

From the 1950s through the 1980s, people living or working at the U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, were potentially exposed to drinking water contaminated with industrial solvents, benzene, and other chemicals.

VA has established a presumptive service connection for Veterans, Reservists, and National Guard members exposed to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune from August 1, 1953 through December 31, 1987 who later developed one of the following eight diseases:

- Adult leukemia
- Aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes
- Bladder cancer
- Kidney cancer
- Liver cancer
- Multiple myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Parkinson's disease

Presently, these conditions are the only ones for which there is sufficient scientific and medical evidence to support the creation of presumptions; however, VA will continue to review relevant information as it becomes available.

Veterans who are experiencing other health conditions that they think may be related to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune are encouraged to contact their primary care provider and to file a claim. VA reviews and decides disability compensation claims on a case-by-case basis.

Veterans' Diseases Associated with Agent Orange

VA assumes that certain diseases can be related to a Veteran's qualifying military service. We call these "presumptive diseases." VA has recognized certain cancers and other health problems as presumptive diseases associated with exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service. Veterans and their survivors may be eligible for benefits for these diseases.

- AL Amyloidosis
- Chronic B-cell Leukemias
- Chloracne (or similar acneform disease)
- Diabetes Mellitus Type 2
- Hodgkin's Disease
- Ischemic Heart Disease
- Multiple Myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

Parkinson's Disease
Peripheral Neuropathy, Early-Onset
Porphyria Cutanea Tarda
Prostate Cancer
Respiratory Cancers (includes lung cancer)
Cancers of the lung, larynx, trachea, and bronchus
Soft Tissue Sarcomas (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or mesothelioma)

Mental Health Care for OTH Discharged Veterans

VA Secretary Announces Intention to Expand Mental Health Care to Former Service members With Other-than-honorable Discharges and in Crisis

WASHINGTON – Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin announced his intention to expand provisions for urgent mental health care needs to former service members with other-than-honorable (OTH) administrative discharges. This move marks the first time a VA Secretary has implemented an initiative specifically focused on expanding access to assist former OTH service members who are in mental health distress and may be at risk for suicide or other adverse behaviors. It is estimated that there are a little more than 500,000 former service members with OTH discharges. As part of the proposal, former OTH service members would be able to seek treatment at a VA emergency department, Vet Center or contact the Veterans Crisis Line. Veterans in crisis should call the Veterans Crisis Line at 800-273-8255 (press 1), or text 838255.

Issue of the Month - ANXIETY

THIS ARTICLE IS COPIED FROM WWW.MAKETHECONNECTION.NET

What are anxiety disorders?

Feeling anxious is a normal reaction to stress, and everyone feels anxious from time to time. Sometimes anxiety can even be positive — when it helps motivate you to address a tense situation at work, study harder for an exam, prepare for a new situation, or stay focused on an important task. In general, anxiety helps people cope and doesn't last for very long. But when anxiety becomes excessive, is not appropriate for the situation, or lasts a long time, it can get in the way of your everyday activities and may interfere with how you get along with others.

Some Veterans develop severe anxiety following a trauma or a life-threatening experience. For others, stressful life events — such as the transition from military to civilian life or difficult work situations — can cause anxiety disorders.

“Honestly, I kind of liked the fact that I was hyper-aware after I got back from my deployment. I figured that it was a good thing, since it helped keep me alive over there. But as time went by, I noticed it was just too much for my life here. It prevented me from enjoying even the simplest activities.”

There are several types of anxiety disorders with a variety of symptoms. Some people have repeated short-term episodes of intense fear called panic attacks, while others have exaggerated worry, tension, and fear most of the time or in everyday social situations. Sometimes, this anxiety can cause physical symptoms like a pounding heart, trouble breathing, trembling, sweating, or being easily startled. Other times, anxiety disorders can include ongoing, intrusive, and unwanted thoughts or changes in behavior.

Common anxiety disorders include panic disorder, social phobia, generalized anxiety disorder, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. No matter the condition you may have, it is important to know that most people who have an anxiety disorder can improve their symptoms through connecting with professional care.

What are the signs of anxiety disorders?

A wide variety of symptoms may be signs of an anxiety disorder, some of which may be physical symptoms:

- Pounding or racing heart
- Sweating or cold, clammy hands
- Feeling jumpy or restless
- Trembling, twitching, or shaking
- Having a hard time catching your breath
- Feeling a fullness in the throat or chest
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Having stomachaches or nausea
- Having trouble falling asleep or getting a good night's rest

You might also have symptoms that impact your emotions, thoughts, or behavior, like:

- Feeling restless
- Feeling on edge or keyed up
- Being angry or irritable
- Worrying a lot about everyday decisions
- Fearing that something bad is going to happen
- Becoming easily distracted
- Having difficulty concentrating
- Feeling like your mind goes blank
- Finding it hard to do your work or normal activities
- Focusing on what isn't going well or what could go wrong

- Frequently avoiding certain places or things
- Drinking or using drugs to numb your feelings

What are the treatments for anxiety disorders?

There are a number of effective treatments for anxiety disorders that can help you cope with these symptoms and greatly improve your quality of life. Many Veterans have found effective ways to deal with their feelings of anxiety.

Treatments for anxiety disorders can involve counseling, medication, or a combination of these two. Counseling can help you learn new ways of thinking, practice positive behaviors, and take active steps to move beyond your symptoms. Medications work in different ways to affect the chemicals in your brain that may be associated with anxiety disorders.

“My anxiety didn’t go away overnight, but it certainly got easier for me to deal with as I continued my treatment.”

Anxiety disorders often occur along with other mental or physical conditions, including depression or alcohol or drug problems, which may mask anxiety symptoms or make them worse. In some cases, it will be important to treat other problems in order to get the full benefits of anxiety disorder treatment. You may need to work with your doctor or counselor and try different types of treatment before finding the best one for your symptoms.

In addition to getting treatment, you can adjust your lifestyle to help relieve anxiety symptoms. Try to work these into your daily routine:

- Walk, jog, or work out. Physical activity can improve your mood and help you sleep better.
- Eat healthy meals regularly. Good nutrition helps your body and your mind.
- Sleep well. Getting enough quality sleep can help you feel better during the day.
- Practice relaxation techniques. A shower, deep breathing exercises, or time in a quiet place to collect your thoughts can help relieve stress and make you feel more at ease.
- Get involved. Volunteer, join a club, or take up a hobby to share your strengths and wisdom with others.

What can I do if I think I have an anxiety disorder?

Your close friends and family may be the first to notice that you’re having a tough time. Turn to them when you are ready to talk. It can be helpful to share what you’re experiencing, and they may be able to provide support and help you find treatment that is right for you. The sooner you seek help, the sooner you will begin to feel better.

“Sometimes the worst thing was not knowing if my anxiety was normal, or something that I should get treatment for. I used an online tool to find out and it helped a lot.”

HELP A BUDDY

Please, help us get the word out to help every combat vet in the area. You've earned all the help available to get you back to your best life as fast as possible. Please forward this newsletter and our web address www.KnowAVet.com to all the vets you know. There is real, practical help on about 60 issues we face, from Relationships to Sleep issues, Addiction, Flashbacks, Depression, PTSD and sexual trauma.

I'm a combat vet too. I know that no one comes back from combat alive. But you and your buddies can be smarter than me. I wasted 40 years before I got the help I deserved. The earlier you take charge the more of your best life you can have.

So help us reach out and ask your friends to go to KnowAVet@regathon.com so they can get their own newsletter and updates on job and career fairs, etc.

IT'S UP TO YOU

What topics do you want us to research and cover?

If you are really passionate about helping yourself and other vets guide the SJVC to the services that would be most valuable to you, we are looking for a few vets from the post 9/11 era to join our Advisory Council. Just go to KnowAVet@regathon.com and tell us, why you.

Volunteer yourself or someone you would want on our team trying to help with outreach to your buddies, execute projects, keep our CONFIDENTIAL database up to date, etc.

To unsubscribe, please go to KnowAVet@regathon.com, put "unsubscribe" in the subject line and we will remove you from our newsletter list immediately.

2017 Veterans Resource Fair Wrap-up

How Did We Do at the Resource Fair?

On Saturday April 8, 2017, 82 service providers, and up to 500 veterans joined us at the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds for a day of networking, information, great BBQ, and hopefully even a little fun.



Amazingly, nearly everything was donated, including the space at the fairgrounds. All food was donated by a variety of companies, including, and coordinated by Lois Reynolds and her Henry's Hi-Life Restaurant. All the cooking was done as a charitable effort by the Friendship Lodge 210 Free & Accepted Masons, who also donated food and more. Many other groups helped, like Notre Dame volunteers at check-in, Sea Scout Ship #300 from Alviso running parking and honor guard, and many volunteers pitched in to build our biggest resource fair yet.

A very special vote of thanks goes out to the volunteers of the Resource Fair Advisory Council for their uncountable hours of dedicated service.

Please go to <http://www.regathon.com/veterans> for links to all of the service providers

And email comments about the fair and how to make it better, to us at KnowAVet@regathon.com