

Light in the Tunnel and Honoring Americans



Hello Mt. Rainier, welcome to 2021 which seems at the moment to be a continuation of 2020. Considering the long history of the chapter, it is difficult to believe that we have not had a formal chapter business meeting at Patriots Landing in a year.

With all that, THERE IS LIGHT IN THE TUNNEL! Let's get vaccinated and get back to business as usual. There are many items to look at as we move into the year in order to recover the momentum we had a year ago. Those include: programs, community service activities, participation in related events and organizations, recruiting new members while retaining old members, fund raising, and board turnover. While all this is going on, we need to be attentive to the needs of those current members who have been in some state of social distancing.

Membership in the year 2021 is a huge task. Closing 2020, the chapter had 103 active members. Of those, 34 members have expired membership. For those affected, please look for an emailed statement for renewal in the next few weeks. Each and every MOAA Mt. Rainier Chapter member can act as a recruiter for the chapter. Membership chair, Ray Dotson, is available to help in that capacity. In addition to maintaining a vital membership, we need to recruit new board members for the upcoming biennium. With the exception of 2 Directors, the current board officer's terms expire in April, 2021. If any member out there in chapter land has an interest, please come forward and express your interest. There are many areas that you can get involved in which forgetting titles include: programs – business and social, membership, legislative activities, and communications.

All members need to be flexible regarding chapter meetings as we adjust to 2021 and hopefully move back to a normal life. We as a board will continue to search for both business and social venues that will allow face to face contact. In the meantime, we rely on ZOOM for board meetings and chapter meetings where functional. Be vigilant, get your vaccination, and keep us informed regarding anything that contributes to the Mt. Rainier Chapter continuing to be a 5 Star Chapter and your participation in it.

Jerry Jackson, President

Wreaths Across America 2020

On December 19, 2020 at 0900, more than 200 attended the wreath laying at Washington Soldiers Home Cemetery at Orting, Washington. Included in those attendees were MOAA Mt. Rainier Chapter board members: Cheryl Toland, Doug Kotrba, and Jerry Jackson.

The ceremony was much like previous years, however, with social distancing honoring the 2265 heroes who are buried there. Thanks to many in the chapter who contributed to our 3 wreaths for each 2 sponsored option. For those who are interested, Wreaths Across America (WAA) is welcoming sponsorships for 2021 on a one for one basis through January 15, 2021. WAA will match each sponsored wreath for next December's Wreaths Across America. Log on to www.wreathscrossamerica.org/WA0119, their website to sponsor.



As you may have noted in previous email regarding WAA, we need to give a shout out to Marc Perez with Restore America who once again did an outstanding job in coordinating this event at the Soldiers Home remembering all who are buried there.



Chapter members Doug Kotrba and Cheryl Toland assist in placing the Wreath Across America and our National Colors on the grave of honored dead.



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2019-2020**

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**MEMBERSHIP REMINDER
2021 Chapter Dues**

Have your Chapter dues expired or about to expire? If you are not sure please contact our 2nd Vice President, Ray Dotson. Dues paid now will cover 2021. 2021 dues are due 1 January 2021.

Please note: Chapter dues are separate from national dues. Dues are \$20 a year or \$55 for three years. For our Social / Auxiliary membership it is \$5 a year or \$12 for three years. Also there is the new electronic membership for [Officers 35 and under](#). Electronic membership provides members with a Chapter newsletter via email, but no printed copy.

The Electronic membership is free to those under age 35. Just send your name, birthday and e-mail address to postal address below.

2021 dues are due 1 January

If you are a National Life Member, please advise the Chapter of your Life status.

Mail your dues to:

MOAA Mount Rainier Chapter
P.O. Box 99212
Lakewood, WA 98496-0212

Thanks!

Contact Information

Joint Base Lewis - McChord
Passenger Terminal
Flight Information 253-982-7259 or 7260

USO
Joint Base Lewis - McChord
253-982-1100

Veterans Hospital Seattle
1-800-827-1000, then O for
Representative

Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)
Veterans Assistance
American Lake VA
253-583-1079

MOAA National "Take Action"
<http://www.moaa.org/takeaction/>



Your Monthly History Note

January 1, 1863 - The [Emancipation Proclamation](#) by President Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves in the states rebelling against the Union.

January 5, 1972 - President Richard Nixon signed a bill approving \$5.5 billion over six years to build and test the NASA space shuttle.

January 7, 1782 - The first U.S. commercial bank opened as the Bank of North America in Philadelphia.

January 12, 1996 - The first joint American-Russian military operation since World War II occurred as Russian troops arrived to aid in peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia.

January 13, 1990 - Douglas Wilder of Virginia became the first African American governor in the U.S. as he took the oath of office in Richmond.

January 18, 1966 - Robert Clifton Weaver was sworn in as the first African American cabinet member in U.S. history, becoming President Lyndon B. Johnson's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

January 20, 1945 - Franklin Delano Roosevelt was inaugurated to an unprecedented fourth term as president of the United States. He had served since 1933.

January 21, 1954 - The USS Nautilus, the world's first nuclear powered submarine, was launched at Groton, Connecticut.

January 23, 1907 - Charles Curtis of Kansas became the first person of Native American ancestry to serve in the U.S. Senate. He later served as vice president under President Herbert Hoover from 1929-33.

January 25, 1961 - President John F. Kennedy conducted the first live televised presidential news conference, five days after taking office.

January 27, 1967 - [Three American astronauts](#) were killed as a fire erupted inside Apollo 1 during a launch simulation test at Cape Kennedy, Florida.

January 28, 1915 - The U.S. Coast Guard was created by an Act of Congress, combining the Life Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service.

January 30, 1835 - President Andrew Jackson survived the first assassination attempt on a U.S. President. While leaving the House of Representatives Chamber, an insane would-be assassin fired two pistol shots at him, however both pistols misfired and the president was unharmed.

MOAA's 2021 Legislative Priorities

By MOAA Government Relations Staff

Over the next couple of newsletters we will look at what National MOAA is working on for us in Washington. Here are MOAA's priorities for advocacy as the 117th Congress begins its work. The focus remains on all eight of the uniformed services and their service-earned entitlements.

As protecting health care and service-earned benefits continues to be a challenge, MOAA will press forward in engaging Congress to shape outcomes in these vital areas.

There are steep hills before us. Our nation has a rising debt of more than \$27 trillion, and a deficit of more than \$3 trillion. In view of this, MOAA anticipates robust attempts to control federal budgets, reduce or eliminate unprogrammed expenditures, and reduce entitlements.

MOAA needs you to be at the ready to reach out to your legislators, and keep that engagement going as needed to make sure your voice is heard.

Our priorities may be updated, as warranted, during the next two years this Congress is in session. Together, we can succeed.

Recognize the COVID-19 Pandemic Changed the Landscape for Many of Our Priorities

OVERVIEW: We will assess programs relative to our priorities and ensure a credible accounting of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has on Service members, families, survivors, and the government entities on which we rely to effect legislation related to these people and their concerns.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Assess congressional influence already executed, such as economic stimulus, actions under consideration, and the need for influence not yet being discussed. Some of our concerns can be addressed through such spontaneous legislation.
- ◆ Ensure awareness of the impact of COVID-19 on all issues, from authorizations to appropriations and the mounting deficit.
- ◆ Do not treat COVID-19 as a catch-all to explain difficult times, nor use COVID-19 to justify our priorities; rather, COVID-19 remains a discussion point and its impact may be significant, scalable, marginalized, or discounted altogether.

Protect the Value of the Military Health Care Benefit

OVERVIEW: Budget pressures, together with shortfalls in both the Military Health System's readiness and benefit provision missions, led Congress to pass MHS reform legislation in the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). MOAA will not fight to reverse MHS reform laws aimed at addressing medical readiness issues, but we will not stand by if reforms turn into cost-cutting exercises.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Oppose any proposal for TRICARE for Life enrollment fees, increases to TRICARE Prime costs for active-duty family members, or increases to working-age retiree costs

that exceed retiree COLA.

- ◆ Secure reduction in mental health and physical, speech, and occupational therapy copays. This will eliminate cost as a barrier to accessing mental health care and other important therapies and bring them in line with high quality commercial plans.
- ◆ Continue efforts to increase transparency, DoD reporting requirements, and congressional oversight of MTF restructuring and medical billet cuts.
- ◆ Oppose cuts to military medical research and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, which is essential to the uniformed provider pipeline and increases the number of culturally competent providers for beneficiaries.

Protect the MHS Pharmacy Benefit and Achieve Flexibility in TRICARE Pharmacy Copays

OVERVIEW: MHS reform legislation has eroded the value of the pharmacy benefit and poses a threat to MTF pharmacy access and zero copay prescription medications. Inflexibility in TRICARE pharmacy copays, which are governed by statute, requires beneficiaries to pay full copays even when TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery is unavailable or the prescription quantity cannot be filled.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Oppose any plans to restrict access to MTF pharmacies.
- ◆ Secure an appeals process for Tier 4/non-covered drugs to protect military families from financial risk.
- ◆ Require DoD to report on the frequency of TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery out-of-stocks and the feasibility of offering lower mail order copays at retail cost for drugs unavailable due to Home Delivery program shortages.
- ◆ Secure legislation allowing DoD to charge prorated pharmacy copays for partial prescription quantity fills.

Address Barriers to Accessing Care Within the MHS, Including TRICARE Coverage Gaps and Mental Health Care Access Challenges

OVERVIEW: TRICARE coverage policy is governed by statute and often requires legislation to remain aligned with new technologies and treatment protocols and benchmarks set by high quality commercial plans and other government payers. Access problems with mental health care, validated by an August 2020 DoD Inspector General report, are pronounced and must be addressed.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Support a pilot program to test MHS mental health appointment schedulers to assist beneficiaries with access to care. This will also allow the Defense Health Agency to more effectively track appointment availability versus access standards.
- ◆ Secure an independent evaluation of TRICARE reimbursement rates for mental health care providers and the impact on access to care under the TRICARE program.
- ◆ Extend TRICARE eligibility to dependents up to age 26 with no additional premium to bring TRICARE on par with commercial health plans.

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MOAA's 2021 Legislative Priorities

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Achieve Concurrent Receipt of Service-Earned Retirement Pay and VA Disability Pay

OVERVIEW: Currently, those with a 40% VA rated disability and those forced to medically retire under Chapter 61 have their retirement pay offset for every dollar of VA disability received. The Congressional Budget Office estimates fixing concurrent receipt will cost \$33 billion over 10 years. An incremental strategy to break up concurrent receipt into smaller cost brackets can gain progress.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Continue to support concurrent receipt legislation and the incremental approach to making progress.
- ◆ Develop solutions with professional staff members and the House and Senate for feasible language in the NDAA.
- ◆ Amass co-sponsors for concurrent receipt legislation such as H.R. 5995/S. 3393, the Major Richard Star Act.

Protect Family Support Programs, and Ensure Military-Provided Services (Housing, PCS, Child Care) are Affordable, Readily Available, and Meet Quality Standards

OVERVIEW: Programs and services for military and veteran families are often the first to see cuts to staffing, quality, and availability when government funding becomes tight. These benefits are essential to ensure Service members can focus on their mission. Military spouses play a vital role in a Service member's decision to stay in the military. When DoD prioritizes people first, it can retain a mission-ready all-volunteer force.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Create innovative approaches and incentives to increase access to quality child care providers.
- ◆ Address the military spouse unemployment rate through resources, program expansions, and private sector incentives.
- ◆ Push for full implementation of comprehensive housing reform and accountability.
- ◆ Improve accountability of contract movers and claims during PCS moves.
- ◆ Continue to assess the impact of COVID-19 on programs and progress.

Reform the Presumptive Process to Support Veterans Claiming Service-Connected Disabilities for Toxic Exposures

OVERVIEW: When deploying to defend our nation, we pursue cutting edge weapons, tactics, techniques, and procedures to defeat our enemies. The consequences for Service members become apparent later, sometimes decades later. When Agent Orange, burn pits, and other sources of hazardous materials cause illnesses, the current practice is to place the burden of proof and record-keeping on veterans. Many are unable to prove their exposure. While research is done, ill veterans suffer without health care benefits. If veterans pass away early, their widows will not receive the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Pursue enactment of legislation that

concedes veterans serving in the Middle East and Southeast Asia were exposed to hazardous substances.

- ◆ Increase transparency and tracking around toxic substance use and exposure.
- ◆ Establish an advisory committee to recommend research on emerging conditions.
- ◆ Assess the impact of COVID-19 on the health of Service members deployed to assist the government response to the pandemic.

Achieve Equity of Benefits, Protections and Administrative Support for Guard/Reserve Members Consistent With Their Active Duty Counterparts

OVERVIEW: Guard and Reserve troops can be activated with little notice. The COVID-19 pandemic response highlights why we need to ensure Service members are always ready. Along with this, the transition to the "total force" concept has transformed the National Guard and Reserve troops into an operational force that is an essential part of America's national defense strategy. However, despite conducting the same duties as their active duty counterparts at increasing frequencies, the reserve component is not receiving the same support.

ACTIONS:

- ◆ Eliminate pay, benefit, and retirement credit inequities to honor the vital role of our Guard/ Reserve Service members.
- ◆ Expand Military Lending Act protections to the Guard/ Reserve forces to support their activation with reduced stress to meet financial obligations. Financial readiness equals operational readiness.
- ◆ Eliminate forced arbitration agreements for Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and Service members Civil Relief Act (SCRA) to protect Service members' rights.
- ◆ Eliminate Guard/Reserve retirement pay processing delays, and support timely health care benefits for retirees.
- ◆ Assess COVID-19 impact on short-notice deployments relative to employers and concerns noted above.

More priorities to come in our next issue. You can also go to this link at [MOAA National](#) to review the entire list now.

Notes From Our Surviving Spouse Liaison

[DFAS Retiree Newsletter December 2022](#)

The DFAS Retiree Newsletter is available & has many informative articles from Tax Season Assistance, What Retirees Should Expect in the Year-End Mail from DFAS, to Cost of Living Pay Schedule & my most important details of the 3 year plan for "The Phased Elimination of the SBP-DIC Offset Begins in January of 2021". Then many more things of interest.

[MOAA - Surviving Spouse Corner: There's a Facebook Group for That!](#)

We have recently expanded our membership to include not only surviving spouses but also our families, military spouses, council and chapter surviving spouse liaisons, advocates, and others with an interest in issues that impact the survivor community, regardless of MOAA membership.

The Shingles Vaccine and Your TRICARE Coverage

By: Shane Ostrom

How coverage of the shingles shot works under TRICARE is a common question among retirees. TRICARE covers the shingles vaccine two different ways – under your medical coverage, or under your pharmacy coverage. Our guidance below can help you understand which one you want to use and take the appropriate action.

Age 64 and Under, and Not on TRICARE For Life (TFL)

All TRICARE Prime plans, U.S. Family Health Plans (USFHP), and TRICARE Select plans cover the full cost of the shot, at no cost to you, whether administered by a pharmacy under the pharmacy coverage or at a doctor's office under the medical coverage.

Beneficiaries using any TRICARE Prime plan can go to any TRICARE network pharmacy, primary care manager, or network provider. USFHP members must use their USFHP pharmacy or primary care manager. Those using a TRICARE Select plan can go to any TRICARE network pharmacy or any TRICARE-authorized provider.

On TRICARE For Life (Normally Age 65 and Over)

Medicare is your primary health coverage under Parts A and B. Medicare covers the shingles shot **but** does so as a pharmacy issue under the pharmacy Part D insurance, **not** under Parts A or B (learn more [at this link](#)). Most military retirees do not have Part D coverage because we use our TRICARE pharmacy plan. In our cases, Medicare will not cover the shot; the entire cost falls to TRICARE For Life as your Medicare supplement.

For those of you still under the USFHP, stay within your USFHP plan pharmacy or primary care managers for your coverage.

Having another pharmacy program besides our TRICARE pharmacy plan disqualifies us from the TRICARE home delivery program and can cause us to file manual claims to TRICARE pharmacy for reimbursement (learn more [at this link](#)). So, we do not want a Part D plan.

Based on the above, TRICARE becomes your shingles shot insurance. You have two TRICARE options to get the shot.

1. The easiest and cheapest option: Use your

The advertisement is split into two main sections. The left section features a graphic with an American flag and the text 'PATRIOTS Landing'. Below this, it says 'You've served us. Now let us serve you.' and describes the organization as 'The Pacific Northwest's only retirement community dedicated to serving former military personnel.' It provides contact information: 1600 Marshall Circle, DuPont, WA 98327; Phone: (253) 964-4900; Toll-Free: (877) 964-4900; Fax: (253) 964-4901; email: kgetchell@patriotslanding.com. The right section features a graphic with the text 'We are proud to serve you.' and 'SERVING THE MILITARY FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS.' Below this is the Harborstone Credit Union logo and the slogan 'No One Takes Better Care of you'.

TRICARE **pharmacy benefit coverage** by going to a TRICARE network pharmacy for the shot. You can get the shingles vaccine for free at a participating TRICARE network pharmacy. That's it.

2. Go to your doctor for the shot. This isn't the best option, because Medicare will not be picking up any of the cost for retirees. Under this option, TFL covers the shingles shot as a **medical coverage**, not pharmacy coverage. So, the process goes like this:

- ◆ You get the shingles shot at the doctor's office.
- ◆ Medicare won't cover the shot because you do not have Part D Medicare, so the total cost falls to TFL.
- ◆ TFL covers the shot as a **medical** cost not covered by Medicare Parts A nor B.
- ◆ When medical costs are not covered by Medicare, TFL deductibles and cost shares apply. The deductible is \$150 for individual coverage (\$300 for families), and you may face a 20% co-pay after the deductible (learn more about costs [at this link](#)). Bottom line: You pay for the shot.

Choose wisely under TFL. Whether pharmacy or medical coverage is used makes a big difference.

Here's How to Avoid COVID-19 Vaccine Scams

By: Shane Ostrom

Now that the coronavirus vaccine is being deployed to the public, you will need reliable sources of information to stay up to speed on the relevant issues. It's too much to cover in one article, so this article includes links to the most comprehensive information regarding insurance coverage as well as vaccine procedures and timelines.

And remember, scams are rampant — beware of criminals. Medicare and TRICARE cover the vaccine at no cost to you, so if anyone asks you to share your private health care information or pay for access to the vaccine, it's a scam.

Things to know about scams:

- ◆ You can't pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine.
- ◆ You can't pay to get early access to a vaccine.
- ◆ Don't share your personal or financial information with anyone who calls, texts, or emails you promising anything related to the vaccine or health care.
- ◆ Hang up the phone or delete any emails or texts that ask you to do anything. Do not click on any attachments or links in emails or texts. Nothing is as it seems. Scam attempts look very real.

Use only reliable sources to get information about the vaccine, like:

- ◆ [Medicare](#)
- ◆ [TRICARE](#) (For TRICARE information specifically regarding vaccines, go [here](#). For one-stop-shop TRICARE information regarding coronavirus, go [here](#).)
- ◆ [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- ◆ [National Institutes of Health](#)
- ◆ [MOAA](#)

Stay in touch with your doctors about the future availability of your vaccine.

No-Cost, Short-Term Caregiver Respite Program Expanding Nationwide

By: Amanda Dolasinski

The Elizabeth Dole Foundation and the VA are working together to expand a respite care program for military families, with plans to use it as a proving ground for future programs.

The [Respite Relief for Military and Veteran Caregivers program](#) is expanding nationwide to give veteran family caregivers a break by providing no-cost, short-term aid in their homes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The VA will review the program to launch a new partnership model for how the public and private sectors can work together during times of crisis to support military and veteran families.

"We care about the well-being of military and veteran caregivers, and want to provide these hidden heroes with trusted support so they can take time to focus on themselves," according to [a statement on the foundation's website](#).

MOAA has been an advocate for caregivers, working alongside and in-partnership with the foundation. The groups partnered to create [Tips for Lifelong Caregiving](#), a collection of resources for caregivers, and last year, [MOAA attended the foundation's launch of the Academy for Inclusive Care initiative](#) that pairs caregivers with medical teams from the first appointment.

The Respite Relief for Military and Veteran Caregivers program launched in August in select regions of California, Florida, and Texas. Under the program, caregivers of veterans can apply to receive 24 hours of respite care from a [CareLinx](#) professional to help with companionship, cooking, exercising, grooming, light housekeeping, medical and medication reminders, mobility assistance, transportation, and other activities. The services are no cost to the veteran or the caregiver.

Since the program's limited launch, more than 3,132 hours of respite care have been delivered to veteran and military caregivers, according to the VA. Respite care allows families opportunities to take a break from their work and use time for themselves.

Qualified caregivers can apply for the program [online](#). Questions about the application process, eligibility, or other issues with the program can be emailed to respiterelief@elizabethdolefoundation.org.

WDVA Receives \$10,000 Contribution and Laptops

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) today announced that it has received a \$10,000 contribution and 15 donated laptops from Comcast as a part of the company's

Now and Always
We'll be There.



1-800-247-2192 • www.moaainsurance.com

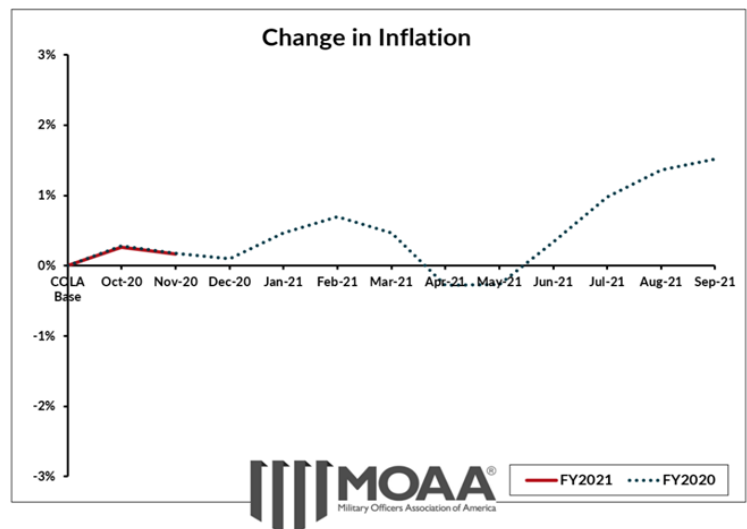
Internet Essentials program.

The contributions will support the department's Veterans Transitional Housing Programs in Orting and Port Orchard, Washington. Veterans enrolled in the transitional housing programs are surrounded with supportive staff and wraparound services designed to lead to their successful completion of the program and a successful return to the community.

Comcast's contribution will help keep transitional housing program participants connected to online resources, such as earned veterans' benefits, and medical and mental health services.

November FY 2021 COLA Watch

The November 2020 CPI is 253.826, 0.2 percent above the FY 2021 COLA baseline. The Consumer Price Index for December is scheduled to be released Jan. 13, 2021. The CPI baseline for FY 2021 is 253.412.



The calculation is made by comparing the average CPI from July through September of the current fiscal year to the average for the same months of the year prior. Remember, active duty pay raises are calculated differently. This information is calculated from the non-seasonally adjusted Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W).

What A Play On Words



The man behind the jokes is Colorado native and volunteer at the community center, Vince Rozmiarek. He made his first sign as an April Fools prank and has never looked back.

Chaplain's Corner

"A New Year"

Looking toward a new year after experiencing the year we just had made me turn to God's word to see what He might have to say about it. For me, the natural place to start was Ecclesiastes. Written by King Solomon, who is said to be the wisest man who ever lived, he readily admits his wisdom comes from God. I found many portions of this book that were applicable to a new year, but one in particular seemed to apply to THIS new year. It said simply:



Do not say, "Why were the earlier days better than these days?"

For it is not from wisdom that you inquire this.



It was a real shock to my system when I read this, yet only four verses below I saw the reason why Solomon might have said this:

In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of distress consider: God has made the one as well as the other.

After seeing these words, I started thinking of the positive things that have happened over the past year. I have saved a lot of money on gas for one thing! I have also been in contact

over the phone with relatives and friends just one-on-one when I usually have to compete for time with them among a group of others. I have seen customer service in many places improve greatly, and I can get take-out from just about anywhere now. Most of all, I appreciate smiles and in-person greetings much more than I used to.

My prayer is that God allows you to see the wisdom in His word this coming year and for years to come.

Gail Porter



Vet Employment

Story By Leo Shane

The jobless rate among U.S. veterans improved in December even as national employment numbers showed discouraging signs of sluggishness amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The unemployment rate among all American veterans fell to 5.3 percent in December, according to estimates released Friday by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The number was 6.3

percent in November and had been as high as 11.7 percent last spring, when widespread layoffs and furloughs related to virus precautions severely hurt U.S. businesses. The unemployment rate among veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan War era showed even greater improvement, decreasing from 6.9 percent in November to 5.1 percent in December. Veterans of the first Gulf War era saw their unemployment rate drop to 4.4 percent.

The positive veterans news comes as the American economy lost about 140,000 jobs last month, the first overall decline for the nation since April. The national unemployment rate now sits at 6.7 percent. In a statement, BLS officials blamed the job losses on "the recent increase in coronavirus cases and efforts to contain the pandemic." More than 21.2 million Americans have been infected by the virus in the last 10 months and more than 360,000 have died from complications related to it. Many of those deaths and cases have come in just the last few months, as nearly every state in the country has seen dramatic spikes due to holiday travel and relaxed restrictions in public areas. BLS officials reported that 15.8 million Americans were unable to maintain full-time work because "their employer closed or lost business due to the pandemic."

The veterans employment numbers, while better than the general population, are still significantly worse than one year ago. In December 2019, the overall veterans unemployment rate was 2.8 percent, nearly half of what was reported last month. Lawmakers inserted several economic stimulus measures related to veterans' pandemic challenges in a recently-passed omnibus bill, including new job training programs for out-of-work veterans and new protections for student veterans whose college classes were disrupted by pandemic closures. That legislation was signed into law by President Trump, but implementing those measures is likely to take several months.

Pierce County Incarcerated Veterans Program

This is a program run by the Pierce County Veterans Assistance Programs and is designed to assist Veterans involved in the Justice System. Our goal is to help those qualified Veterans get connected with services they may not already be aware of and work with the jail and court systems to ensure the best possible outcome from an already bad situation. We will assist eligible Honorably Discharged Veterans incarcerated in any of the jails within Pierce County with possible housing assistance, food assistance, and utility assistance. Let us help you get assistance with drug and alcohol addictions, poverty, homelessness, and issues related to PTSD. We also have a great network of partners that we can refer you to that may be able to assist where we cannot, This is a "Hand Up not Hand Out" Program.

Services Provided

Incarcerated Veterans Program provides advocacy prior to release, case management and referral / access to a wide array of resources at the point of release. The program succeeds by identifying specific veteran needs and challenges that precipitate incarceration. Support and resources are maximized in order to achieve consistent, long-term stability. Statistically, it has been proven that there is cost savings to the county and state when there is success in preventing incarceration and reducing associated recidivism.



IF YOU HAVE A PROGRAM IDEA, PLEASE CONTACT PAT CAMPION, 253-847-7068. YOUR IDEAS ARE NEEDED TO KEEP THE CHAPTER 'FUN' TO ATTEND, YET INFORMATIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE.

Note: Due to COVID 19 concerns our meetings will be a combination of ZOOM or in person depending on potential venue. We will keep you informed on a regular basis.

For all reservations or information contact Jerry Jackson at gerald.jackson1@comcast.net or 253.691.5766, Pat Campion at campionpe@yahoo.com or 253-847-7068.

Remember, when making a reservation, your word is your bond.

24 Jan 2021: TBD

20 Feb 2021: (Washington State Patriot's Day).

21 March 2021: TBD

25 April 2021: TBD - Election of Officers

16 May 2021: TBD - Installation of Officers

As we move forward in this COVID-19 time, your chapter board is always looking for the opportunity to plan and conduct meetings in person, ensuring we meet the state mandated social distancing rules and always concerned with members safety. That personal contact is also important to our health and well-being. We look forward to adding locations and quest speakers to the above list.

Again, please let us know if you have a program idea!!



Happy Birthday Wishes to Our Treasured Friends

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1/4 Dennis Sapp | 2/5 Thomas O'Ban |
| 1/6 Landan O'Ban | 2/7 Joan Brown (Wife) |
| 1/8 Charles Brockway | 2/7 William Cargill |
| 1/10 Kristina Fortman | 2/8 Tatiano Saxe |
| 1/10 Gregory Vaught | 2/10 Jennifer Willis |
| 1/11 Richard Mencarini | 2/11 Lucretia Drangstvelt |
| 1/11 Monica Roberts-Brown | 2/13 Jerome Hoban |
| 1/12 Dolores Stetson | 2/16 Kenton Deich |
| 1/14 Chlotilde (Coti) Dotson | 2/18 Otis Hollar |
| 1/17 Jon Castle | 2/18 Paul Wood |
| 1/17 Bruce Dammeier | 2/19 Carl Bayha |
| 1/25 Ronald Dammeier | 2/19 Joseph Quinn |
| 1/25 Nori Wendt (Wife) | 2/20 David Eck |
| 1/26 James Manning | 2/20 Hans Zeiger |
| 1/29 Carroll Dickson | 2/23 Chung Sugaya |
| 2/1 Lonnie Lai | 2/24 Sherri Eck |
| 2/1 Joseph Lewis | 2/25 Nancy Hart |
| 2/2 Richard Mackey | 2/26 Carolyn Cubert |
| 2/4 Dorothy Weichseldorfer | |



*"If there were no tribulations, there would be no rest; if there were no winter, there would be no summer."
~ St. John Chrysostom*

Northwest Patriot News

Editors Curtis Atkinson and Jerry Jackson

The information in this newsletter, both National and Local, is Nonpartisan

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AROWS

The ladies of AROWS (Associated Retired Officers Wives), an auxiliary of the Mt. Rainier Chapter of MOAA, has members from every branch of the service. They meet monthly from 11:00 to 13:00 hours on the 3rd Thursday every month at Patriot's Landing. Reservations are required.

Contact Carolyn Guppy
(253) 581-2662 for any questions.



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Mount Rainier Chapter 2019 Col Marvin J. Harris Communication and Level of Excellence Five Star Awards

