



# Director's Message

*A Monthly Update  
From Your WDVA*



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January 5, 2009

## AGENCY UPDATE

As with many agencies and organizations, WDVA faces significant challenges and difficult decisions in the weeks and months ahead. And I know these times will be just as hard on the individual veterans and their families across our state.

That's why it is so important that we continue to build on the partnerships we've established with our Veterans Service Organizations, other agencies and organizations and veterans and families.

I am keenly aware that a considerable amount of work is being done because many of you have embraced the call to serve in your community as Ambassadors to Veterans. And I am asking for your help as we enter a new year.

Think about the new programs and services we've created together, just in the last four years.

We are serving our returning veterans with innovative new programs designed to look at the individual situation of each veteran and family who needs help.

For example we've helped well over 500 veterans and their families through the Veterans Innovations Program by ensuring their immediate financial needs are met and assisting them toward a solid path for the future.

We're reaching out to the children of our deployed national guard and reservists and helping them cope with the absence of a parent. Thanks to Operation Military Kids children, parents and teachers have tools and resources to help see them through.

We are caring for several hundred veterans in our State Veterans Homes. And for those receiving long-term care in community settings, we are making sure they are connected with their VA entitlements.

And finally, our targeted outreach campaign to Vietnam Veterans who live daily with the devastating effects of Agent Orange Exposure has connected many of these heroes to medical care and disability compensation.

While it is truly unfortunate that we will have to make cuts to some programs and services, including some of our network contracts, I am convinced that with our collective diligence and work together we will meet and exceed the challenges of the future.

It is important, now more than ever, that we stay united to face these challenges together. We don't know exactly what the future will bring, but we know

that we will need to work even harder to ensure Washington's veterans and families receive the quality of care and service they deserve.

My commitment to you has long been that I will work to earn and to keep your trust and confidence. That has not, and will not change. As we enter a new year together may our partnerships grow stronger in service to those who served.

## GOLD STAR LICENSE PLATES

On January 2, 2009, we unveiled Washington's new Gold Star License Plates now available to the parents of servicemembers who lost their lives in service to our country.

I'd like to thank the American Gold Star Mothers and the Washington Department of Licensing who worked to make this plate a meaningful symbol of their child's service and sacrifice.

Find out more about the Gold Star License Plates:  
<http://www.dva.wa.gov/GoldStarParentLicensePlates.html>

## VETERANS CEMETERY

On December 16, 2008, Frank Salvias, the Federal VA Director of the State Cemetery Grant Program along with several other Federal VA Cemetery Staff Members, met with the Eastern Washington State Veterans Cemetery Project Team and Governance Committee.

The goal of the meeting was to reach an agreement on a number of issues that had caused our Master Plan approval to be delayed. After visiting the site and going over each issue, our partners at the Federal VA agreed that the Master Plan we had presented would serve the needs of the Eastern Washington veterans community.

We expect to receive the formal approval for the Master Plan any day and will then move forward with the design and construction phase.

The next meeting of the Governance Committee is February 4, 2009. For more information on the project you can e-mail [cemetery@dva.wa.gov](mailto:cemetery@dva.wa.gov).

## STATE VETERANS HOMES PHARMACY SERVICES

All pharmacy services for residents in Washington State Veterans Homes are now being provided through a centralized pharmacy located in the Washington Veterans Home, Retsil. Residents at the Spokane Veterans Home have been receiving their medications from Retsil since their opening in 2001 and there are a



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number of efficiencies and savings that will come from this consolidation.

Consolidated services began on January 2, 2009 and the first medications were delivered to Orting on January 5, 2009.

If you have any questions about the consolidation or services being provided, please contact Superintendent Quindola Crowley at 360 893-4512.