



Washington State Veteran's Employee Resource Group

VERG Informer – May 2016

From the Chair...“Month of Remembrance”

By: Stacey Moore, Business Analyst, Washington Health Care Authority, US Army Veteran



Memorial Day began following the Civil War as a day of remembrance for soldiers on both sides and became a national holiday in 1971. Memorial Day is the time we celebrate the sacrifices of service members who laid down their lives during our nation's conflicts to protect the American way of life. Their sacrifices have allowed the rest of us to enjoy the freedoms that we have come to expect.

We can sit on the patio enjoying a “cold one”, BBQing, and splashing around the family pool without worry. A sure sign that Memorial Day is on the horizon is the replaying of many of my favorite movies...The Dirty Dozen, The Longest Day, The Green Berets, Saving Private Ryan and We Were Soldiers to name a few.

I had an opportunity to discuss the Memorial Day holiday with the VERG Chair, Lonnie Spikes, and reflect its impact on Veterans. I began by asking, why Memorial Day is important to him? He said, “For me this is the day of homage to both those that have fallen and the loved ones that are left behind”. I had to agree, although we take time to salute the fallen, the family are at times forgotten. I followed up by asking why it's important for all Americans to celebrate Memorial Day and he responded with, “To recognize the cost of war and to recognize the full impact...the fallen, their loved ones, and the survivors who may be dealing with physical, mental, emotional, and employment challenges.” One can simply sum it up as freedom isn't free!

As the Chair of the VERG, I asked him to share how he sees the VERG in action providing transition assistance to veterans and their families. He said, “This makes me very passionate regarding public service and to give back to those who are still dealing with employment challenges. I always like to say it's a matter of 'sending the ladder' back down to our brothers and sisters and their families.”

There are no words that can convey my gratitude to the families or to those who made the ultimate sacrifice because thank you doesn't seem to do justice. The best words that I have come across are from Abraham Lincoln: “I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.”

Celebrating those who made the ultimate sacrifice is an inherent responsibility of all who served. Whether you attend a service, volunteer to place flags at a cemetery, or simply take a moment of silence to remember; take time and remember those who came before us and gave their lives so that we can continue living free....**Lest we forget!**

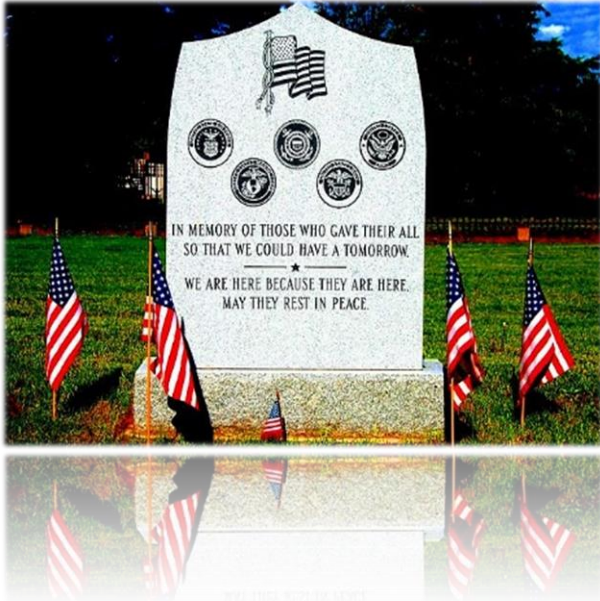
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Memorial Day

“A Day of Remembrance”

By: Paul Cruz, Project Manager, Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, US Army Veteran



Flags honoring our fallen heroes stand tall in an unidentified veteran's cemetery.

Memorial; honoring all those that have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Memorial Day is a special day. It is a day of honor and reverence; it is a solemn day. Today, we must recognize an unfortunate fact of life; our beloved country was formed and is protected by the blood of warriors. As unfortunate as this is we can be thankful, because over the years America has answered the call every time our way of life has been threatened. No one has more succinctly and accurately described what someone puts on the line when they sign a contract to serve in the armed forces than legendary General Jim Mattis of the United States Marine Corps.

In to Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, Mattis articulated, “You signed blank checks payable with your lives to the American people.” With a simple analogy he captures the moment of signing, when a young man or woman takes that black pen and signs on the dotted line and thinks nothing of it, because their mind is already made up. Unbeknownst to them, their fate is sealed with the final stroke of that black pen.

Memorial Day is a special holiday, it allows us the opportunity to take a moment so that we can all remember and honor in our hearts all those that have sacrificed to help preserve the foundation of our great Nation. Let us all take a moment of silence and show our respect to all of our Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, and their family to show our thanks for all they have done.

God bless America!

Veterans Spotlight: DeLora Rosario, Department of Social and Health Services

By: Becky Boutilier, IT Manager, Washington Department of Social and Health Services, US Air Force Veteran



DeLora Rosario is originally from the Detroit metro area, and graduated from Hanau American High School, Hanau, Germany. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Ashford University and a Master's in Infrastructure Planning and Management from the University of Washington.

As of December 2015, DeLora serves DSHS as its Chief Information Security Officer (CISO). The CISO has agency-wide oversight responsibilities to ensure information security and privacy policies, standards, guidelines, processes, and procedures are in place to support the agency's risk management program—ensuring the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the information systems that support DSHS strategic goals and objectives.

She previously served as a career U.S. Air Force Senior Non-Commissioned Officer for 22 years, achieving the rank of Master Sergeant, retiring in 2014. She worked primarily in Cyber Security, protecting the Stealth Fighter and air defense missions.

DeLora is a Pierce County Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)/guardian ad litem and is passionate about protecting abused and neglected children. She and her wife have three daughters and three grandchildren.



“A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both.” – **President Dwight D. Eisenhower**

Public Service Recognition Week

By: Wayne Gilbert, Motor Carrier Safety Investigator, Utilities and Transportation Commission, US Air Force Veteran

Public Service Recognition Week has been celebrated the first week of May since 1985 to take time and honor the women and men who serve our nation as federal, state, county and local government employees by Presidential Proclamation and adopted by the State of Washington.

This year's Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW) was celebrated from May 1-7.

Some of the goals of hosting a public service recognition week is to: 1. Promote government employment and careers, 2. Educate Americans about the value of the public servants and the services they provide, and 3. Recognize excellence in public service and promote the spirit of public service.

On Wednesday, May 4th the State held events in Olympia on the East Plaza Lawn from 11 am – 1 pm. The Veterans Employee Resource Group (VERG) eagerly participated operating a booth so that they could promote awareness and the group's message of providing assistance to transitioning veterans and their family members.

A special thanks to all those who took time and helped get the word out and man the booth!



VERG members, Gary Allen and Betty Carter provide information to personnel during Public Service Recognition Week.

Upcoming Events

Provided By: Communications Team

- May 25th, 2016, the [Annual Seattle Hiring Expo](#) for veterans, active duty military members, guard and reserve members, and military spouses at Safeco Field from 10:00am – 1:00pm.

2016 Memorial Day events and Observances around the area:

- May 28, 10:00am, **Spokane Veterans Home** Memorial Day Program, 222 East 5th Street, Spokane. For additional information contact Shane Price at ShaneP@dva.wa.gov or 509-344-5788
- May 30, 9:00am, **Wenatchee City Cemetery** – VFW Post 3617. East Wenatchee, WA. For additional information call 509-884-3617
- May 30, 10:00am, **Washington Veterans Home**, Retsil, WA. Chapel Retsil, 1141 Beach Drive for additional information contact Tami Reuter at TamiR@dva.wa.gov
- May 30, 11:00am, **Washington State Veterans Cemetery Medical Lake**, Medical Lake, WA. 21702 West Espanola Road, Medical Lake, WA. For additional information contact ADA Arrangements at cemetery@dva.wa.gov or call 509-299-6280
- May 30, 10:30 (Music), 11:00 (**Ceremony**), Thurston County Veterans Coalition Annual Memorial Day Ceremony, State Capitol Rotunda. For additional information contact Arlene Murray at 253-720-1766
- Veterans **Memorial Day Run** Vietnam Vets/Legacy Vets, 12:00pm Vietnam War Memorial, Olympia, Washington
- May 30, 1:00pm **Tahoma National Cemetery**. 18600 Southeast 240th Street, Kent, WA. For additional information contact Thomas Yokes at Thomas.yokes@va.gov or call 425-413-9614
- May 30, 2:00pm, **Washington Soldiers Home**, Orting, WA. Chilson Hall, 1301 Orting-Kapowsin Highway, for additional information call 360-893-4511
- May 30, **Military Show**. See tanks, military vehicles, artillery weapons, firing demonstrations, and a collector's club parade at **Tankfest Northwest at Paine Field in Everett**.
- May 30, **Memorial Day Mini-Triathlon**, Seattle University hosts an indoor Try-Athlon, which is 10 minutes each of swimming, spin biking, and treadmill running at its Recreation Center to benefit Wounded Warriors for age 18+
- June 23, 2016, 9:30am – 12:30pm. The Washington State VERG is please to sponsor **Mr. Karl Marlantes**; Local Native to the Pacific Northwest, Princeton Ivy League Graduate, Rhodes Scholar (Oxford), Vietnam War Veteran (USMC), International Businessman and New Your Times Best Selling Author of the non-fiction/fiction book "Matterhorn" at the HSB/OB2 auditorium.

Tools & Resources

[Click here](#) to see all the current open jobs listings across the state enterprise.

[This report](#) provides responses to frequently asked questions about health care provided to veterans through the VHA. It is intended to serve as a quick reference to provide easy access to information. Where applicable, it provides the legislative background pertaining to the question.

[Click here](#) To better understand the benefits you may be eligible for. Operation Veterans Benefits are here to assist war time veterans and their families understand their benefits. We provide free assistance in claim preparation through our volunteers.

[Military.com](#) is another helpful and useful site to help assist with meaningful employment, career-development and benefits.

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“I don't have to tell you how fragile this precious gift of freedom is. Every time we hear, watch, or read the news, we are reminded that liberty is a rare commodity in this world.” – **President Ronald Reagan**



The gravestones at Arlington National Cemetery

Communications Sub-Committee Roster

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 Fletcher Mansfield (DFW)
 Tommy Simpson (DOH)
 Sheryl Whitcomb (L&I)
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 Rocio Ochoa-Geesaman (LNI)
 Angie Hong (DNR)
 Wayne Gilbert (UTC)
 Bill Allman (HCA)
 Dominique Jinhong (BIIA)

DO YOU HAVE IDEAS OR INFORMATION TO DISSEMINATE? SUBMIT YOUR INFORMATION WITH A COMMUNICATIONS REQUEST AND THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM WILL TAKE ACTION!

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