

WASHINGTON STATE
DEPARTMENT OF

VETERANS
AFFAIRS



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"Serving Those Who Served"

VETERAN VOICES

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September 2016

September is Suicide Prevention Month



Learn more about what you can do as an individual, friend or family member.

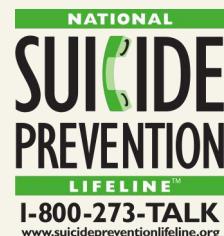
NAMI.org/suicideawarenessmonth

This month serves as an opportunity to increase public awareness about the warning signs of suicide risk, to provide information about the resources available to aid someone in crisis and to show how individuals, organizations and communities can work together to save lives.

During Suicide Prevention Month and year-round, the U.S. Departments of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Defense (DoD) work together to raise awareness of the suicide prevention and mental health resources that are offered, as well as to encourage communities to support Veterans, service members and their families and friends.

VA collaborates with community groups, Veterans Service Organizations, health care providers, corporations, educational institutions, government agencies, and others that serve, employ, or support Veterans to spread the word that help is available. These stakeholders help VA remind Veterans, Service members, and their loved ones that free, confidential crisis support from the Veterans Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/



"Serving Those Who Served"

A Message from the Director Lourdes "Alfie" E. Alvarado-Ramos Alfie@dva.wa.gov



Honoring POW/MIAs Still Unaccounted For

The third Friday of each September is POW/MIA Recognition Day; a day where we honor each and every U.S. Servicemember who is still missing.

Nationwide, 82,672 of our brothers and sisters remain unaccounted for.

From Washington State – the number is 1,508.

1,343 are from WWII

126 are from Korea

38 are from Vietnam

1 is from the Cold War

As many of you know, this past Memorial Day we added a name to the Vietnam Memorial on the Capitol Campus. Commander Domenick Spinelli was not only added as a Washingtonian who made the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam, he also was listed a U.S. Servicemember who is still unaccounted for.



Thankfully, over the years, some of those who were listed as Missing on our Vietnam Memorial have been accounted for. At the National Wall, the mark next to these names is changed from a missing symbol which looks like a cross or + sign, to a diamond symbol to signify that they have been accounted for.

Over the coming months, we will be working with a local engraver to make the same changes to our own Vietnam Memorial. Seventeen names on our wall will have their symbol changed to a diamond meaning that they have been accounted for and in some cases recovered.

In addition, as we were researching the [Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency's](#) website, we



noticed that we had ten names on our Wall that never had the missing symbol next to them, to let people know they are still unaccounted for. So those names will also be updated with the proper symbols by the engraver.

We hope that these changes will help to more fully tell the story of our Washingtonians who went to war but never came home.

Armed Forces License Plates: Show it and Pay It Forward

Show your Pride & Patriotism by Purchasing your Armed Forces License Plates.

Eligibility to Purchase an Armed Forces Plate at any Vehicle Licensing Office:

- Served at any time in the U.S. Military
- Are currently on Active Duty
- Served and/or are currently in the Guard or Reserve
- Are a family member of those above

Proceeds from the sale of Armed Forces License Plates support the ongoing maintenance of the State Veterans Cemetery in Medical Lake. *In 2015, the license plates provided \$454,000 for Cemetery operations.*

For additional info, including personalizing your plates, go to www.dva.wa.gov or call 1-800-562-0132



NOTABLE FACTS ON THE WALLA WALLA VETERANS HOME

-Located on the campus of the Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center in Walla Walla

-Design and construction meets guidelines established by the US Department of Veterans Affairs State Home Construction Grant Program.

-Operating costs will be generated through Medicaid, VA Per Diem, Medicare and local contributions.

-This new care model is a significant departure from our more traditional Veterans Homes and there is no program in the country's veterans home inventory like Walla Walla

-Veterans will live in one of eight, ten bedroom houses with separate kitchen and living areas.

-Each house will be staffed with Nursing Assistants-Residential Living who will perform duties such as assisting residents with dressing and bathing, providing medications, meal preparation and light housekeeping.

Come and work at the NEW Walla Walla Veterans Home



Walla Walla Veterans Home Recruiting Event

WHO: All Are Invited!!!

WHEN: 10am-2pm, Thursday, September 22, 2016

WHERE: WorkSource Bldg. 1530, Stevens St., Walla Walla, WA 99362 (Main Lobby)

WHY: Be one of the FIRST to apply for a position at this state-of-the-art facility and be the FIRST to be hired for the new job class -NAC-Residential!

RSVP: recruiters@dva.wa.gov or 360-725-2204 or 509-527-4393 (WorkSource)



About the New Walla Walla Veterans Home

The Walla Walla State Veterans Home serves 80 residents needing skilled nursing support. The Home is situated in the beautiful Fort Walla Walla Historic District of Walla Walla, WA which also includes the highly regarded Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center, beautiful 208-acre Fort Walla Walla Park and excellent 15-acre Fort Walla Walla Museum.

WDVA Traumatic Brain Injury Resources are Available

What is Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)?

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is defined as an alteration in brain function, or other evidence of brain pathology, caused by an external force. Examples of external forces are falls, exposure to blasts, being hit in the head, sudden and violent change in air pressure and more.

Acquired Brain Injury is an injury to the brain, which is not hereditary, congenital, degenerative, or induced by birth trauma. An acquired brain injury is an injury to the brain that has occurred after birth and is often the result of lack of oxygen to the brain, poisoning, strokes, etc.

The common ground between the two is that there has been injury to the brain which causes disruption and damage to this most vital and fragile of organs.

-Over 8% of Washington residents are veterans

-As many as 1 in 5 that served in recent conflicts may have sustained a TBI/ABI.

-79% of Washington veterans do not get health care at the VA and receive health care from community providers.

-These veterans are our neighbors, friends, family and employees who struggle on a daily basis with an invisible and often unrecognized disability.

Need to schedule a TBI Assessment and/or ask questions on TBI and available resources in Washington?

Contact WDVA TBI Program Specialist, Dan Overton, at 360.725.2223 or DanielO@dva.wa.gov

State of Washington

2016 Veterans Day Regional Site Events

Auburn - 11:00am, Saturday, November 5th in Downtown Auburn

POC: Kristy Pachciarz at 253.931.3052 or kpachciarz@auburnwa.gov

Port Angeles - Information on event to be announced (TBA)

Fort Vancouver National Site - 9:30am, Saturday, November 5th in Downtown West Richland
(Van Giesen St.)

POC: Natalie Hanto at 360.992.1804 or events@fortvan.org

West Richland - 10:00am, Saturday, November 5th around the Fort Vancouver National Site

POC: May Hayes at 509.967.0521 or mayhayes@westrichlandchamber.org

*WDVA wants to share your upcoming Veterans Day Event!

Submit your event and flyer to communications@dva.wa.gov, so that we can upload your event onto our social media and website calendars.



"Serving Those Who Served"

A Huge Success: Retsil's Annual Home and Family Picnic



Families joined veteran residents for the Annual Home and Family Picnic at the Washington Veterans Home in Retsil (WVH) on August 21st.

Veterans living at WVH invited their families to join them for an outdoor BBQ with tons of enjoyable entertainment. The WVH Dietary Staff provided a hearty meal of hamburgers, hotdogs, potato salad, watermelon and baked beans. After the meal, all veterans and their families enjoyed Hawaiian Shaved Ice.

We would like to thank the many volunteers from the VFW, American Legion, community members and especially our managers, who helped serve lunch to all. (Photos above)

Special thanks goes out to USO Northwest for providing a complimentary table for our WDVA Outreach Team at the Boeing Classic on August 28.

WDVA Outreach Team members made numerous connections while located on the hill above the 18th green on the final day of the tournament, which also happened to be Military Appreciation Day. #WeLoveOurCommunity



View of WDVA Outreach Team at the Boeing Classic



Coming Soon! B&O Tax and Public Utility Tax Credit for Hiring Unemployed Veterans



Beginning October 1, 2016, businesses that hire unemployed veterans may qualify for credit against their state business and occupation (B&O) tax or public utility tax (PUT).

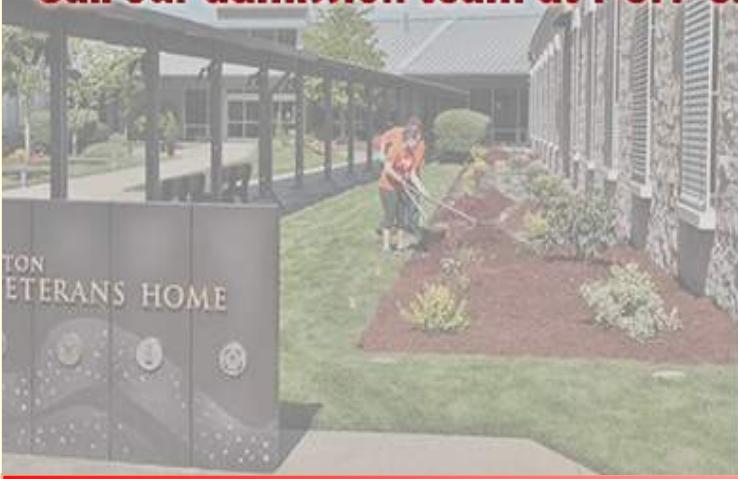
The credit equals 20 percent of the wages and benefits a business paid to or on behalf of a qualified employee, up to a maximum of \$1,500 for each qualified employee hired on or after October 1, 2016. There is no limit on the total credit an employer may receive. However, the total statewide credits may not exceed \$500,000 per fiscal year.

Provided is a link to the Department of Revenue's Special Notice, Credit for Hiring Unemployed Veterans website, which contains further information.

http://dor.wa.gov/.../SpecialNoti.../2016/sn_unemployed_vets.pdf

Welcome Home!

Call our admission team at 1-877-838-7787 and arrange a tour today!



*Medicaid & Medicare Certified

*24-Hour Nursing Care Provided

*Medical Care & Pharmacy Services

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Veterans' Remains Escorted to Medical Lake Cemetery



([Tri-City Herald](#)) More than 50 Patriot Guard riders showed up Wednesday morning in Pasco to honor the remains of 20 unclaimed Eastern Washington veterans in a sendoff ceremony.

The ceremony was followed by a nearly two-hour motorcycle processional to the Washington State Veterans Cemetery in Medical Lake.

The ceremonies and procession were part of the continuing Missing in America project, whose members look for unclaimed remains of

war veterans at funeral homes so they can be laid to rest in veterans cemeteries.

This was yet another successful ride for the [Missing In America Project](#) and many others.

We would like to extend our thanks to the numerous Washington State members who conducted a three-ride mission on August 18th, 2016 to deliver the remains of 50 veterans to your [Washington State Veterans Cemetery](#) for the Veteran Remains Interment Event.

Learn more at <http://dva.wa.gov/cemetery>



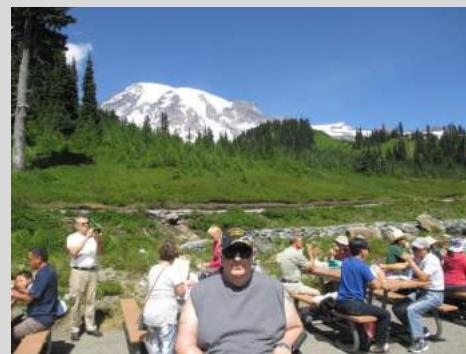
Washington Soldiers Home in Orting Visits Mt. Rainier National Park



Veteran residents from the Washington Soldiers Home in Orting enjoyed a perfect view of Mt. Rainier during their visit and picnic at [Mt. Rainier National Park](#) in August.

This event provided an opportunity for veterans at the home to enjoy a delicious meal, with a one-of-a-kind view, with their fellow residents.

[#WeLoveOurCommunity](#)



Veterans Farm in Orting: Volunteer Work



The Veterans Farm in Orting received significant assistance from Expedia Cares and The Mission Continues volunteer workers on September 9, 2016.

Task:

WDVA Veterans Conservation Corps in conjunction with Expedia.com, [The Mission Continues Puget Sound](#), continues work on the Orting Soldier's Home Veterans' Farm.

Purpose:

Develop rain garden, remove invasive species and install further infrastructure on the nearly 7 acres of land for veterans and the community to help utilize our shared spaces and increase the quality of life for the Orting community.

Endstate:

Provide Washington state veterans and their families with 3 locations to take advantage of Ecotherapy and reduce the symptoms of invisible wounds such as PTSD, TBI, anxiety, and depression to improve their quality of life.

PHOTO ALBUM LINK: <https://www.flickr.com/.../98326753@.../albums/72157672771092251>



Home Depot Foundation and Team Depot Volunteers partner with WestCare and WDVA to make significant upgrades to a Shelton area veteran's home!

From landscaping to installing new flooring, installing a new bathroom and new kitchen appliances, to new paint and texture throughout the house, this project will completely change the way Jim is able to live!

The best part though is the new flag pole in the front yard!

Thank you Home Depot Foundation and your Team Depot volunteers!

KOMO News Coverage: <http://komonews.com/news/local/army-of-volunteers-give-huge->



Sunnyside Veterans Plaza Honors Veterans from Across the Country



Anyone can order a plaque to honor any veteran, past or present.

The only requirement is that the applicant must have served in the United State military or an Allied military force.

All plaques will have the same general information----name & rank on the first line; unit/ship and place of service on the second line; and the branch of service along with the year of induction and discharge

on the third line. The wall will also recognize those who were KIA, POW, and MOH recipients.

The Jerry Taylor Veterans Memorial will eventually have 42 large granite walls over 8-ft tall, and weighing over 3 ton each.

"We are honoring all veterans----those still with us, and those who are now deceased; those who served in a war, and those who served during times of peace; from any state in the union.....going back to the Revolutionary War." said American Legion Post 73 Commander, Greg Schlieve.

Future plans call for building the largest Veterans Memorial in the Northwest.....and potentially in the top 10 throughout the nation.

If you want to find out more, visit the [American Legion Post #73](#) Facebook page, or contact Greg Schlieve at 509-781-0799 or schlieve@charter.net



Pictured Here: The Spokane Veterans Home Residents and staff show off their Seattle Seahawks support for Blue Friday.

Register Now for Upcoming Service Dog Conference



Service for Service Washington Goes to the Dogs



Sessions on Emotional Support Dogs, Service Dogs,
Therapy Dogs & Dogs of War

November 3, 2016
Emerald Queen Casino
Conference Center

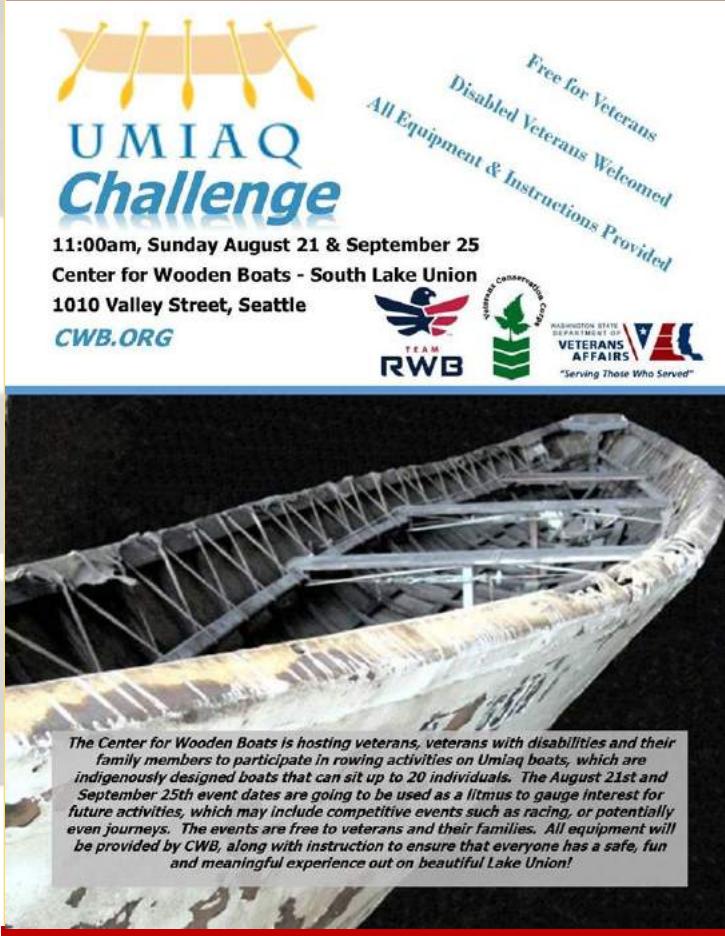
9am-3pm

POC: PeterS@dva.wa.gov

WDVA brings you a fascinating day
focused on service dogs and Veterans.



Umiaq Challenge & Orting Receives YesVets Decal

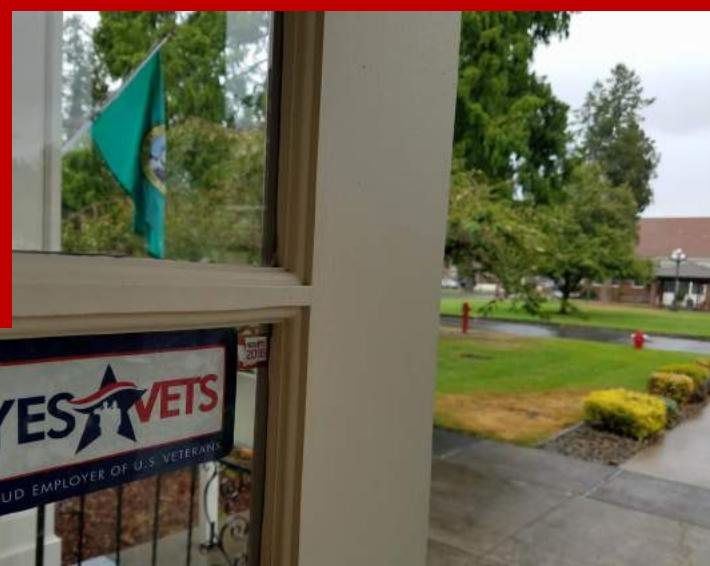


The banner for the Umiaq Challenge event features the title "UMIAQ Challenge" in large blue letters at the top left. To the right, there are four yellow oars arranged in a cluster. Below the title, it says "11:00am, Sunday August 21 & September 25" and "Center for Wooden Boats - South Lake Union 1010 Valley Street, Seattle". To the right of the date information, there is a "CWB.ORG" logo. At the bottom of the banner, there is a photograph of a long, narrow wooden boat (Umiaq) on land. A text box over the photo contains the following text:

The Center for Wooden Boats is hosting veterans, veterans with disabilities and their family members to participate in rowing activities on Umiak boats, which are indigenously designed boats that can sit up to 20 individuals. The August 21st and September 25th event dates are going to be used as a litmus to gauge interest for future activities, which may include competitive events such as racing, or potentially even journeys. The events are free to veterans and their families. All equipment will be provided by CWB, along with instruction to ensure that everyone has a safe, fun and meaningful experience out on beautiful Lake Union!

Help us row an Umiak boat in Lake Union! Bring the entire family and there's no experience needed!

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Washington Soldiers Home in Orting Receives Their YesVets Decal

Willie Slusarski, the Superintendent for the Washington Soldiers Home in Orting, was presented with a [#YesVets](#) decal by their Local Veterans Employment Representative, Brenda Laban with [Washington Employment Security Department](#).



YesVets STATISTICS SINCE FEBRUARY

Registered Employers: 305

Veterans Hired: 372

If you are an employer interested in joining the YesVets initiative, please visit www.YesVets.org

2016 Washington Business Fair

8am-3:30pm, Saturday, September 24

www.bizfair.org

Renton Technical College

3000 NE 4th Street, Renton, WA 98056

Keep informed about upcoming Veteran events by checking
our Calendar/Public Events Page often
<http://www.dva.wa.gov/calendar>

Have an event of interest to Veterans you want others to
know about?

Send fliers and information to
communications@dva.wa.gov

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View previous editions here:
<http://www.dva.wa.gov/about-wdva/brochures-and-newsletters>

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