

From the Chair

By: Jennifer McDaniel, Administrative Assistant, Department of Veterans Affairs, US Army Veteran



Greetings fellow Veterans and supporters! Another month has gone by. Hope you are all doing well!

March is Women's History month and as you read further on in the newsletter, you can enjoy the featured article on this topic. Recently many other topics may have caught your attention.

For example, during Valentines week, Suicide Prevention week was also in full swing at the Capital.

Some of you may have noticed the grave markers that had been set up near the rotunda marking the many lives lost each day to suicide. In addition, the WDVA had set 20 sets of combat boots near some of those grave markers to represent the now average number of daily veteran suicides that occur.

I cannot emphasize enough the need that exists today to reach out to our fellow veterans who are suffering from burdens of the heart and mind. These are our brothers and sisters. We may not know them all by name but we "know" them by shared experiences and the knowledge of our own potential past and present struggles.

If you or someone you know is having some kind of difficulty with the transition from battle mind to home mind or cannot seem to make peace with past or present events I encourage you to encourage them (or yourself) to speak out, speak up, reach out and grab your buddy by the hand one more time. Let them know they are not forgotten, not alone, and help is available.

Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 Press 1

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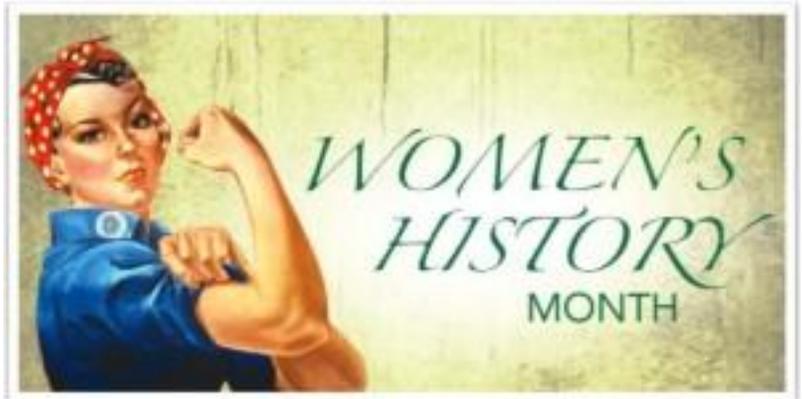
Women's History Month

By: Carrie Nielson, Learning Solutions Manager, Department of Enterprise Services (DES), US Navy Veteran

Why March is National Women's History Month

Local Celebrations

As recently as the 1970's, women's history was virtually an unknown topic in the K-12 curriculum or in general public consciousness. To address this situation, the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County (California) Commission on the Status of Women initiated a "Women's History Week" celebration for 1978, choosing the week which included March 8th, International Women's Day, as the focal point of the observance. Dozens of schools planned special programs for Women's History Week. Over one-hundred community women participated by doing special presentations in classrooms.



Mobilizing a Movement

At the 1979 convening of The Women's History Institute at Sarah Lawrence College, when the participants from across the nation learned about the success of the Sonoma County's Women's History Week celebration, they decided to initiate similar celebrations within their own communities and to support an effort to secure a "National Women's History Week."

Presidential and Congressional Support

The first steps toward success came in February 1980 when President Carter issued the first Presidential Proclamation declaring the Week of March 8th, 1980, as National Women's History Week. In the same year, Representative Barbara Mikulski and Senator Orrin Hatch co-sponsored a Congressional Resolution for National Women's History Week 1981, recognizing, honoring, and celebrating the achievements of American women.

A National Lobbying Effort

As word spread, state departments of education encouraged celebrations of National Women's History Week as an effective means to achieving equity goals within classrooms. Within a few years, thousands of schools and communities were celebrating National Women's History Week, supported and encouraged by resolutions from governors, city councils, school boards, and the U.S. Congress.

National Women's History Month

By 1986, 14 states had already declared March as Women's History Month. This momentum and state-by-state action were used as the rationale to lobby Congress, which declared the entire month of March, 1987, and in perpetuity as National Women's History Month.

Presidential Message 1980

From President Jimmy Carter's message to the nation, designating March 2-8, 1980 as National Women's History Week:

"From the first settlers who came to our shores, from the first American Indian families who befriended them, men and women have worked together to build this nation. Too often, the women were unsung and sometimes their contributions went unnoticed. But the achievements, leadership, courage, strength and love of the women who built America was as vital as that of the men whose names we know so well.

As Dr. Gerda Lerner has noted, "Women's History is Women's Right." – It is an essential and indispensable heritage from which we can draw pride, comfort, courage, and long-range vision." I ask my fellow Americans to recognize this heritage with appropriate activities during National Women's History Week, March 2-8, 1980.

"I urge libraries, schools, and community organizations to focus their observances on the leaders who struggled for equality – – Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, Lucy Stone, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Harriet Tubman, and Alice Paul.

"Understanding the true history of our country will help us to comprehend the need for full equality under the law for all our people." *From Molly Murphy MacGregor, Executive Director and Co-founder of the National Women's History Project*

The 2017 theme for National Women's History Month honors women who have successfully challenged the role of women in both business and the paid labor force. Women have always worked, but often their work has been undervalued and unpaid. This year's honorees have succeeded in expanding women's participation in commerce and their power in the paid labor force. To read about these extraordinary women, visit:

<http://www.nwhp.org/womens-history-month/2017-honoree-nominations/>

To learn more about the experiences of women veterans, visit:

<http://www.loc.gov/vets/stories/ex-war-women4wars.html>

Upcoming Events

- March 2 - 5, 2017, **Complimentary Tickets for Pac-12 Women's Basketball Tournament**, <http://www.dva.wa.gov/complimentary-tickets-pac-12-womens-basketball-tournament>
- Webinar on the **Advantages of Hiring Veterans**, 10:00 am to 11:00 am, on March 7th, 2017. Follow http://info.ascentis.com/Mar7_LP.html to attend.
- March 9, 2017, **Alliance Northwest**, <http://www.dva.wa.gov/alliance-northwest>
- March 16, 2017, **Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee Town Hall – Marysville**, <http://www.dva.wa.gov/governors-veterans-affairs-advisory-committee-town-hall-marysville>

Career Growth and Development Lunch for Veterans,

12:00 Noon to 1:00 pm (Bring your own lunch), March 17, 2017

<u>Tumwater</u> AGO 7141 Clearwater Ln SW Tumwater, WA 98501 <i>Confirmed</i>	<u>Vancouver</u> WA State School for the Blind 2214 E. 13 th St. Vancouver, WA 98661	<u>Spokane</u> WS Spokane 130 S. Arthur St. Spokane, WA 99202	<u>Seattle</u> WS 2531 Rainier Ave South Seattle, WA 98144 Room 300	<u>Olympia</u> DOL 1125 Washington St SE, Olympia, WA 98501 <i>Confirmed</i>	<u>Tacoma</u> WS 1305 Tacoma Ave S. Tacoma, WA. 98402 Nisqually room	<u>Yakima</u> WS Yakima 306 Division St. Yakima, WA 98902	<u>Everett</u> WS Snohomish County 3201 Smith Ave. Ste. 114 Everett, WA. 98201 Room 310	<u>Wenatchee</u> WS 270 9 th St. NE Suite Wenatchee, WA. 98802 Okanogan Room
(360) 586-7777	(360) 947-3302	(509) 532-3102	(206) 721-6011	(360) 902-4066	(253) 680-288-888	(509) 574-0120	(425) 258-6309	(509) 665-6605

- The VERG is proud to host a **Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Event** that will take place at the March VERG meeting on March 23, 2017. Please provide names of Viet Nam Era Veterans to McDaniel, Jennifer (DVA), jennifermc@dva.wa.gov by February 9th.
- March 25, 2017, **Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans – Yakima**, <http://www.dva.wa.gov/welcome-home-vietnam-veterans-yakima>
- March 26, 2017, **Vietnam War Memorial Benefit Dinner**, <http://www.dva.wa.gov/vietnam-war-memorial-benefit-dinner>
- March 30, 2017, **Collaboration in Action: An Evening of Appreciation from Give an Hour**, <http://www.dva.wa.gov/collaboration-action-evening-apprciation-give-hour>
- March 31, 2017, **The Ethical and Effective Practitioner: Lessons for Private Practice**, <http://www.dva.wa.gov/ethical-and-effective-practitioner-lessons-private-practice>

Veterans Spotlight: Paul Buerger, Department of Fish and Wildlife (Retired)

By: Richard Worthy, Contracting Specialist, Department of Enterprise Services (DES), US Army Veteran

Paul Buerger was recognized by Rear Admiral Gary Mayes, Commander, Navy Region Northwest at Patriots Landing in DuPont, Washington. Petty Officer Buerger was awarded the Bronze Star on January 25, 2017 for combat actions in the Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam, August 25 and September 19, 1971.

Petty Officer Buerger's military service started in 1967 at Jacksonville, Florida as an Aviation Ordnanceman. His first assignment was on the USS Coral Sea, an attack aircraft carrier operating in the South China Sea off the coast of Vietnam. Paul's second tour to Vietnam was with the skimmer boats. These boats were very small, fast, and carried only three men with small arms and grenades. They patrolled the estuaries, marches, and river areas around the Cam Rahn Peninsula. He left Vietnam and the Navy in 1971 and returned to Washington to meet up with his wife, Linda.

Mr. Buerger started working for the State of Washington at the Thurston County Sheriff's Office in 1972. He finished his State service with 32 years at the Washington State Fish and Wildlife Police in 2011.

CITATION

"For meritorious service while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in armed conflict against the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong communist aggressors in the Republic of Vietnam from July to November 1971. While serving at the United States Naval Air Facility, Cam Ranh Bay, Petty Officer Buerger was assigned as upper Cam Ranh Bay harbor patrol skimmer craft coxswain. He was exposed to enemy hostile fire on numerous occasions while performing his assigned mission of interdicting swimmer and sapper teams attempting to gain access to the peninsula by water. His craft was attacked by small arms fire from enemy ambushes on 25 August and 19 September 1971, and suffered damage from secondary explosions during anti-swimmer operations in August 1971. He and his point man were successful in capturing in excess of thirty sampans and more than sixty Viet Cong suspects. Petty Officer Buerger's unselfish devotion to duty and exceptional courage in the face of enemy fire were significant factors in preventing the enemy from accomplishing their sabotage missions and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

The Combat Distinguishing Device is authorized.

For the President

R. S. Salzer
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy
Commander, U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam



Paul and Linda have been married for 45 years. They have two grown daughters and four grandchildren.

The VERG wishes to congratulate Paul on the well overdue and deserved award. Your faithfulness is an inspiration for all veterans. Thank You for your service both to our Country and State.

Tools & Resources

[Veterans Choice Health Care](#): VA health care includes regular checkups with your primary care doctor and access to specialists, such as cardiologists, gynecologists, and mental health providers. You can also get home health care and geriatric care, as well as medical equipment, prosthetics, and prescriptions.

[Connection Veterans to the Health Care they need in Washington](#): Bridging the gap between Health Care and Health Policy.

[WA Pathways to Employment \(Veterans Pages\)](#): Each year thousands of disabled military personnel return to the civilian labor force seeking rewarding and meaningful work. The resources in these pages can help you in your job search and your transition to civilian life.

[Working for Washington State](#) – Check out state employment opportunities and sign up for daily job postings sent to your email inbox.

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

[Click here](#) to follow us on Facebook.

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Communications Sub-Committee Roster

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 Becky Boutilier (DSHS)
 Stacey Moore (HCA)
 Fletcher Mansfield (DFW)
 Tommy Simpson III (DOH)
 Sheryl Whitcomb (L&I)
 Paul Cruz (DVA)
 Angie Hong (DNR)
 Wayne Gilbert (UTC)
 Bill Allman (HCA)
 Casey Swenson (ECY)

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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