



Roscommon County Veterans Affairs
Monthly Newsletter
Website: www.roscommoncounty.net/Veterans
"Serving those who Served"

Month: March 2016 5th Edition

Deadline for April's Newsletter: March 22, 2016

Greetings, the office of the Roscommon County Veterans Affairs has decided to publish a monthly newsletter which will be shared with all of our Service Organizations within the county on a regular basis. The last three newsletters will also be placed on our Roscommon County Veterans Affairs website (www.roscommoncounty.net/Veterans).

It is our hope that this information will be of value to your members and displayed within your organization in a location that your members are aware of and have access to. We have **enlarged the font** for the newsletter based on feedback, hopefully, it will be easier to read. We would like to also announce any future events and/or activities your post is sponsoring that we can help spread the news under the Service Organizations section. If your post has an email address that this can be sent that would be helpful as occasionally this may be publish to advertise a special event involving Veterans in your area.

Electronic copies of the newsletter will allow the reader to have access to the various links found in this newsletter. If individual Veteran wishes to receive these newsletters electronically have the Veteran send a email to veterans@roscommoncounty.net with a Subject Line: Request for RCVA monthly newsletter. Our office will also provide our minutes of our Board meeting monthly as well as the Accumulative Total spreadsheet showing our office service to Veterans in our measurable categories.

The format for this newsletter will be by War Periods, but is not limited to only war time Veterans; **Peacetime Veterans have benefits**, too. For VA benefits available for Veterans during a certain War Periods, see the November 2015 1st Edition for specific information.

World War II (December 7, 1941-December 31, 1946);

World War II Veterans

World War II (WWII) was the most widespread war in history with more than 100 million people serving in military units. About 16 million Americans served during WWII, and many of



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those Veterans are now receiving VA benefits including Pension and Health Care. WWII Veterans who were a part of the Occupation Forces assigned to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan soon after the detonation of Atomic-Bombs over those respective cities, and those American prisoners of war (POW's) who were housed in close proximity to those cities are sometimes called "Atomic Veterans."

Mid Michigan Honor Flight Information: They are looking at a Spring flight for 2016, date to be announce soon. They are constantly fundraising to assist in the cost of these flights for WW II Veterans. If interested call, 231-803-4255.

Korea Conflict (June 27, 1950-January 31, 1955)

Approximately 5.7 million Veterans served in the Korean War. Korean War Veterans are more prone to suffer from disabilities related to cold injures as a result of exposure to severe cold climates. Cold weather accounted for 16% of Army non-battle injuries and over 5,000 U.S. casualties of cold injury required evacuation from Korea during the winter of 1950-1951. In many instances, Servicemembers could not seek or were unable to obtain medical care for cold injuries because of battlefield conditions.

Mid Michigan Honor Flight Information: Discussed opening up the Honor Flights to Korean Veterans. Call the number above for more information.

Vietnam Era (August 5, 1964 – May 7, 1975)

Vietnam Veterans

United States military involvement in the Vietnam War officially began on August 5, 1964; however, the first U.S. casualty in Vietnam occurred on July 8, 1959. Approximately 2.7 million American men and women served in Vietnam. During the war, over 58,000 U.S. military members lost their lives and 153,000 were wounded. There were 766 prisoners of war of



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which 114 died in captivity. The war was officially ended by Presidential Proclamation on May 7, 1975.

VIETNAM VETERANS – Check your calendar, March 29, 2016 Saginaw VA Medical Center will host a Vietnam Veteran Recognition Day at all of their Community Based Outpatient Clinic and at the Saginaw Medical Center, itself. More details to follow.

Vietnam Wall "In Memory" Program: More than 58,000 names meet the Defense Department's criteria to be etched into the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, but those who survived the war — but later died as a result of their service — are not. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund acknowledges their service and sacrifice through an online "In Memory" Honor Roll. Causes of death that fit the criteria for inclusion in the program include exposure to Agent Orange, PTSD-related illnesses/events, cancer, diabetes, heart attacks, etc. The program is free and the application process is simple. To honor a loved one, you only need to submit the veteran's DD214 to show their proof of service in the Vietnam War, a copy of their death certificate, and a photograph. The application deadline for inclusion in the 2016 ceremony is March 4. For information or to submit applications, go to: <http://www.vvmf.org/InMemoryProgram>.

Persian Gulf War/OIF/OEF... (August 2, 1990 through a date to be set by law or Presidential Proclamation)

Gulf War Veterans

More than 650,000 Service members served in Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm from August 2, 1990 to July 31, 1991. For VA benefits eligibility purposes, the Gulf War period is still in effect. This means that anyone who served on active duty from August 2, 1990, to present is considered a Gulf War Veteran. For example, the Veterans Pension benefit requires service during a wartime period. Therefore, any Veteran who served on active military service for any period from August 2, 1990, to the present meets the wartime service requirement.



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Services/Benefits for All Service Members

Veteran designation on Michigan Driver's licenses and state IDs: More than 57,000 Michigan Veterans have taken advantage of this program to have their licenses and/or IDs identified with a Veteran status. Veterans may receive this designation **free during renewal** or pay a small fee before or after renewal dates to have it placed on your license. Proof of service, such as a discharge document (DD-214) is required at the Secretary of State office. Any questions, please call our County office at (989) 275-6047. This Veteran designation **does not** meet several of the chain stores (i.e., Home Depot, Lowes) requirements for a Veteran discount. It never hurts to ask any business/restaurant if they offer a discount to Veterans. Do us a favor and let us know if it is in Roscommon County and we will add it to our list.

Certified Veteran –Friendly Employer program: Michigan Veteran Affairs Agency (MVAA) has recognized 34 organizations for their efforts to hire and support Veteran talent in the workforce.

57 schools earn veteran-friendly status: Student veterans and their dependents can choose from more than 50 veteran-friendly schools committed to providing on-campus, veteran-centric services to better support their academic and transitional needs.

MVAA's Veteran-Friendly School program recognizes institutions of higher learning for their dedication to student veterans and dependents utilizing their G.I. Bill and other educational benefits. Michigan 43 colleges and universities are 100 % compliant with the Choice Act, offering in-state tuition to all recently released Veterans and their families.



Michigan Veterans Trust Fund: In FY 2014, \$2,482,845 dollars distributed to 2,157 Veterans and their families in need of emergency assistance. These funds are only available to war time Veterans.



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Radical Individual Ready Reserves (IRR) Plan to Call Back Veterans: The goal is to make this historically disorganized component into a more integrated, reliable and useful part of the "total force" in an era when the services are under pressure to reduce active-duty personnel strength and its associated high costs. If you have members in your organization who have not serve their total service obligation, they need to be aware of this plan and the potential implications.

Helpful Veterans Information

Michigan is home to the 11th largest Veterans population in the country with 658,469 Veterans; here in Roscommon County we have 2,821 Veterans.

Michigan Veterans receive capita federal spending ranked at 48th out of 53 states and territories, which is an improvement as several years ago Michigan was dead last or 53rd of 53 states and territories.

Michigan is projecting 30,000 plus Michigan Veterans returning to Michigan due to the recent drawdown. A lot of the younger Veterans are having a hard time transferring their skills to civilian workplaces. Unemployment rate for Michigan Veterans was 7.3% in 2013.

More than half of Michigan's 658,469 Veterans are not officially counted in the labor force. Only about 44% of our Veterans are in the workforce.

Michigan Veteran Community Action Teams (VCAT) - The concept behind these VCAT is to implement the no wrong door concept among service providers to Veterans **and their families**. A "warm hand off" is the operational concept of making sure the Veteran is not only given the service provider information but for the agency to call the service provider while the Veteran is still in the office and provide the Veteran a Point of Contact within the service agency. Please call the Roscommon County Veterans Affairs office for more information.

In Michigan, nearly three quarters (72%) of Veterans are aged 55 and older.



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Michigan's Veteran population is older than that of the U.S. Veteran population as a whole, with a significantly higher proportion Vietnam Veterans residing in the state.

No Wrong Door for Michigan Veterans: The Michigan Veteran Resource Service Center (MVRSC) and MichiganVeterans.com provide one-stop access for Veterans and their families seeking information, resources and support as they transition through each chapter of their lives. Callers to 800-MICH-VET (800-642-4838) are provided Veteran-specific programs as well as a warm hand-off to programs available to all Michigan citizens.

Veteran Homes in Michigan – Michigan is home to two (2) superb state owned Veteran homes in Michigan, one in Grand Rapids and one in Marquette.

National Cemeteries in Michigan - one in Battle Creek known as Fort Custer Cemetery and one in Holly, Mi known as Great Lakes National Cemetery.

Roscommon County Helpful Information

Roscommon County Veterans Affairs (RCVA) office is open five days a week from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the County Building in Roscommon and has started offering office hours every Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Houghton Lake Community Center (aka Houghton Lake Senior Center) starting Thursday, December 3, 2015.

The RCVA office recently requested local businesses to identify if they provide any type of Veterans discounts here in Roscommon County. Sadly, only one business responded to this attempt though our office is aware that there are more service providers and/or businesses in Roscommon County who do offer Veterans discount. Our office is asking for your help in developing this list for Roscommon County. Our office is also aware certain "chains" may offer Veterans discount but this varies from one business to another.

The one business who did reply was:

Family Eye Care, P.C., Dr. Jay C. Jenkins in Houghton Lake and Roscommon



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- 40% off materials from usual and customary on any spectacle orders
- 30% off services, to include specialty testing such as Visual fields, Ocular coherence and Visual Evoked Potentials for disease management

Minutes of our February 4, 2016 Roscommon County Veterans Affairs monthly meeting are as follows:

Meeting called to order at 12:00 noon by Chairman Don Mraz.

Pledge of Allegiance was given to the National Flag.

Members present: Don Mraz; Ken Melvin, Ron Schrieber and Tom Sheppard; Staff: Director of Veterans Affairs: Kevin C. Sherman. Excused: Heath Nemeth, County Veteran Service Officer in Houghton Lake office; **Guests:** None

Public Comments – None.

Minutes of last meeting, 7 January 2016, and Office Report Accumulative Totals for January 2016 were presented, accepted and filed. Motion by Ken Melvin and seconded by Ron Schrieber to approved minutes and Office Report. Motion Carried. Ken Melvin stated we need to provide a copy of our approved minutes to the county clerk. The Director also stated the Accumulative Totals Spreadsheet is also shared.

Correspondence. Thank you from one of our Veterans who is a rider for medical appointment and County Acceptance Letter of the MVAA grant.

Burial and Graver Markers:

Roscommon County had expenses for 9 burials at \$2700.00 and 0 grave markers for a total of \$2700. Motion by Ron Schrieber and seconded by Ken Melvin to approved burial expenses. Motion Carried.



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Medical Transportation

We had 19 trips for medical transportation for \$1,261.98. Collections from the office throughout the month were \$275.05, leaving a total of \$986.93 for the month. Motion by Tom Sheppard, seconded by Ken Melvin to pay transportation claims for \$1261.98. Carried

Monthly Office Expenses:

Claims and Accounts for monthly office expenses submitted for \$810.18. Motion by Tom Sheppard, seconded by Ken Melvin to pay monthly office expenses. Carried

Veteran's Relief Fund Application:

One application (#234) was presented. One application for \$1000 for trees removal threatening a WWII Veteran's home who is too elderly and frail (stroke, frail) to remove and who is low income. Motion by Ron Schrieber and seconded by Tom Sheppard to approve this application. Motion carried.

Director's Report

Director requested permission for Director and County Veteran Service Office to attend the National Training in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina during May. Estimated cost for the training will be \$2,000. Tom Sheppard indicated he would be willing to staff the office for this week. Motion by Tom Sheppard, seconded by Ken Melvin to allow both Heath and Kevin to attend this training. Motion carried.

Director gave a report on the office newsletter he is sending out to County Veterans organization and advised the Board he will be doing his monthly visits to all the service organizations during February and March, as he attempted to do last year.

Ron Schreiber made a motion to purchase another laptop computer and docking station for office at an estimated cost of \$1,250.00. Seconded by Tom Sheppard. Motion Carried.



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Old Business:

Green Light campaign is still underway. Bulbs are not in that have been ordered.

Wreaths Across America – there has been little interest shown to date, though it is still early.

New Business: None

Good of the Order: None

Public Comments: None

Motion by Tom Sheppard, seconded by Ron Schrieber to adjourn, Meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Minutes taken by: Ron Schrieber, Secretary

Questions and Answers/ Requests Driven

Q&A/ What is an “Accredited Service Officer” ?

Accredited service officers are specially trained to provide expert assistance, free of charge, to veterans and their families. While the majority of a service officer’s work involves application for VA disability benefits, these compassionate professionals also provide information, referrals and resources on education, employment and business, death benefits and other important topics. County Veteran Service officers can be accredited by more than one service organizations if they meet that service organization requirements.

VA accreditation is for the sole purpose of providing representation services to claimants before VA and does not imply that a representative is qualified to provide financial planning services or is otherwise endorsed by VA. VA accreditation may not be used for marketing financial products or promoting a financial services business.



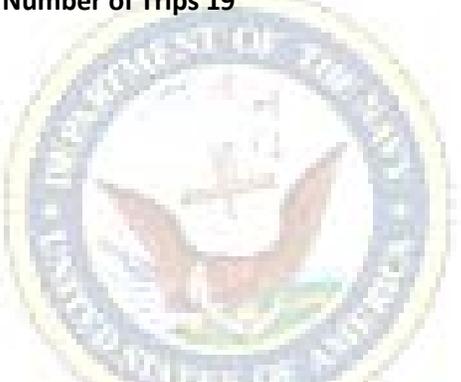
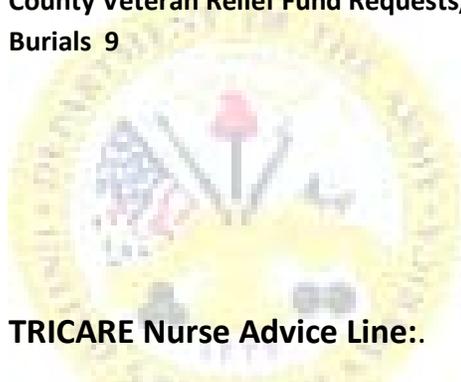
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January Roscommon County Veterans Affairs Office Totals

January Veterans or Dependents Office Visits 81 Coordination of volunteer medical transport 39
Personal Interviews 57 Telephone calls made 135 Telephone calls received 247
Claims submitted/reviewed 36 Home or Nursing Home/Assisted visits 4 Records Request; DD 214 or other: 2
County Veteran Relief Fund Requests/Application 1 Medical Transportation: Number of Trips 19
Burials 9



General Information

TRICARE Nurse Advice Line:

Applications being accepted for 2016 National Veterans Golden Age Games

Event takes place in Detroit, July 10-14

The 2016 National Veterans Golden Age Games take place in Detroit, Michigan, July 10-14. Nearly 800 athletes are expected to compete in the national rehabilitative multi-sport and recreation competition for senior Veterans. The event encourages participants to make physical activity a central part of their lives, and supports VA's comprehensive recreation and rehabilitation therapy programs. Competitive events include air rifle, badminton, bocchia, bowling, cycling, field, golf, horseshoes, nine ball, power walk, shuffleboard, swimming, table tennis and track.

Veterans and their families may be eligible to file taxes absolutely free

Taxpayers have until Monday, Apr. 18 to file their 2015 tax returns and pay any tax due because of the Emancipation Day holiday in Washington, D.C., falling on Friday, April 15. The IRS expects more than 70 percent of taxpayers to again receive tax refunds this year. Last year, the IRS issued 109 million refunds, with an average refund of \$2,797.



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Shown below are several ways Veterans and their families have access to free tax preparation and electronic filing services to keep more of their hard earned money.

- IRS’ [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance](#) (VITA) and [Tax Counseling for the Elderly](#) (TCE) programs are available to taxpayers that earned less than \$54,000 in 2015. More than 3.7 million tax returns were prepared using these services in 2014. All tax returns completed through VITA are prepared by IRS certified volunteers, so you can feel confident your tax return is accurate. Even better, there are over 12,000 convenient locations across the country. To find the VITA location nearest you, enter your zip code into the easy-to-use [VITA/TCE Locater](#).
- [MyFreeTaxes](#), operating the only free online tax preparation and filing assistance platform available in all 50 states and Washington D.C., who earned \$62,000 or less in 2015, allows qualified Veterans, active-duty military, their families and all other qualifying taxpayers to file both a federal and state tax return absolutely free. In addition to e-filing, MyFreeTaxes also provides in-person help to individuals and families earning \$20,000 or less in 2015. For more information, please visit: www.myfreetaxes.com. The MyFreeTaxes initiative is managed by United Way, with the assistance from legacy partners, National Disability Institute and Goodwill Industries International, and is sponsored by the Wal-Mart Foundation

Wreaths Across America

On Wreaths Across America Day (December 12, 2015), 70,000 volunteers placed 240,185 remembrance wreaths on headstones in Arlington, and with over 1,100 participating locations nationwide 901,000 remembrance wreaths were placed overall. The remembrance wreaths were gifts of respect and appreciation donated by private citizens or organizations.

Visiting Field Service Officer from American Legion at Roscommon County Building.

On the **Second and Fourth Wednesdays of every month**, Elizabeth Cuddington from the Michigan American Legion, will be in the Roscommon County Building, Veteran Affairs office from 12:30- 3:30 p.m. to assist Veterans with claims related issues. Walk ins are welcome, appointments are not needed. During winter months, please call our office in the morning to ensure she is able to get in that afternoon. **Notice – this month, March 2016, this Service Officer will only be available on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, March 9th, 2016.**



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American Legion District Service Officer Tom Sheppard also provides office hours at the Prudenville American Legion Post on Tuesday evenings from 4pm-6pm and at St. Helen American Legion on Wednesdays from 5pm – last Veteran is seen.

Resource Guide for Roscommon County Veterans – Our office is working on a local Roscommon County Resource Guide to assist Veterans in finding services available to Veterans. These services cover a wide range of service areas and may be beneficial to new Veterans to your post and/or community. Copies are available in our Roscommon and Houghton Lake offices.

Green Light Campaign- The Roscommon County Veterans Affairs office is encouraging all Veterans and friends of Veterans to honor a Veteran by displaying a “Green Light” on their home year round. These “Green Lights” are now available in our Roscommon and Houghton Lake office. These are also available at our local Walmart store in Houghton Lake who provided our office these lights at their cost. The Roscommon County Veterans Affairs office would like to thank our local Walmart and their management team for this generosity. Any donation toward these “Green Lights” will allow us to maintain an adequate supply of these lights as the demand dictates.





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Service Organizations in our County

VF^W Post 4159 (Dues \$50)

Post **4159 Charles M. Engel Post** (11th
District)
PO Box 774

Roscommon, MI 48653
United States
Phone: (989) 275-4136

*Meeting Location &
Time*

219 Terrace Dr
Roscommon, MI 48653
United States
7:00 PM 2nd Wednesday
Commander: David A. Luck
Service Officer: Ronald R. Schrieber
Quartermaster: Gerald McCormick

VF^W Post 4034

Post 4034 Fred & Paul Kalis Post

PO Box 591
Houghton Lake Heights, MI 486300591
United States
Phone: (989) 422-6404
Meeting Location & Time
935 Loxley Rd
Houghton Lake Heights, MI 48630-5051
United States
7:00 pm 2nd Wednesday

Commander: Steven Bidstrup
Quartermaster:

VF^W Post 5680 St. Helen Post

PO Box 376
Saint Helen, MI 48656
United States
Phone: (989) 389-7492

Meeting Location & Time

1914 Lake St
Saint Helen, MI 486569756
United States
7:00 PM 1st Wednesday

Quartermaster: Bruce Bridson
Commander: Robert Hurd

Service Organizations in our County

AMERICAN LEGION POSTS

Roscommon Post #96 (Dues \$45)

PO Box 744
Roscommon, MI 48653
United States
Phone: (989) 389-0164

Meeting Location & Time

219 Terrace Dr
Roscommon, MI 48653
United States
7:00 PM 3rd Thursday

Adjutant: Don Croff
Commander: George Ferguson
Service Officer: Kevin C. Sherman



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St. Helen Post #416

10062 Ford Drive, St. Helen, MI 48656

Phone: (989) 389-4630

Meeting Location & Time

10062 Ford Drive, St. Helen, MI 48656

7:00 PM 1st Thursday

Adjutant: Don Mraz

Commander: Phil Maylum

Service Officer: Vacant

Prudenville Post #245 (Houghton Lake-
Higgins Lake) Dues \$45 3564 S. Reserve Rd

PO Box 318, Prudenville, MI 48651

United States

Phone: (810) 751-9983

Meeting Location & Time

3564 S. Reserve Rd

Prudenville, MI 48651

United States

7:00 PM 3rd Wed

Adjutant: Elizabeth Cuddington

Commander: Bill Jammer

Service Officer: Tom Sheppard

Service Organizations in our County

AMVETS

Amvet Post #13 (Dues \$37)

8009 N Ausable Rd

PO Box 335

Higgins Lake, MI 48627

United States

Phone: (989) 821-9838

Meeting Location & Time

2nd Tuesday at 6 pm

8009 N Ausable Rd

Roscommon, MI 48653

United States

Commander: Ron Watson

Service Officer: Vacant

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

Marine Corps League #684 CPL Jack A.

Davenport

3564 S. Reserve Rd.

Prudenville, MI, 48651

United States

Phone: (989)

Meeting Location & Time

3564 S. Reserve Rd

Prudenville, MI 48651

United States

7:00 PM 2nd Wed

Commander: Jim Bowman

Service Officer: Mel Ward (989) 422-7415



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[Vietnam Veterans of America \(VVA\)](#)

VVA Chapter #264

PO Box 773

Roscommon, MI 48653

Meeting Location & Time

FWV Post #4159

Roscommon, MI 48653

United States

7pm, 4th Wednesday

Commander: Ed Nolff

Service Officer: Ronald R. Schrieber

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Veterans are among our most community-oriented citizens. The study shows that they volunteer an average of 160 hours annually, 25 percent more than non-veterans. **They belong to civic groups and attend neighborhood meetings, often assuming leadership roles. Furthermore, 48 percent of them vote in elections regularly, 16 percent more than non-veterans.**

These findings should surprise no one. Those who serve in today's all-volunteer military usually do so out of a sense of commitment. Although the government offers educational, health, and other assistance to service members, of the scores of veterans I have interviewed, every single one has named duty to country, not benefits, as his or her primary reason for serving. Furthermore, nearly all -- including severely wounded soldiers -- say they would do it again.

Once soldiers transition to civilian life, many want to continue serving.

Continuing to Serve

Think today's veterans are mostly suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and barely making ends meet? According to a recent report by [Got Your Six](#), just the opposite is true. Got Your Six notes that today's veterans tend to be engaged citizens, more likely to volunteer and vote than the general population. As a group, they earn more than non-veterans with comparable qualifications, complete educational programs at the same rate as non-veterans, and comprise only 8.6 of the homeless population.



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Service Organizations Page

Service Organizations: The Roscommon County Department of Veterans Affairs is asking all of our county service organizations in our county to provide our office with their annual dues and a contact list of their officers. Our office would like to refer returning Veterans to your organization and it would be nice if we can give them a good contact person. I've asked in previous correspondence for applications with your dues amount completed, if your organization have not done so, please consider helping us help you in your recruiting.

February/March Service Organizations Visits – It is my hope to visit all of our service organizations during February/March though one night three of our service organizations meet at the same time.

- **Visits during February included the St. Helen VFW and American Legion, AMVETS, Prudenville and Roscommon American Legion.**
- **Visits during March will hopefully be the Roscommon VFW. (Due to my schedule vacation, visits will resume in April for the Marine Corp League, Houghton Lake VFW and the Vietnam Veterans of America service organizations.**

The Roscommon County Veterans Affairs Committee members and staff say to all of our Veterans and their families, "God bless our Veterans and God bless America."



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VA Plans to Propose Expanded Disability Benefits Eligibility for Veterans Exposed to Contaminated Water at Camp Lejeune

12/17/2015 02:27 PM EST

VA Plans to Propose Expanded Disability Benefits Eligibility for Veterans Exposed to Contaminated Water at Camp Lejeune

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today that it plans to propose expanded disability compensation eligibility for Veterans exposed to contaminated drinking water while assigned to Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune.

From 1953 to 1987, water sources at the base were contaminated with industrial solvents that are correlated with certain health conditions. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald decided to propose presumptions of service connection for certain conditions associated with these chemical solvents following discussions between environmental health experts at the Veterans Health Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

"The water at Camp Lejeune was a hidden hazard, and it is only years later that we know how dangerous it was," said Secretary McDonald. "We thank ATSDR for the thorough review that provided much of the evidence we needed to fully compensate Veterans who develop one of the conditions known to be related to exposure to the compounds in the drinking water."

ATSDR determined that the drinking water at Camp Lejeune was contaminated with perchloroethylene, trichloroethylene, vinyl chloride, benzene and other petroleum contaminants from leaking storage tanks from 1953 to 1987. ATSDR also determined that prolonged exposure to these chemicals increases the risk of certain health conditions.

Based upon VA's review of current medical science and ATSDR's findings, Secretary McDonald intends to propose creation of a presumption of service connection for the following conditions:

- Kidney Cancer
- Liver Cancer
- Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma
- Leukemia
- Multiple Myeloma
- Scleroderma
- Parkinson's Disease
- Aplastic Anemia / Myelodysplastic Syndromes

The Secretary's proposal would also expand benefits eligibility to Reserve and National Guard personnel who served at Camp Lejeune for any length of time from August 1, 1953, through December 31, 1987. These personnel would be presumed to have been exposed to the contaminated water during their Reserve or National Guard service and, in appropriate circumstances, to have been disabled by such exposure during service, thus allowing them to qualify for VA benefits under the statutory definition of "Veteran."

This would make them eligible for VA disability compensation and medical care for any of the presumptive conditions, and their surviving dependents would be eligible for dependency and indemnity compensation and burial benefits.

VA is working on regulations that would establish these presumptions, making it easier for affected Veterans to receive VA disability compensation for these conditions.



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VII. Hearing Loss and Tinnitus Claims for Reserve and Guard

In December 2015, VA updated the M21-1 to clarify that Reserve and Guard members who experience a decrease in hearing ability (auditory acuity) during active duty for training or inactive duty for training as a result of acoustic trauma may be granted service connection for hearing loss.

Duty MOS should be considered in whether the veteran was exposed to acoustic trauma (an "injury" allowing service connection during inactive duty for training, as well as active duty service). Audiometric results should show a threshold shift (decrease in hearing ability) during service, but service connection may be granted even if the hearing loss threshold for disability purposes in 38 CFR 3.385 was not met in service, as long as it is met during the claim process.



We wish to let our servicemen and servicewomen know we support their sacrifice and that we will not forget them; we will do this by wearing Red every Friday.

What is R.E.D. Friday?

RED is an acronym that stands for Remember Everyone Deployed. R.E.D. Friday was created to remind people of our heroes overseas and show that we are thinking of them. People across the country wear red every Friday to serve as a reminder and spread the message of how important it is that we keep our troops in our thoughts.

How did R.E.D. Friday Get Started?

Remember those email chains you used to get asking you to forward to 10 friends – or all of your friends? There were all kinds: some claiming ridiculous things, some trying to raise awareness for campaigns or diseases, and some that were just plain silly. This is how R.E.D. Friday originated: an email chain back in 2005.

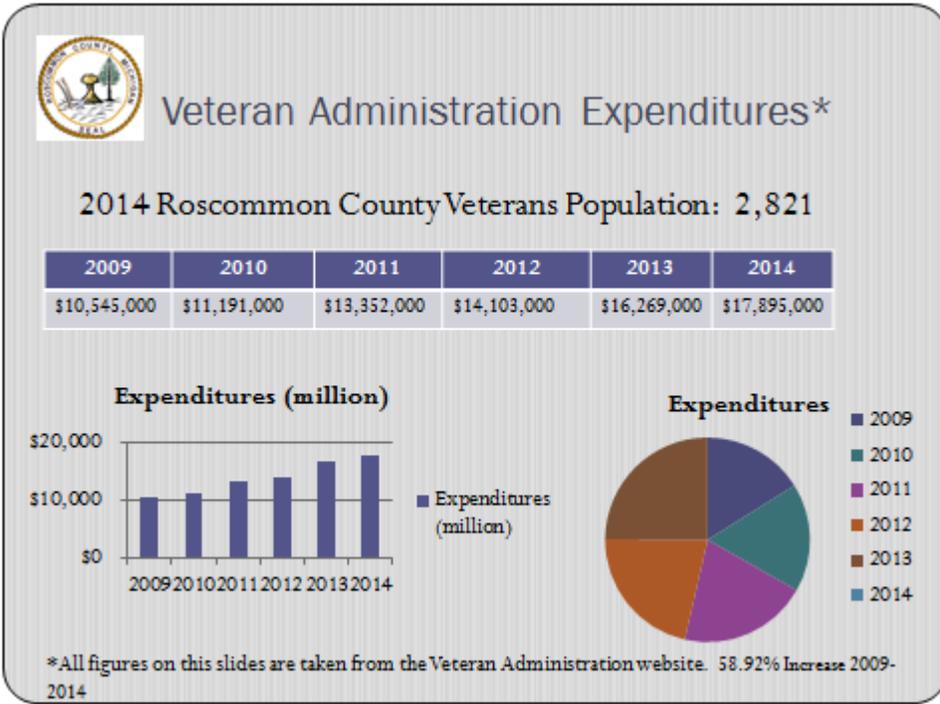
Editor Note: This is our office fifth newsletter and we are open for articles for future newsletters and/or events you would like us to publicize with this monthly newsletter. Next month deadline is identified above, if you have any questions please call Kevin C. Sherman, Director, at (989)275-6047.



Roscommon County Veterans Affairs
 Monthly Newsletter
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 "Serving those who Served"

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Deadline for April's Newsletter: March 22, 2016



Breakout of Roscommon County VA Expenditures

Fiscal Year 2014 VA GDX Totals (**millions**)

Roscommon County Veteran total 2,821

VA expenditures totaling \$17,895,000

\$10,411,000 in Compensation and Pension Benefits

\$6,613,000 for medical expenditures

\$633,000 for education and training for disabled Veterans

\$237,000 for insurance and indemnities