



"Serving Those Who Served"

VETERAN VOICES

Table of Contents

June 2017

Message from the Director Page 2

**DuPont Memorial Day
Ceremony/Soldiers Home
Fishing Derby/ Spokane Navy
Week** Page 3/4

**VA Geriatrics & Gerontology
Committee Visits Port Orchard/
Memorial Day Event Photos** Page 5/6

**Tacoma Dome Resource Fair/
Commander's Call** Page 7/8

**Recognize Employers at YesVets
Event/ Apprenticeship Work-
shop** Page 9/10

**American Lake Veteran
Networking Event/
Contact Us** Page 11/12

WDVA Hot Jobs:

[Director of Nursing Services Orting](#)

[Licensed Nursing Home Administrator/
Superintendent Orting](#)

[Attending Physician/Medical Director Orting](#)

[Nursing Assistant Residential Living \(WWWVH\)](#)

[Registered Nurse 2 \(WWWVH\)](#)

[Registered Nurse 3 Resident Care Manager WWWVH](#)

[Registered Nurse 3 MDS Coordinator Non-
permanent Orting](#)

More Info: recruiters@dva.wa.gov

NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR 2017 OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO VETERANS AWARDS

The Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee is accepting nominations for the 2017 Washington State Outstanding Awards for Service to Veterans.

These awards presented by the Governors Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee, are open to all who serve veterans in Washington State and nominations may be submitted by any person, organization or institution.

Nominations are due by September 17, 2017 and the winners will be honored in the 52nd Auburn Veterans Day Parade, followed by a special luncheon after the parade.

There are three Nomination Categories to choose from:
Superior Award – This award is the Committee's highest honor and is given to recognize clearly superior accomplishments, achievements and outstanding performance.

Distinguished Service Award – This award is used to recognize significant accomplishments and special contributions.

Team Award – This award is designed to recognize significant accomplishments of a team or group of individuals. This may be for their contributions on a special project, special contribution and outstanding performance.

NOMINATE: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSee4uzYqueDn-FliNkhr8dvfsa4g6Q-SuhkjS6ikZD7zC6Cyg/viewform>

**For more information,
contact Liza Narciso at
360-725-2157**



**2016 Outstanding Service to
Veterans Award Winners**

"Serving Those Who Served"

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



I am proud to announce that we have entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Suquamish Tribe.

It allows *your* Washington Department of Veterans Affairs to extend our VA accreditation as a Veteran Service Organization to the Tribal Veterans Representative Program of the Suquamish Tribe.

This agreement is made possible by recent Federal rule changes that allow VA accredited agencies, such as WDVA, to extend accreditation to Tribal Veterans Representatives and Service Officers in the same way that we may accredit Service

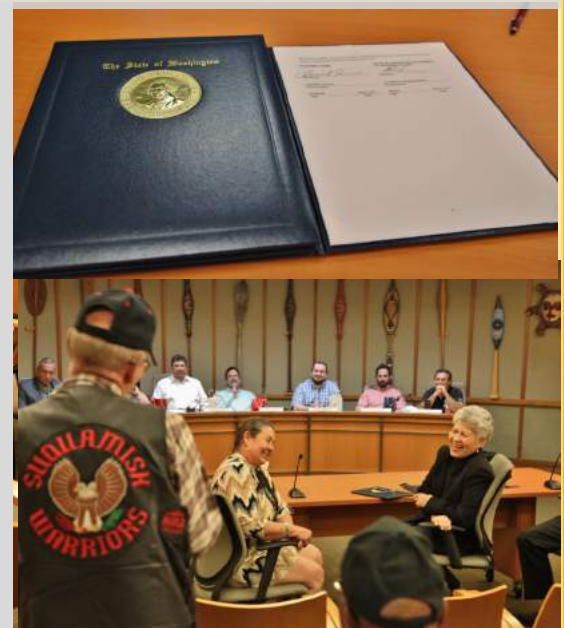
Officers in individual Counties.

This is the first state/tribal agreement that WDVA has entered into under the new Federal rules. I am excited about our partnership because it expands our statewide network of accredited Veteran Service Officers who can help connect veterans and their families to their earned benefits.

The Suquamish Tribe also recognizes the importance of this agreement because it allows their Tribal Veterans Representative, LaVada Anderson, to better advocate for veterans and their families by developing and representing VA disability claims as an accredited Veteran Service Officer.

Ultimately, more veterans and their families will receive their earned benefits, such a VA disability compensation, vocational rehabilitation, and survivors benefits.

I look forward to working with each of our State's Tribes to determine whether a similar agreement would benefit their members. If you'd like to learn more about the new Federal rules or this agreement, please contact Steven Gill, WDVA Veteran Services Administrator and Tribal Liaison, at 360-725-2235 or steveng@dva.wa.gov.



DuPont Honors Medal of Honor Recipient, Wilburn Ross



"Today (May 29) was a very significant day for DuPont. We started the day with our annual Memorial Day "Wear Blue, Run to Remember" event at Powder Works Park.

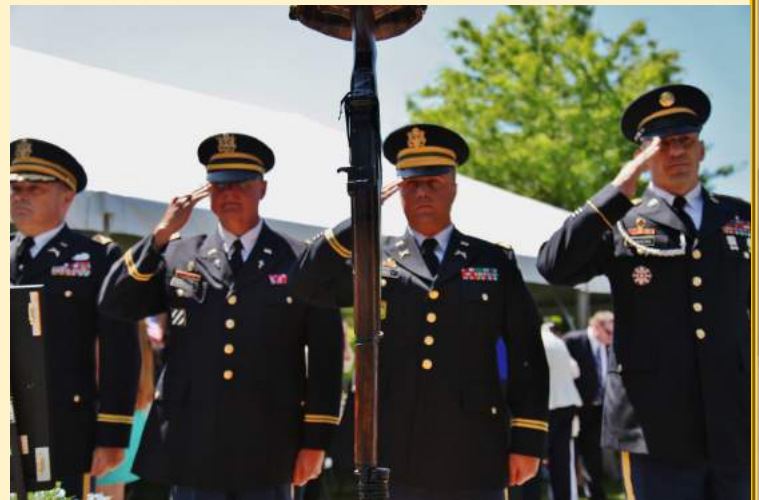
This National movement MEMOR and living memorial that began in DuPont drew over 2000 runners.

We followed with our traditional Memorial Day remembrance at the DuPont Global War on Terrorism Memorial in Ross Plaza. Today, in addition to recognizing DuPont's fallen, we

said farewell to MSG(Ret) Wilburn K. Ross MoH recipient from WW2 who passed away on May 9th.

We were honored to have National Representatives Sen Maria Cantwell and Rep Denny Heck join us, speak and participate in the ceremony. Our State Representatives Sen Steve O'Ban and Rep Christine Kilduff joined us as well as our County Councilman Doug Richardson.

It was a special privilege to have Mr. Desmond Doss Jr, son of WW2 MoH recipient Desmond Doss and subject of the current movie "Hacksaw Ridge" serve as our inspirational guest speaker. Our Community Connector Unit 6th CID provided the color guard, firing team and senior leaders to MC and participate in the ceremony. They are absolutely great partners.



The Patriot Riders provided additional color guards for Ross Plaza. Representative of Wear Blue Rachel Elizade-Powell shared moving comments during the ceremony. The City was well represented with Deputy Mayor Roger Westman, CMs Penny Coffey, Shawna Gasak, Matt Helder and Eric Corp in attendance today. And certainly not least, the staff and volunteers of DuPont who worked tirelessly for several weeks to plan and execute today's memorable ceremony.



Ross Plaza looked as beautiful as it has ever looked, my thanks to our hard working Public Works team. Amy Walker and the Parks and Rec team did a superb job of putting this all together. Police and Fire made it safe and flow like clockwork. Finally, City Administrator Ted Danek who has put in countless hours planning, coordinating and supervising our team as this magnificent event came together. Job Well Done!"

-DuPont Mayor, Mike Courts

Rear Admiral Kovacich Visits Spokane Veterans Home



Rear Admiral Kevin Kovacich, a native of Spokane, visited the Spokane area from May 16-19 as part of #SpokaneNavyWeek.

Spokane Navy Week is a community outreach program targeted at increasing the community's understanding of the U.S. Navy as well as its mission and relevance to national security. The Navy engaged with various community organizations, educational institutions, and businesses to spend time with local citizens, volunteer, learn about the great programs offered to the Spokane community, and share a bit about why a strong Navy matters to the Spokane community.



Part of his visit was to YOUR Spokane Veterans Home to tour and visit with veteran residents.

We appreciate your support and send special thanks for making a trip to visit our veteran residents. #WeLoveOurCommunity



2017 Washington Soldiers Home Fishing Derby



The competition was neck and neck at this year's Annual Washington Soldiers Home Fishing Derby.

Jerry Greenup caught the 1st Fish, George Jewell won The Most Fish by catching four fish and Hurshel Phillips won Biggest Fish at 15 1/2".

After fishing the residents enjoyed a delicious fish fry with all the tasty sides!



We would like to send a special #ThankYou to our WSH Resident Council, Tacoma Washington Chapter of H.O.G., The Chosin Few, individual volunteers, the WSH Dietary Staff for their outstanding food service and the many local businesses that supported this exciting event!



VA Geriatrics & Gerontology Committee Visit Port Orchard



Our Washington Veterans Home in Port Orchard hosted the VA Secretary's Committee on Gerontology and Geriatrics.

The committee provides advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Under Secretary for Health on all matters pertaining to geriatrics and gerontology by assessing the capability of VA health care facilities to meet the medical, psychological and social needs of older veterans and by evaluating VA facilities designated as Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Centers.

We presented the concept for a behavioral health unit to better serve the needs of our more challenged veterans. Along with this presentation, the committee also enjoyed a choir performance from the Booneville Mississippi Choir and a visit to our Building 9 for Veterans Transitional Housing Program.



Registration Open: Serving Those Who Served Conference

Veterans Resource Providers Conference

-Establish a greater collaboration within the Veteran Service Community on both sides of WA State

Your Washington Department of Veterans Affairs is hosting the second "Serving Those Who Served Conference" at the Wenatchee Convention Center on July 26 and July 27.

The purpose of the conference is to enhance collaboration and connection of all those who work with veterans and their families.

"Participants are able to attend a wide variety of workshops taught by professionals in a number of fields, and as a result they return to their place of work with an even greater capacity to serve veterans and their families," said Schmidt.

Professional development will be provided in areas that impact the lives of our veterans and their families: Benefits, Education, Employment, Financial, Housing and Mental Health with two additional topics on Military Culture and Justice-Involved Veterans.

The conference will promote the opportunity to make new and unique connections, and collaboration with others from across the state.

Forging new connections and creating opportunities for future collaborations is a theme for the upcoming conference for good reason.

"These connections to each other strengthen the fabric of support and resources that are available," said Schmidt.

Information is power and the more empowered we become the more empowered our veterans become through the services provided to them.

Register Now at: <https://servingthosewhoserved.eventbrite.com>

BREAKOUT SESSIONS TO INCLUDE:

Justice Involved Veterans

WDVA Programs

VA Healthcare/VA Choice

Life Cycle of a VA Disability Claim

Suicide Prevention/Suicide Safety

VA Education Benefits / Vet Corps

Cemetery & Burial Benefits

PTSD & Traumatic Brain Injury

Vocational Rehabilitation

County Specific Topics - Best Practices/Creating Regional Strategic Partnerships

Helping Vets Succeed in the Workplace and YesVets

Service Animals

Veteran Homelessness & Housing Programs

Memorial Day Event Photos



**Fred Ross Memorial Ride &
Washington Veterans Home in
Retsil**



**Spokane Veterans Home &
Washington Soldiers Home
in Orting**



**Washington State Veterans
Cemetery in Medical Lake**



**Olympia Thunder Run -
Memorial Day Ride to
the Capitol & Thurston County
Veterans Council Memorial Day
Ceremony**



See more Memorial Day Event Photos by visiting our Flickr webpage at:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/98326753@N03/albums>

Tacoma Dome Resource Fair Leaves Lasting Impact



The fifth annual Veterans Resource Fair was held on May 13th inside the Tacoma Dome's Exhibition Hall. This event was a great place for military-affiliated individuals living in Pierce, King, Kitsap, and Thurston counties to network and learn about their VA related benefits.

Event Director Shawn Durnen said the Veterans Resource Fair aims to get everyone under one roof, volunteers, veterans, and veteran family members alike. The event has their backs better than a flak jacket, or a heavy vest, as it protects against proverbial social shrapnel when veterans go through significant life changes.

Durnen said all veterans struggle with enormous life shifts. Some seem to be continually marching to the cadence, "I had a good home, but I left" when they return home and can't seem to fit in with their new surroundings. According to this January's annual Point in Time count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons living in Pierce County, ten percent were veterans. In 2015, the count declared that the majority of homeless veterans were male while nine percent were female.

Durnen himself was homeless off-and-on for more than three years when he returned home from 4 ½ years of active duty service. His experiences from living on the streets inspired his getting involved with the premiere Veterans Resource Fair five years ago. For the Army, Durnen had worked for OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom) as a combat vet and did engineering, construction, and demolition work. "Sustainability was not in my vocabulary at the time," he admitted about his mindset when he first returned home.

Because Durnen knows the social neglect that veterans feel on an intimate basis, he speaks up for his comrades in transition and said when individuals get out military service they have lost their identity and must suddenly rediscover who they are as civilians. That means they must transition into civilian housing rules, which are quite different than what the military offered. Durnen said the returning vet must also navigate many other cultural expectations.

"You're talking about a population of individuals who have gone from being told what to do every day of their lives. When they get out of the military, they're learning how to dress, how to eat, when to be places, and are now having to rediscover who they are," Durnen said. ([Via TacomaWeekly.com](http://ViaTacomaWeekly.com))



Commander's Call Held in Tacoma



WDVA and the Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee (VAAC) were honored to host a Commander's Call at the Tacoma AMVETS Post 1 in Tacoma. This meeting served as a venue for Veterans Service Organizations, veterans, resource providers and other partners to hear from representatives from Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, Federal VA and each other.

During the meeting, attendees engaged in multiple briefings such as:

- VAAC Overview
- US DVA Veterans Benefits Administration
- US DVA Veterans Health Administration
- US DVA National Cemetery Administration
- WAServes
- Veterans Services, Legislative Update, WDVA Budget & Veterans Services



You can watch the entire meeting on video by visiting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AzV7TFb8KWo>

You can view all of the presentation slides visiting: <http://www.dva.wa.gov/about-wdva/veterans-affairs-advisory-committee> (Scroll to the bottom of the page to find the Meeting Materials from May 18th Commander's Call.)

More about the VAAC

The Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee (VAAC) is a seventeen member committee appointed by the Governor. Each member is appointed to a term of four years. Veterans are recommended for appointment to the VAAC by the leadership of nationally recognized Veteran Service Organizations active in Washington State, and two members are appointed as veterans at large.

The VAAC serves in an advisory capacity to the Governor and the Director of the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. Members divide into small groups and plan Town Hall meetings in locations across the state.

Town Hall meetings serve two purposes:

- 1) To provide a forum for veterans and their families to learn about the services and resources available in their own communities.
- 2) To educate VAAC members on issues that are important to veterans and their families across the state so that the VAAC can share this information with the WDVA Director and the Governor.

The next VAAC Meeting is being held on September 21, 2017 in Vancouver, WA.

For more information on the VAAC, please contact LisaN@dva.wa.gov



Recognizing Employers that Hire Veterans



RECOGNITION CEREMONY



Employers who hire veterans through the state's new YesVets Initiative will receive recognition at a ceremony in the Columbia Room on the Capitol Campus on June 14 at 11:00am.

Since launching the initiative in February 2016, 450 employers have signed up to participate and 1,260 veterans have been hired.

The initiative is a result of House Bill 2040, sponsored by 14th Legislative District Representative Gina McCabe in 2015. Originally conceived as a demonstration project to take place in the Yakima Workforce Development Area, YesVets quickly spread across the state and now any employer can sign up and begin hiring veterans through the program.

YesVets provides public recognition to employers who actively commit to, recruit for and hire veterans into their open positions. By creating a business environment that publically recognizes and values employers who commit to hiring veterans, YesVets hopes to continue decreasing veteran unemployment. The YesVets decal presented to employers who have hired a veteran, also provides a very public way for both customers and veterans to see that the business supports veterans.

Enrolling in YesVets is quick and easy. Employers simply visit www.yesvets.org and enter basic business and contact information into the online form. Then they are contacted directly by their local veterans employment representative who can help them use the new WorkSource job search system powered by Monster. Once the employer has hired a veteran, their local veterans employment representative presents them with their YesVets decal to proudly display on their business window.

During the June 14 ceremony, all YesVets employers in attendance will be recognized and thanked for their commitment to Washington's veterans and their families.

Annual Korean War Armistice Wreathlaying Ceremony

You are cordially invited to the Annual Wreathlaying Ceremony as we Commemorate the Korean War Armistice 64th Anniversary on July 22, 2017 at 11:00am at the Korean War Veterans Memorial on the Capitol Campus.

The public is encouraged to attend as we Honor Washington State's Korean War Veterans and their families. During the ceremony, the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in Seattle will present the Ambassador for Peace Medal to Barbara Nichols (Nichols Served in WWII, Korea and Vietnam).

Barbara Nichols enrolled in the Cadet Nurse Corps in 1945. She was called for active duty assignments in 1948. Nichols was assigned to the 3rd Field Hospital during the Korean War and saw Active Duty service during the 1960's Vietnam years. She obtained her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Minnesota in the 1960's. She has had several assignments at Walter Reed, Madigan and even in Wurtzburg, Germany. Barbara quickly rose through the ranks and she retired from the Army Nurse Corps in 1969 as a Lt. Colonel.

For more information, please contact JenniferM@dva.wa.gov

Join Us for an Apprenticeship Workshop



Interested in an Apprenticeship?

Join us for a **“deep dive”** into Washington State’s current labor market and a discussion about apprenticeships, how the GI Bill applies, wages, benefits and how apprenticeships move you into long term successful careers.



We will provide guest speakers from several apprenticeship programs to give you insight into today’s job market. We will also take you onsite to some of the apprenticeship training locations so you can see what it takes to be an apprentice. Join us and find out more about career opportunities.

WHO: Transitioning Service Members & Veterans

WHAT: Washington State Apprenticeships Info Session

WHERE: Hawk Transition Center Room 214

WHEN: 0900-1600, July 13th & 14th

WHY: Receive Education on Employment Opportunities

POC: rachelr@dva.wa.gov

REGISTER: www.eventbrite.com/e/july-apprenticeship-workshop-tickets-35156579275



American Lake Veteran Networking Event in July

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19 | 11AM - 2PM

VETERAN NETWORKING & HIRING EVENT



AMERICAN LAKE
CONFERENCE CENTER
LEWIS NORTH JBLM

JOB SEEKERS RECEIVE:

- Access to multi-state employers
- Networking opportunities with government & private sector employers
- **ON THE SPOT Resume & LinkedIn Review**
- Access to Goodwill Veteran Services for resume building, training, job navigation & retention resources

EMPLOYERS RECEIVE:

- Access to a prepared, trained, professional and ready to work Veteran community

PLUS: Connect to Paid Logistics and Transportation Apprenticeships with the US Department of Labor.

RSVP

Job Seekers:
<http://bit.ly/2rjpx9w>
Exhibitors:
<http://bit.ly/2qoleMz>

Partners:



JBLM military access

WA State Residents must have a valid
ENHANCED WA STATE DRIVER'S LICENSE or **US PASSPORT**
Valid Insurance Card
Valid Vehicle Registration
www.lewis-mcchord.army.mil/des/le_visitor.htm

Sponsored by:

FASTPORT



The Operation GoodJobs program has the founding support of the Walmart Foundation, through Goodwill Industries International.

/OperationGoodJobs @OpGoodJobs goodwillwa.org
1017R05/10

Goodwill
Olympics & Rainier Region

"It's All About Us"
2017 Women Veterans Summit

September 16, 2017
Lynnwood Convention Center
3711 196th St. SW, Lynnwood, WA

REGISTER: www.eventbrite.com/e/2017-women-veterans-summit-tickets-33634142626

POC: LisaN@dva.wa.gov



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

WDVA Veteran Voices
PO Box 41150
1102 Quince Street SE
Olympia, WA 98504-1150
1-800-562-0132 opt. 1
communications@dva.wa.gov

Veterans Voices is published every other month for Washington Veterans and all interested in news affecting veterans and their families.

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

Governor of Washington
Jay Inslee

WDVA Director
Lourdes E. Alvarado-Ramos (Alfie)
alfie@dva.wa.gov

WDVA Deputy Director
Gary Condra
garyc@dva.wa.gov

WDVA Assistant Director
Mary Forbes
maryf@dva.wa.gov

Communications Director
Heidi Audette
heidia@dva.wa.gov

Community & Media Relations
Gary Lott
garyl@dva.wa.gov

Web & Veteran Owned Business
Jennifer Montgomery
jenniferm@dva.wa.gov

