From: WA Dept of Veterans Affairs
To: Montgomery, Jennifer (DVA); Hunt, Mark (DVA); Tillmon, Shamekia (DVA); Lee, Su Mi (DVA); Korir, Erick (DVA); Audette, Heidi (DVA); Lott, Gary (DVA); Ritchie, JoAnn (DVA); Bahme, Heather (DVA); Pomeroy, Chelsea (DVA); Vellaturi, Rajeswari (DVA); Chapin, James (DVA); Flott, Brianna (DVA)
Subject: Courtesy Copy: 2025 October Veteran Voices - WA Dept of Veterans Affairs
Date: Friday, October 10, 2025 8:59:48 AM

External Email

This is a courtesy copy of an email bulletin sent by JoAnn Ritchie.

This bulletin was sent to the following groups of people:

Subscribers of Brain Injury & Recovery, Veteran Owned Business, WDVA News, or Women Veterans (17821 recipients)

View as a webpage / Share

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs

October 2025

Veteran Voices Newsletter

In this edition:

- WDVA News and Current Events
- Check out what's happening at our Veterans Homes
- WDVA Job Opportunities
- Events and Observances Calendar
- Program Spotlight

David Puente

Greetings from your WDVA Director: David Puente

At the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA), we believe that honoring our Veterans doesn't end with their service, it continues in how we care for them and their families, even after their

final salute. Today, I'm proud to share an important milestone in that commitment.

The State Veterans Cemetery at Medical Lake is expanding its columbarium section, a long-planned project rooted in respect, foresight, and service to our Veteran community. This meaningful addition of eight new walls, offering approximately 5,000 niches, ensures we can continue meeting the interment needs of Washington's Veterans and their families for years to come.

This expansion reflects WDVA's enduring promise to provide a dignified, peaceful resting place for those who served. It also stands as a testament to the care and dedication of Cemetery Director Rudy Lopez and his exceptional team, whose dedication made this possible.

We invite you to learn more about the State Veterans Cemetery and to visit this sacred space, where gratitude and remembrance live on.

Visitation Hours: 8am – Sunset, 7 days/week *Note: Severe winter weather may limit access on weekends.*

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. *(Closed for State Holidays)*

Learn more: Cemetery | WDVA

Cemetery construction

WDVA News and Current Events

Veterans Town Hall and a Women Veterans Forum

Townhall info

Walla Walla County - Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) will host a Women Veterans Forum from 8:30 to 9:30 and a Veterans Town Hall from 10:00 to 12:30 on Wednesday, October 22, 2025, at the Mathew Fazzari VFW Post 992, located at 102 N. Colville St., Walla Walla 99362. If joining virtually, please register now.

This double event is presented by the Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee (VAAC) and the Women Veterans Advisory Committee (WVAC).

2025 Veterans Day Events & Observances

Share Your Veterans Day Events

Veterans Day is a time to honor and celebrate the service of those who've worn our nation's uniform. WDVA is building a statewide calendar of events to help communities connect, reflect, and show appreciation.

If your organization is hosting a Veterans Day event, whether it's a ceremony, parade, resource fair, or community gathering we'd love to include it.

Please upload your event to WDVA Event Submission and send event details and flyers to **communications@dva.wa.gov**

Visit 2025 Veterans Day Events & Observances | WDVA for Veterans Day events and observances throughout Washington.

September Highlights: WDVA in Motion

In case you missed it, here's a quick roll-up of WDVA activities from September:

Spokane County Takes Action: 200 Suicide Prevention Emblems Bought to Support Veterans | WDVA

September 2025 Update to Tri-Cities Veterans Community on the Proposed Tri-Cities State Veterans Cemetery | WDVA

WDVA Honored with 2025 Pillars of Excellence Award for ArtsWA WAM Grant Innovation | WDVA

Did You Know

To learn more, visit VA.gov Home | Veterans Affairs

Check out what's happening at our Veterans Homes

Washington Veterans Home

Shaking hands

Residents and staff at WVH had the privilege of welcoming The American Legion National Commander, Dan K. Wiley, during his recent visit to Washington. Commander Wiley toured the campus, met with veterans and caregivers, and shared his appreciation for their service and sacrifice.

His presence was a meaningful reminder of the strong ties between national leadership and local veteran communities.

Click the link to watch the Washington Veterans Home Foster Dog Program Video: WVH Foster Dog Program

---

WSH REsidents at the fair

Washington Soldiers Home in Orting

Residents from the Washington Soldiers Home headed to the WA State Fair to join in its 125th birthday celebration. With volunteers and staff by their side, they strolled through the fairgrounds, taking in the buzz of the crowd, the sights and sounds, and the mouthwatering smell of fair food drifting through the air.

Big thanks to the WA State Fair for donating admission tickets and heartfelt appreciation to the volunteers from Puyallup Elks, PNW Vets, JBLM, community members, and WDVA staff who made the day possible.

WWVH Residents

Walla Walla Veterans Home

We're honored to celebrate Harold (104) and Ed (102), two extraordinary WWII Veterans, alongside fellow WWVH residents who enjoyed a truly memorable experience.

Thanks to the entire WWVH team for making it happen, with special appreciation to Walla Walla Regional Airport, Flying Legends, and Wings Over Walla Walla for their continued dedication to our Veterans.

SVH

Spokane Veterans Home

To beat the heat, our residents took aim in a refreshing round of Squirt-a-Mole! Armed with squirt bottles, our veterans showed off their coordination and reflexes as they waited for staff to pop up through a tarp, then let the water fly!

Not only was it a blast, but the game also offered great opportunities for physical movement, hand-eye

coordination, and a few well-earned laughs.

We love finding creative ways to keep our veterans cool, active, and smiling.

WDVA Job Opportunities

Take a look at our available opportunities with WDVA!

We are hiring

Events & Observances Calendar

Click Here to View Upcoming Events

OCT WDVA CAlendar

Submit an Event

Program Spotlight

Transitioning Warrior Program

WTP

The Transitioning Warrior Program is dedicated to guiding service members, Veterans, and their families through every step of the benefits process on Joint Base Lewis-McChord and throughout surrounding communities.

Whether you're navigating your transition from military to civilian life or seeking support as a Veteran, our team is here to help you access the resources you've earned.

What we do:

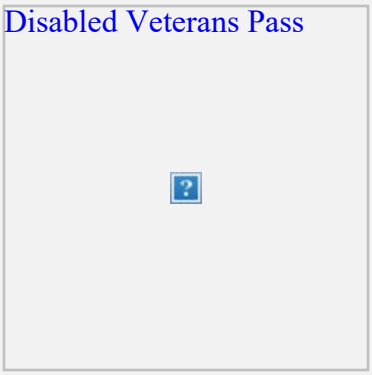
- VA Disability Claims Support
- Guidance on VA Programs and Services
- Community Outreach and Education
- Trusted Referrals to Partner Agencies

If you or someone you know is preparing to separate from military service, don't wait! Connect to your earned benefits now.

To learn more and to get connected with a Veteran Benefit Specialist visit Transitioning Warrior Program | WDVA or e-mail jblmvabenefits@dva.wa.gov

---

Additional Information



Explore Washington's Outdoors: Free Access for Veterans

Washington's natural beauty is for everyone and veterans with a qualifying disability can enjoy it year-round with the **Lifetime Disabled Veteran Pass**. This free pass provides access to day-use areas at state parks and other state recreation lands, along with discounts on camping, moorage, and more.

Eligible veterans can apply through the Washington State Parks website: Lifetime Disabled Veteran Pass | Washington State Parks

In addition, **Discover Pass Free Days** offer everyone a chance to visit state lands without a pass. Here are the remaining free days for 2025:

Tuesday, Nov. 11 – Veterans Day

Plan your next adventure and help spread the word to fellow veterans and community members.

For more details visit: State land agencies announce 2025 Discover Pass free days | Washington State Parks

---

Changes to Washington State Disabled Veteran Parking

Disabled veteran parking

You are eligible to apply for parking for individuals with disabilities if you are a veteran and:

- You have received a qualifying discharge with a 70 percent disability rating or higher from the U.S. Armed Forces or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- You use a service animal.

If you can provide proof of both items and your application is approved, your parking will be valid for 5 years.

To learn more and to apply for a permit visit: Disabled veteran parking | Washington State Department of Licensing

---

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs
1102 Quince St. SE, PO Box 41150, Olympia, WA 98504-1150
1-800-562-2308

Manage Subscriptions | Unsubscribe | Subscriber Help