



# **131<sup>st</sup> BW RAO Newsletter**

**July - September 2017, 3rd Quarter Issue**

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The O'Fallon Veteran /131BW Retirees Activities Office is committed to continue providing you the best support possible. Contact us by phone or email and let us know how we can help you. If you are in the area and would like to see what we are currently doing feel free to stop by the office. We would like to thank our volunteer, Vicki Mayes for the time in the Veteran Office. If you live in the local area and would like to volunteer some time to answer the phone and assist other retirees/spouses give us a call. Our office is open from 9 AM to 4 PM Monday thru Friday except for the 2<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month which is committed to the Veteran's Service Officer helping veterans needing VA help.

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## **131<sup>ST</sup> LINDBERGH'S OWN MISSOURI ANG REUNION PICNIC**

### **REMINDER,**

Saturday August 26th, 2017

Noon-10:00pm

Wapelhorst Park, Shelter 1

St. Charles, MO

Donations are being requested to help fund the picnic. Just like last year, the proceeds will be used to buy food, beverages, desserts, and other needed supplies. You will be responsible for your own alcoholic beverages, I will not be supplying them.

Entertainment is being lined up, but since nothing is set in stone yet, I cannot comment.

I will have a display table again with 131st Fighter Wing memorabilia on display. Please feel free to bring in items of your own to share with everyone.

Once again, I am asking all of you to bring your photographs from your time with the 131st. I will have a friend there with a scanner that will make copies to add these photos to the Lindbergh's Own archives. Eventually, I would like to add them to a Wing historical project I am working on.

The success of this picnic depends on all of you. Your donations will fund it and the more we collect the better it will be. The more of you that attend, the more fun will have. Please contribute and clear this day from your calendar. The link to the GoFundme account is listed below for donations. The event page is attached to the Lindbergh's Own facebook page. Go there and check yes for going. Thank you.

<https://www.gofundme.com/2nd-annual-lindberghs-own-picnic>

Chris Boehlein, cboehlein@hotmail.com

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**VA FORM 40-10007, APPLICATION FOR PRE-NEED DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL IN A VA NATIONAL CEMETERY**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) implemented the pre-need burial eligibility determination program to assist anyone who would like to know if they are eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery.

Eligible individuals are entitled to burial in any open VA national cemetery which includes opening/closing of the grave, a government-furnished grave liner, perpetual care of the gravesite, and a government-furnished upright headstone or flat marker or niche cover all at no cost to the family. Veterans are also eligible for a burial flag and Presidential Memorial Certificate. Authorized representatives can also apply on behalf of eligible claimants. An authorized representative first needs to be recognized by VA as an authorized representative or agent by filing a VA Form 21-22 Appointment of Veterans Service Organization As Claimant Representative or VA Form 21-22a Appointment of Attorney Or Agent As Claimant Representative.

Interested individuals may submit VA Form 40-10007, Application for Pre-Need Determination of Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery, along with a copy of supporting documentation of military service such as a DD214, if readily available, by: toll-free fax at 1-855-840-8299; or mail to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office, P.O. Box 510543, St. Louis, MO 63151.

NOTE: The VA is no longer accepting email submissions for VA Form 40-10007, Application for Pre-Need Determination of Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery. We hope to resume this service in the future. We are continuing to process applications via mail and fax.

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**NEW MEDICARE CARDS ARE ON THE WAY**

May 18, 2017 by Andrew Johnson, Consumer Education Specialist, FTC

Changes are coming to your Medicare card. By April 2019, your card will be replaced with one that no longer shows your Social Security number. Instead, your card will have a new Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) that will be used for billing and for checking your eligibility and claim status. And it will all happen automatically – you won't have to pay anyone or give anyone information, no matter what someone might tell you.

Having your Social Security number removed from your Medicare card helps fight medical identity theft and protect your medical and financial information. But even with these changes, scammers will still look for ways to take what doesn't belong to them. Here are some ways to avoid Medicare scams:

- Is someone calling, claiming to be from Medicare, and asking for your Social Security number or bank information? Hang up. That's a scam. First, Medicare won't call you. Second, Medicare will never ask for your Social Security number or bank information.
- Is someone asking you to pay for your new card? That's a scam. Your new Medicare card is free.
- Is someone threatening to cancel your benefits if you don't give up information or money? Also a scam. New Medicare cards will be mailed out to you automatically. There won't be any changes to your benefits.

For more on new changes to your Medicare card, visit Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and report scams to the FTC .

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## **VA Health Care | Eligibility:**

If you served in the active military service and were separated under any condition other than dishonorable, you may qualify for VA health care benefits. [Enrollment based on Priority Groups]

Current and former members of the Reserves or National Guard who were called to active duty by a federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty may be eligible for VA health benefits as well..

**Minimum Duty Requirements:** Most Veterans who enlisted after September 7, 1980, or entered active duty after October 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty in order to be eligible. This minimum duty requirement may not apply to Veterans who were discharged for a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, for a hardship or "early out," or those who served prior to September 7, 1980.

Since there are a number of other exceptions to the minimum duty requirements, VA encourages all Veterans to apply so that we may determine their enrollment eligibility.

**Bottom Line: if you don't at least TRY to enroll, you will never know what you are and are not eligible for.**

**Five Myths about VA Health Care** (<http://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/586/busting-myths-about-va-health-care/>)

**Myth Number One:** I wasn't injured in the service, so I'm not eligible for VA health care.

**Status:** *False*

**Myth Number Two:** I can only receive care for service connected injuries. **Status:** *False*

**Myth Number Three:** I make too much money to qualify for VA health care. **Status:** *It depends*

**Myth Number Four:** I can't use VA health care if I have private health insurance. **Status:** *False*

**Myth Number Five:** If I'm 100 percent disabled, that means I'm permanently disabled. **Status:** *False*

## **TRICARE’S NURSE ADVICE LINE**

Thanks to the free Military Health System Nurse Advice Line (NAL), a medical professional is just a phone call away. Registered nurses (including pediatric nurses) at the NAL help stateside TRICARE beneficiaries decide what course of action they should take. In many cases, the nurse will tell you how to care for your issue on your own. If needed, the nurse will help you find the closest emergency room or urgent care center. The nurse can also help you schedule a next-day appointment at a military hospital or clinic, if available. NAL is available 24 hours a day. For more information, watch the TRICARE video on [NAL](#). To call the NAL, dial 1-800-TRICARE (1-800-874-2273) and select option 1.

Registered nurses (including pediatric nurses) answer roughly 1,750 calls each day on the NAL. These professionals help stateside TRICARE beneficiaries decide what course of action they should take. To date, the NAL has helped 1.5 million callers.

When you call the NAL (1-800-TRICARE, option 1), the nurse will:

- Check your DEERS eligibility
- Ask questions about your medical situation
- Assess if you need to see a health care provider and determine what level of care is best
- In many cases, the nurse will tell you how to care for your issue on your own. Common reasons for calling the NAL include fever, rashes, colds, abdominal pain, and the flu. Please remember that for the nurse to assess a beneficiary’s medical condition, the beneficiary will need to be present either on the phone or with the parent or caregiver.

If needed, the nurse will help you find the closest emergency room, The hospital department that provides emergency services to patients who need immediate medical attention. or urgent care center. He or she can also help you schedule a next-day appointment at a military hospital or clinic, if available. If you are enrolled to a military hospital or clinic, the NAL will even send a note to your primary care team to let them know how you are doing. The NAL isn’t a substitute for emergency treatment and not meant for emergency advice. If you have a medical emergency, call 911 or go the nearest emergency room.

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## **VETERANS BENEFITS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT**

Many veterans know about the basic health care and education benefits available to them through the Department of Veterans Affairs: Tricare and the GI Bill. While these benefits alone are substantial, numerous other programs help provide more benefits to veterans and their families. Even within the health care and education programs are little-known benefits to improve the lives of veterans and help ease the financial burden of medical care or other expenses.

**1. Long-term Care** | Long-term care is expensive, but often necessary to provide care for aging relatives. Through the Aid and Attendance program, many veterans are eligible to receive money

to cover the cost of nursing homes, assisted living programs and other long-term care options. With the ability for couples to receive up to \$25,020 a year, the Aid & Attendance benefit will help take care of a significant portion of long-term care costs. Surviving spouses of veterans are also eligible to receive up to \$13,560 a year to cover their long-term care costs.

**2. Caregiver Support** | Should you choose to take care of an ailing Veteran at home, the Department of Veterans Affairs offers a caregiver support program. While this program does not offer any monetary support to caregivers, they are provided with a free support line and a caregiver support coordinator to help navigate military benefits and the stress of care giving.

**3. Death Benefits** | When a veteran dies, families have a few unique benefits available to them. A U.S. flag may be requested to drape over the casket and families may request a Presidential Memorial Certificate to honor the deceased loved ones service. The Department of Veterans Affairs also provides free headstones or grave markers.

**4. Certification Programs** | In addition to receiving credits to use toward a college degree, the GI Bill offers up to \$2,000 to help cover the cost of certification courses or other vocational training programs. This benefit will work well for veterans who wish to change careers or pursue a career path that does not require a college degree.

**Read more:** <http://militarybenefits.info/10-veterans-benefits-you-may-not-know-about/>

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## **WHITE HOUSE VETERANS' HOTLINE GOES LIVE**

When Donald Trump was in the midst of his presidential campaign, he promised America's veterans that he would create a 24 hour help hotline, answered by a real person, to take down any complaint a veteran would have about their experience with the VA.

Veterans Affairs Secretary, David Shulkin said that by August 15, there will be full-time "live-answer agents" available to veteran callers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The agents will be on hand to process questions and redirect callers to appropriate parties.

Calls to the hotline will, of course, remain confidential. But callers may be asked to provide personal information depending on their type of case. VA department officials explained that the hotline will be used to improve the care for all veterans and their families across the board.

The White House/VA Veterans' Complaint Hotline can be reached at 855-948-2311.

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## **GULF WAR PRESUMPTIVES - Fibromyalgia**

Fibromyalgia is a health condition characterized by unexplained pain throughout the body. Symptoms include:

At least 3 months of unexplained pain in the muscles, tendons, and other soft tissues

- Points on the neck, shoulders, back, hips, arms, or legs that are tender and hurt with pressure
- Additional health problems such as sleep disturbances, headaches, memory problems, or morning muscle stiffness

If you are concerned about symptoms related to fibromyalgia and would like to learn about health care options for Gulf War Veterans, go to

<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/benefits/%20health-care.asp>

or call 1-877- 222-8387. You can also, talk to an Environmental Health Coordinator near you about your concerns at <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/%20coordinators.asp>.

Fibromyalgia is a presumptive illness for Gulf War Veterans: VA presumes that some health conditions, including fibromyalgia, were caused by military service. As a presumptive illness, Veterans do not have to prove an association between fibromyalgia and their military service. The condition must be at least 10 percent disabling and have first appeared sometime between active duty in the Southwest Asia theater of military operations and December 31, 2021.

Symptoms can be managed. Researchers and health care providers do not currently know a direct cause or cure for fibromyalgia. However, Veterans can work with their health care team to manage symptoms. Prescription drugs are available to treat fibromyalgia. Learn more about presumptive service connection and benefits for Gulf War Veterans at

<http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/benefits/index.asp> or call 1-800-827-1000.

More information about fibromyalgia is available at

<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/fibromyalgia.asp>. [Source: Veterans Health| June 12, 2017 ++]

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## **LINK TO RETIREE PUBLICATIONS**

**Army Echoes**

**<http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement>**

**Navy Shift Colors:**

**[www.shiftcolors.navy.mil](http://www.shiftcolors.navy.mil)**

**Air Force Afterburner:**

**[www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner](http://www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner)**

**Marine Corps Semper Fidelis:**

**[www.usmc-mccs.org](http://www.usmc-mccs.org)**

**Coast Guard Evening Colors:**

**<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/psc/ras>**

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**INPUT.** If you have any suggestions for any type of additional articles you may like to have included in the future newsletters please email us. We look forward for more input from you and other agencies.

We will publish this newsletter four times a year if the supply of information is available.

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