Greetings and welcome to the September edition of the Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR) newsletter. We have a number of noteworthy activities from the past month to share with our readers.

We began the month in Albuquerque, supporting the Veterans Health Administration with formal tribal consultation focused on the 2010 VA/IHS Memorandum of Understanding. Eight specific questions were put forth and testimony was provided by tribal leaders representing tribal governments located across the country. The record for the tribal consultation remains open until October 8, 2014 so there is still time to provide input for the record to the following address: tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov. Input will be reviewed and consolidated into a final response and report which will be made publicly available on the VA OTGR website. Tribal leaders will also be notified through a Dear Tribal Leader Letter once the report becomes available.

Following the tribal consultation session, VHA’s Office of Rural Health Director Gina Capra, accompanied by Albuquerque VA Medical Center leadership, myself and OTGR Southwest Region Specialist Homana Pawiki, traveled to site visits to meet with officials from the local IHS Area Office and Jemez Pueblo. Our hosts at Jemez Pueblo very graciously introduced us to the tribal leadership, offered us a tour of the tribally operated health care facility (a state of the art facility), provided a briefing regarding the scope of services offered and arranged a listening session with Veterans from the local community. The visit was very informative and opened doors to increasing our VA colleagues’ understanding of both the resources available to Veterans living in and around the Jemez Pueblo community, opportunities for partnerships and also some of the access to care and benefits challenges that exist in a rural area.

Homana returned to Albuquerque later during the month, accompanied by VA Deputy Assistant Secretary David Montoya, who addressed Veterans and tribal leaders attending the Southwest Regional Veterans Conference “Empowering Native American Veterans to Speak with One Voice to Shape Policy.” The conference participation was outstanding and served as an important platform for raising issues of concern for American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans. We look forward to continuing to support this important annual national event. In the meantime, over in the Western Region, Terry Bentley was busy hosting our final Veterans Training Summit of the year in Smith River, California.

Smith River is located in far northern California near the coast, almost on the Oregon border. The Smith River Rancheria hosted the event with support from CalVet (the California Department of Veterans Affairs). The training was very well received, with key presenters from all three VA administrations on hand as well as representatives from other federal agencies who shared information on services and benefits available to Veterans and their families. Terry received special recognition from the Western Region Tribal Veterans Representatives who honored her for her leadership and work with Veterans with a presentation of a Pendleton blanket. Great job Terry 😊

Over here in the East, OTGR Central Region Specialist Peter Vicaire served on a rotational assignment to the VBA Loan Guaranty Office, where he assisted with reviewing pending Native American Direct Loan
(NADL) MOUs. Peter got a lot of work accomplished during his assignment which was mutually beneficial for VBA, OTGR and the tribes we serve. Speaking of NADL MOUs, a ceremonial signing of the NADL MOU between the Uintah and Ouray Tribe and the Department of Veterans Affairs is scheduled for October 16 in Utah. VBA Loan Guaranty Director Mike Frueh will be on hand to sign this agreement with the tribe which will open doors for Veterans from the community to utilize the NADL loan to achieve their dream of home ownership. We’re very excited about the increase in interest tribes have expressed in this program during the past year and look forward to more MOUs, and seeing more Veterans access this mortgage product in the coming year.

Looking ahead, Mary Culley, OTGR Southern Plains Region Specialist is assisting with planning of the Southern Plains Inter-Tribal Stand Down, which will be held in Oklahoma. We’re also very much looking forward to Secretary Robert McDonald’s remarks during the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Annual Convention in Atlanta October 27, 2014.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter edition and we look forward to hearing from you in the days ahead. Happy Reading – Stephanie
Four Navajo Code Talkers Walk on in September Within Two Weeks of One Another

This first article, by Bill Donovan, originally ran on September 13 in *Navajo Times*, and can be located HERE. Just a few days after this article went to print, Code Talker Wilford Buck passed away on September 16. Then, only days later, David Jordan also walked on. The second article further below, from *Native News Online.net*, can be found HERE.

2 Code Talkers pass on in one week

“Two Navajo Code Talkers died this past week, according to the tribal government and family members. Guy Claushee, 87, died early Thursday [September 11] morning in Fort Defiance. Services [were] held at 10 a.m. on Monday [September 15] at the Fort Defiance Presbyterian Church. A Code Talker throughout most of World War II, Claushee came back from the war and continued his education at the Ganado Mission. After graduating in 1950, he moved to Window Rock and started work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs as a facilities management foreman. He retired after 40 years.

On Wednesday, [September 10] tribal officials reported the death of another Navajo Code Talker, Robert Walley Sr., 93. Walley served as a Code Talker from 1943 to 1945, during which he received a Purple Heart. He served in the 6th Marine Division and was a Marine Raider who fought in the Battle of Bougainville, Guam, Okinawa and the occupation of Emirau Island. Both Walley and Claushee received Congressional Silver Medals for their service as Navajo Code Talkers. According to figures supplied by the Navajo Code Talkers Association, the number of Code Talkers has gone from more 400 to just 27.”
Navajo Nation Mourns the Loss Code Talkers Wilford Buck & David Jordan

“WINDOW ROCK, ARIZONA — The Navajo Nation is mourning the loss of two more Code Talkers. On Thursday, Navajo President Ben Shelly through proclamations ordered the Navajo Nation flags to be flown at half-mast from September 18 through September 21, 2014 in honor of the passing of Code Talkers Wilford Buck and David Jordan who walked on this week.

Wilford Buck

David Jordan

Buck was stationed in Pearl Harbor, Vietnam and Japan during World War II. Jordan was stationed in the Asiatic-Pacific Theater from September 21, 1943 to December 5, 1945, fighting in the Battles of Bougainville, Solomon Islands, Iwo Jima, New Caledonia, Mariana Islands, Volcano Islands and the Hawaiian Islands. In the past week, Navajo President Shelly issued proclamations for the families of four Code Talkers. Last week, he issued proclamations after the deaths of Guy Claushee and Robert Walley, Sr.

According to the Navajo Code Talkers Associations, the four deaths have reduced the number of living members between 25 and 27. Sadly, all members of the original 29 Code Talkers have walked on. “This is the worst period in the time of the code talkers,” said Peter MacDonald Sr., president of the Navajo Code Talker’s Association told the Navajo Times.”
American Indian Veterans National Memorial
Golf Classic

Save the Date
Friday, Dec. 5, 2014

Enjoy golfing on We-Ko-Pa Golf Club’s Saguaro course and support the American Indian Veterans National Memorial at the Heard Museum. This Coore/Crenshaw course has been ranked by “Golfweek” as the #1 public access course in Arizona.

Presented by We Ko Pa and the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. Sponsored by the Heard Museum and the Inter Tribal Golf Association.

For Sponsorship information or to register to play, contact Eric S. Treven at 602.251.0251 or email etreven@heard.org.

Heard Museum
2301 N Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85004
602.252.8840 | heard.org
DHHS Rural Health Care Services Outreach Program Grant ~ Rural Veterans

“This announcement solicits applications for the Rural Health Care Services Outreach Grant Program (Outreach Program). ORHP’s Outreach Program is a community-based program targeted to improve outreach and service delivery in local and regional rural communities. The goals for the Outreach Program are the following: 1. Expand the delivery of health care services to include new and enhanced services exclusively in rural communities 2. Deliver health care services through a strong consortium, in which every consortium member organization is actively involved and engaged in the planning and delivery of services 3. Utilize and/or adapt an evidence-based or promising practice model(s) in the delivery of health care services 4. Improve population health, demonstrate health outcomes and sustainability.”

For the full description of eligibility and grant information, visit the grant opportunity, which can be found HERE. This grant opportunity was posted on September 4 and its closing date is November 14. The estimated total program funding is 16,000,000 – with no stated award ceiling or floor.

OTGR Staff Member Terry Bentley Honored by Washington State Tribal Veteran Representatives

This photo was provided by Lt. Col. Susan Pangelinan, Behavioral Health Coordinator and Joint Staff Medical Advisor for the California National Guard.

John Bastian, TVR, Quinault Nation (pictured) presented with Lucky Joe Boyd, Confederated Tribes of Colville, and with other WA State Tribal Veteran Representatives gifted Terry Bentley at the Smith River Veterans Summit. Terry is the Tribal Government Relations Specialist for OTGR’s Western Region, which encompasses Washington, Alaska, Oregon, Idaho, California, and Nevada.
VA/Tribal Health/IHS Reimbursement Program Passes $10.5 Million Mark

Tribal Health Clinics interested in entering into a Reimbursement Agreement with VA for serving veterans should send an initial note of interest to: tribalagreements@va.gov

Rural Veterans Coordination Pilot (RCVP)

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced on September 2, 2014, that it will fund $10 million in grants to support Veterans and their families residing in rural and/or underserved areas of the country.

This new grant program, known as the Rural Veterans Coordination Pilot (RVCP), will provide $2 million dollars over a two-year period to five grantees for activities specifically geared towards rural Veterans and their families who are transitioning from military to civilian life. The programs are projected to
support more than 25,000 rural Veterans in Arkansas, Louisiana, Maine, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas and Washington. This program will be administered by the VA Office of Rural Health (ORH).

Grantees are expected to use the funds to aid Veterans with the adjustment to civilian life in one or more of the following areas: (1) Increasing coordination of health care and benefits for Veterans; (2) Increasing availability of high quality medical and mental health services; (3) Providing assistance to families of transitioning Veterans, and; (4) Outreach to Veterans and families.

The five awardees are:
1. Volunteers of America of North Louisiana (Shreveport, Louisiana)
2. Maine Department of Labor (Augusta, Maine)
3. New Mexico Department of Veteran Services (Santa Fe, New Mexico)
4. Nebraska Association of Local Health Director (Kearney, Nebraska)
5. WestCare Washington (Orting, Washington)

This grant opportunity reiterates both the need to support our rural/highly rural Veterans, but also the local commitment, as VA received more than 90 grant applications from organizations around the United States.

For more information about the RVCP program - contact us at RVCP@va.gov, check out the VA Press Release at www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2617 or visit the Office of Rural Health website at www.ruralhealth.va.gov

VA Announces New Grants to Help End Veteran Homelessness

WASHINGTON – In addition to the $300 million in Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program grant awards announced on August 11, 2014 serving 115,000 Veterans and their family members, today Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald announced the award of $207 million in SSVF grants that will help an additional 70,000 homeless and at-risk Veterans and their families. The grants will be distributed to 82 non-profit agencies and include “surge” funding for 56 high need communities.

During the brief history of this program, VA has helped tens of thousands of Veterans exit homelessness and prevented just as many from becoming homeless. The “surge” funding will enable VA to strategically target resources to high need communities where there are significant numbers of Veterans who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.
Under the SSVF program, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is awarding grants to private non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives that provide services to very low-income Veteran families living in – or transitioning to – permanent housing. Those community organizations provide a range of services that promote housing stability among eligible very low income Veteran families (those making less than 50 percent of the area median income). The grants announced today will fund the fourth year of the SSVF program. “The Department of Veterans Affairs is committed to using evidence based approaches such as SSVF to prevent homelessness and produce successful outcomes for Veterans and their families,” McDonald said. “This is a program that works, because it allows VA staff and local homeless service providers to work together to address the unique challenges that make it difficult for some Veterans and their families to remain stably housed.”

Under the terms of the SSVF grants, homeless providers offer Veterans and their family members outreach, case management, assistance in obtaining VA benefits and assistance in receiving other public benefits. Community-based groups can offer temporary financial assistance on behalf of Veterans for rent payments, utility payments, security deposits and moving costs. In the first 2 years of SSVF operations (through FY 2013), nearly 100,000 Veterans and their family members received direct assistance to exit homelessness or maintain permanent housing, including over 25,000 children.

“With the addition of these crucial resources, communities across the country continue a historic drive to prevent and end homelessness among Veterans,” said Laura Green Zeilinger, Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. “The SSVF program gives Veterans and their families the rapid assistance they need to remain in permanent housing or get back into permanent housing as quickly as possible.”

In 2009, President Obama announced the federal government’s goal of ending Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015. The SSVF grants are intended to help accomplish that goal. According to the 2014 Point-in-Time Estimates of Homelessness, homelessness among Veterans has declined 33 percent since 2010. Through the homeless Veterans initiative, VA committed more than $1 billion in FY 2014 to strengthen programs that prevent and end homelessness among Veterans. VA provides a range of services to homeless Veterans, including health care, housing, job training, and education.

More information about VA’s homeless programs is available at [www.va.gov/homeless](http://www.va.gov/homeless). Details about the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program are online at [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp).

There were six organizations (listed below) which were awarded grant money to provide services to tribal (and non-tribal) areas.
WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (NCPTSD) celebrates its 25th anniversary. “We are extremely proud of the Center’s work over the last 25 years,” said Interim Under Secretary for Health Dr. Carolyn Clancy. “VA will continue to study, create awareness, educate and develop policies which better the lives of Veterans with PTSD for years to come.”

VA created the Center in 1989 to address the needs of Veterans and other trauma victims.
survivors with PTSD. Congress called for a center of excellence that would set the agenda for research and education on PTSD without direct responsibility for patient care. VA initially established the Center as a consortium of five divisions but now it consists of seven VA academic centers of excellence across the U.S.

“Our most important accomplishment is that we helped educate policymakers as well as the general public that PTSD was not something that happened only to Vietnam Veterans, but could happen to Veterans of other wars and to any man, woman or child faced with a catastrophic event,” said Dr. Matthew Friedman, currently the Center’s Senior Advisor and former Executive Director from 1989 through 2013. “When we started, PTSD was a controversial diagnosis. The Center’s research and educational initiatives helped establish the scientific basis for PTSD, and disseminated that information globally.” Major accomplishments of the Center over its 25-year history also include:

- **Applying the latest technology to disseminate information and education about PTSD.** In 1995 the Center launched its website, [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov). Since then it has become the number one website on PTSD. The Center has become the technological leader in PTSD online continuing education for VA clinicians and in the creation of mobile apps (such as the award-winning PTSD Coach) for Veterans with PTSD. The Center’s AboutFace program, [http://www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/AboutFace](http://www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/AboutFace), an online video gallery of Veterans talking about living with PTSD and how treatment turned their lives around, has improved access to care through Veterans encouraging fellow Veterans to get into treatment.

- **Assessment and diagnosis.** The Center developed the leading assessment measures for PTSD in VA, DoD, and organizations around the world. These measures include the Clinician-Administered PTSD Scale (CAPS), the gold standard for assessing PTSD. They have advanced research on PTSD and the clinical care of Veterans living with PTSD by ensuring accurate diagnoses and assessment.

- **Neurobiological research.** The Center’s investigators have been at the forefront of research demonstrating alterations in structural and brain function associated with PTSD, which has significantly enhanced the science and understanding of PTSD and led to improvements in the treatment of Veterans and others with PTSD.

- **Treatment research and training.** The Center has conducted some of the leading research on the treatment of PTSD, particularly the main evidence-based psychotherapies. The Center also developed training programs that have trained thousands of VA clinicians in these psychotherapies, allowing these clinicians to provide effective evidence-based treatments to Veterans with PTSD.

- **Supporting evidence-based PTSD care.** In 2008 the Center helped create the
VA Mentoring Program, which encourages implementation of evidence-based treatments for PTSD within PTSD-specialized programs. In 2011, the Center helped establish the VA PTSD Consultation Program, which advises VA clinicians on PTSD. Both programs contribute significantly to better care for Veterans with PTSD.

For more information on PTSD and ways to raise awareness of this mental health problem, Veterans, professionals and members of the public can visit the National Center for PTSD website, www.ptsd.va.gov. This site offers resources such as:

- **PTSD Coach Online** and the award-winning PTSD Coach mobile app, which provide self-help symptom-management tools.
- PTSD Continuing Education opportunities for providers, including PTSD 101 Courses, on the best practices in PTSD treatment (CEs/CMEs offered).
- **AboutFace**: Online videos of Veterans talking about how PTSD treatment can turn your life around.

**VA Announces Awardees of Grants that Support Disabled Veterans in Adaptive Sports**

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald today announced the award of approximately $8 million in grants to provide adaptive sports opportunities for disabled Veterans and disabled Servicemembers of the Armed Forces. Adaptive sports are those sports that have been created or modified for persons with disabilities.

“Partnering with national, regional, and community-based non-profit organizations allows VA to provide rehabilitative adaptive sports opportunities to our disabled Veterans and Service members all across the country,” said Secretary McDonald. “Disabled Veterans who participate in adaptive sports improve their health and quality of life, make new friendships and discover that physical rehabilitation healing comes in many forms and can also be great fun.” The new program provides grants to eligible entities to plan, develop, manage and implement programs to provide adaptive sports activities for disabled Veterans and disabled members of the Armed Forces. Funding may be used for such things as training, program development, recreation therapists, coaches, sports equipment, supplies, program evaluation and other activities related to program implementation and operation.

The **grants** will be distributed to 69 national, regional and community programs serving all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and American Samoa. Approximately 10,000 Veterans and Servicemembers are expected to benefit. Information about the awardees and details of the program may be found at [www.va.gov/adaptivesports](http://www.va.gov/adaptivesports).
Notice of VA Tribal Consultation ~ Black Hills Health Care System

This notice was also in last month’s newsletter and letters were sent directly to tribal leaders. Please direct any questions you may have to: Peter Vicaire Peter.Vicaire@va.gov (651-405-5676).

Dear Tribal Leader:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is sending this communication to provide information regarding upcoming consultations on the Proposed ReConfiguration of the VA Black Hills Health Care System (BHHCS).

Proposal and Recent Efforts

The proposal would involve reconfiguring existing services and expanding points of access to health care within the VA Black Hills Health Care System (BHHCS) service area to better serve the health care needs and distribution of Veterans in the VA BHHCS service area over the next 20 to 30 years. That area includes portions of South Dakota, Nebraska, and Wyoming. More information is available on the BHHCS website (http://www.blackhills.va.gov/vablackhillsfuture/).

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared to analyze the environmental consequences of the proposal. A series of NEPA public scoping meetings were held throughout the service area in June. The purpose of public scoping is to ensure the EIS evaluates the range of potential issues associated with the proposal. The public scoping period ended August 16.

Evaluating the potential effect(s) or impact(s) of this proposal is a comprehensive effort that involves outreach efforts, consultations, and compliance with several applicable laws and regulations. To assist in understanding these processes, VA would like to take this opportunity to clarify the term “consultation”, which appears in several of these laws and regulations. With respect to the proposal to reconfigure the Black Hills Health Care System, there are two distinct, yet interrelated, sets of consultations.

National Historic Preservation Act Consultation

The regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) discuss “consultation” as the process “to identify historic properties potentially affected by the undertaking, assess its effects and seek ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate any adverse effects on historic properties.” This consultation process focuses exclusively on effects to historic properties. NHPA recognizes the government-to-government relationship between the Federal government and the tribes.
Notice of VA Tribal Consultation ~ Black Hills Health Care System

Since a key component of this BHHCS proposal involves the VA Hot Springs campus, which is designated as a National Historic Landmark, VA is following the "substitution" process described in the handbook issued jointly by the Council on Environmental Quality and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for integrating NEPA and NHPA Section 106 (dated March 2013). This substitution does not lessen any of the NHPA requirements, rather, it provides a more integrated and streamlined mechanism to accomplish the same.

Tribal Consultation

Consultation, as prescribed by Executive Order 13175 and by VA Directive 8803, covers a much broader range of potential tribal concerns and/or issues with respect to the proposed Federal action than just historic preservation. These consultation topics and scope extend well beyond the historical aspects of a particular facility or location. Formal tribal consultation in this sense is a documented process in which input is sought from tribal officials on proposed VA actions which may: (1) require tribal and VA senior leadership involvement; (2) involve the potential for widespread, direct and substantial impact upon more than one tribe or on the relationship between VA and tribes; (3) affect tribal resources, rights, or land; (4) entail policy, legislative, or legal actions involving tribes; or (5) change the distribution of authority and responsibilities between VA and Indian tribes.

Participation in the Section 106 Process for Historic Properties

If you indicate an interest in the NHPA Section 106 consultation process, you will be provided additional details about the relevant schedule and milestones in future correspondence. Please recognize the focus of the Section 106 consultations is limited to evaluation of the potential adverse effects to the Hot Springs campus and other historic properties that may be identified. Please notify the VA of your interest in the Section 106 process by referencing this letter and identifying your selected point of contact for Section 106 coordination, by either an email to yablackhillsfuture@va.gov, or a letter to Staff Assistant to the Director, VA Black Hills Health Care System, 113 Comanche Road, Fort Meade, SD 57741. We welcome your interest and would appreciate receiving your response within 15 days of your receipt of this letter.

Participation in Tribal Consultation Pursuant to Executive Order 13175

VA is preparing to initiate formal Tribal Consultation this summer as well, possibly as soon as late August or early September. To prepare for these efforts, VA is requesting input from tribes located in South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Minnesota, Oklahoma, and Nebraska. The input would be focused on primary topics of concern to the affected tribes and would help craft the agenda, identify venues, and ensure that key VA leadership and personnel attend.
Notice of VA Tribal Consultation ~ Black Hills Health Care System

We very much look forward to your input. Based upon the communications to date, VA anticipates Tribal Consultation subjects of interest to include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Tribal government concerns specific to the Hot Springs campus itself;
- Potential for Tribal government interest in the use or actual acquisition of part or all (with some exceptions) of the Hot Springs campus, if the decision to vacate some or all is reached;
- Specific concerns surrounding access, timeliness, and quality of medical care to American Indian Veterans through facilities on or near reservations;
- Other mechanisms for provision of medical care to American Indian Veterans;
- Any effect on other Veterans benefits and services available to American Indian Veterans (for example, through VA’s Veterans Benefits Administration or VA’s National Cemetery Administration) as a result of the proposal.

In order to properly prepare for the upcoming Tribal Consultation under Executive Order 13175, please provide your comments and requests by September 12, 2014. Comments and requests may be sent electronically to tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov, by fax (202) 273-5716 or mail: Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Tribal Government Relations, 810 Vermont Ave. NW Suite 915e, Washington, DC 20420.

VA recognizes the value of dialogue and importance of communication with American Indian tribes and looks forward to receiving your input. If you have any questions regarding this communication you may contact Peter Vicaire, Office of Tribal Government Relations Specialist, Central Region at (651) 405-5676 or Peter.Vicaire@va.gov.

Sincerely,

Josh Taylor
Acting Assistant Secretary
Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs
OTGR Southern Plains

ANADARKO AMERICAN INDIAN VETERANS STAND DOWN

Event for Veterans that are homeless or in overcrowded situations.
Friday November 7th, 2014  10am-3pm
Lunch will be served @ 11:30am
Location: Iscami Gym / 101 E. Coronado St. / Anadarko, OK

PARTICIPATING TRIBES
Delaware Nation / Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma / Wichita Tribe / Comanche Nation / Apache Tribe of Oklahoma / Ft. Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma

SERVICES:
- Help with accessing VA benefits & services
- Housing assistance for homeless or overcrowded Veterans
- Counseling & substance abuse referrals
- Emergency shelter & other social services
- Legal Services
- Health screening
- Employment services
- Haircuts

GIVEAWAY ITEMS:
- Personal care products
- Clothing closet
- Surplus items, blankets, boots, etc.
- Breakfast and lunch
- Pick-up locations available

Please bring ID (VA card or DD214) if available.
Comrades & Coffee ~ Oklahoma City, OK

Stop by for camaraderie and coffee!

Comrades & Coffee is a place for service members and veterans to connect with each other and enjoy a free cup of coffee. Comrades & Coffee is a place of honor, where grateful citizens put their “boots on the ground,” thanking our service members and veterans by serving them coffee and pastries. Comrades & Coffee is a place of information, where attendees can be helped to find local community resources; or just stop in for some camaraderie and coffee.

Comrades & Coffee is on the 2nd and 4th Friday mornings of each month. Meetings are held at the Lottie House, Drop-in Center in Oklahoma City, 1311 N. Lottie Ave, from 0800-1100.

For more information, contact NAMI Oklahoma @ 405-607-6018 or 1-800-583-1264.
Save the Date!
14th Annual Veterans Honor Dance
November 14, 2014
Oklahoma City VA Medical Center
Oklahoma City, OK

Sponsored by
Oklahoma City VA Warriors and Elders Council

Head Staff to be announced

Contact: Candy Fish Klumpp
Native American Nurse Navigator
Oklahoma City VAMC
405-466-3008
candy-klump@va.gov

OR
Tempie Nichols-Rood, LCSW
405-466-1129
OTGR Central Region

Wisconsin Indian Veterans Association

Oneida Chapter

Breakfast Fundraiser

Oct 25th

7:00 am – 11:00 am

All you can eat pancakes

and sausage

$7.00 Adults
Children 10 and under $4.00

Oneida Nation Veterans Building, 134
Riverdale Dr. 50–50, raffle, come on
over for a good time.

For delivery orders 2 or more call 328-8287
Veterans Art Exhibit ~ Salvation Army Supportive Services for Veterans Families

Supportive Services for Veteran Families
A Salvation Army Program,
presents the

**Homeless Veterans Art Exhibit**

As an Outreach tool the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program was simply looking for a way to communicate with primitively living homeless Veterans in North Dakota. What started out as a last ditch effort to find out a Veterans name by leaving a pencil and paper has now turned into a heartbreaking, powerful and life changing look into the memories that our Veterans live with every day. Their nightmares, experiences and thoughts are expressed fully and without words. Please come to learn, to feel and to gain insight.

Date: November 9-November 15, 2014
Time: Sunday-Saturday 1PM-7PM
Location: Pekin Auditorium, Pekin, North Dakota

This Special Exhibit will run concurrently with the Nelson County Arts Councils:

Veterans Art Exhibit, “Honoring Our Veterans”.
Both Exhibits share the same date, time and location.

For information about the Homeless Veterans Art Exhibit, please contact:
Ellen McKinnon 701-866-2446
Supportive Services for Veteran Families
Ellen.mckinnon@usc.salvationarmy.org

**Because of the strong content, you must be 18 years old or older to view this exhibit**

For information about the Veterans Art Fair (or to enter), please contact:
Nelson County Arts Council 701-296-4410 ncac@nccdnc.com
Or Jennifer 701-262-4437 jen@glassondesign.net
You can find more information and entry forms by visiting:
www.nelsoncountyarts.com
All Veterans are welcome to enter the Veterans Art Fair. You may either display or sell your works. See the complete guidelines on the website.
Veterans Art Exhibit  
"Honoring Our Veterans"  
November 9th-15th  
Pekin Auditorium - 121 Main Street, Pekin, N.D.

Hours: Sunday-Saturday, 1PM-7PM

Entry Form Submission Deadline: October 26th.

Artwork Must be Delivered By: November 1st or 2nd BEFORE 7:00PM (Unless a prior arrangement has been made) to the Pekin, N.D. auditorium. Starting at 10AM.

Pickup Day: November 15th Between 7PM and 8PM. NO early removals please. If you would like to send us a jpeg of the artwork you are entering to consider for media releases, please email ncac@gondtc.com with the JPEG, Title, and medium of your artwork. Arrangements must be made prior to if you cannot make Pick Up Day.

Eligibility: ALL VETERANS are eligible to submit artwork. You make it, we will exhibit it. Each Veteran can display 3 pieces. Please have you or your organization fill out the form. Pieces can be for sale or display only. If for sale, this needs to be CLEARLY marked. (This is to make sure pieces are accounted for, picked up, etc.). If privacy is an issue please have your representative fill out the form and state so (you may want to cover signature). Family to a late Veteran may exhibit the late Veteran’s art if they have legal rights to it.

All donations taken during Exhibit will be donated to the Supportive Services for Veteran Families, a Salvation Army program. All final sales, if selling, go to the Veteran artist.

This is a sponsored Art Exhibit. Be sure to thank them.

SHIPPING AND RETURN - Ship to: Nelson County Arts Council, P.O. Box 83 Pekin, ND 58361
All shipped works must arrive by November 2 in reusable packaging. A return label and return postage including insurance should be included with artwork. Shipped artwork will be re-turned in a 3 week business day period after November 15th.
Artwork can be personally delivered. Suggestion: 1 or 2 from your organization/area can drop-off/pickup your artwork.

Please visit www.nelsoncountyarts.com or facebook/ncacpekin to view activities planned for the week.
Phone: NCAC at 701-296-4410 or Jennifer at 701-262-4437
Email: ncac@gondtc.com or jen@gleasondesign.net
Nelson County Arts Council - P.O. Box 83 - Pekin, N.D. 58361
Make sure to fill out labels same as entry form. Attach one to back of each art piece.

* LABELS - Cut, keep and attach to back or base of each artwork using the same number and info you entered in Entry Form:

**#1**
Artist Name: 
Organization: If the artist wants to remain anonymous, leave blank.
Participating organization: 
Title: 
Medium: 
Price: 
For Sale: YES ______ NO ______

**#2**
Artist Name: 
Organization: If the artist wants to remain anonymous, leave blank.
Participating organization: 
Title: 
Medium: 
Price: 
For Sale: YES ______ NO ______

**#3**
Artist Name: 
Organization: If the artist wants to remain anonymous, leave blank.
Participating organization: 
Title: 
Medium: 
Price: 
For Sale: YES ______ NO ______

**Medium:**
Oil - Watercolor - Photography - Pastel - Acrylic - Mixed Medium - Other
Entry Form - THE FOLLOWING IS TO BE FILLED OUT AND SENT TO NCAC* (exactly as labels!)
Nelson County Arts Council - P.O. Box 83 - Pekin, N.D. 58361

Artist/Organization Name: ____________________________________________________________
Authorized Representative/Group: ________________________________________________
Address: _______________________________________________________________________
City: __________________________ State: _______ Zip: ____________
Phone: ________________________ Email: ____________________________________________

Number of works to be displayed: ______
I understand that NCAC cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to works on display. The Board of NCAC has the final authority for approving exhibits and reserves the right to prohibit any person or group from displaying artwork.

Signature: ______________________ Date: ____________

#1
Artist Name: ____________________________
Organization: _____________________________ If the artist wants to remain anonymous, leave blank.
Participating organization: __________________________
Title: __________________________
Medium: __________________________
Price: __________________________
For Sale: YES ______ NO ______

#2
Artist Name: ____________________________
Organization: _____________________________ If the artist wants to remain anonymous, leave blank.
Participating organization: __________________________
Title: __________________________
Medium: __________________________
Price: __________________________
For Sale: YES ______ NO ______

#3
Artist Name: ____________________________
Organization: _____________________________ If the artist wants to remain anonymous, leave blank.
Participating organization: __________________________
Title: __________________________
Medium: __________________________
Price: __________________________
For Sale: YES ______ NO ______

Indicate Medium:
Oil Watercolor Photography Pastel Acrylic
Mixed Medium Sculpture Other - please describe: __________________________________________

*Exactly like you filled out the label for back of each art piece.

NCAC Memberships Available:
Please sign me up for membership in the Nelson County Arts Council (Please renew my membership ______ I am signing up as a new member ______) $15.00 single $25.00 couple
Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________
Address: _______________________________________________________________________
City: __________________________ State: _______ Zip: ____________
Email: __________________________________________

Membership is not required for the Veterans Art Exhibit.
16th ANNUAL VETERANS SYMPOSIUM

“INTEGRATING HEALTHY VETERAN PARTNERSHIPS IN NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES”

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 7TH, 2014
Location: Route 66 Casino & Hotel
14500 Central Ave SW, I-40 Exit 140, Albuquerque, NM 87121

This event is to recognize and honor the military service of Native Americans; and to orient veterans and their families on benefits and programs available from the Indian Health Service and the NMVA Healthcare System.

Come enjoy the interaction and socializing in an environment specific for veterans.

Sponsors for the event are the Albuquerque Area Office of the Indian Health Service, the New Mexico Veterans Administration Healthcare System and hosted by the Pueblo of Laguna.

For registration please contact Grace Baca at 505.248.4600 grace.baca@ihs.gov
Arizona is home to more than 625,000 service members, veterans & their families.

How do we ensure there is no wrong door and no wrong person for them to connect to resources?

Arizona’s Military/Veteran Resource Navigators!

“The Resource Connection Guide is the best tool I have ever seen for helping service members, veterans & families.”

“This training is exactly what we need for our community.”

“I’ve worked in this field for a long time, and I learned so many new things today.”

- Navigation Training Participants

Resource Navigators are members of our community who are trained to connect service members, veterans & family members to the array of available resources. Navigator training includes:

- How to use the Resource Connection Guide.
- Key factors that may affect a person or family’s access to resources.
- Navigation strategies.
- How to link into the military/veteran community to find resources to address a range of issues, including:

  - Employment
  - Housing
  - Health
  - Finance
  - Education
  - Legal
  - Veteran
  - Physical Health
  - Spiritual

  - Housing
  - Food

Resource Navigation training is 4 or 8 hours long. Navigators are trained on the guide and the process, and also connected into Arizona’s Military/Veteran Resource Network.

Who can become a Resource Navigator? Anyone who wants to be a part of ensuring no wrong door and no wrong person for Arizona’s service members, veterans & families!

View the statewide schedule of upcoming trainings: www.ArizonaCoalition.org/events

Contact us to schedule a training for your organization, group or community!

Questions? Email events@arizonacoalition.org or call 602-753-8802

Special thanks to the Arizona Coalition for Military Families’ partners that make this training possible, including the Arizona Department of Veterans’ Services, the Governor’s Office for Children, Youth & Families, Arizona Department of Health Services, Newman’s Own Foundation and other public and private sector partners.

The Arizona Coalition for Military Families is a public/private partnership focused on building Arizona’s statewide capacity to care for and support all service members, veterans, their families and communities.

To learn more, visit: www.ArizonaCoalition.org
Chinle Vet Center
Grief and Loss Group Sessions Schedule

Grief and Loss Group Sessions
for Veterans and their families
Chinle Hospital Counseling Services

Tuesday, Oct 07, 2014  1:00pm  What does it mean?
Tuesday, Oct 14, 2014  1:00pm  Life’s Ups & Downs
Tuesday, Oct 21, 2014  1:00pm  Stress Signals
Tuesday, Oct 28, 2014  1:00pm  Changes
Tuesday, Nov 04, 2014  1:00pm  Facing changes
Tuesday, Nov 18, 2014  1:00pm  Let Go, Moving on
Tuesday, Nov 25, 2014  1:00pm  Memories & Wrap up

Group sessions facilitated by the Chinle Vet Center
For further information please contact 928 205-3345 or Chinle
Hospital Counseling Services at 928 674-7377
White Mountain Apache Warriors Summit

LEFT: Ronnie Lupe, Chairman, White Mountain Apache Tribe; RIGHT: Kuauhtemoc Rodriguez (K-Rod), Phoenix VA Health Care System Native American Liaison

On September 11, 2014, the White Mountain Apache Warriors Summit was held at Whiteriver, Arizona. The Phoenix VA Health Care System (PVAHCS) provided enrollment and eligibility assistance as well as coordinated care for Veterans requesting medical assistance. Chairman Ronnie Lupe who is also a Marine Korean War Veteran, K-Rod is an Operation Iraqi Freedom Veteran.
New VA Clinic Opens at Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation

“TUBA CITY, Ariz. - A new veterans administration clinic in Tuba City seeks to enhance access to healthcare for Native Americans veterans who live in remote areas on the Navajo and Hopi reservations. The grand opening of the clinic took place Sept. 23 at Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation (TCRHCC).

As the result of a partnership with the VA Office of Rural Health (ORH), Northern Arizona VA Healthcare System (NAVAHCS) and the hospital, and after three years of work, the agreement was signed Jan. 17 to establish a VA staffed primary care telehealth outpatient clinic within Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation's campus.

Rod Sepulveda, rural health program coordinator for the Northern Arizona VA Health Care System, said the agreement allows VA staff to provide services to eligible veterans on the Tuba City campus.

"I think it is very important because a lot of our veterans do not have access to reliable transportation or the means to actually make that journey to either Prescott or Flagstaff, Sepulveda said. "By providing local access, we are encouraging them to come in as soon as they start feeling ill and that can help prevent the disease process moving forward."

Because of the space and resource sharing agreement, veterans are now able to schedule primary care appointments with VA providers at the Tuba City VA clinic, get lab work done, receive medications and see available specialty services in the same facility, eliminating the need for a four hour one way trip to Flagstaff or Prescott.

Veterans who want to be seen by the VA providers must be signed up with the VA. But veterans do have a choice. They can be seen through the Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation and the VA reimburses the hospital for the services it provides those veterans, which means it increases revenue and the operation budget for the hospital so that it can provide more services.

Sepulveda said that practice started as a Indian Health Service and VA agreement signed in December 2012.
The healthcare center worked with the Prescott VA to train its staff, case managers and department directors directly involved with veterans care to make sure the training was tailored to the population that TCRHCC serves. The training focused on understanding what resources are available for veterans through the VA health system and how to access those resources.

Sepulveda said the he encourages veterans to sign up for their benefits whether they choose the VA or the hospital.

"The reality is we reimburse the Tuba City facility, so whichever they choose, that brings money into the community, it helps the entire community by them signing up," Sepulveda said.

He said rural veterans have been asking for services closer to them for a long time and, now that the services are there, he hopes veterans will use them.

"The goal really is to increase access," Sepulveda said.

There are other sites also that provide VA care to rural veterans: the VA clinic in the Chinle hospital, Tsalie and Pinon, Tuba City and services just started in Kayenta. Once a week services are provided at the Hopi Health Care Center through a mobile clinic.

"Their goal is to reach out to veterans in rural communities and that is why the Office of Rural Health takes such an important role in this," Sepulveda said."
O’otham Veterans Celebration

This article, by Christopher Lomahquahu, originally ran on September 19 in the Gila River Indian News, and can be located HERE.

“The O’otham Veterans Celebration took place at the District 6 Komatke Boys & Girls Club before a large audience of current and past members of U.S. armed forces. On Sept. 13, veterans old and young stood proud at the celebration for their service to their country.

Gov. Gregory Mendoza in his address to the audience praised the Community’s long history of service to the nation. “We as Native Americans have represented our tribes and country and our O’otham people,” said Mendoza. Gov. Mendoza added: “We have to ask ourselves, what are we doing to really help our veteran, beyond the celebrations, holidays, anniversaries and other events?”

Recently, the Community won a grant to develop a plan to serve GRIC veterans, with a goal to “establish a system of programs and services.” Gov. Mendoza said an “ad-hoc” team has been assembled to address the various issues veterans face, including housing, counseling and employment. To conclude his speech Mendoza said, “It is time to do more for our veterans,” as he thanked them for voicing their concerns. Haskell-Osife Antone Post 51 Commander David Anderson presented Mendoza with a certificate of appreciation and gave thanks for the work the current administration is doing for them.

After a rash of bad public relations about the level of treatment for veterans in the news, the Department of Veterans Affairs wants to make sure American Indians are not left out of the picture by increasing their outreach to tribal communities.
VA Chief social worker David Jacobson said, 22,000 American Indians currently serve in the armed forces, which is the highest among the country’s minorities enlisted. Jacobson alluded to the fact that many current and returning veterans may need assistance to stay on their feet, especially regarding housing.

Rodriguez Kuauhtemoc, a VA representative and veteran, talked about the enrollment and eligibility resources from the VA and a unique opportunity for veterans called the American Indian direct loan program.

The loan can be used to improve or purchase a home on tribal trust land in order to improve the quality of living for veterans in need of assistance. All the paperwork and loan approval is done through the VA, without the involvement of banks, which makes the program ideal for veterans. He thanked the American Legion posts, because as he said, “They first brought to light the problems in the VA system by stepping up to the plate to make folks accountable.” This year’s celebration brought many new opportunities to veterans of the Community and their O’otham neighbors. Much of the focus was on the quality of care and how much the Community is willing to invest in the welfare of its veterans.

For the VA, it is a step in a more positive direction as they focus on being involved with American Indian tribes and their veterans.

This year’s celebration marked the first year it has been brought to other O’otham tribes in Salt River, Tohono O’odham and Ak-Chin. The purpose of the event is to be inclusive of all veterans from these communities and elsewhere to raise awareness about the needs of veterans.”
On Thursday, October 9, 2014, the Missing in America Project (MIAP), in partnership with the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona and Hansen Mortuary Chapel, will conduct an Inurnment with Honors Service for six unclaimed military veterans. These veterans collectively served in the United States Army Air Forces, Marine Corps, Air Force and Army, during World War II, World War II and the Vietnam War.

The remains of the veterans will receive a full escort, complete with flying flags, from Hansen Mortuary Chapel (9314 North 7th Street, Phoenix AZ 85020) to the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona (23029 North Cave Creek Road, Phoenix, AZ 85014), where full military honors will be rendered. The remains will be transferred from the mortuary to the hearse at 9:00 AM. The escort will depart the mortuary at 9:15 AM, travel northbound on 7th Street north-eastbound on Cave Creek Road and eastbound on Pinnacle Peak Road to the main entrance of the cemetery.

The inurnment service will take place at 10:00 AM, at the Assembly Area, located adjacent to the large flagpole. The service will include a flyover of historic military aircraft by the Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force (CAF). Parking, seating, media-staging, restroom accommodations and handicap accessibility will be available.

The National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona, an active member of the Commemorative Partners for the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War, will utilize this service to:

- To thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action, for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.
- To highlight the service of the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of Federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with, or in support of, the Armed Forces.
- To pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the United States during the Vietnam War.
- To highlight the advances in technology, science, and medicine related to military research conducted during the Vietnam War.
- To recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the United States during the Vietnam War.

The Missing in America Project (MIAP) respectfully requests the participation of the general public, veterans organizations and the mass media in this important event.

"It's The Right Thing To Do!"

www.miap.us