

VVA CHAPTER 1069 BENEFITS PRESENTATION, 7/12/17 PAGE 1

1. **CONTACTS:** To help you obtain information about claims or other needs:

- **VETERANS CRISIS LINE:** Veterans and loved ones can call (800) 273-8255 24/7 and then press 1 with total anonymity to speak to a professional counselor. A Houston Vet Center counselor, James Bailey, is available in Don Montoya's office on Thursdays for veterans and their families. Call Don's office at (979) 532-1311 for an appointment to see James Bailey. See forms on my desk for information.
- **Dwight Winkler**, 2254 CR 291, East Bernard, TX 77435; (979) 335-4464; lerwinkdd@aol.com
- **Don Montoya**, Wharton County Veterans Service Officer, 1017 N. Alabama Road, Wharton, TX 77488; (979) 532-1311, don.montoya@co.wharton.tx.us; **NEW OFFICE HOURS:** M, TUES, THUR (Wharton), 8:00a.m.-12:00 noon & 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.; FRI (Wharton), 8:00a.m.-12:00 noon by appointment only & 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. (Administrative time); On WED (El Campo library), 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- **Vanessa Hicks-Callaway**, (Congressman Blake Farenthold's Veteran Advocate), (361) 894-6446, Vanessa.Hicks-Callaway@mail.house.gov
- **Matt Minor**, (Texas State Representative Phil Stephenson's Veteran Advocate), (281) 232-7900, Matt.Minor@house.state.tx.us
- **NEW VA COMPLAINT HOTLINE:** New VA complaint hotline number is (855) 948-2311. Be courteous and be able to answer WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, and WHY about "wrong doing at the VA."
- **NEW VA PHONE NUMBER TO CALL 1-844-698-2311;** This new national toll-free number is a go to source for Veterans and their families who do not know what number to call at the VA. It is identified at the VA as **myVA311**.

2. **JOKES #1 & #2:** Tankers (Source: DW) & Banned from Walmart (Source: Retiree Activities Office Bulletin, June 15, 2017, pages 118-119.

VVA CHAPTER 1069 BENEFITS PRESENTATION 7/12/2017, PAGE 2

3. **YOUR INPUT WORKED:** At our June meeting, I reported that President Trump's 2018 budget was presented with a "tradeoff" of VA dollars from veterans with a disability of Individual Unemployability to the Choice Program totaling \$3.2 billion dollars. You contacted Senators Cruz and Cornyn and Congressman Farenthold and according to VA Secretary Dr. David Shulkin the "tradeoff" has been successfully eliminated from the budget. Source: <http://www.military.com/daily-news/2017/06/14>

4. **FREE LEGAL ADVICE:** Free legal advice clinics are available for veterans with no appointment necessary for issues such as family law, wills and probate, consumer, property, tax, disability, and veterans benefits as well as other legal problems or questions at the Richmond Outpatient Clinic, Richmond, Texas, on Saturday, July 29 and October 21, 2017, from 9AM-Noon. Photo ID required but not proof of service. Contact the Houston Bar Association at (713) 759-1133 or www.hba.org for more information. Source: The Scuttlebutt, June 2017, page 6.

5. **RULES FOR SALUTING THE US FLAG:** National Anthem and Pledge of Allegiance - The National Defense Act of 2009 allows "members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute in the same manner provided for individuals in uniform." Veterans may render a hand salute during the hoisting, lowering, or passing of the U. S. flag. Source: Go to the following website-

<http://www.military.com/flag-day/rules-for-saluting-us-flag.html?ESRC=marine-a>

6. **VA CAREGIVER SUPPORT:** VA's Caregiver Support Line assistance is just a quick phone call away. Whether you are in need of immediate assistance or have questions about what services you may be eligible for, **call (855) 260-3274**. The caring licensed professionals who answer the support line can also do the following:

- Tell you about the assistance available from the VA.
- Help you access services.
- Connect you with the Caregiver Support Coordinator at a VA Med Center near you.
- Just listen to your problem, if that's what you need right now.

Source: veteranshealth@public.govdelivery.com

VVA CHAPTER 1069 BENEFITS PRESENTATION 7/12/2017, PAGE 3

7. **APPRAISAL APPEAL:** In May I told you about the receipt of appraisal notices from the Wharton County Central Appraisal District (CAD) and the fact that my acreage had increased from \$2,900 an acre to \$8,000 an acre. I protested the increase and had a hearing on June 27, 2017, at which time the Appraisal Review Board (ARB) reduced the per acre amount to \$6,500 an acre based upon a sale approximately 1/2 mile from my property. My amount of savings in actual tax dollars is \$197.54. Source: Wharton County Central Appraisal Notice of Appraised Value received 5/8/2017.
8. **EXCHANGE ONLINE SHOPPING (BEGINS 11/11/2017?):** Exchange officials have verified over 18,000 honorably discharged veterans for ONLINE shopping as of 6/9/2017. The website www.VetVerify.org allows honorably discharged veterans to get their credentials in order before the ONLINE exchanges open to veteran shoppers on 11/11/2017. The new benefit is for ONLINE shopping only, and does not extend to exchange stores on installations. Actual online pricing can be seen only by those who are authorized to shop at the exchange websites: www.shopmyexchange.com; www.shopcgx.com; www.mymcx.com; and www.mynavyexchange.com. Veterans who have problems with the verification process can contact the VetVerify.org customer call center, toll-free, at (844) 868-8672. Source: Retiree Activities Office Bulletin, June 15, 2017, pages 11-12.
9. **POSITIVE MARINE CORPS QUOTES:**
 - "The deadliest weapon in the world is a Marine and his rifle"- Gen. Pershing
 - "Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference in the world. But, the Marines do not have that problem"-Pres Ronald Reagan
 - "There are only two kinds of people that understand Marines: Marines and the enemy. Everyone else has a second-hand opinion." - Gen. W. Thornson, US Army
 - "Your soul may belong to Jesus, but your "ASS" belongs to the Marines. Come on, you SOB's! Do you want to live forever?" -GySgt. Daniel Daly, Belleau Wood, 1918.

Source: Retiree Activities Office Bulletin, June 15, 2017, pages 68-69.

Learn how AARP is helping family caregivers.  Find answers at aarp.org/iheartcaregivers.

LET'S TALK

Planning to Live to 100? Volunteer!

IN SCIENCE labs all over the world, researchers are exploring ways to delay the effects of aging and extend our years of healthy life.

Already, we're living nearly three decades longer on average than our ancestors from a century ago. A

10-year-old child today has a 50 percent chance of living to be at least 104.

If you're wondering what you—or your 10-year-old—might do with all that extra time on Earth, I have an idea.

Volunteer. Share your skills and your passion with others. Find a need and devote your time to filling it. It's the closest thing to a silver bullet we have discovered for personal and societal well-being.

Most of us who have volunteered know the positive jolt of what's been called "giver's high." But the benefits of contributing your talents to others go way beyond that transitory buzz.

The obvious payoff is the social good done: A littered block becomes an urban garden, the hungry are fed, or social isolation is eased, among countless other examples.

Donating one's time to benefit others has deep individual value as well. A growing body of research tells us that those who volunteer

have lower mortality rates and less depression, along with a greater sense of control over one's life and higher rates of self-esteem and happiness. Using health and volunteering data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one report found that states with a high volunteer rate even have lower incidences of heart disease. Some studies showed that volunteers who devote about 100 hours or more per year to volunteer activities are the most likely to experience health benefits.

Findings indicate that—in general—the older the volunteer, the greater the personal benefits of volunteering.

I know from my own experience that many of us lose our sense of purpose as we transition out of a career or end our role as caregiver to a spouse or family member. Volunteering can renew that sense of purpose and prevent the social isolation that is a recognized health hazard of our later years.

I think you will find AARP is an excellent place to begin exploring your own volunteer journey. See aarp.org/volunteer for more information and resources.

Write to Eric J. Schneidewind at AARP, 601 E St. NW, Washington, DC 20049, or email aarppresident@aarp.org.



Eric J. Schneidewind
PRESIDENT
AND NATIONAL
VOLUNTEER
SPOKESPERSON

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: JEFF ELKINS (3); COURTESY DENNY'S; ILLUSTRATION BY JOE MCKENDRY (STEPHEN VOSS); NOUN PROJECT


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The officers and directors give their time to enhancing life for everyone 50-plus.


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AND
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JUST FOR
AARP
MEMBERS




Glasses.com

 You save 25 percent on orders of \$200 or more and get free basic lenses or 25 percent off lens upgrades.

Healthy Meal Delivery


 You save 10 percent on Silver Cuisine meals from bistroMD and get free shipping on your first order.


Car-Rental Discounts

 You save up to 25 percent off base rates, plus get a free upgrade on compact through full-size car class bookings (based on availability) and an additional driver at no cost, at Avis and Budget Rent A Car.



Denny's

 You save 15 percent all day, every day, at participating locations.

 To see a complete list of benefits, go to aarp.org/mybenefitslist.