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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.
- **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
- **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
- **VA INQUIRY ROUTING & INFORMATION SYSTEM (IRIS),** <https://iris.custhelp.com>

2. **MEDICALLY RELATED TRAVEL, LODGING, AND PER DIEM:** Your Veterans Health Benefits Handbook (VHBH) will tell you what benefits you are entitled to for medically related travel, lodging, and per diem. My VHBH states on page 20, Chapter 3, for "MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT: You are eligible to be reimbursed 41.5 cents per mile, for your travel related to obtaining VA health care services. You are also eligible for travel reimbursements when you travel to a VA facility or VA-authorized health care facility for a scheduled Compensation and Pension (C&P) examination."

3. **VETERAN ID CARD:** In July, 2015, President Obama signed into law the Veterans Identification Card Act of 2015. This act allows veterans to apply for an identification card directly from the VA. The card will allow Veterans to demonstrate proof of service for discounts at private restaurants and businesses. The Veterans ID Card is different from a Veteran Health ID Card. It is estimated the program will be implemented in 2017 and is taking longer because the VA is trying to implement the program in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible.

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4. **CAR RENTAL DISCOUNTS:** The following information is for Senior citizens:
 - Alamo car rental: Up to 25% off for AARP members
 - Avis: Up to 25% off for AARP members
 - Budget Rental Cars: 40% off; Up to 50% off for AARP members
 - Dollar Rent-A-Car: 10% off (50+)
 - Enterprise Rent-A-Car: 5% off for AARP members
 - Hertz: Up to 25% off for AARP members
 - National Rent-A-Car: Up to 30% off for AARP members
5. **VIETNAM SPECIAL EDITION #3-MEDALS OF AMERICA CATALOG:** On my table, I have copies of the VN Special Ed. #3, a 52 page catalog from Medals of America that deals entirely with VN products.
6. **FREE TRIP THROUGH VFW'S "RETURN TO VN" DRAWING:** If you received a Purple Heart for being wounded in VN, you could be a lucky Veteran to win VFW's "Return to Vietnam" trip. This in-country tour is scheduled for April 20-May 3, 2017. I have the forms on my table to complete and mail in prior to December 2, 2016.
7. **POTPOURRI OF INFORMATION:** The following topics are to refresh your memory:
 - **VA LOANS:** Home Loan, up to \$417,000@ 3.85% (as of 9/1/2016), 15-30 yrs., little or no money down; Land Loan, one acre or more, up to \$125,000 for a 30 year fixed rate @ 6.75% (as of 9/1/2016), minimum 5% down; Home Improvement Loan, \$50,000 for 20 yrs. or \$10,000 for 10 yrs. @ 3.85% (as of 9/1/2016), no down payment. Go to www.glo.texas.gov/vlb or (800) 252-8387.
 - **COLD WAR RECOGNITION CERTIFICATE:** Complete an Application for Cold War Recognition Certificate after determining eligibility (one day of active service between 9/2/1945 and 12/26/1991). Don Montoya or www.coldwarrecognition.
 - **MILITARY RECORDS:** If you have not obtained your military records, I recommend you send off for thr records before they become more than 62 years old and you are charged by the VA for the records. Don Montoya or VA Form SF 180 or go to www.va.gov/forms and input SF 180 in the blank.