



LOCK & LOAD



From the Presidents Desk:

Thanks to all who attended the January meeting. Strength, that is our membership.

Those of you that were in the bar before the January meeting may remember an Iraq War Veteran that was looking for scrap metal. He was picking up and selling scrap metal due to having lost his job and needed to provide for his family. Mike Isbell was able to help him out and was able to get rid of a lot of junk out of his warehouse/office. This gentleman then contacted Mike a couple of days later and let Mike know that his truck broke down and he was in dire straights. The Blackwell V.F.W. told him they would buy the parts if he would do the work. Mike, Marie, George and I talked and we decided to also give him a helping hand. I purchased at Walmart a \$50 gift card. When I went by his house he was in the process of pulling the transmission. When I gave him the gift card I thought he was about to cry. This is a classic example why I love this organization. We will help those Veterans in need.

John H. Howe

PS: New look for the newsletter. It will keep evolving. Still not happy yet, but close.

President	John H. Howe	(580) 304-5053	President@okvva750.org
Vice-President	Mike Isbell	(580) 401-4648	gunnyisy@att.net
Secretary	Marie Mayo	(580) 628-3215	uswacmayo@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Rod Kutz	(580) 761-5746	rodkutz@sbcglobal.net
Newsletter Editor / Webmaster	John H. Howe	(580) 304-5053	johnhhowe@me.com

V.V.A. Chapter 750 Board Members: John H Howe, Mike Isbell, Rod Kutz, Marie Mayo, Bob Hart, Fred Collins and George White.

THE NEXT CHAPTER 750 BUSINESS MEETING: FEBRUARY 17TH, 1900 HOURS (7 P.M.), AT THE AMERICAN LEGION POST ON SOUTH STREET.

This newsletter was printed and distributed by **THE UPS STORE**, 14th St., Ponca City.

Meeting called to order at 7 P. M. by President Howe.

Pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for all POW/MIA's and active duty personnel.

Invocation by Bob Robbins

Attendance: one new member, Allen Teten; no guests. Members in attendance: 15

Minutes were read and accepted

Treasurer's Report

Membership: 104 with 5 associates.

Committee reports:

Monument: No report.

Bricks: Mike Isbell stated that the engraver is waiting for the right weather conditions to complete all of the bricks.

Membership: A discussion was held about scheduling a meeting to recruit more members. More will be discussed at next meeting.

Old Business:

Tet Dance: The dance will be held on the 19th of February in the American Legion Lounge. Time: 7 pm. until whenever. The cost will be \$5.00 for singles, \$8.00 couples. Flyers were given to members to pass out. Food and the number of volunteers needed will be discussed at next meeting.

President Howe read thank you cards from Tony Marlar and Leona Wetmore for their Christmas gift cards.

New Business:

Fund raising for 2011 - A lengthy discussion was held on whether to

raffle a gun or cross bow or if we wanted to raffle more than 1 item. Ideas were exchanged and some members felt we would do better with only 1 item at a time. A discussion was also held about other fund raisers, i.e.: a raffle for OU & Texas football tickets and/or a poker run. Please keep these ideas in mind and bring other ideas to our next meeting.

Nominating committee: Bob Robbins was nominated to spearhead the nominating committee again this year.

Scholarships: The State and National Councils have scholarships available. If you need one, please contact Marie at (580) 628-3215. Marie will mail you the forms and information.

President Howe read a letter from RSVP stating they need help to transport a veteran to appointments in OKC. Motion made to donate \$100.00 to RSVP. The motion carried. John Howe and John Hoogendoor stated they would each take the veteran one time.



Motion from George White to have a roster of all members made and passed out at next meeting. The motion carried.

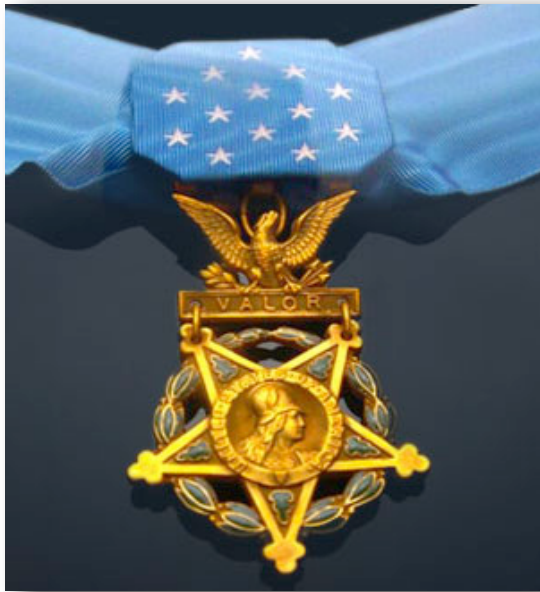
Bob Robbins presented an award to our chapter from the American Legion for our donation and assistance provided during the 2010 Veterans Day Parade. Bob announced that the

2011 parade will be held 5 November starting at 10:45 am. Bob also told us that the American Legion golf tournament will be held May 15th.

Motion to adjourn by George White. Seconded by John Wiles. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

NEXT MEETING – February 17, 2011



YOUNG, GERALD O.

Rank and organization: Captain, U.S. Air Force, 37th ARS Da Nang AFB, Republic of Vietnam.

Place and date: Khesanh, 9 November 1967.

Entered service at: Colorado Springs, Colo. Born: 9 May 1930, Chicago, Ill.

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Capt. Young distinguished himself while serving as a helicopter rescue crew commander. Capt. Young was flying

escort for another helicopter attempting the night rescue of an Army ground reconnaissance team in imminent danger of death or capture. Previous attempts had resulted in the loss of 2 helicopters to hostile ground fire. The endangered team was positioned on the side of a steep slope which required unusual airmanship on the part of Capt. Young to effect pickup. Heavy automatic weapons fire from the surrounding enemy severely damaged 1 rescue helicopter, but it was able to extract 3 of the team. The commander of this aircraft recommended to Capt. Young that further rescue attempts be abandoned because it was not possible to suppress the concentrated fire from enemy automatic weapons. With full knowledge of the danger involved, and the fact that supporting helicopter gunships were low on fuel and ordnance, Capt. Young hovered under intense fire until the remaining survivors were aboard. As he maneuvered the aircraft for takeoff, the enemy appeared at point-blank range and raked the aircraft with automatic weapons fire. The aircraft crashed, inverted, and burst into flames. Capt. Young escaped through a window of

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the burning aircraft. Disregarding serious burns, Capt. Young aided one of the wounded men and attempted to lead the hostile forces away from his position. Later, despite intense pain from his burns, he declined to accept rescue because he had observed hostile forces setting up automatic weapons positions to entrap any



rescue aircraft. For more than 17 hours he evaded the enemy until rescue aircraft could be brought into the area. Through his extraordinary heroism, aggressiveness, and concern for his fellow man, Capt. Young reflected the highest credit upon himself, the U.S. Air Force, and the Armed Forces of his country.

VA Publishes Final Regulation to Aid Korean War Veterans Exposed to Agent Orange -Will Provide Easier Path to Health Care and Benefits, New Program Speeds Approval for Vietnam Veterans

WASHINGTON – Veterans exposed to herbicides while serving along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) in Korea will have an easier path to access quality health care and benefits under a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) final regulation that will expand the dates when illnesses caused by herbicide exposure can be presumed to be related to Agent Orange.

“VA’s primary mission is to be an advocate for Veterans,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki “With this new regulation VA has cleared a path for more Veterans who served in the demilitarized zone in Korea to receive access to our quality

health care and disability benefits for exposure to Agent Orange.”

Under the final regulation published today in the Federal Register, VA will presume herbicide exposure for any Veteran who served between April 1, 1968, and Aug. 31, 1971, in a unit determined by VA and the Department of Defense (DoD) to have operated in an area in or near the Korean DMZ in which herbicides were applied.

Previously, VA recognized that Agent Orange exposure could only be conceded to Veterans who served in certain units along the Korean DMZ between April 1968 and July 1969.

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In practical terms, eligible Veterans who have specific illnesses VA presumes to be associated with herbicide exposure do not have to prove an association between their illness and their military service. This "presumption" simplifies and speeds up the application process for benefits and ensures that Veterans receive the benefits they deserve.

Click on these links to learn about [Veterans' diseases associated with Agent Orange exposure](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/diseases.asp) at <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/diseases.asp> and [birth defects in children of Vietnam-era Veterans](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/birth_defects.asp) at http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/birth_defects.asp.

VA encourages Veterans with covered service in Korea who have medical conditions that may be related to Agent Orange to submit their applications for access to VA health care and compensation as soon as possible so the agency can begin processing their claims.

Individuals can go to website <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/AO/claimherbicide.htm> to get a more complete understanding of how to file a claim for presumptive conditions related to herbicide exposure, as well as what evidence is needed by VA to make a decision about disability compensation or survivors benefits.

Additional information about Agent Orange and VA's services for Veterans exposed to the chemical is available at www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange.

The regulation is available on the Office of the Federal Register website at <http://www.ofr.gov>

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VA may have overpaid disabled vets by \$1 billion

WASHINGTON — Poor oversight and missing medical follow-ups led to nearly \$1 billion in overpayments in veterans disability benefits over the last 18 years, and could lead to another \$1 billion in improper payouts in the near future if left unchecked, according to a new investigation.

The report, from the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of the Inspector General, found mistakes in the processing of an estimated 27,500 cases before the Veterans Benefits Administration, resulting in individuals receiving a 100 percent disabled rating

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for years longer than they should have.

“Despite numerous audit and inspection reports since FY 2004 stating that the staff was not consistently processing temporary 100 percent disability evaluations correctly, VBA has not fully corrected the problem,” the report stated. “If VBA does not take timely corrective action, they will overpay veterans a projected \$1.1 billion over the next 5 years.”

At issue are temporary 100 percent disability ratings, given to veterans with service-connected disabilities requiring surgery, convalescence or specific treatment. In some cases, those payouts may be reduced or ended after veterans recover and are able to return to work.

IG officials found that in nearly half of the problem cases, officials simply forgot to schedule follow-up medical visits or update related paperwork, allowing veterans to continue their full payout even after recovery. In about 6,500 cases, those medical exams were delayed or canceled, causing the payouts to continue.

Researchers said the average overpayment for veterans receiving extra benefits for less than a year was about \$10,500, but rises to about \$66,000 for veterans receiving overpayments for one to five years.

“For each year the overpayment continues, the cumulative financial

effect becomes increasingly more significant,” the report said.

Benefits officials disputed the findings, calling the cost estimates and total number of problem cases exaggerated.

“VBA makes every effort to ensure that veterans are paid correctly and disability evaluations are assigned appropriately at all levels,” Michael Walcoff, acting VA Under Secretary for Benefits, said in a statement to the IG office. “VBA is actively working to resolve these types of errors through system modifications. These system safeguards will ensure correct future review of temporary 100 percent evaluations.”

In a statement to Stars and Stripes, Tom Murphy, Director of the Compensation and Pension Service, said the VBA is committed to making sure veterans receive the proper disability benefits.

“VBA modified training for claims processors to ensure timely oversight responsibilities are completed,” he said. “Further training on evaluating evidence to determine permanency for a total evaluation is also being created.

The report does not recommend the VBA attempt to recoup any of the overpayments, but does urge a review of all 100 percent disability claims to ensure that proper payouts are being awarded. In cases where the mistakes have lingered for more than 20 years,

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the VA by law cannot change the disability ratings.

Murphy said the department will follow that recommendation “to ensure the appropriate evaluations are assigned and oversight controls are properly established.”

Veterans groups said they’ll keep a close eye on the issue.

“While there may be some veterans receiving an overpayment, our biggest concern is the 325,000 veterans who have waited more than 125 days to get

their foot in the door,” AMVETS spokesman Ryan Gallucci said, referencing the current VA benefits backlog. “That said, this may be an indication of a system that’s flawed, and is not treating all veterans equally.”

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VA Provides Cash Relocation Assistance for Foreclosed Veterans

The recession has taken a heavy toll on homeowners nationwide, and America’s service members haven’t been spared.

But veterans who lose their homes to a short sale or a deed-in-lieu of [foreclosure](#) will now have some financial cushion to help them rebound.

The VA has authorized mortgage servicers to provide veterans with up to \$1,500 in relocation assistance. Borrowers can use the money to cover moving expenses and other costs associated with the change in their living status.

Relocation assistance is the VA’s latest effort to help service members on the

edge. The agency has for years incentivized mortgage companies to exhaust all alternatives when veterans are in jeopardy of losing their homes.

“VA has a longstanding policy of encouraging servicers to work with veteran borrowers to explore all reasonable options to help them retain their homes or, when that is not feasible, to mitigate losses by pursuing alternatives to foreclosure,” according to the [two-page VA circular](#) released on the subject. “These options generally provide a substantially better outcome than a foreclosure sale for borrowers, investors and communities.”

Veterans won’t receive the funds as part of their home’s overall sale.

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Mortgage servicers will be reimbursed by the VA.

While service members have certainly been hit by foreclosure, overall they represent one of the most committed and secure borrowing demographics on the market. Paying bills on time and staying out of debt are almost ingrained pillars for most service members.

In fact, VA loans in particular have proved especially safe in face of recession. They continue to have the

lowest rate of foreclosure of any major loan program, an exemplary achievement given the fact that 90 percent of all VA loans come with no down payment



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VA & HUD Issue First-Ever Report on Homeless Veterans

WASHINGTON – For the first time, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development today published the most authoritative analysis of the extent and nature of homelessness among Veterans. According to HUD and VA's assessment, nearly 76,000 Veterans were homeless on a given night in 2009 while roughly 136,000 Veterans spent at least one night in a shelter during that year.

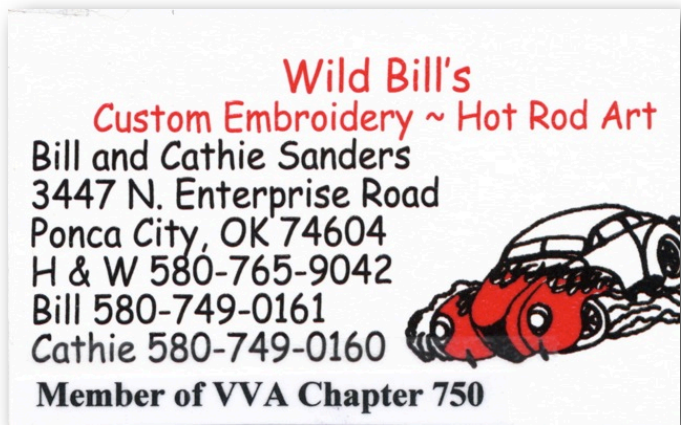
This unprecedented assessment is based on an annual report HUD provides to Congress and explores in greater depth the demographics of Veterans who are homeless, how the number of Veterans compare to others who are homeless, and how Veterans access and use the nation's homeless

response system. HUD's report, [Veteran Homelessness: A Supplement to the 2009 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress](#), examines the data in the department's annual report to Congress in-depth.

"With our federal, state and community partners working together, more Veterans are moving into safe housing," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "But we're not done yet. Providing assistance in mental health, substance abuse treatment, education and employment goes hand-in-hand with preventive steps and permanent supportive housing. We continue to work towards our goal of finding every Veteran safe housing and access to needed services."

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Last June, President Obama announced the nation's first comprehensive strategy to prevent and end homelessness, including a focus on homeless Veterans. The report, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, puts the country on a path to end Veterans and chronic homelessness by 2015; and to ending homelessness among children, family, and youth by 2020. [Read more about the Administration's strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness in America.](#)



**Key Findings of Opening Doors:
Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent
and End Homelessness**

- ☀ More than 3,000 cities and counties reported 75,609 homeless Veterans on a single night in January of 2009; 57 percent were staying in an emergency shelter or transitional housing program while the remaining 43 percent were

unsheltered. Veterans represent approximately 12 percent of all homeless persons counted nationwide during the 2009 'point-in-time snapshot.'

- ☀ During a 12-month period in 2009, an estimated 136,000 Veterans—or about 1 in every 168 Veterans—spent at least one night in an emergency shelter or transitional housing program. The vast majority of sheltered homeless Veterans (96 percent) experienced homelessness alone while a much smaller share (four percent) was part of a family. Sheltered homeless Veterans are most often individual white men between the ages of 31 and 50 and living with a disability.
- ☀ Low-income Veterans are twice as likely to become homeless compared to all low-income adults. HUD and VA also examined the likelihood of becoming homeless among American Veterans with particular demographic characteristics. In 2009, twice as many poor Hispanic Veterans used a shelter at some point during the year compared with poor non-Hispanic Veterans. African American Veterans in poverty had similar rates of homelessness.

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- ☀ Nearly half of homeless Veterans were located in California, Texas, New York and Florida while only 28 percent of all Veterans were located in those same four States.
- ☀ The report studied the path homeless Veterans take into the shelter system and found most Veterans come from another homeless location

and few entered the shelter system from their own housing or from housing provided by family or friends.

- ☀ Sheltered homeless Veterans are far more likely to be alone rather than part of a family household; 96 percent of Veterans are individuals compared to 63 percent in the overall homeless population.

You can kill ten of my men
for every one I kill of yours,
but even at those odds,
you will lose and I will win.

--Ho Chi Minh to the French,
late 1940's



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316506	ACTV	201102	HACKETT	KENNY
273586	ACTV	201105	HIBBETS	GARY J
427614	ACTV	201105	HOWE	RUSSELL D
390007	ACTV	201104	LESEMANN	MILTON L
927758	ACTV	201102	MASSEY	BROCK
927342	ACTV	201104	MAYO	PEGGY
316509	ACTV	201103	NELSON	ELTON R
169624	ACTV	201104	ROBBINS	ROBERT G
191439	ACTV	201104	RUPE	NEAL N.
390791	ACTV	201105	SANDERS	WILLIAM K
923415	ACTV	201102	SIMMONS	SYLVIA
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