
Office of Tribal Government Relations Newsletter ~ July/August 2015

Note from the Director

Greetings and welcome to this special combined summer edition of VA's Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR) newsletter. We've had the opportunity to conduct outreach, make site visits, participate in planning sessions and facilitate engagements between senior VA leadership, tribal leaders, Veterans and Veteran service providers during these past couple of months and we're excited to have you read all about it.

We extend a warm welcome to the new VA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Intergovernmental Affairs (VA/IGA), James Albino. DAS Albino, a Navy Veteran who has benefited first-hand from health care services provided by the VA, comes to VA from the White House where he served in a variety of capacities with the Domestic Policy Council. He looks forward to meeting with tribal leaders and working collaboratively to ensure VA as an agency is proactive in honoring the government to government relationship that exists between the United States and tribal governments, while ensuring VA continues to be responsive and consistent in efforts to link Indian Country's Veterans with the services and benefits they've earned through their service.

We are also pleased to announce an addition to the OTGR staff, Mr. Clay Ward, joins us as our new OTGR Program Specialist here in the Washington, D.C. office. Clay is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and comes to VA from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security. He has additional extensive experience working for the Indian Health Service, as well as tribal and urban Indian health programs. Clay's father is a Vietnam veteran and brings a special enthusiasm to his work at VA. He shares what he knows from personal family experience the positive impact VA services and benefits make on the lives of Veterans and their families.

I will try to offer a retrospective of where we've been the past couple of months. Tribal Government Relations Specialist Terry Bentley supported Secretary McDonald's trip to Alaska at the invitation of the Alaska Native Health Board (ANHB). In addition to visiting with leadership and delegates of ANHB, Secretary McDonald met with leadership from the Alaska Federation of Natives, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and Southcentral Foundation. Secretary McDonald traveled to remote tribal communities (Kotzebue and Point Hope, AK) and observed how health care is delivered and coordinated in Alaska. He also conducted a Veteran's Town Hall in Wasilla, AK.

Specialist Mary Culley facilitated, in collaboration with the Chickasaw Nation, a Veterans Training Summit in Norman, Oklahoma. The sessions were well attended, with a lot of new connections and faces in attendance. Attendees received the latest updates and information regarding VA services and benefits.

Homana Pawiki, our specialist in the Southwest, supported the Native American Direct Loan MOU between the VA and the Pueblo of Taos signing ceremony and Veterans Benefits Fair held in Taos, NM at the end of July. She joined Linda Schwartz, VA Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning at the 12th Annual Direct Service Tribes National Meeting in Flagstaff, Arizona. Dr. Schwartz and Dr. Susan Karol, Chief Medical Officer, IHS, led a panel on "VA Partnerships and Reimbursements Agreements."

Peter Vicaire, our specialist based in Minneapolis, traveled to New York to meet with representatives of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe to discuss housing options and needs for Veterans. He is heading out to Albuquerque next week to present information on veterans courts and Veteran Justice Outreach (VJO) Specialists to tribal judges at a Tribal Law and Policy Institute meeting.

I could go on and on as it has been an action packed summer. We're looking forward to a busy fall as we prepare for the Secretary to make remarks during the National Indian Health Board's Annual Consumer Conference in September 2015 in Washington, DC and plan for VA participation in the upcoming National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) gathering in San Diego in October 2015.

Terry Bentley has an upcoming Tribal Veteran Representative (TVR) training during the week of September 22-24, 2015, co-hosted in collaboration with our state partners – Oregon State Department of Veterans Affairs in Salem, OR. Over 40 TVRs from across her region have signed up to participate. For more information, please contact Terry at terry.bentley@va.gov

Stay tuned for more updates by checking out the www.va.gov/tribalgovernment website. Also, feel free to connect with us directly by emailing tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov with any suggestions, recommendations or questions you may have. We're always here to assist.

Happy Reading,

Stephanie



Stephanie E. Brisdwell



VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald Visits Tribal Leaders in Alaska

On August 11-13, the Honorable Robert A. McDonald met with tribal leaders and Veterans in Anchorage, Kotzebue and Point Hope, Alaska. He was invited by Lincoln Bean, Sr., Chairman of the Alaska Native Health Board, when they met at a National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) event in November, 2014. Mr. Bean wanted Secretary McDonald to visit Alaska to see and hear first-hand of the challenges Veterans face in receiving healthcare in remote parts of the state. During this visit, he also met with the following Alaska Tribal Leaders/Programs: Andy Tueber, Chairman of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) and Roald Helgelson, CEO of ANTHC; Julie Kitka, President of the Alaska Federation of Natives; Katherine Gottlieb, President/CEO of the Southcentral Foundation; Meet and Greet with Elders and Veterans at the Maniilaq Health Center, Kotzebue, Alaska and Meet and Greet with Elders and Veterans at the North Slope County Health Clinic, Point Hope, Alaska.



Secretary McDonald and
OTGR's Terry Bentley



Secretary McDonald at Point Hope Cemetery



VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald Visits Tribal Leaders in Alaska



Secretary McDonald with the Northern Lights Dancers



Secretary McDonald with ATG Veteran Spouse and family



Two Oklahoma Tribes Benefit From Nationwide Boom in Veterans Cemeteries



Here's an article by Silas Allen that ran in [The Oklahoman](#) on August 17, 2015.

SEMINOLE — Two Oklahoma tribes are taking part in the largest expansion of national veterans cemeteries since the Civil War. The Ponca Tribe and the Seminole Nation received grants through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to build veterans cemeteries on tribal lands. The Seminole Nation Cemetery and Veterans Memorial, located in Seminole, was dedicated in November. The Ponca Tribe's veterans cemetery is nearing completion in Kay County.

George Eisenbach, director of the VA program, said the grants are intended to place veterans cemeteries in areas where there isn't a national cemetery nearby. Before the construction of the two tribal cemeteries, Oklahoma was home to two national cemeteries: Fort Sill National Cemetery, near Lawton, and Fort Gibson National Cemetery, near Muskogee.

The construction of tribal cemeteries is meant to supplement a larger expansion of the nation's national cemetery system that once complete will have 96 percent of the nation's veterans living within 75 miles of a national cemetery, said Christopher Erbe, a spokesman for the VA's National Cemeteries Administration. The agency has built 19 new cemeteries since 1995 and has plans to build 17 more in the next three to five years. In some cases, the agency has awarded grants to tribes that wanted to create veterans areas within existing tribal cemeteries, Eisenbach said. Other tribes have used grant dollars to build veterans cemeteries where none existed. The Ponca Tribe used a \$495,000 grant to build a veterans memorial in the center of its tribal cemetery near Ponca City.

Tribal Chairman Earl Howe III said the cemetery had for years included an area that was unofficially designated for veterans. Using grant money, the tribe built three memorial walls and a brick walkway with a central court with flagpoles for the American, Oklahoma and Ponca Tribe flags. A tradition of military service exists in the Ponca Tribe, Howe said. A small contingent of men volunteered for service during World War I, even before tribal citizens were granted U.S. citizenship.

"We feel very fortunate to get it so we can honor our veterans," he said. The Seminole Nation used \$1.3 million in grant money supplemented with tribal funds to build a new cemetery. Galen Greenwalt, the tribe's director of veterans affairs, said half of the cemetery is designated for veterans. The other half serves as the nation's tribal cemetery, he said. The Ponca and Seminole cemeteries are among six tribal veterans cemeteries nationwide designated by the VA. Others are located in South Dakota, California and Arizona. Both Oklahoma cemeteries only will be open to tribal members. Nationally, there are 131 national VA cemeteries.



Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Webinars: Part I (VBA and OTGR) and II (VHA and Reimbursements)

Recently the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services held two webinars, the first, on August 5th and the second, August 24th. These 1.5 hour webinars covered information related to the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), VA's Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR) as well as the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and its Reimbursement Agreement Program. To access these webinars, go to the CMS website here: <http://cmsitustrainings.net>

Housing for Vets Coming to Taos Pueblo



Indian Country
TODAY MEDIA NETWORK



Here's an article by Harlan McKosato that ran in the [Indian Country Today](#) on August 13, 2015.

"Native American veterans from Taos Pueblo in New Mexico were pleased by the recent signing of a memorandum of agreement between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Taos tribal government that will allow Native vets to purchase, build or renovate a home on Taos tribal land under the VA's Native American Direct Home Loan Program.

"This signing was a long time coming," said Robert Espinosa, a citizen of Taos Pueblo and a U.S. Army veteran who currently serves as War Chief of his pueblo. "This program has been available to other tribes and reservations for several years. It's finally available to my people here at Taos Pueblo." The MOU was signed July 30 at the Taos Pueblo Community Center by Taos Gov. Luis Romero and Mike Frueh, Director of the VA Loan Guaranty program. The VA will now allow eligible Native vets and their spouses the opportunity to use the VA home loan guaranty benefit on federal trust land, including reservation land, through the Native American Direct Home Loan Program (NADL).

Since the end of World War II the VA has had a program to help U.S. military veterans purchase homes. It's called the VA Home Loan Program. The program has been around since 1944, and has helped over 21 million veterans purchase homes through the VA. But the program has not applied to American Indian veterans living on their tribal lands, which under current U.S. law is labeled as U.S. trust land.



Indian Country
TODAY MEDIA NETWORK



“What we’ve found over the years is that many banks were not willing to lend on federal trust land,” Frueh said. “In 1992 we developed NADL. The program works exactly the same as the VA Home Loan Program except that for Native veterans, or veterans that have a Native American spouse, they can borrow money from the VA to build a house on U.S. trust land.

“We wanted to open the credit to Native veterans on their ancestral homelands, where they grew up. It’s been very effective,” commented Frueh, who added that he was told about 1/3 of Taos Pueblo residents living in the village were U.S. military veterans. “This is the 95th MOU that we’ve negotiated with a federally recognized tribe that has federal trust land.” Native veterans eligible for VA home loan benefits whose sovereign governments have signed a MOU may now apply directly to VA for a 30-year fixed rate loan to purchase, build, or improve a home located on federal trust land. They may also refinance a direct loan already made under this program to lower their interest rate.

“I personally tried for a VA loan, but since I lived on the reservation, I couldn’t get one – I didn’t qualify,” said Espinosa, who gave the welcoming address at the signing, along with Gov. Romero. “This signing made me very happy. All the veterans (at Taos Pueblo) are going to be able to apply for loans and hopefully qualify and make homes for themselves.” Veterans Affairs has been aggressive in reaching out to tribal communities over the past several years.

“It’s a program that I haven’t used as much as I want, so (a few) years ago I partnered with the VA Office of Tribal and Government Relations,” said Frueh, who pointed out that over the last three years the VA has guaranteed or loaned more than \$20 million to Native American veterans living on tribal reservations. “Since then we’ve made a concerted effort to reach out to every single tribe with federal trust land. My goal is to have an MOU with every one of the 567 federally recognized tribes so veterans no matter where they live, or where they’re from, can access and keep their benefits to buy a home,” he said.

“They should have been doing this decades ago,” said Espinosa, who is now the Director of the Natural Resource Department, Law Enforcement Branch at Taos. “They should have been coming to tribal governments, to reservations, to Indian country.” On the same day as the MOU signing, the pueblo held a groundbreaking for the Taos Pueblo Veterans Memorial that will be located at the pueblo entrance off 100 Veterans Highway. “I think it’s a necessity that should be done here at Taos Pueblo, because people take for granted to live free,” Espinosa said.”



HUD-VASH on Tribal Lands Pilot Program



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-5000

PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING

JUL 24 2015

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing today to update you on the status of the Tribal HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) demonstration program.

Implementing this demonstration program in Indian Country is a top priority for the Obama Administration. HUD staff have been working diligently with officials from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to develop a program that will bring health care, supportive services, and housing assistance to Native American veterans in tribal communities. This innovative demonstration program will be the first of its kind in Indian Country, bringing VA case management together with housing assistance to Native American veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

HUD set aside \$4 million from the fiscal year 2015 budget for the Tribal HUD-VASH demonstration program, which will fund approximately 600 housing vouchers.

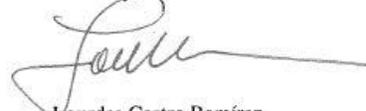
HUD understands that there is strong interest in this program, and an urgent need for it to begin. Tribes advocated for this program, and have been waiting for it for some time. HUD is aware of the great need for the services and assistance it provides, and for the benefits it will bring to Native veterans, many of whom do not currently have targeted case management from the VA, and are now enduring overcrowded conditions, substandard housing, or have no permanent home.

On January 26, 2015, HUD issued a "Dear Tribal Leader" letter to tribal leaders, tribal organizations, and housing directors soliciting comments on the Tribal HUD-VASH demonstration program. HUD also held a national listening session at the National American Indian Housing Council's Legislative Conference held on February 2, 2015, followed by a series of regional listening sessions. HUD is considering the tribal comments as the notice is being developed.

The *Federal Register* notice implementing Tribal HUD-VASH is now expected to be issued by September 30, 2015. Tribal leaders and tribal housing officials will be kept informed of this demonstration program's implementation, progress, and outcomes.

Thank you for your continued support of and participation with HUD's Office of Native American Programs to bring housing assistance to low-income tribal members. Your involvement helps deliver more effective programs to those in need of adequate, affordable housing. HUD looks forward to bringing the Tribal HUD-VASH demonstration program to Indian Country, and to the positive benefits it will bring to Native American veterans and their families.

Sincerely,



Lourdes Castro Ramirez
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary



Indian Country
TODAY MEDIA NETWORK

VA Brings Veterans' Services Training to Indian Country

Here's an article by Brian Daffron that ran in the [Indian Country Today](#) on August 25, 2015.

“For veterans living in rural areas, getting help for services that range from a medical check-up to psychiatric counseling is difficult. The drive to a major city that has a VA office could take an hour or more. Once a veteran gets to a VA hospital, the wait could take even longer. These factors—combined with other needs such as benefits applications—can be discouraging for both veterans and family members.

Although many Native veterans have issues in common with rural American veterans of other ethnicities, the issues can be even more severe. Drive times to VA clinics may be several hours from a reservation, causing a potential for neglecting chronic health conditions. Seeking opportunities such as applying for benefits online also may not be an option in some tribal communities. Furthermore, language and cultural barriers may exist, making Native veterans feel uncomfortable.

It is for reasons such as this that the VA created the Office of Tribal Government Relations four years ago, in January 2011.

“The VA recognizes that one of the best ways to really understand the needs and priorities of veterans living in Indian country is to recognize the unique relationship that tribes have with the United States,” said Stephanie Birdwell, the director of the OTGR and an enrolled member of Cherokee Nation.

The creation of this federal office was based in part on VA offices already in place that dealt with state veteran agencies and international veteran agencies. The focus of this particular office, said Birdwell, “is to build relationships with tribal leaders, establish a formal tribal consultation policy so the VA doesn’t make decisions or policies about veterans living in tribal communities before we consult with tribes.” Birdwell said that the main issues in which tribal consultation is essential is in regards to care, benefits and economic sustainability.

A year after the office’s inception, OTGR began hosting veterans’ training summits in closer proximity to Indian country. Since 2012, at least 20 have



been held throughout the United States, with the latest one taking place at the Chickasaw Nation’s Riverwind Casino and Hotel Conference Center near Norman, Oklahoma, on July 30-31. Some of the information that attendees can take back to their tribe’s veterans’ affairs offices include changes to laws such as the Veterans Choice Act and information on education, home loans, pensions, monetary compensation, and military cemetery grants. In addition, there is also information on helping veterans with less than an honorable discharge to apply for a service upgrade to make them eligible for veteran benefits.

Birdwell said these trainings bring elected tribal officials as well as tribal, state and federal employees “all in one place to really exchange information and provide training so that information can be disseminated. People can really put faces with names and build relationships to really advance the efforts of serving the needs of our vets and their families.”

For Birdwell, the impact that she sees the OTGR having is that it is due, in part, to the voices of tribal leaders being heard by the federal government. In the past, the relationships that tribes had with the VA varied across the country from region to region, what she referred to as “pockets of strength or excellence.” Since 2011, the OTGR goal has been consistency.

“The biggest impact has been more of a consistent recognition, understanding and appreciation,” said Birdwell. “Wherever you go—if you’re going to Washington state, the southwest, east coast or Oklahoma—when it comes to tribal leaders reaching out to VA leadership, you are going to get a consistent response.”

Some of the future plans of the federal office include the increase of seeing more tribal nations create their own offices or departments for veterans’ affairs, as well as helping to implement the “MyVA” procedures that are being implemented throughout the VA system.

Upcoming OTGR regional summits include one currently running through August 22 at Camp Chaparral, Toppenish, Washington and September 22-24 in Salem, Oregon. Additional information on OTGR can also be found on their [website](#).”



VA/Tribal Health/IHS Reimbursement Program Reimburses almost \$26 Million to IHS and Tribal Health Programs

Tribal health clinics interested in entering into a Reimbursement Agreement with VA for serving veterans should send an initial note of interest to:
tribal.agreements@va.gov

CBO Purchased Care, Program Oversight and Informatics
Department of Informatics (10N3B)

Indian Health / Tribal Health Program

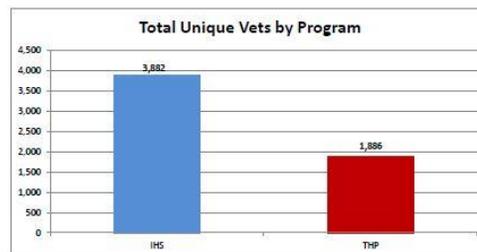
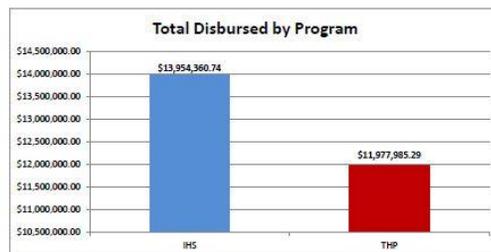
Transaction through: 6/30/2015
Last Updated: 8/31/2015
Extracted by: Jenaya Lee

Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to capture the total amount disbursed, total unique Veterans, total billed charge, total VA amount Paid, and total number of claims using the **Central Fee Files & Fee Basis Claims System (FBCS)** for the Indian Health & Tribal Health Program

National Data

Total Disbursement for entire IHS/THP Program - Agmt Date to FYTD	Total Disbursement by Program - Agmt Date to FYTD			Total Unique Veterans for entire IHS/THP Program - Agmt Date to FYTD
\$25,932,346.03	Program	Total Disbursed	Total Unique Vets	5,717
	IHS	\$13,954,360.74	3,882	
	THP	\$11,977,985.29	1,886	
Total Disbursement - Out of System Ret repayments (only)	Total Disbursement of Out of System Ret repayments (only) - payments are included in above totals			Total Unique Veterans - Out of System Ret repayments (only)
\$7,535.00	Program	Total Disbursed	Total Unique Vets	258
	IHS	\$3,228.00	175	
	THP	\$4,307.00	83	



VA Releases New Report: Native American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans – 2013 American Community Survey

This report uses data from the 2013 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample to report data concerning the demographics, socioeconomic status, and health characteristics of AIAN Servicemembers and Veterans.

It can be found on the VA website [HERE](#).

<http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/AIANReport2015.pdf>

VA and Tribes Host Inter-tribal Veteran Stand Down

VA and Tribal Nations Join Forces to Aid Homeless Veterans



A Veteran receiving a blood pressure check at one of the Tribal Blood Pressure stations

By Ozzie Garza

They came here in droves, dozens of them, from under bridges, cardboard makeshift shacks, and from homeless shelters. Others came in busses and some were dropped off by Good Samaritans wanting to help. Their destination was the Iscani Gym in Anadarko, Okla. this past Nov. 7.

Despite their differences in age and background they all have something in common. All are military Veterans who served their country honorably. They also are homeless.

To help these patriots and their families, eight tribal nations along with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hosted an inter-tribal Veterans Stand Down, a program where an array of services are brought to one location making them more accessible to homeless Veterans.

The Stand Down for homeless veterans program is modeled after

the Stand Down concept used during the Vietnam War to provide a safe retreat for units returning from combat operations. At secure base camp areas, troops were able to take care of personal hygiene, get clean uniforms, enjoy warm meals, receive medical and dental care, mail and receive letters, and enjoy the camaraderie of friends in a safe environment. Stand Down afforded battle-weary soldiers the opportunity to renew their spirit, health and overall sense of well-being.

To have a successful Stand Down and achieve the program's objectives requires a wide range of support services. Those services were provided by eight tribal nations: Delaware Nation of Oklahoma, Caddo Nation of Oklahoma, Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma, Comanche Nation, Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, Ft. Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, and the Cheyenne and

Arapaho Tribes, in collaboration with the VA's Office of Tribal Government Relations and the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center. They all came together to serve the Native American homeless Veteran population in and around the Anadarko Indian Community.

More than 160 Veterans and widows were treated to a myriad of services that included health care, mental health treatment, housing, vocational rehabilitation, flu shots, job and employment counseling. In addition, offices such as Office of Special Trustee and the Bureau of Indian Affairs CFR Court provided information on services available to tribal members.

A half dozen barbers were on hand to provide free haircuts, while other volunteers distributed winter clothes to help these Veterans prepare for the cold weather. Many thanks was given to the Cheyenne



VA and Tribes Host Inter-tribal Veteran Stand Down

and Arapaho tribes, who catered the hot meal, and the Kiowa War Mothers Society provided boxed thanksgiving luncheons for the Veterans to take with them.

The eight tribes came together in this joint effort that was spearheaded by Mary Culley, VA's tribal government relations specialist for the Southern Plains and Eastern Region and Lottie Jay, Delaware Nation Housing Director.

"The biggest purpose targeting Native American Veterans in this area is to get a projected head count of homeless Veterans in this very rural part of Oklahoma. "Generally, as Indian people, we don't self-identify with the term homeless. In our culture we support our families and take them in, provide them an extra bed, or a couch to sleep on, so by not identifying with that term, we really don't have a true account of numbers where our homeless Indian Veteran population is concerned," said Culley. "By collaborating with the tribes we are starting to initiate demographics of our Veterans. We are also using this opportunity to teach tribal staff, how to best service their tribal Veteran population, by also teaching them and helping them understand VA services and processes. This event was a collaboration of eight different tribes coming together to help our Veterans which has never been done before in this region and it was a very successful event. All of the tribes and agencies who worked on this event did an outstanding job"

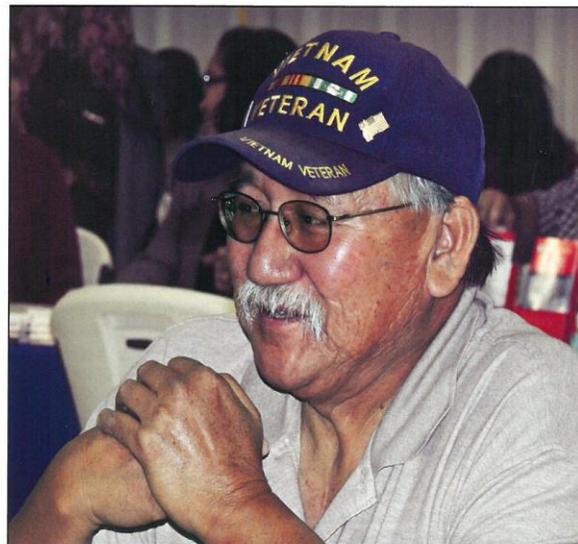
Culley pointed out the support and encouragement provided by the tribal leadership, who all wholeheartedly embraced the event, has more than opened the doors of collaboration between the VA and tribal nations within the State of Oklahoma.

Also embracing the Stand Down were the Veterans and their families as evidenced by the smiles on their faces.

As one Veteran put it, "I could feel the love and appreciation that was on display today, "A big thank you to all!"



Cheyenne and Arapaho Lt Governor Cornell Sankey, Cheyenne and Arapaho Governor Eddie Hamilton, VA' OTGR Mary Culley, Delaware Nation President Clifford Peacock, and Delaware Nation Vice President C.J. Watkins take time out to pose for a group photo. Several Tribal Leaders were in attendance and talked with several Veterans and widows."



A local Veteran meets and talks with other Veterans at the Stand Down after going through and receiving services.



Operation Freedom Bird

See this [LINK](#) to find out more about Operation Freedom Bird.

Operation Freedom Bird, is a non-profit, providing a unique Healing Journey & therapeutic program aimed at helping combat veterans, from all wars, continue the process to heal from their symptoms of PTSD and unresolved grief/loss. The four day journey in DC provides an opportunity to share their experiences, and pay tribute to their fallen comrades-in-arms in a supportive environment of fellow Veterans and concerned counselors. Each year, since 1988, approximately 50 veterans have been selected to participate in a four-day Healing Journey. Participants are selected by community counselors throughout Arizona, some of whom also accompany the veterans on the journey. Combat Vets may also apply to participate themselves. In addition to visiting the National Mall War Memorials, the program itinerary includes a trip to Arlington National Cemetery, the Iwo Jima Memorial, and the 9-11 Memorial located at the Pentagon.

Operation Freedom Bird (OFB) underwrites all meals, lodging, and ground transportation expenses for the veterans and counselors. The veteran is asked to provide \$100.00 toward the expenses of their Healing Journey, this to create greater commitment overall. *The OFB Board and Staff are all volunteer.* Southwest Airlines has generously provided air transportation since 1999. As citizens, Operation Freedom Bird provides us a way to recognize and give gratitude to these combat veterans by acknowledging them for their service and personal sacrifice, and finally, welcoming them home. They have given their all for us, and all we ask is that you thank them with your support.

How to participate: We serve combat veterans from all conflicts. Visit our website: www.operationfreedombird.org and click on the "Provider Information" link to understand all of the needed criteria and then fill out the form to start the process. All applicants are reviewed for readiness and suitability to participate. Combat vets maybe recommended by their provider or inquire themselves. Operation Freedom Bird is an Arizona IRS 501(C)(3) non-profit status corporation.

This November, fifty veterans will fly, courtesy of Southwest Airlines, to our nation's Capitol, and over four days, have an opportunity to share their experiences, and pay tribute to their fallen comrades-in-arms in a supportive environment of fellow Veterans and concerned counselors. If you know of a combat veteran who struggles with PTSD, grief/loss, etc., and are in therapy, and could benefit from this program, please tell them about Operation Freedom Bird. Applications are currently being accepted for the 2015 trip. A combat vet may be recommended by their medical/behavioral provider or inquire directly themselves. The out of pocket cost for a veteran is \$100. For more information, please go to: <http://www.operationfreedombird.org/>



Home Depot Foundation Seeks Proposals for Veteran Housing Projects in Rural Areas

The Home Depot Foundation Seeks Proposals for Veteran Housing Projects in Rural Areas -- Deadline to submit concept paper is **October 30, 2015**

August 11, 2015 - The Home Depot Foundation (THDF) is seeking opportunities to support veteran housing projects in rural areas. Projects may be new construction or rehab, with priority given to renovation and rehab projects, and must be either in progress or scheduled to commence within the next 12 months. The Home Depot Foundation anticipates funding several projects, with awards ranging from \$25,000 to \$40,000. The bricks-and-mortar projects can provide both temporary and permanent housing for veterans, depending on the local needs of the community. Fundable projects include: support for veteran homeowners with repair and rehab needs; accessibility modifications on caregiver homes housing veterans; housing homeless veterans; veteran homeownership programs; and programs that increase the availability of affordable rental housing for veterans.

Organizations interested in applying to this program are asked to submit a Concept Paper on the approved Concept Paper Template by October 30, 2015, at 5 p.m. ET. This concept paper should be no longer than three pages. Also, before working on the concept paper, please complete the quick eligibility quiz to see if you are eligible for this grant. Please access a downloadable copy of both documents at the links below.

ELIGIBILITY. The applicant must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, tribally designated housing entity (TDHE), or housing authority acting as a nonprofit, that serves veterans at or below 80% of area median income. **RURAL SERVICE AREA.** The applicant must apply to support programs working in nonmetropolitan areas or in counties that meet the USDA definition of rural for housing (Sec. 520 of the Housing Act of 1949). Please check the USDA Property Eligibility Site, <http://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov>, to determine rural eligibility.

[Link here for the eligibility quiz.](#) [Link here for the eligibility quiz.](#) [Link here for the concept paper template.](#) Upon review by The Home Depot Foundation and Housing Assistance Council, selected organizations will be invited to submit full proposals online. Full proposals will not be accepted without a preliminary approval by The Home Depot Foundation. The applicant must be a nonprofit organization, tribally designated housing entity (TDHE), or housing authority acting as a nonprofit, that serves veterans at or below 80% of area median income.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PROGRAM, CONTACT: [Janice Clark](mailto:janice@ruralhome.org), (janice@ruralhome.org) Program Coordinator, Housing Assistance Council or [Shonterria Charleston](mailto:shonterria@ruralhome.org) (shonterria@ruralhome.org), Housing Specialist, Housing Assistance Council



OTGR Western Region

(AK; CA; ID; NV; OR; WA)

Tribe Hosts Third Native Veterans Summit

Here's an article written by Dean Rhodes and which ran in [Smoke Signals](#) on July 14, 2015

“The ultimate goal of the Native Veterans Summit, which was held for the third consecutive year on Friday and Saturday, July 10-11, at Uyxat Powwow Grounds as a complement to the Marcellus Norwest Memorial Veterans Powwow, is to provide resources, benefits coordination, health care and opportunities for healing and networking for veterans. To help in that effort, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde held a pre-summit workshop on Thursday, July 9, in the Tribal Community Center to brief other Pacific Northwest Tribes on its agreement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that allows it to serve Native veterans through the Tribal health clinic.

Health care for Native veterans living in rural areas or in areas of the country without a Veterans Affairs hospital is problematic at best. Native veterans are three times more likely to live in highly rural areas than non-Native veterans, and aging Native veterans can find it difficult to travel long distances to reach a Veterans Affairs health care facility. By allowing Tribal clinics to provide health care to Native veterans, as well as be reimbursed for that care through the Department of Veterans Affairs, Tribes can help Native veterans living in rural areas who cannot access or travel to the Veterans Affairs facilities in Portland and the Tribes can save limited Indian Health Service funding to care for other members.

Mark Johnston, former head of the Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center and current deputy executive director of the Coquille Tribe, returned to discuss veterans' health care. “Negotiating the MOU was real simple,” Johnston told an audience of about 30 people. “The harder part is getting Native veterans signed up with the VA.” Johnston said the Department of Veterans Affairs protected sovereign immunity in negotiating the memorandum of understanding and reimburses Tribes for Native veterans' health care at a high rate. “Native veterans don't have to leave the Reservation,” Johnston said. “They can see the providers they are used to seeing.” “The big question,” Johnston said, “is where do Oregon Tribes go from here?” He said he would like to see the process of qualifying Native veterans for VA-approved health care streamlined, possibly allowing Tribes to decide who is eligible for VA-reimbursable care. Also,



Johnston said Veterans Affairs needs to help Tribes figure out how to serve non-Native veterans who live in the community as either spouses or residents, but also face the same logistical problems of accessing health care. “I think that is one of the next logical steps that will require talking to legislators,” Johnston said. In addition, Johnston said Tribes will need to talk to their federal representatives about more funding for the VA to treat veterans – Native and nonNative alike. Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno said the idea of the Tribal health clinic serving Native veterans was inspired by the Grand Ronde Tribes’ desire to serve its World War II veterans, who were unable or unwilling to make the journey to Portland.

Leno said the MOU saves the Tribe Indian Health Service funds, which are then used to serve the rest of the membership. “We are still working on being able to see any veteran,” Leno said. Terry Bentley, Western Region Tribal Government Relations specialist with the Department of Veterans Affairs, said the VA currently has 79 reimbursement agreements with Tribes nationwide that reimburse direct care services for VA enrolled and eligible Native veterans. She added that the agreements have reimbursed more than \$22.6 million to Tribes for the care of more than 5,400 Native veterans. Bentley distributed a packet to help any interested Tribe contact the VA about establishing a memorandum of understanding regarding Native veterans’ health care.

The workshop also was attended by Social Services Manager David Fullerton, who moderated the event, and General Manager Dawn Doar. The workshop was followed by a reception and dinner at the Powwow Grounds and cultural sharing at achaf-hammi, the Tribal plankhouse.

Summit begins The official summit kicked off a little after 9 a.m. Friday at the Powwow Grounds with the theme of “Honoring Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans,” warriors of America’s two most recent conflicts. The Grand Ronde Honor Guard posted the colors and included Tribal Elders Alton Butler (eagle staff), Raymond Petite (Grand Ronde flag) and Brenda Tuomi (U.S. flag) as Grand Ronde drummers Bobby Mercier, Brian Krehbiel and Travis Stewart sang. Elder Edmund Bull (Little Pine First Nation) gave the blessing and Grand Ronde Tribal Council member Jon A. George gave the invocation.

Morning speakers introduced by master of ceremonies and Navy veteran Nick Sixkiller included a welcome from Grand Ronde Tribal Chairman Reyn Leno, a Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War era, as well as speeches from JoAnne Krumberger, director of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Portland Health Care System, and Terry Bentley (Karuk), Tribal Government Relations Specialist for the Western Region with the Department of Veterans Affairs.



Leno introduced Tribal Council members in attendance – George, Vice Chair Jack Giffen Jr., Tonya Gleason-Shepek and Ed Pearsall. He then complimented Tribal staff on the new arbor, which he said was one of the few things that all nine members of Tribal Council agreed on. “When all nine members of Tribal Council agree on something, you might want to take action and do it,” Leno said. “It’s a beautiful arbor.” Leno said the summit and powwow are his favorite events of the year because they recognize veterans.

“We wouldn’t get to do things like this if it wasn’t for our veterans,” Leno said. “I’ve always said if you can just help one veteran we’re successful. Numbers never bothered me. If you can help one veteran step up, because veterans are really tough, and go get their services and benefits.” Leno also acknowledged his cousin, Thomas Elery Leno, who walked on Dec. 31, 2014, and became a statistic of Agent Orange. “It’s important that we get veterans to use their benefits, get their families to get them to use their benefits,” he said.

The Native Wellness Institute, based in Gresham, Ore., started the Veterans Summit in 2013 after receiving calls and messages from veterans or their family members seeking help for their healing and well-being, and the Grand Ronde Tribe has volunteered to host the event each year.

Krumberger, who is responsible for the health care of more than 97,000 veterans as director of the Portland Veterans Affairs facility, said that she would be willing to explain the new Choice Act, which allows enrolled veterans to access eligible non-VA health care entities if they cannot obtain an appointment within 30 days or live more than 40 miles away from a VA facility. The act was passed by Congress in reaction to last year’s controversy regarding health care access delays at VA facilities nationwide.

Native Wellness Institute Board of Directors member Charles Tail Feathers (Cree/Blackfeet) gave a welcome for the organization and explained why attendees were at the summit. “Benefits for veterans is why we are here,” Tail Feathers said, adding that 80 percent of Native veterans do not receive their benefits from Veterans Affairs. “We’re tired of fighting this issue ... let’s make some noise. Our goal is 0 percent. We want all of you to be served.”

As in previous summits, a somber ceremony to honor and remember those warriors still held captive or missing in action was read by Linda Woods (Ojibwe), an Air Force veteran. She then returned to talk about warrior women and her experiences serving in the military in the 1960s. After a lunch and fun run/walk up to Fort Yamhill State Park, the summit returned in the afternoon with Yamhill County Veterans Service Officer Jerry Wilson talking about Agent Orange, the defoliant used by the U.S. military during the Vietnam War that caused increased rates of cancer and other diseases among veterans who were exposed to it. Wilson said that Agent Orange affected



military personnel who served in both Korea and Vietnam and that Veterans Affairs has a list of 15 presumptive diseases caused by the chemical. He said that veterans who can prove they have one of those diseases and are “brown water” veterans of Vietnam can receive benefits for Agent Orange exposure. “It’s one of the easiest disabilities to claim if you have the evidence,” Wilson said.

He added that diabetes type II and prostate cancer are the most frequent disease claims by veterans exposed to Agent Orange. Army veteran Rebecca Stone (Chickasaw), who is a certified suicide negotiator, discussed suicide prevention techniques for veterans and suggested any veteran contemplating taking their own life seek out an Elder or medicine man to talk to. “By asking for help, you are making yourself and your family stronger,” she said.

Tail Feathers gifted Stone a Pendleton blanket for her trip out to Oregon from Maryland to make her presentation. Meanwhile at the Grand Ronde Rodeo Grounds, John Spence (Gros Ventre/Sioux) offered equine therapy for veterans dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder and other health issues. “With Native American veterans it is especially helpful to relate the spiritual nature of horses with a veteran’s natural and intuitive beliefs and Tribal identity,” Spence said in the summit’s information packet. “This knowledge has often been neglected or lost due to generational oppression, poverty, boarding schools, termination, family dysfunction, foster or adoptive placements, and wartime experiences of many veterans.”

Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Center employees staffed tables offering veterans blood pressure, dental and blood sugar checks. Drivers were available to take veterans to the health clinic upon referral from staff. Staff also had information about the Oregon Health Plan for veterans. Information booths surrounding the outer edge of the arbor included the Yamhill County Veterans Service, U.S. Department of Justice, National Guard, Federal Bureau of Prisons, WorkSource Oregon and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Charles Nelson of Lexington, Ore., displayed his collection of World War II artifacts, which included a collection of dog tags, arm bands from American and German military personnel, and German knives, bayonets and swords. Sharing circles and Healing Village activities concluded the afternoon before the summit segued into the first evening of the Veterans Powwow and a 6 p.m. dedication ceremony for the new arbor. The summit continued on Saturday morning with a general session called “Let Your Voice Be Heard” and an honoring ceremony supervised by Tail Feathers before the summit officially concluded and the Veterans Powwow took over the Powwow Grounds for Saturday afternoon and evening grand entries.

Like in previous summits, all meals were provided by the Tribe. Tribal Social Services Manager David Fullerton coordinated this year’s summit in cooperation with other Tribal programs, the Native Wellness Institute, the Native American Rehabilitation Association, the Department of Veterans Affairs, local veterans and Yamhill County representatives.”



1ST INDIGENOUS WOMEN VETERANS NATIONAL HEALING CIRCLE

September 24-27 2015 Ojai CA



Travel stipends,
Child care stipends
Food and lodging provided

Sweat Lodge
Talking Circle

Body Work
Equine Therapy
Elders Council

Veteran Benefits Information
Information on upgrading discharges
(Bad Paper)

This is an invitation to be part of the first Indigenous women vets' national healing circle. We will invite 13 women to participate in a healing gathering to heal the wounds of military service.

Please visit our website below for information on

How to apply and complete an application for consideration. There are no restrictions on type of discharge and any veterans from any era may apply.

Applications for registration will begin in June 2015. Please visit our website below for additional information.

If you have any further questions, please email or call the organizer listed below.

Your financial support is greatly appreciated.

For more information contact: Lola Mondragon
(408) 621-8449 Lolasisle@hotmail.com

Like us Facebook

Please consider making a donation at our website or at our Go Fund Me page at: www.gofundme.com/M9XBBS

Your generous donations are appreciated



www.turtlewomenrising.com P.O Box 537 Merced Ca 95341

12th Annual
Celebration
★ ★ ★ ★ OF ★ ★ ★ ★
HONOR

Presented by Chinook Winds Casino Resort

An event to honor Active Duty
Personnel and Military Veterans
September 24-27, 2015

Field of Honor
Cost of Freedom Tribute

Featuring the
Oregon Traveling Memorial Wall

Veterans and Active Duty Personnel Receive
a Free Buffet Thursday September 24, 2015

For more details:
chinookwindscasino.com or call Bill John
at 1-888-244-6665 ext. 5815





OTGR Southwest Region

(AZ; CO; NM; UT)



O'ODHAM VETERANS CELEBRATION SAVE THE DATE

August 15, 2015

Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community
Salt River Community Building
1880 N. Longmore Rd. Scottsdale, AZ 85256
Contact Pacer at 480-362-7490 or pacer.reina@srpmic-nsn.gov

August 29, 2015

White Mountain Apache
312 N Chief Avenue
Whiteriver, AZ 85941
Contact Dennis at 928-338-6090 / denisfaden@wmat.us

September 12, 2015

Gila River Indian Community
Blackwater District 1/ Multi-Purpose Bldg.
15747 N. Shegoi Road, Coolidge AZ 85128
Contact Doug at 602-327-5973 / djuan-vsv@gmail.com

September 26, 2015

Tohono Odham Nation
Desert Diamond Casino
1100 W Pima Mine Rd, Sahuarita, AZ
Contact Ron at 520-383-1900/ronald.homewytewa@tonation-nsn.gov

October 10, 2015

Solomon, AZ
Lopez—Hernandez American Legion Post #95
2256 S. 3rd Ave Solomon, AZ 85551
Contact Hal at 928-235-1980/halherbert8@gmail.com
Ray at 928-965-0785/reajpac@hotmail.com



Conference Contacts

Marvin Trujillo, Jr.
01twineagle@gmail.com
505-366-1560

Ramus Suina
rsuina47@gmail.com
505-920-5047

Patty Jojola
pattyjojola@yahoo.com
505-280-7013

The mission of the **Southwest Native American Veteran's Association, Inc.** and the **Pueblo of Isleta Veteran's Association** is to provide a conference that is beneficial to Native American Veteran's, their families and tribal leaders.

Congressional leaders, as well as speakers from a variety of agencies and all branches of the military, have been invited to share valuable information that will enhance the relationship between the Veterans Administration and Indian Country by increasing access to VA benefits and strengthening awareness of VA services to the Native Communities.

Please join us, September 20-22, 2015, at the 2nd Annual Southwest Veteran's Regional Conference at our host hotel, the Isleta Casino and Resort in Isleta Pueblo located minutes south of Albuquerque, NM. The conference rate for the room is \$83 + tax per night. Make your reservations by calling (877)747-5382 or 505-848-1999. Use group code **SNA0915**.

Registration \$25 per Veteran or \$30 per Veteran with Guest

Avoid the long lines of onsite registration. Pre-register by September 14, 2015 and your badge and conference materials will be ready when you arrive. Print an extra copy of this form to register your spouse or guest. There are three ways to pre-register:

U.S. Mail: Mail completed registration form along with payment of check or money order payable to SWNAVA, PO Box 425, Isleta, NM 87022

Online: www.swnava.org

On-Site Registration: Check, Cash, or Credit Card payments accepted.

Full Name: _____ Veteran: Yes No
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Tribal Affiliation: _____
 Email: _____

Veteran Only Veteran with Guest Guest Name: _____

Branch of Service: US Army US Air Force US Coast Guard
 US Marine Corp National Guard US Navy

Served In: WW II Korean War Vietnam War
 Operation Desert Storm/Shield Operation Enduring Freedom Operation Iraqi Freedom



EXHIBIT SPACE APPLICATION

Package includes one six-foot draped table, two chairs and lunch for two days
Application and fees must be received by: **September 14, 2015**

Company / Organization

Company _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone _____ Alternate phone _____

Representatives (limit two)

1. Name: _____
 Email: _____
 Branch: US Army US Marine Corp
 US Navy US Air Force
 National Guard Coast Guard

Served: WWII Desert Shield/Storm
 Vietnam War Op. Enduring Freedom
 Korean War Op. Iraqi Freedom

2. Name: _____
 Email: _____
 Branch: US Army US Marine Corp
 US Navy US Air Force
 National Guard Coast Guard

Served: WWII Desert Shield/Storm
 Vietnam War Op. Enduring Freedom
 Korean War Op. Iraqi Freedom

Exhibitor Schedule

Sept 21	7am-8am	Exhibitor Move-in
Sept 21 & 22	8am-5pm	Exhibit Open
Sept 22	8am-3am	Exhibit Open
	3pm-4pm	Exhibitor Move-out

Exhibitor Type & Fees

Tribal & Charitable Organizations\$100

Corporations, Casinos,
Government Agencies\$230

Arts & Crafts\$130

Total Amount Due: \$ _____

Fifty percent non-refundable deposit is due at the time application is submitted; balance due prior to set-up.

Payment Method

Mail to:
 Pueblo of Isleta – Treasurer’s Office
 RE: 2015 Veterans Conference
 PO Box 1290
 Pueblo of Isleta, NM 87022

Hand-Deliver to:
 Pueblo of Isleta – Treasurer’s Office
 3950 State Road Hwy 47 SW
 Albuquerque, NM 87105
Exit 213 (Broadway Exit), South on Hwy 47, Pass the Isleta Resort & Casino, Tribal Services Complex is on the East side of highway

Contact Information

Petra Solimon 505-600-5759
petrasolimon@gmail.com

Marvin Trujillo 505-366-1560
01twineagle@gmail.com

Information regarding hotel, agenda, etc., can be found at www.swnava.org




SAVE THE DATE
VETERANS BANQUET
NOVEMBER 10, 2015—6:00 P.M.

VETERANS DAY OBSERVANCE AND PARADE
NOVEMBER 11, 2015 –9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

HOPI VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER
KYKOTSMOVI, ARIZONA
AZ HIGHWAY 264 MILE POST 375

SCHOOL AND TRIBAL ROYALTY
AND
MILITARY & VETERAN COLOR GUARDS WELCOME!

**VETERANS, MILITARY AND THE PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO COME JOIN US
AT THIS YEAR'S EVENTS . FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO VOLUNTEER
YOUR SERVICES PLEASE CONTACT THE HOPI VETERANS SERVICES AT
(928) 734-3461 OR 3462. E-MAIL : ETalas@hopi.nsn.us.**





**Southwest Native American Veterans Association
2015 Golf Tournament**



*Isleta Eagle Golf Course
11000 Broadway SE
Albuquerque, NM
Phone: 505-848-1900*

*September 20, 2015
8:00 – 2:00*

*Cost: \$125 per player
Registration: 7AM
125 players*

*Enjoy a complete program of
18 holes of golf
Golf cart included
Goody Bag for each player
Exciting awards banquet*

*Contests/Challenges:
Longest Drive
Closest to the Pin
Long Putt*

Sponsorships:
Gold Sponsor
\$1,500
Silver Sponsor
\$1,000
Bronze Sponsor
\$500
Tee Sign Sponsor
\$250



4 Person Scramble

This year's event will be held at the well-manicured Isleta Eagle Golf Course in Isleta, NM

Sunday, September 20, 2015

***Registration begins at 7:00 am
with a shot-gun start at 8:00 am***

Golf attire is required No steel spikes are allowed on the course

Cost of entry includes:

Entry into all events, 18 holes of golf, riding cart, and range balls

The golf tournament will conclude in the banquet room with an awards presentation and raffle

Assist us to properly plan for this event, please pre-register by calling, emailing, or online.

Call: 505-280-7013

Email: pattyjoia@yahoo.com

On-Line: www.swnava.com

Please join in honoring all veterans, our Warriors who have served us bravely in the United States Armed Services to preserve and protect our freedoms and liberties they deserve our utmost praise.

Your contributions will go directly towards providing services to all Veterans whose needs far exceed the capacity of any single stand-alone program. Your support will contribute to the well-being of these Veterans as they leave the military, return to their communities seek health care, and employment opportunities.

A day of golf with these heroes will be fun and exciting!

**NAVY 240TH BIRTHDAY
BALL**

*Celebrating the US Navy's 240th Birthday
Honoring 100 Years Reserve*

*Entertainment by DJ Ray Mar
Raffle and Door Prizes
Formal Wear-Dress Blues
Mini Medals*

SOCIAL HOUR AT 5:30P.M. DINNER AT 8:30P.M.



10.10.15

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/U.S.NAVYBIRTHDAYBALLPHOENIX2014
WWW.PHOENIXNAVYBALL.COM

CAPT. CAROL CULBERTSON, USN RET. (602) 799-9480
CLAUDEHC@YAHOO.COM

MICHELLE BUCHANAN (951) 746-8765
AUSNBALL@OUTLOOK.COM

ALL TICKET PRICES \$65


**ARIZONA GRAND
RESORT & SPA**
8000 ARIZONA GRAND PKWY
PHOENIX, AZ 85044

OTGR Central Region

(IA; MI; MN; MT; ND; NE; SD; WI; WY)

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Michigan State University named 'Veteran Friendly' School

Michigan State University has earned gold status in the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency's [Veteran-Friendly School](#) program. For the 2015 rankings, 55 schools earned either bronze-, silver- or gold-level status as determined by the number of services they offer to student veterans. "Nearly half of this year's veteran-friendly schools achieved a gold-level designation, which is a huge achievement," said Jeff Barnes, MVAA director. "Whether schools offer an active student veterans club, on-campus support staff, accelerated learning programs for military experience or all of the above and more, veterans attending these institutions have a variety of services and resources available to them as they begin the next chapter of their lives."

The veteran-friendly designation is available to any institution of higher learning eligible to receive veteran education benefits, regardless of size, location or program delivery. A new application and review process will be conducted every spring semester. Institutions can apply each year for the same, higher or lower ranking. MSU participates in the [Michigan Veteran Education Initiative](#), an effort to support veterans transitioning to civilian life and to aid in their pursuit of a college education. MSU hired [Sarah Mellon](#) in February to run its Veterans Resource Center.

Wisconsin DVA Hires New Tribal Veterans Outreach Specialist



"Dear Colleagues: I am pleased to announce the selection of Sandra Winneshiek as the new Tribal Veterans Outreach Specialist in the WDVA Outreach Section effective Monday, July 27, 2015. Sandra brings over 23 years of federal government service working for the Department of Veterans Affairs in various programs and services supporting our veterans and their families. For the past two years Sandra has been employed as the Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Veterans Service Officer providing services and information. Sandra will be a great asset to the Outreach Team and provide appropriate support and outreach services to the 11 Tribal Nations located in Wisconsin. Sandra's Office will be located in Tomah with more information to follow once she is officially on board.

Kenneth G. Grant, Administrator – Division of Veteran Services, Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, 608/267-7207, 608/669-5693 (cell), Ken.grant@dva.wisconsin.gov "

Veterans Information Session



- WHAT:** Veterans' Information and Resource Event
WHEN: September 23, 2015 from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM
WHERE: 1308 East Franklin Ave., Mpls. MN. 55404
Rear Entrance
WHO: Veterans, Family, Caregivers, all are welcome

VETERAN'S RESOURCES AVAILABLE:

- ▶ Employment Specialist (Veterans & Vocational Rehabilitation Program): Jewish Family & Children's Service of Minnesota
- ▶ Hennepin County Veterans' Services
- ▶ Minneapolis Police Department
- ▶ Minnesota Department of Veterans' Affairs
- ▶ Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development
- ▶ Native American Community Clinic
- ▶ Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity: Veteran Outreach Coordinator
- ▶ Veterans Outreach: St. Stephen's Human Services
- ▶ US Department of Veteran Affairs: Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Division (28)

URBAN TRIBAL REPRESENTATIVES:

- ▶ Fond du Lac Band
- ▶ Bois Forte Band
- ▶ Mille Lacs Band
- ▶ Red Lake Nation
- ▶ White Earth Band

Any questions or concerns contact:

Lyle H. Iron Moccasin
952-703-3104
lyle.iron.moccasin@state.mn.us



OTGR Southern Plains Region

(KS; OK; TX)





OKC VA NATIVE AMERICAN VETERAN'S ELDERS COUNCIL
OKC VAHCS WARRIORS GROUP AND IN
COLLABORATION WITH OKC VA AMERICAN INDIAN COUNCIL



Presents

16th ANNUAL VETERANS HONOR DANCE
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2015
12:00 P.M TO 5:00 P.M

VA Medical Center, 921 NE 13th Street Oklahoma City, OK 73104
(Northwest corner of NE 13th and Kelley)

HEAD STAFF---TBD

Opening Ceremony and Grand Entry.....	12:00 pm
Gourd Dancing.....	12:30 pm to 2:30 pm
Dinner.....	2:30 pm to 3:30 pm
Resume Gourd Dancing.....	3:30 pm to 5:00 pm

All Veterans and Princesses invited.

Vendors Welcome

For more information contact:
Candy Fish Klump 405-456-3808 or 405-394-1761
Tempie Nichols-Rood 405-456-1129

Head staff please be available by 11:00 a.m.
Vendors welcome with limited booth space available. Contributions accepted.



FREE for Homeless Veterans **2015 SOONER STAND DOWN**

Thursday, September 10th, 2015

6:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Services and Agencies available to
Veterans beginning at 8:00 AM

**1729 NW 3rd, Oklahoma City, OK
(Corner of NW 3rd and Virginia)**

If you are a homeless Veteran in need, consider attending this program.

*Immediate housing options are available the day of the Stand Down.
Please contact Christine Cleary for more information.*

Other opportunities and assistance are being offered by Veterans Organizations, Federal, State and Local Agencies, Churches, and Volunteers.

Services Offered:

- Emergency Shelter Assistance
- Employment Assistance
- Haircuts/Styling
- Medical Screening & Referrals
- Drug & Alcohol Treatment Information
- Help Accessing VA Benefits and Services
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Legal Assistance
- Dental Screening
- Native American-Specific Services
- Women Veteran-Specific Services

Items Offered:

- Breakfast and Lunch Will Be Served
- Non-Perishable Food Items
- Personal Care Items
- Duffel Bags, Boots



For more information call 405-456-1710 or email christine.cleary@va.gov

OCTOBER 3, 2015

SOMEBODY HAD TO PAY FOR OUR FREEDOM



NATIVE AMERICAN CHURCH
IS PROUD TO SPONSOR A POW WOW
HONORING ALL VETERANS
ALL RACES AND ALL NATIONS INVITED
MARINES ARMY NAVY AIRFORCE RESERVERS



Gourd dancing from 2:00 till 5:00
Super served at 5:30
Grand Entry at 7:00
Intertribal dancing to follow

MC	DON PATTERSON AIR FORCE
HEAD SINGER	KENNETH LOOKING GLASS MARINE
HEAD GOURD DANCER	CHINK WHITECLOUD ARMY
HEAD MANDANCER	JASON BENDER MARINE
HEAD LADY DANCER	ELEANOR MCDANIEL ARMY
ARENA DIRECTOR	SHANDA SILVERHORN MARINE

All proceeds to go to the Native American Church Kickapoo Chapter Inc.

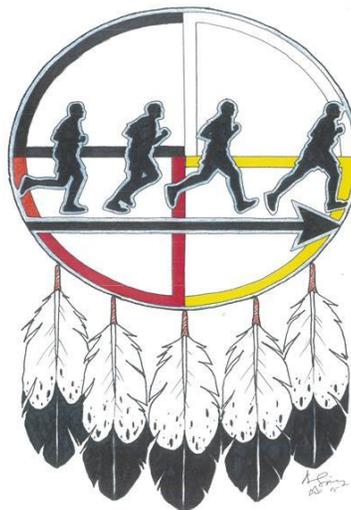
NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THEFTS OR ACCIDENTS No Drugs or Alcohol Allowed on the Premises

**THUNDERBIRD CASINO ADDRESS: 157000 E. STATE HIGHWAY 9, NORMAN OK
VENDERS & QUESTIONS CONTACT JIM JOHNSON (405) 882-7749**



Journey to Wellness

IOWA TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA



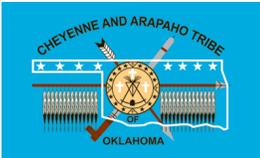
Thursday, September 24, 2015, 10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
Wellness Walk (5K) at 9:00 a.m.

Chena Building * Contact: Terrie Wright 405.547.2473

ACTIVITIES

ON SITE

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door Prizes Every 30 Minutes • Mobile WIC Unit • Health Screenings PFC • Sooner Care Enrollment • OBI Blood Drive • OBI Bone Marrow Registry • ITO Diabetic Education Program • Native American M Power (Moving Parity Onward with Every Resource) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honoring Veteran Warriors Veteran • Veteran Benefits Services • Veteran Enrollment Services • ITO Fire Department • Emergency Response • Smokey the Bear • Behavioral Health • Title VI | <p>LUNCH PROVIDED</p> <p>FREE T-SHIRTS</p> <p>EAGLE SHOW
GREY SNOW
EAGLE HOUSE</p> |
|---|--|--|



A YOU A VETERAN? HOMELESS OR LIVING IN AN OVERCROWDED SITUATION?
THE WIDOW OF A VETERAN?

2015 INTER-TRIBAL VETERAN'S STAND DOWN

HOSTED BY THE CHEYENNE AND ARAPAHO TRIBES
PARTICIPATING TRIBES TO INCLUDE:
KIOWA TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA, DELAWARE NATION, COMANCHE NATION

OCT 16, 2015 | 09:00 - 15:00

CHEYENNE & ARAPAHO TRIBES CLINTON COMMUNITY HALL
CLINTON COMMUNITY CENTER | 2015 DOG PATCH ROAD | CLINTON, OK

BRING THE FOLLOWING TO FILE A CLAIM:

COPY OF YOUR DD FORM 214

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

BANK ACCOUNT AND ROUTING NUMBER

CANCELED CHECK FOR DIRECT DEPOSIT

ANY CIVILIAN MEDICAL RECORDS

ANY DOCTORS STATEMENTS

ANY MILITARY MEDICAL RECORDS

ANY MILITARY SERVICE RECORDS

ANYTHING THAT MIGHT HELP SUPPORT YOUR CLAIM

WIDOWS: COPY OF MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE AND/OR DEATH CERTIFICATE AS NEEDED



Warriors Resource and Benefit Enrollment Fair

Are you a family member of someone who has served in the military?

This is your opportunity to come and ask the experts for help and assistance

Have you ever served in the military?

Holdenville Creek
Indian Community
Center

224 E. Poplar Street
Holdenville, OK

WHEN: Sep 15, 2015

TIME: 0900-1500

IF you want to file a claim: What should you bring with you:

- Copy of your DD Form 214
- Marriage Certificate
- Social Security Numbers for Spouse and Children
- Bank Account Number
- Bank Routing Number
- Canceled Check for Direct Deposit—VA recommends this
- Possibly Any Civilian Medical Records
- Any Doctors Statements
- Any Military Medical Records
- Any Military Service Records
- Anything that might help support your claim

WIDOWS: Copy of Marriage Certificate and/or death certificate-as needed

Contacts:

Galen Greenwalt
Director, Veterans Svc Dept
Seminole Nation
405-234-5242

Rhonda Marshall
Business Office Manager
Wewoka Indian Clinic
405-257-7318

Candy Klumpp, RN
Tribal Liaison. NANN
Oklahoma City VAMC
405-456-3808



U.S. Department of
Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health

