



VETS NEWS

March / April 2010

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Jim Willis, Director

STUDY: CERTAIN BRAIN SIGNALS CAN INDICATE PTSD

There has never been a simple test to diagnose post-traumatic stress, but a group of Minnesota scientists say they have found a high-tech way to identify people who have the disorder -- by studying their brain signals.

The discovery could have huge implications for the way PTSD is diagnosed and treated in the future, says Dr. Apostolos Georgopoulos, who led the research as director of the Brain Sciences Center at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.

PTSD is thought to afflict tens of thousands of combat veterans, but it can be hard to diagnose. It's a collection of psychological symptoms that can, in some cases, be caused by other conditions, such as head injuries or depression. That is one reason that exact numbers are hard to pin down. The VA estimates that anywhere from 11 to 20 percent of returning veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq have PTSD.

But in a study released in January, Dr. Georgopoulos and his research team found what they call the first "biological marker" for PTSD: A distinctive pattern of brain signals that can be detected with a \$2 million device called MEG (magnetoencephalography).

"The brain patterns are very different," said Georgopoulos, who has been studying brains for 30 years.

In men and women with PTSD, the machine found a cluster of abnormal brain signals in an area of the brain involved in memory, he said. Exactly why is still a mystery, but he speculates that it may interfere with the ability to suppress

SEE STUDY ON PAGE 6

VA TO COLLECT GI BILL ADVANCE

WASHINGTON - The United State Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is beginning the process of recovering advance payments made available during the fall 2009 semester to veterans and servicemembers who applied for education benefits.

"The advance payments were a huge success and helped thousands of student veterans during the first days of the historic Post-9/11 GI Bill focus on studies and not their finances," said Keith Wilson, VA's director of education services. "Now, we can get to the business of closing the books on advance payments and focus on supporting veterans for the spring semester."

VA officials will soon begin sending out notification letters explaining the repayment process.

In October, VA instituted an advance-payment process for all eligible students who were enrolled in an institution of higher learning for the fall 2009 term to ensure that all veterans and eligible students were able to focus on their academic studies and not be burdened with financial concerns, officials said. As part of that process, a web portal was established to allow electronic submission for advance payment, and advance payments also were made at VA offices around the country.

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Director's Message

**Jim Willis,
Director,
Oregon
Department
of Veterans'
Affairs**

The 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) is coming home from Iraq in the April-May time frame. Many of you have sent them packages during their deployment and have offered encouragement throughout their tour of duty. I know that they have appreciated your efforts and now as they prepare to rejoin their families, return to their jobs, seek employment or go back to school, they will need your assistance back here at home.

Oregon Partners in Crisis has joined with the Oregon National Guard Reintegration Team for a series of community meetings to plan how we can assist the members of the 41st IBCT after they return from their tour of duty. The meetings will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in each location and are scheduled as follows:

THE 41ST IBCT NEEDS YOUR HELP

- March 16 - Tigard Armory, 6700 SW Oak St.
- March 17 - Springfield Armory, 3100 Pierce Pkwy.
- March 18 - Salem ARC, 3225 State St.
- March 23 - Medford Armory, 1701 S. Pacific Hwy.
- March 24 - Roseburg Armory, 111 NW General Ave.
- March 25 - Bend Armory, 875 SW Simpson Ave.
- March 30 - Ontario Armory, 720 NW 8th Ave.
- March 31 - La Grande Armory, 401 12th St.
- April 1 - Pendleton Armory, 2100 NW 56th Dr.

RSVP is required as seating may be limited. If you are able to attend one of these events and wish to help, please call Élan Lambert, Executive Director of Oregon Partners in Crisis at 503-400-8147 or email elanlambert1@aol.com.

Anyone willing to help is invited with emphasis on the following:

- Veteran or family member of a veteran
- County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO)
- Law enforcement professional
- Clergy or lay minister
- Community mental health director
- Employer
- Mental health or addictions provider
- Housing professional
- Community corrections professional
- Employment professional
- Criminal Justice professional
- Veteran service organization
- Judge or District Attorney
- Crisis or domestic violence intervention specialist
- Public defender or criminal attorney
- Elected officials
- College or university professional
- Specialty court administrator
- Community members
- VA professionals

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STATE SENATE RECOGNIZES WWII MERCHANT MARINERS

The story of the Merchant Mariner is one of patriotism, of youthful exuberance, of dedication to duty, of bravery in the midst of battle and of a nation that denied them for more than four decades after their service.

On February 11, the Oregon State Senate unanimously passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 22, which officially recognizes the service of United States Merchant Marine veterans during World War II.

Members of the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization, many of whom are now in their 80's, attended the Senate reading where Senator Martha Schrader carried the resolution on the floor. The Senate adopted the resolution unanimously.

"Merchant Mariners were denied veteran status until 1988; however, their contribution to the war effort can never be overlooked. Simply put, without the supplies and troops these ships delivered, America and her allies could not have sustained the fight against our enemies," said Director Jim Willis in early February while testifying in support of SCR 22 before the Senate Veterans' Committee.

The role of the Merchant Marine was to ship vital supplies and troops into combat theaters. During the war, the Merchant Marine had the greatest casualty rate of any branch of service – about 9,300 mariners died at sea, more than 12,000 wounded and 604 men and women were held prisoners of war. As many as 1,554 American ships were sunk and countless mariners died on shore of their injuries after their ships were shot at from the air, hit by torpedoes or blown up by floating mines. The infamous "Murmansk Runs"

claimed one in every eight ships.

This resolution finally recognizes the heroic and invaluable sacrifices that the United States Merchant Marine veterans have made to help ensure the prosperity and safety of this state and nation.



Members of the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization attended the Senate reading of SCR 22 at the State Capitol on February 11. From left to right: Ed Lingenfield, Beryl Lingenfield, Leo Menace, Director Jim Willis, Gloria Wells, Gene Tomlin, Willard Bartlett, Bill Marker, Toni Horodysky, Carole Gutierrez, Max Gutierrez and Deputy Director Paula Brown.



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If you wish to receive the VETS NEWS regularly, send your name and address to the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, Attention Public Information, 700 Summer Street, NE, Salem, OR 97301-1285. If you are a veteran, please include your era of military service.

When credit is given to the source, VETS NEWS articles may be reprinted. However, please call the editor to assure accuracy and timeliness of the articles. Reunions printed upon space availability. (Input for the next issue should be received by April 1, 2010.)

PORTLAND VA BOASTS NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED PARKINSON'S CENTER

Portland VA / OHSU Collaborating Together on Parkinson's Project

by Natasha Carney - Psychology Technician

In 2001, the Northwest Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Center (NW PADRECC) was established as a collaborative effort between the Portland VA Medical Center and the VA Puget Sound Health Care System (Seattle). Together, the Portland and Seattle centers serve an area extending over 10 states in the Northwest and upper Midwest.

Parkinson's Disease recently was added to the list of presumptive conditions caused by exposure to Agent Orange by Vietnam veterans.

The NW PADRECC is one of six centers across the nation that were developed to provide direct clinical care to veterans with Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders. It also provides outreach to the community through education seminars and research opportunities.

Portland's NW PADRECC clinical team works together with Oregon Health and Sciences University (OHSU). The team includes neurologists, nurses, pharmacists, physical and occupational therapists, research assistants, and social workers. The staff at the center provides individualized comprehensive care to veterans with Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders.

At weekly clinics, the staff works to optimize treatment for symptoms and to promote healthy lifestyles in these veterans. Additional clinical services are available to Parkinson's patients who have concerns of memory and mood disturbances, difficulties with regulating effects of medication, or complex gait disorders.

The NW PADRECC is continuously exploring different facets of movement disorders in order to better understand these diseases. Research staff at the center are currently conducting studies to examine the involvement of smell in Parkinson's



Dr. Jay Nutt works with a patient on management tools for Parkinson's Disease.

disease, the effect it has on memory, gait/balance problems, and the impact various medications have when taken over long periods of time.

In recent years, the center has begun to offer Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) as a treatment option for Parkinson's. The surgical procedure is most commonly used to treat tremor, stiffness, dyskinesias, and slowed movement. This treatment method involves implanting a battery-operated device that delivers electrical stimulation to target areas in the brain, thus relieving some of the symptoms of the disease.

To date, published results from studies at seven VA Hospitals, including the NW PADRECC and OHSU, conclude that DBS is more successful than Best Medical Therapy

(BMT) in improving motor function and quality of life in Parkinson's patients, though it also had an increase in adverse events.

In addition to clinical care and research opportunities, the NW PADRECC provides several education seminars throughout the year that are intended for the patients, families, caregivers, hospital staff, and other interested individuals. The center also offers services including exercise and physical therapy classes, social work services, and annual conferences.

The NW PADRECC website provides more information on research opportunities, educational programs, and other resources: www.visn20.med.va.gov/portland/PADRECC.

SYMPTOMS OF PTSD INCLUDE:

- Anger and Irritability
- Depression and Apathy
- Hypervigilance
- Guilt
- Poor Judgment
- Sleep Disturbances
- Lack of Feelings
- Self Medication with Drugs or Alcohol



OREGON
DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER | SUICIDE | TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY | MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

Yes. It's real.

No. You're not alone.

It's hard to admit there is something different, let alone something wrong. But you are not alone.

Every day veterans just like you are calling to make appointments to speak with veterans service officers about symptoms they are experiencing. These symptoms are real.

Your call is always confidential and we can help. Call us today.

To schedule an appointment **800-692-9666**
Suicide Hotline. Vets press 1 **800-273-8255** (800-273-TALK)

ODVA FIELDS VSOs ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

SALEM – In an effort to help student veterans with the GI Bill and other veteran benefits, the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs has fielded five campus veteran service officers throughout the state.

Authorized by House Bill 2718 during the 2009 Legislative Session, the five veteran service officers are located regionally and travel between Oregon's universities and community colleges. The regions include, Portland State University, Oregon State University, University of Oregon, Southern Oregon University, and Eastern Oregon University.

The intent of the program is to reach student veterans and help them with their benefits, especially the Post 9/11 GI Bill. During the past six months, the campus veteran service officers have helped hundreds of student veterans receive their Post 9/11 GI Bill eligibility certificates and have worked closely with college and university certifying officials to ensure payment of the educational benefits.

"This program has done exactly what we thought it would do," said ODVA Director Jim Willis. "We're helping hundreds of veterans receive both education benefits and other VA benefits, such as health care and disability compensation. By going to the campuses where they are, we make it easy for veterans to receive

the benefits they have earned."

With the success of the program, there is interest in expanding it during the next legislative session. "We originally were going to ask for a VSO on every university and community college campus; however, budget restrictions made that impossible," Willis explained. "But, we are interested in expanding so that every

student veteran has the advantage of having a trained accredited VSO helping them with their benefits."

For more information about the Campus VSO Program, the Post 9/11 GI Bill or other educational benefits, please contact ODVA, 503-373-2186.



FEBRUARY SPECIAL SESSION INCLUDES VETERANS BILLS

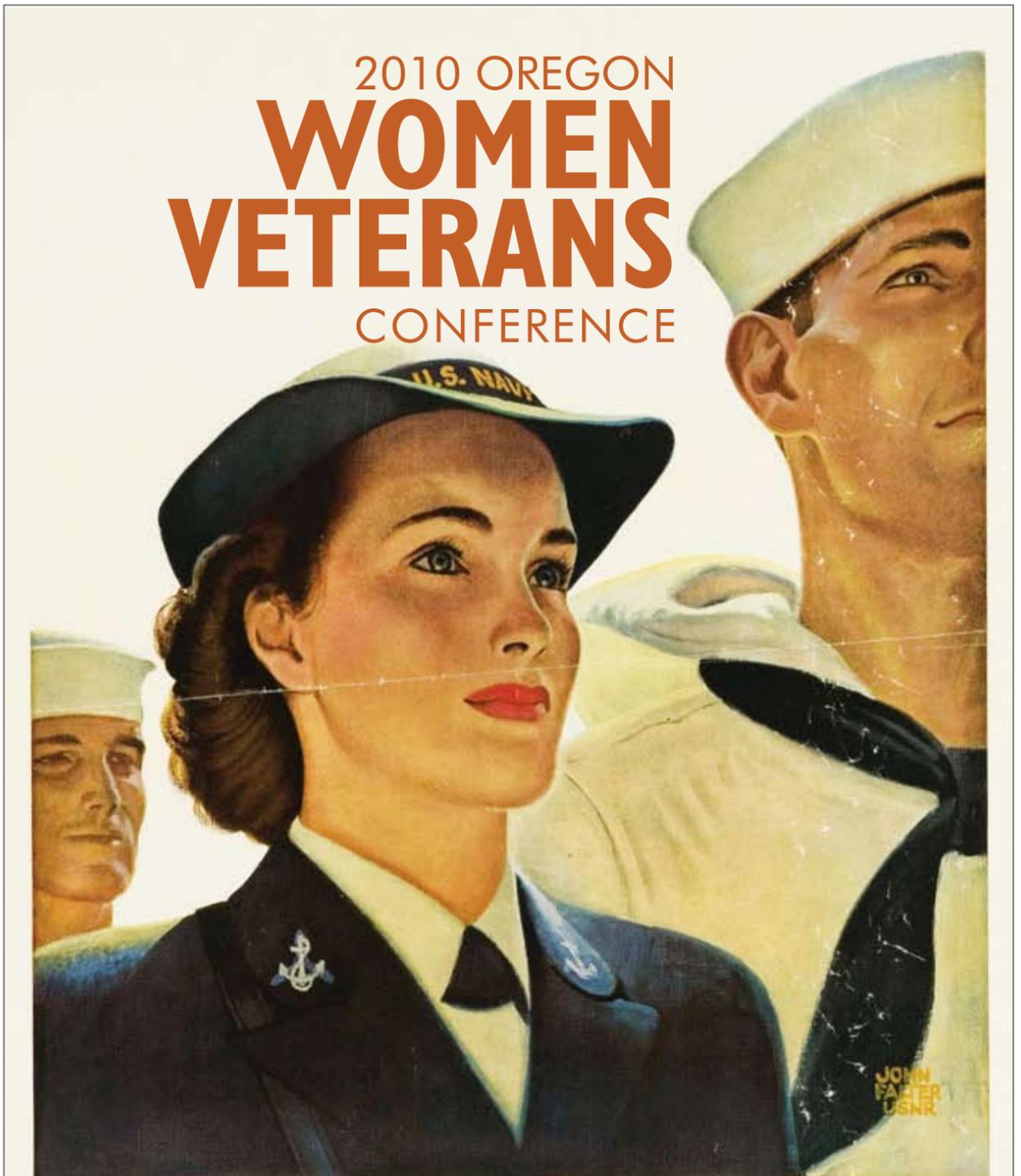
SALEM – The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs pre-session filed two veteran bills that will be heard during the February Legislative Special Session.

Senate Bill 999

SB 999 allows district attorneys more flexibility in determining if a veteran should be offered diversion instead of jail based on details of the case. The bill was developed by a criminal justice workgroup that realized that veterans suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury or other mental or emotional issues might benefit more from diversion than jail, which also would be in the best interest of the community.

Senate Bill 1000

SB 1000 permits the Department of Transportation to waive the plate registration fee for persons with the Medal of Honor plates, and it directs the Department of Transportation upon request from a veteran to place an identifier of veteran status on driver licenses and identification cards. This bill also was developed by the criminal justice workgroup and is intended to help police identify veterans in order to ensure veterans engaging the criminal justice system receive appropriate veteran benefits, including medical and mental health.



2010 OREGON WOMEN VETERANS CONFERENCE

March 26-27, 2010
Seven Feathers Resort, Canyonville

Join us for two full days of education, entertainment, camaraderie, shopping and more with your fellow women veterans.

No cost for participation and FREE LUNCH!

OPEN TO ALL WOMEN WHO SERVED IN THE MILITARY.



REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

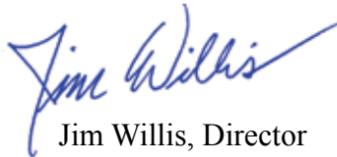
To register, please call 1-800-692-9666, ext. 2090 or 2264 or download a registration form online at www.oregon.gov/ODVA/wvc.shtml

Be sure to reserve your room at Seven Feathers now by calling 1-800-548-8461. Let them know that you are attending the Oregon Women Veterans Conference.

In another area of interest, the deadline for proposals for the location of Oregon's second veterans' home has passed and proposals were received from Douglas County, Jackson County, Linn County, Klamath County and the City of Coquille. The proposals have been passed to an evaluation team consisting of John Osborn, ODVA Construction Project Manager; Denny Nielsen, Retired Vice President, Salem Hospital; Bruce Craig, Acting Administrator, ODVA Support Services Division; Bruce Shriver, CFO and Administrator of the ODVA Financial Services Division and Tino Ornelas, Hillsboro businessman and member of the Governor's Advisory Committee to ODVA with retired ODVA Director Jon Mangis serving as an advisor to the evaluation team.

The evaluation team should complete its work by mid to late March and make a recommendation to the ODVA Director's office with an announcement of the successful location to follow. I would like to thank everyone for your interest in this most important project. I look forward to the construction of a Veterans' Home of which we can all be proud.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to all of you who have made donations and given volunteer hours to our Veterans' Home in The Dalles.



Jim Willis, Director

MILITARY FAMILY APPRECIATION DAY IS MAY 8

SALEM – Initiated last year to raise community awareness of the sacrifices of those who serve in the military and their families, Oregon will again celebrate Military Family Appreciation Day on May 8.

Last year, 14 communities throughout Oregon held events in support of military families that included local proclamations, educational materials about military service and families, and community projects.

This year, organizers are eager to encourage more communities to participate, especially because more than 2,500 soldiers from Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team will be returning home from its Iraq deployment at about the same time.

For more information about Military Family Appreciation Day, contact Tom Mann, 503-373-2386, or Michelle Kochosky, 503-534-2245.

PRESIDENT SIGNS VETERANS' EMERGENCY CARE FAIRNESS ACT

WASHINGTON – President Barack Obama has signed a bill into law that will enable the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to reimburse veterans enrolled in VA health care for the remaining cost of emergency treatment at a non-VA facility if the veteran has outside insurance that only covers part of the cost.

The Veterans' Emergency Care Fairness Act also allows the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide retroactive reimbursements for care received prior to the passage of the bill.

Previously, VA could reimburse veterans or pay outside hospitals directly only if a veteran had no outside health insurance.

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Daniel K. Akaka introduced the bill in the Senate last year and praised President Obama's signing of the legislation.

"For veterans with limited insurance, a trip to the emergency room should not result in financial ruin," Akaka said. "With this new law, VA will be positioned to help veterans who are enrolled in VA care whose insurance does not cover the full cost of emergency treatment."

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that this legislation will cover approximately 700 future claims per year and as many as 2,000 veterans retroactively.

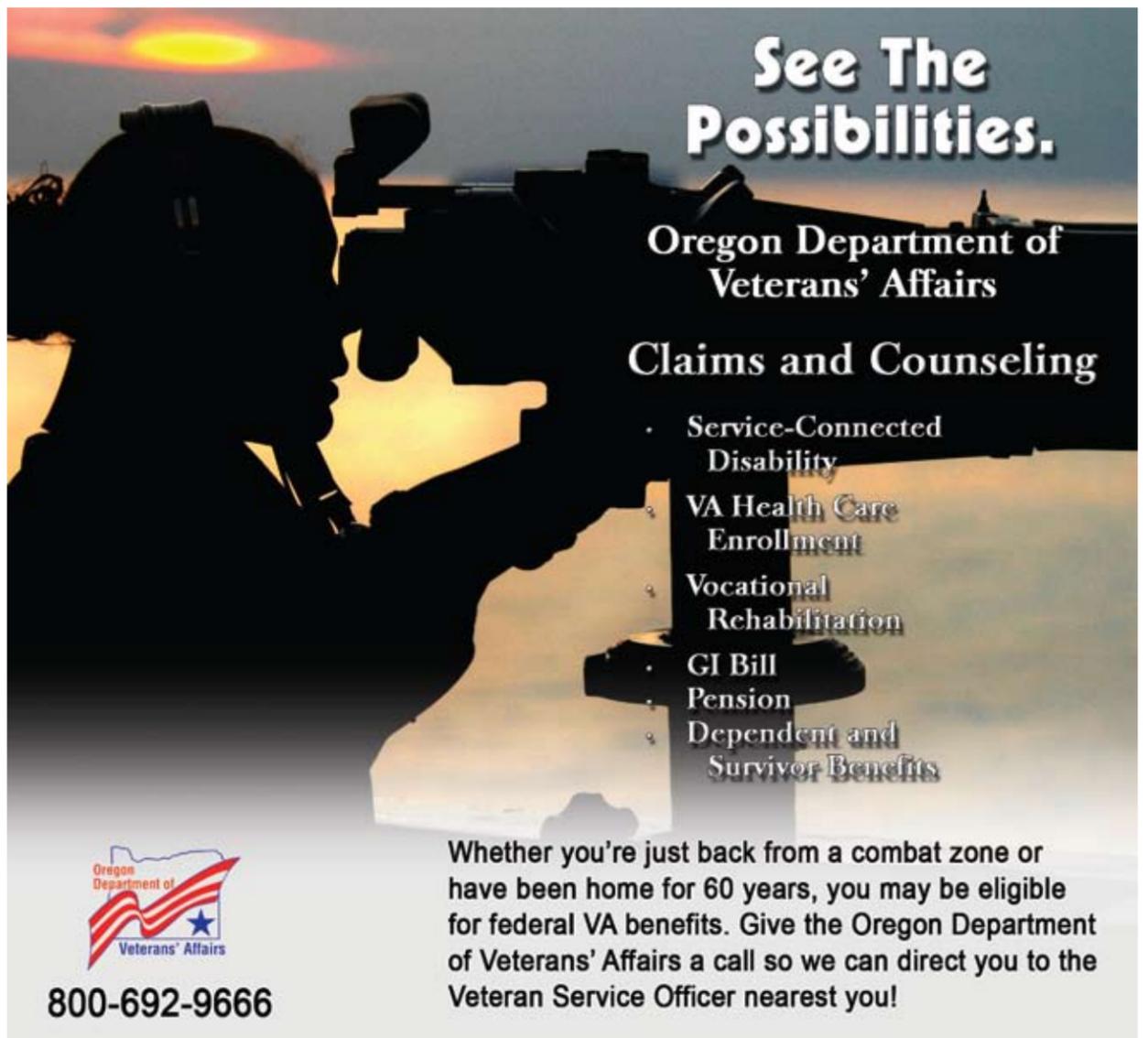
Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs
Veterans' Home Loans - Veterans' Benefits - Conservatorship
Oregon Veterans' Home (skilled nursing & rehabilitative care)
503-373-2000 or 1-800-828-8801
ODVA Website: www.oregon.gov/odva

ODVA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA provides that no qualified person with a disability shall be kept from participation in, or be denied a benefit of the services, programs, or activities of ODVA because of that disability. This publication is available in alternate formats. For this service, or concerns regarding ADA, contact the ADA Coordinator at 503-373-2380.

HIPAA Statement

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, known as HIPAA. You may obtain a copy of the ODVA Notice of Privacy Practices anytime by way of the following:

- * Access ODVA's website at www.oregon.gov/odva
- * Call ODVA at 1-800-828-8801 ext. 2141 or 503-373-2141
- * Write to ODVA's Privacy Officer to have a copy mailed to you; or
- * Ask for a copy the next time you visit ODVA.



See The Possibilities.

Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs

Claims and Counseling

- Service-Connected Disability
- VA Health Care Enrollment
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- GI Bill
- Pension
- Dependent and Survivor Benefits

Whether you're just back from a combat zone or have been home for 60 years, you may be eligible for federal VA benefits. Give the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs a call so we can direct you to the Veteran Service Officer nearest you!

800-692-9666

bad memories, one of the hallmarks of post-traumatic stress.

New tools

Georgopoulos, who is also a neurology professor at the University of Minnesota, is one of a growing band of scientists using brain imaging, such as MEG and Positron emission tomography (PET) scans, to study psychiatric disorders.

“That’s a big area in psychiatry,” said Dr. Monte Buchsbaum, a leading brain researcher and psychiatrist at the University of California at San Diego. “Mental illness is a devastating brain disease, and we now have better technology to look at the brain in action.”

Three years ago, Georgopoulos led a small study of patients with Alzheimer’s, schizophrenia and several other brain disorders and found that each group had a distinctive pattern of brain signals when examined with the MEG device, which measures moment to moment changes in the brain’s electrical activity.

For the latest study, he and his team recruited several hundred veterans from Minnesota and

Wisconsin, spanning every war since World War II. Among them were 74 men and women who had been diagnosed with PTSD.

One was Gary K. Lore of Minnetonka. Lore, 62, who served two tours of duty in Vietnam in the 1960s. The experience left him with “horrendous nightmares,” flashbacks, sleeplessness and other classic symptoms of post-traumatic stress, he said. Yet it took more than two decades to get a diagnosis.

“I just thought I was another crazy Vietnam vet,” he said. It wasn’t until the Gulf War in 1991, when he watched the horrific images on TV, that Lore realized he needed help. Since then, he’s been treated successfully with therapy and medications, he said, and gets checkups at the Minneapolis VA hospital’s Brain Sciences Center. He allowed researchers to scan his brain. The result was a sort of footprint of the brain’s activity at any given moment.

High accuracy

By studying the images of all the volunteers, the scientists were able to identify the patients with PTSD 97 percent of the time, said Georgopoulos. Even among patients who had recovered, the pattern was still visible, though less intense. Georgopoulos said the technique

could also help treatment, by allowing doctors to monitor how well the brain responds to different therapies.

Andrea Northwood, a Minneapolis psychologist who treats patients with PTSD at the Center for Victims of Torture, said she would welcome a device that could make her job easier. “With these kind of complex behavioral conditions, we need as many tools as possible,” she said. Georgopoulos notes that the device itself is harmless, emits no radiation, and can be safely used even “in newborns.”

Yet it may be some time before the brain scans are widely available. The MEG devices are costly and rare, and mainly used in research. But that could change, Georgopoulos said, if the device proves to be as useful as it appears.

For Lore, the veteran, it was “a relief” to learn the results of his brain scan. “It wasn’t just because I couldn’t think straight or whatever; there were real changes in the brain,” he said.

Georgopoulos is optimistic and says his discovery does not mean the damage from PTSD is permanent.

The study appears in the Jan. 20 online issue of the *Journal of Neural Engineering*.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR VETERANS ABOUT CHILD SUPPORT ORDERS AND DOJ

By Margaret Olney
Special Counsel to the Attorney General

When a parent is in the military, it can be difficult for the entire family. For veterans with child support orders, making sure that you are paying or receiving the correct amount can be particularly challenging. You may be having a hard time finding a job. You may be disabled. You may not be sure if you have been established as the legal father. You may be entitled to certain veterans benefits that are paid directly to your children, in which case you can receive a dollar-for-dollar credit on your child support.

All of these circumstances can affect child support, and often result in a lower order. The Oregon Department of Justice Child Support Program stands ready to help you sort them out. We do not represent just fathers or just mothers – we are here to help families as a whole to take care of children. Our goal is to have fair and enforceable orders, but in order for us to do that, it is essential that you work with the program. This means contacting us and responding to legal papers.

Here is some more specific information that you should know:

Dollar-For-Dollar Credit For Veterans’ Benefits

Veterans’ benefits paid to a custodial parent on behalf of a child count as child support paid by the veteran. This means that you are entitled to a dollar-for-dollar credit on any past due child support and current support for benefit amounts going to your child. You must provide your

child support case worker with your official record showing the benefit amount paid to the child.

There is No Time Limit on Receiving This Credit

If you believe that you have not been given adequate credit for past support even if that past support obligation is more than 10 years old, ask your child support case worker to start a “credit for veteran’s benefits process.” Credit can be given for lump sum payments.

Note, in order for your children to receive this benefit directly, you must identify them in the application process. Your County Veterans Services Officer can help you make sure that you and your children are receiving all of the available benefits.

Other Child Support Services

The Oregon Child Support program provides a range of other services to Oregon families at little or no cost. If you have a child and are separated from the other parent, chances are you will be working with the child support program. Again, it is important that you provide current and accurate information and that you respond to any legal papers. The services we provide include:

Establishing paternity. We will help you establish legal paternity of your child, including paternity testing if needed.

Locating parents. We have a variety of tools to help locate parents in Oregon and other states.

Establishing and modifying child support orders. Child support orders include both cash support and medical support coverage.

Collecting and distributing child support. Through a variety of tools, including income withholding, we collect and distribute approximately \$363 million in child support each year.

Enforcement. When a parent fails to pay his or her child support, we will take steps to enforce the order, either administratively or through legal actions in court.

You Deserve It

Making the Oregon Child Support Program a national leader is one of Attorney General John Kroger’s highest priorities. So too is reaching out to veterans and other military personnel in Department of Justice program areas that impact Veterans. The Attorney General’s initiatives include enforcement of new consumer protection and civil rights laws for military personnel, laws that the legislature enacted at the request of the Attorney General. Look for future articles about those laws.

Contact The Oregon Child Support Program

From the Salem area: 503-373-7300

Toll-Free in Oregon: 800-850-0228

From outside Oregon: 503-378-5567

For information, www.oregonchildsupport.gov or www.doj.state.or.us

PRIMARY ELECTION WILL INCLUDE ORVET HOME LOAN MEASURE TO ERASE 30-YEAR RESTRICTION

SALEM – In an effort to make the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs home loan a lifetime veteran benefit, the May 18 Primary Election will contain a constitutional amendment to eliminate the 30-year restriction for use.

Currently, the Oregon Constitution limits the eligibility of the ORVET home loan to 30 years after discharge. Federal Internal Revenue Service tax codes are even stricter, limiting eligibility to 25 years after discharge when certain bonds are

used to fund the loan. ODVA worked last year to try to change both laws.

ODVA has worked with the Legislature to place the restriction found in the State Constitution on the ballot so voters could decide if the benefit should be limited or lifetime.

The agency is also working with Congressman Earl Blumenauer and the rest of the Oregon delegation to change the federal IRS tax code to ensure the benefit is for life. Both the constitutional

amendment and federal legislation must pass before the benefit can be used for life.

Since 1945, ODVA has made more than 334,000 home and farm loans with a principal amount exceeding \$7.6 billion. The ORVET Home Loan program has helped thousands of Oregon veterans improve their quality of life, and at the same time has had a positive impact on the economic growth and well being of the state.

VA BLUE WATER VIETNAM VET CLAIMS UPDATE

The VA Compensation and Pension (C&P) Service has initiated a program to collect data from Navy veterans on Vietnam naval operations for the purpose of providing regional offices with information to assist with development in Haas related disability claims based on herbicide exposure.

VA C&P has received verification from various sources showing that a number of offshore "blue water" naval vessels conducted operations on the inland "brown water" rivers and delta areas of Vietnam. They have also identified certain vessel types that operated primarily or exclusively on the inland waterways.

The ships and dates of inland waterway service are listed below. If a veteran's service aboard one of these ships can be confirmed

through military records during the time frames specified, their exposure to herbicide agents can be presumed without further development.

They include all vessels with these designations:

IFS [Inshore Fire Support] Division 93 during their entire Vietnam tour:

USS Carronade (IFS 1)

USS Clarion River (LSMR 409)

USS Francis River (LSMR 525)

USS White River (LSMR 536)

LST [Landing Ship Tank] during their entire tour

LCVP [Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel] during their entire tour

PCF [Patrol Craft, Fast], or Swift Boats during their entire tour

BR [Patrol Boat, River], or River Patrol Boats in the Mobile Riverine Forces during their entire tour

USS Ingersoll (DD-652), Saigon River, Oct. 24-25, 1965

USS Mansfield (DD-728), Saigon River, Aug. 8-19, 1967 and Dec. 21-24, 1968

USS Richard E. Kraus (DD-849), coastal inlet north of Da Nang, June 2-5, 1966

USS Basilone (DD-824), Saigon River, May 24-25, 1966

USS Hamner (DD-718), Song Lon Tao and Long Song Tao Rivers, Aug. 15-Sept. 1, 1966

USS Conway (DD-507), Saigon River, early-Aug. 1966

USS Fiske (DD-842), Mekong River, June 16-21, 1966

USS Black (DD-666), Saigon River, July 13-19, 1966

USS Providence (CLG-6), Saigon River, during Jan. 1964

USS Mahan (DLG-11), Saigon River, Oct. 24-28, 1964

USS Okanogan (APA-220), Saigon River, July 22-23, 29-30, 1968, Aug. 5-6, 1968

USS Niagara Falls (AFS-3), Saigon River and Cam Ranh Bay, April 22-25, 1968

Cam Ranh Bay is a qualifying location for "inland waterway" service.

Go to this website for information about Agent Orange, possible health problems, and related VA benefits: www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/index.asp, or call the toll-free helpline at 1-800-749-8387.

MILITARY ONESOURCE: FREE TAX FILING FOR ACTIVE DUTY, GUARD AND RESERVE

By Elaine Wilson
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON - Defense officials encourage military families to once again take advantage of the free electronic tax filing services offered through Military OneSource.

People can access the H&R Block at Home program by going to Military OneSource at www.militaryonesource.com/ and clicking on "Tax Filing Services."

More than 200,000 servicemembers filed their tax returns through this resource last year, officials said.

"We have such a mobile force, and you have folks dispersed all over the world. It's a quick link for the family to link up with the [servicemember]," said Tommy T. Thomas, deputy undersecretary of defense for military community and family policy. "It's a convenience for you to be able to go on that site and file that tax form."

The program is open to active duty, Guard and Reserve servicemembers, regardless of activation status, as well as spouses, dependent children and family members standing in for a deployed servicemember.

Participants can e-file up to three state resident returns for each federal return, Thomas said. However, he added, they should ensure they're filing through Military OneSource. People who file through H&R Block directly may be charged for services, he cautioned.

The program is set up for basic returns. People who wish to upgrade to the premium program also may incur charges.

For tax assistance, filers can call a Military OneSource tax consultant from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. (EST), seven-days-a-week, at 800-730-3802.

"That's a tremendous service," Thomas said. "We feel it's important to give our military families the absolute best."

Along with the consultants, people with complicated tax returns can visit a legal assistance office on a military installation for more in-depth advice, he said.

"Don't run up against the 15 April deadline," he said. "And when you get the return, look at it as the means to secure your family's finances," whether it's paying off debts or adding to a savings or investment account.



FRIENDS OF THE HOME



Donations to the Oregon Veterans' Home Trust Fund continue to be received. We deeply appreciate the thoughtfulness and generosity of an ever-growing number of Friends of the Home. To become a friend of the Home, use the gift form on page 10, and make a tax-deductible donation today. Those who contributed during the months of December, 2009 and January, 2010 are listed below:

Access Computer Products
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American Legion Washington Post 2
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American Legion Umpqua Post 16
American Legion Crook County Post 29
American Legion Auxiliary Unit 37
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American Legion Heppner Post 87
American Legion Auxiliary Unit 150
American Legion Durkee Auxiliary
American Legion—The Dalles
American War Mothers
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Jack C. and Anna-Jean Means
Ronald and Joann Meisner
Eugene Melvin
Military Order of the Cooties
—Rimrock Pup Tent #8
Military Order of the World Wars
Gary and Janet Miller
Darrell and Winifred Mitchell
MOAA—Central Oregon Chapter
Don Moore
Patti Moore
MOPH Ladies Auxiliary #1942
MOPH—South Coast Chapter 1942
Navy Recruiting Station—Beaverton
NCOA National Defense Foundation
Ed Nelson
Craig C. Nowland
Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America
Oregon State Bowlers to Veterans Link
Oregon Trail Good Sams Chapter
OSCI Veterans Assistance Program
Irene Payne
Pearl Harbor Survivors Association
Clinton and Lucile Peck
Clair Pense
Mel and Norma Peterson
PGE Employee Giving Campaign
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James W. Presley, Jr.
Marvin S. Prestwood
Project D.E.F.T.
Lt. Col. David H. Raner
Norm and Renee Renninger
Retired Officers Association
—Lower Columbia
Eugene Robertson
Michael Anderson Rodeen
Kenneth and Arliss Rolph
Shannon Sappingfield
Judith Scott
Screaming Eagles QWL
—U.S. Postal Service
Seniors of Mosier Valley, Inc.
Myrle Smith
Patrick M. Smith
Clyde B. Spence
Andrew Spiak
Mark Sullivan
Bob Taylor
The Duck Store—U of O Bookstore
The Regence Employee Giving Campaign
U.S. Army Recruiting Battalion—Portland
U.S. Marine Corps Coordinating Council
U.S. Marine Corps—RSS Beaverton
Gary VanOrman
Veteran License Plates
VFW Blue Mountain Post 4567
VFW Post 1909
VFW Post and Auxiliary 2848
VFW Post 5653
Vietnam Veterans of America—Chapter 757
Vietnam Veterans of America—Chapter 805
Molly Walker
Louis C. Wampler
Mary Watts
WAVES National Unit 46
Robert L. Weiss
Dennis A. Williams
Gerald Williamson
Bob Windu
Jim and Joyce Witt
Women of the Moose Chapter #1494
Virginia Wood
Bill Wright
Rex Ziegler

At that time, student veterans were told that advance payments would be deducted from future benefit payments.

In collaboration with the Defense Department, VA also will notify active-duty servicemembers who may have mistakenly applied for the advance payment of their options for returning uncashed checks or reimbursing deposited funds.

VA discontinued advance payments via the Web portal after the fall 2009 semester. Officials now are processing about 7,000 education benefits daily, up from an average of 2,000 at the beginning of the fall 2009 term.

As of Jan. 22, the department had processed more than 105,000 of the roughly 132,000 spring enrollments received. Since the inception of the new program last year, VA has paid out more than \$1.3 billion in education benefits and opened the door to higher education to more than 183,000 veteran students.

DONATE TO OVH WITH CHARITABLE CHECKOFF

Taxpayers can choose to donate part of their tax return to the Oregon Veterans' Home. The Home is listed on the Charitable Checkoff portion on Oregon tax forms.

Donations to the Oregon Veterans' Home are used to provide for residents of the Home. In the past, donation proceeds have purchased blanket warmers and other useful items for residents.

Although one can choose many charitable entities to which to donate, only 12 are shown on the tax form. For more information about Charitable Checkoff and the Oregon Veterans' Home, visit: www.oregon.gov/ODVA/VETSHOME/Charitable_Check-off.shtml

MEMORIAL DAY EVENT INFORMATION SOUGHT

If your community or organization is planning Memorial Day events and you would like them listed in the May-June edition of *VETS NEWS*, please mail or email that information to the *VETS NEWS* staff no later than April 1.

The required information to be listed on the calendar should be brief and include: The city or location of the event, date(s), time(s), a description of the event, a contact person, and their phone number. Send your Memorial Day event information to Oregon Dept. of Veterans' Affairs, Public Information Section, 700 Summer St. NE, Salem, OR 97301-1285, or email to: vetsnews@odva.state.or.us.

NEW COMMUNITY CENTER TO BE BUILT AT VETERANS HOME

THE DALLES – With the goal of providing residents with a place to gather for programs and fellowship, the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs will build a Veterans' Community Center at the Oregon Veterans' Home in The Dalles.

"We are always looking for ways to improve the quality of life of the residents at the Oregon Veterans' Home," ODVA Director Jim Willis explained. "By building the Veterans' Community Center, residents will be able to meet together for programs, entertainment and camaraderie," he said.

When the Oregon Veterans' Home was built in 1997, the design did not include a general gathering area where all the residents could meet. "So if the local high school choir came to sing for the residents, the choir had to go to each wing of the facility to perform," Willis said. "With the new Community Center, veterans will be able to enjoy a concert together in one location and the performers will have an easier

time entertaining all our residents," he said.

The cost of the project will be \$2,756,325 with 65 percent of the money being supplied by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The remaining 35 percent of the funding will come from ODVA, which is accepting donations to help offset this cost.

"We will need to provide \$964,714 in order to receive the federal VA's matching funds," Willis said. "We continue to raise money for the Veterans' Home to help with this project," he said.

If you are interested in supporting the construction of a Veterans' Community Center at the Oregon Veterans' Home, please send your tax deductible donation to the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, Attention Oregon Veterans' Home; 700 Summer Street NE, Salem, OR 97301.



Artist's rendering of the new Oregon Veterans' Home Community Center.

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For more information on Veterans' Home Loans,
Contact the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs
at 1-888-673-8387 or by email at orvetshomeloans@odva.state.or.us.

REUNIONS & EVENTS

American Ex-Prisoners of War will hold its annual meeting May 19, at 12:00 noon at the Almost Home Restaurant, 3310 Market St NE, Salem, OR . For information; Mike Ryan 541-258-5732.

Military Order of The Purple Heart will hold its State Convention June 4-6, at the Holiday Inn, 919 Kruse Way, Springfield, OR. For information contact Dorene Huntley, 503-632-1874.

The 26th Infantry Regiment Association is having its annual reunion June 10-12, in Elizabethtown, KY. For information, Bob Morris, 503-639-2365, email: lionspade@aol.com.

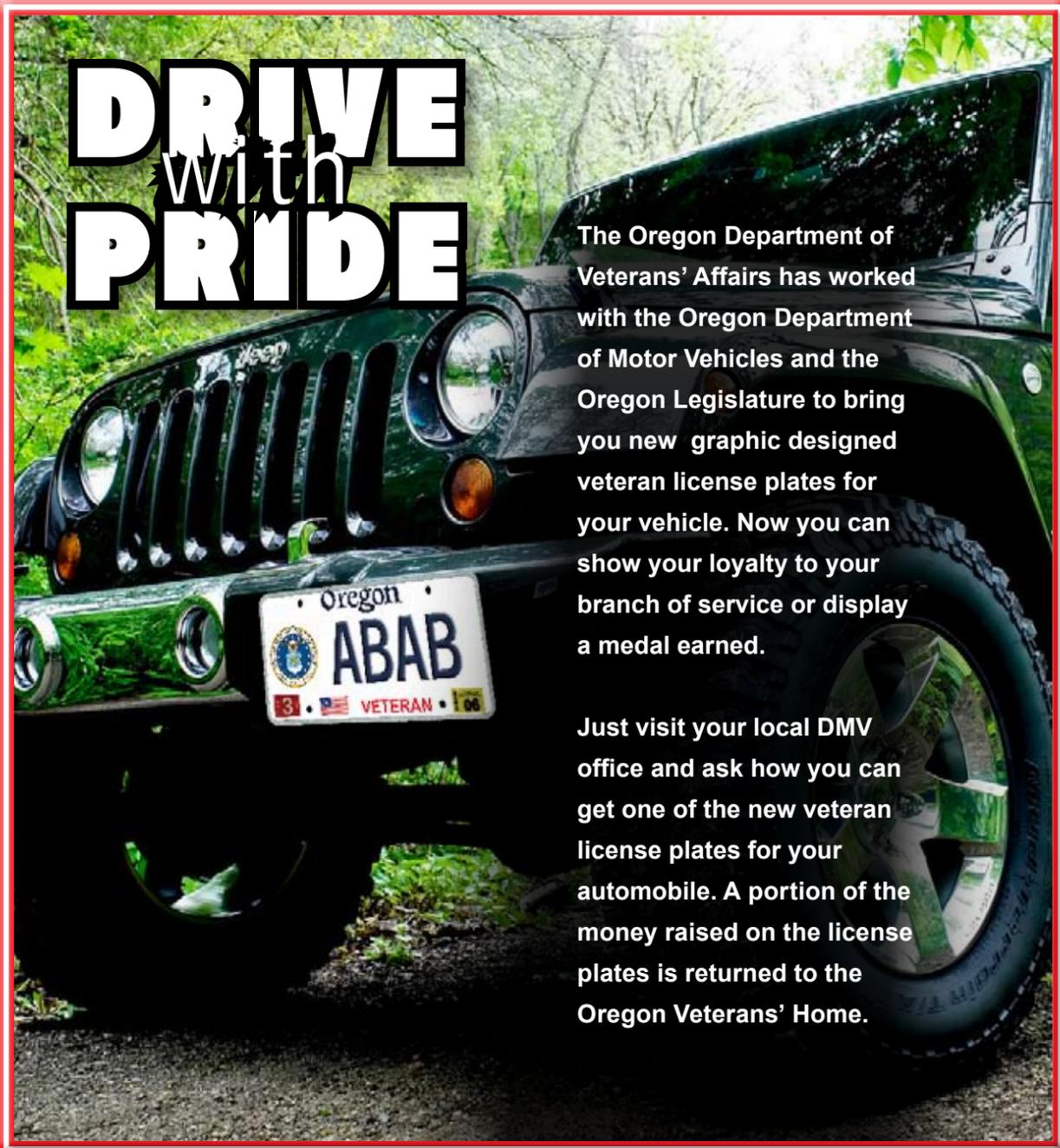
USS Lawrence (DDG-4) is having its reunion June 24-29, in Boston, MA. For information, Craig Bernat, 814-322-4150, email: dguts@uslawrence.com

USS Concord (AFS 5) is having its first reunion July 22-25, in Norfolk, VA. Visit www.usconcord.org/id34.html for info.

USS America Carrier Veterans Association is having its 7th biannual reunion June 22-26, at the Holiday Inn Cincinnati Airport Conference Center in Covington, KY. For information, 610-585-2155, www.ussamerica.org.

USS Begor (APD-127) is having its reunion October 4-9, in Plymouth, MA. For information, contact Rich Parady at 541-582-1761, email: rogriv@q.com

Veterans of Underage Military Service meet the first Friday monthly, at Shari's Restaurant, 122nd and SE Sunnyside, Portland, OR starting at 10:30 a.m. Contact: Willie Paradise, 503-665-1739.



The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs has worked with the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles and the Oregon Legislature to bring you new graphic designed veteran license plates for your vehicle. Now you can show your loyalty to your branch of service or display a medal earned.

Just visit your local DMV office and ask how you can get one of the new veteran license plates for your automobile. A portion of the money raised on the license plates is returned to the Oregon Veterans' Home.

MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thanks to the generosity of donors to the Magazine Subscription Program, residents at the Oregon Veterans' Home enjoy reading current magazines.

The individuals listed below have recently joined dozens of previous donors to support this meaningful program. Their generosity is greatly appreciated by our veteran residents.

Craig C. Nowland
Gordon Halston
Jane and Paul Daudet
Richard Bailey
Ruth McNamara

For information concerning the Magazine Subscription Program, contact Linda Adams at the Oregon Veterans' Home by calling 1-800-846-8460 or 541-296-7152 or e-mail: adamsl@odva.state.or.us.



Oregon Veterans' Home Gift Form

"Give to those who have already given of themselves"

Please designate my donation: In memory of: _____
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Gift amount: \$35-\$64 (1 Oregon Veterans' Home Remembrance Pin)
 \$65-\$99 (2 Oregon Veterans' Home Remembrance Pins)
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Please send my "Oregon Veterans' Home Remembrance Pin(s)" to:

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 City/State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is: Personal Check (Please make checks payable to the "Oregon Veterans' Home")

Credit Card Information

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Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Name (Please Print): _____ Phone #: _____

Signature: _____

Please print this form and mail it with your donation to: Oregon Veterans' Home
 c/o ODVA
 700 Summer St NE
 Salem OR 97301-1285

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE OREGON VETERANS' HOME!
 "The Place Where Honor Lives"

VETERANS STAND DOWN & JOB FAIR EVENT – MARCH 8TH

PORTLAND – All Veterans and their families are welcome at the Veterans Stand Down & Job Fair – a free event with access to dozens of employers and agencies on Monday, March 8th from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. at the Ambridge Event Center, near Portland’s Convention Center MAX stop. Attendees are urged to bring their resumes.

In times of war, Stand Downs were the opportunity for combat units to take time to rest and recover at secure base camp areas. The Stand Down today, directed at homeless veterans, began in 1988 in San Diego as an opportunity for veterans to gather and access assistance. This year, there will be nearly 100 Stand Down events held across the country. Last year, the Portland Stand Down attracted more than 600 veterans.

Portland’s Stand Down is organized by Central City Concern in collaboration with Department of Veteran’s Affairs, Hire Oregon Vets, Returning Veterans Project, Disabled American Veterans and Worksource Oregon. Call Central City Concern at 503-226-7387 or visit www.portlandstanddown.org for more event details.

Veterans comprise an estimated 23 percent of the total homeless population in the United States, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless and experience disproportionately high unemployment rates. In a January 2009 Multnomah County “street count,” veterans accounted for 12 percent of the total counted homeless individuals.

Returning Veterans Project estimates that there are more than 10,000 Oregon Veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. In May 2010, another 2,700 Oregon National Guard troops will return from active service.



Central City Concern’s mission is to provide pathways to self-sufficiency through active intervention in poverty and homelessness. CCC operates more than 1,400 units of affordable housing and provides health, recovery and employment services to more than 13,000 of individuals in the Portland metro area every year.

VETERANS’ SERVICE OFFICERS

County	Telephone Number	Service Officer
Baker	541-523-8223	Jane Chandler
Benton	541-758-1595	Don Johnson
Clackamas	503-650-5631	Janice Harlan-Raisl
Clatsop	503-325-2429	Kenneth H. Rislow
Columbia	503-366-6580	Joseph Pyle
Coos	541-396-3121, Ext. 362	Mary Ann Sackett
Crook.....	541-447-5304	Angela Gilley
Curry	866-298-0404	Frank Van Meter
Deschutes	541-385-3214	Keith Macnamara
Douglas	541-440-4219	Mary Newman
Gilliam	541-384-6712	Paul Conway
Grant	541-575-1631	Bryan Hunt
Harney.....	541-573-6024	Anne Lessar
Hood River	541-386-1080	Vacant
Jackson	541-774-8214	Renee Burgdorf
Jefferson	541-475-5228	Tom Weiss
Josephine.....	541-474-5454	Lisa Shipley
Klamath	541-883-4274	Kathy Pierce
Lake	541-947-6043	G. Don Boone
Lane	541-682-4191	Joseph Reiley
Lincoln	541-574-6955	John Reed
Linn	800-319-3882	Kim Grooms
Malheur	541-889-6649	Bill Thomson
Marion.....	503-373-2085	ODVA
Morrow	877-999-8387	Linda Skendzel
Multnomah	503-988-3620, Ext. 26123	Katie Pereault
Polk	503-373-2085	ODVA
Sherman	541-565-3408	Paul Conway
Tillamook	503-842-4358	Steve Weld
Umatilla	541-278-5482	Peggy Raines
Union	541-962-8802	Timothy H. Jederberg
Wallowa	541-426-3155, Ext. 241	Linda McIntyre
Wasco	888-804-1817	Brad Houghton
Washington	503-846-3060	Doug MacEllven
Wheeler.....	800-982-1172	Paul Conway
Yamhill	503-434-7503	Debbie Gill

Service Organizations	Telephone Number	Service Officer
American Legion	503-412-4771	Greg Demarais
Blinded Veterans Association	541-265-9087	Frank Armstrong
Disabled American Veterans	503-412-4750	Salina Norton
Military Order of the Purple Heart	503-412-4770	Jennifer Burt
Paralyzed Veterans of America	503-412-4762	Ken Fink
Veterans of Foreign Wars.....	503-412-4757	Jack Zule

State Offices-ODVA	Telephone Number	Service Officer
Salem	1-800-692-9666 or 503-373-2085	Jessica Garcelon Leah Rickert Mitch Sparks Gina Thomas Jerry Wilson Doug Yerke
Portland	503-412-4777	Deanna Erhardt Linda McMillan Ed Van Dyke

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Nanci L. Visser 13934 NW Meadowridge Dr. Portland, OR 97229 503-614-8463	Eugene J. LaBonte, Chair 8825 Hebo Road Grand Ronde, OR 97347 503-879-5342	Joseph R. Howell 1780 NW Valley View Drive Albany, OR 97321 541-990-4176
Kevin J. Owens 2249 Commercial North Bend, OR 97459 541-756-2390	Gerard F. Lorang 3914 SW Hewett Boulevard Portland, OR 97221-3103 971-404-5154	David Fairclo 20751 Amber Way Bend, OR 97701-8510 541-382-8281
Irv Fletcher 1272 Mayanna Drive Woodburn, OR 97071 503-981-4356	Tino E. Ornelas 22504 SW Riggs Road Beaverton, OR 97007-8467 503-844-9000	Charles E. Schmidt PO Box 1394 Hines, OR 97738 541-573-3130

Quarterly meetings of the Advisory Committee are held in the Director’s Conference Room, Oregon Veterans’ Building, 700 Summer Street NE, Salem, Oregon.

Special needs will be met for those who have a disability. For arrangements and meeting dates, please call 503-373-2383.

Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs
700 Summer Street NE
Salem, OR 97301-1285

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Jim Willis, Director

March | April 2010

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NEW ADDRESS:

Please clip and mail to ODVA, 700 Summer St NE, Salem, OR 97301-1285.

Changes can also be e-mailed to: vetsnews@odva.state.or.us

ADDRESS AS IT APPEARS NOW:

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March | April 2010
Jim Willis, Director

STUDY: CERTAIN BRAIN SIGNALS CAN INDICATE PTSD

There has never been a simple test to diagnose post-traumatic stress, but a group of Minnesota scientists say they have found a high-tech way to identify people who have the disorder -- by studying their brain signals.

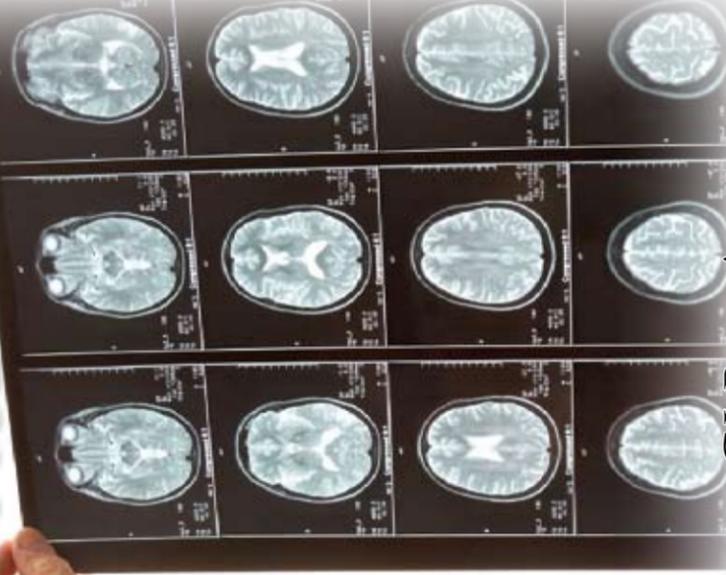
The discovery could have huge implications for the way PTSD is diagnosed and treated in the future, says Dr. Apostolos Georgopoulos, who led the research as director of the Brain Sciences Center at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.

PTSD is thought to afflict tens of thousands of combat veterans, but it can be hard to diagnose. It's a collection of psychological symptoms that can, in some cases, be caused by other conditions, such as head injuries or depression. That is one reason that exact numbers are hard to pin down. The VA estimates that anywhere from 11 to 20 percent of returning veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq have PTSD.

But in a study released in January, Dr. Georgopoulos and his research team found what they call the first "biological marker" for PTSD: A distinctive pattern of brain signals that can be detected with a \$2 million device called MEG (magnetoencephalography).

"The brain patterns are very different," said Georgopoulos, who has been studying brains for 30 years.

In men and women with PTSD, the machine found a cluster of abnormal brain signals in an area of the brain involved in memory, he said. Exactly why is still a mystery, but he speculates that it may interfere with the ability to suppress



VA TO COLLECT GI BILL ADVANCE

WASHINGTON - The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is beginning the process of recovering advance payments made available during the fall 2009 semester to veterans and servicemembers who applied for education benefits.

"The advance payments were a huge success and helped thousands of student veterans during the first days of the historic Post-9/11 GI Bill focus on studies and not their finances," said Keith Wilson, VA's director of education services. "Now, we can get to the business of closing the books on advance payments and focus on supporting veterans for the spring semester."

VA officials will soon begin sending out notification letters explaining the repayment process.

In October, VA instituted an advance-payment process for all eligible students who were enrolled in an institution of higher learning for the fall 2009 term to ensure that all veterans and eligible students were able to focus on their academic studies and not be burdened with financial concerns, officials said. As part of that process, a web portal was established to allow electronic submission for advance payment, and advance payments also were made at VA offices around the country.

SEE GI BILL ON PAGE 9

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