



Missouri Women Veterans News



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Announcing the New Women Veteran Coordinator, Cindy Stivers



The Missouri Veterans Commission (MVC) has recently appointed me as the New Women Veteran Coordinator for the State of Missouri. I am taking over the responsibilities that were held by Karen Etzler, whom retired on September 1, 2010. For those receiving their first edition, Karen Etzler held the position as Women Veteran Coordinator since 2005 and was also appointed to the Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee on Women Veterans in September 2009. She still maintains the position on the

Department of Veterans Affairs Advisory committee and maintains a very active role working on Women Veteran issues. Throughout the years I have worked with Karen on Women Veteran issues and I look forward to continuing working with her in the future.

I served in the United States Marine Corps from 1990 – 1994. Having the worries of starting a civilian life back in the rural area in Missouri, VA benefits was the least of my concerns. In 2002 I began working for Missouri Veterans Commission, with the Missouri State Veterans Cemetery located in Jacksonville, MO. Being employed by Missouri Veterans Commission is when I became aware of all the VA Benefits that I may be entitled to. Using the network of Veteran Service Officers, they guided me on the information of the federal and state benefits of being a Veteran. Then in 2006, I was promoted to an accredited Veteran Service Officer in the Northeast Area of Missouri, to work as an advocate for Veterans and surviving spouses of veterans, to inform them and help them in applying for their benefits. As a Veteran myself, I understand the frustration of paperwork and the network of the different benefits.

Now, as the Missouri Women Veteran Coordinator, I will make contact with every Woman Veteran whose discharge I receive to let you know where your nearest MVC Veteran Service Officer is and will encourage you to visit him/her about possible benefits. I am excited about providing information regarding benefits and programs to Women Veterans and to see that you are getting the benefits you have earned. I strongly encourage all Women Veterans to register to receive the Missouri Women Veteran Newsletter, it is FREE. As you can see it is a wealth of information. Women Veterans are unique in that we belong to the Sisterhood of Military Women. It doesn't matter, when you served or how long you served or what Branch you served – we served. We chose to serve our Country and we performed our military services that have open doors for Women serving in the Military today. As your State Coordinator I look forward to this wonderful opportunity to address information of Women Veterans, awareness of Veteran Affairs Benefits and network of sources to our Women Veterans. On page 2 we will feature Women Veterans in our Women in Uniform. We encourage you to share your story and pictures with other Women Veterans. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

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Women in Uniform PAST

Karen S. Etzler



I joined the Air Force in the mid 70's and after learning that it would be a 9 month wait to get into the medical field, I accepted a position in a nontraditional women's job and became a aircraft hydraulic mechanic. I worked on B-52 and KC-135 aircraft, and as interesting and challenging as that was, I knew it was not going to be my life long career, so after 3 ½ years I crossed trained into Personal Affairs where I worked with awards and decorations and casualty affairs. Both of these jobs indirectly lead me to my position as the State of Missouri Woman Veteran Coordinator and Veteran Service Officer. The hydraulic mechanic job taught me how to deal in an all male environment (kind of like the VA health care system) and my casualty affairs training help me get the job of a Veteran Service Officer. I started working for the Missouri Veterans Commission in 1999 as a VSO and was appointed the coordinator in 2006. After 11 years of working with veterans, I retired Sep 1, 2010. I could not have selected a more rewarding job for me, it has been an awesome job and I take with me so many fond memories. I will serve my appointed time on the Secretary of the VA Eric Shinseki's Women Advisory Council in DC so I will still be involved with women veteran issues. Life after the commission includes laying on the beach in Florida, traveling with my husband and visiting my children and grandchildren as often as possible. Life is good!



Jalesia F. McQueen



I was born in Tachikawa Air Force Base, Japan and moved around the world with my Air Force father for most of my early life. I resigned from the Army as a Captain before pursuing my legal career. I am a second generation immigrant fluent in Spanish, and am the owner and attorney of the St. Louis-based law firm, McQueen Gadberry LLC. My practice areas focus on general corporate law, immigration and international law. I understand business needs and provide a full range of corporate legal services to entrepreneurs, start-ups, global-minded business professionals, and various sized businesses. I have extensive experience from large and prestigious law firms in St. Louis. I emphasize a strong attorney-client relationship by offering flexible and flat fee arrangements and not basing fees through billing by the hour. I currently hold a federal appointment as one of 12 members to the Missouri Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and I hold an appointment by the Governor to the Missouri Hispanic Business Trade and Culture Commission. I also volunteer my services one day a month to assist Hispanic business owners at the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan St. Louis. I also received the St. Louis Business Journal's "40 under 40" award in 2007 and have been featured as a "St. Louis Character" in 2010. I am a combat veteran of the Iraq War, and I live in the St. Louis area of Missouri with my twin two-year-old sons.

Lynn Harvey



I am a retired Woman Marine. I served from 1967-1987. I would have happily served until 1997 had my physical health made that possible. My husband and I live in Western MO. We have one daughter and three granddaughters. My hospital of choice here is the Leavenworth, KS. Five years ago I started with a new Psychologist at the VA hospital. At one of our sessions the Therapist asked me if I had a pet. I did have a perfect little dog that was my heart. Then the worst happened, he passed. In about a year we found a cute little terrier. We named her Pepper. My therapist suggested that I train her to be a Psychiatric Service Dog. I found a wonderful organization called Psychiatric Service Dog Society, psychdog.org. I found out about the "Wounded Warriors", so I have a service dog. It's hard for some people to understand how much she does for me. My therapist supports my need and wrote me a prescription to have her, train her, and use her. I'm not physically able to do much, but I'm mentally getting better. I think it's great that the VA is finally figuring out that there are Women out here in need of better services. It has been a long time coming to be recognized as having the same dysfunctions that our Male counterparts have. Day by day with the help of understanding Doctors at the VA Hospital and Advocates willing to get involved we will start to receive the care we need. Help us in burning a new path to ensure proper care for Women

Christine Zika



In 1990, I was attending Central Missouri State University when I was introduced to the educational benefits the military offered. Needing the money to finish college, I signed up for the Missouri Army National Guard and joined the Military Police Corps. Nine months after I joined, I was activated and sent to Saudi Arabia to guard Iraqi prisoners during Operation Desert Storm. During my 13 years in the Missouri Army National Guard, I was activated two more times: 1996 for Operation Joint Endeavor and in 2003 for Operation Enduring Freedom. I have traveled to 17 different countries and work with many racial and ethnic groups thanks to the military. This experience has played an important part in my civilian career. For 16 years, I worked in the non-profit sector as a membership coordinator. I found it imperative to be able to relate to people of all backgrounds in order to determine their need and be able to fulfill it. When my position was eliminated due to budgetary cuts last August I took my 16 years of Member Services and Executive Assistant experience and started CZ Concierge Services, L.L.C. CZ Concierge Services, L.L.C is a personal service company where our motto is – Your Tasks. Our Priority. We specialize in bringing back work/life balance to the over-tasked. I tell everyone that my dream of entrepreneurship would not have been possible had it not been for the assistance of the Veterans Business Resource Center and the Bootstrap Program.





Ask Cindy



Q. I am a Younger Women Veteran and I just learned I am pregnant, does the VA provide any medical benefits for soon to be mothers?

A. Yes- the VA provides maternity benefits to eligible women veterans. You first will have to be enrolled into the VA Health Benefit Program by completing a 10-10 EZ form and submitting it to the VA Medical center in your area. The VA Medical center will determine your eligibility. Each VA medical center has a Women Veterans Program Manager. The Women Veterans Program Manager works side by side coordinating care for the patient. Pregnancy is verified by the VA medical center but prenatal and intrapartum, delivery services and post partum care for the mother are provided in community hospitals near the Veterans home. The VA does not cover newborn care.

The following is a list of Program managers and their locations:

Leavenworth/ Topeka, KS: Kathy Zima 800-574-8387

St. Louis, MO: Jennifer Cunningham 314-289-6483

Popular Bluff, MO: Marsha Shively 573-778-4044

Columbia, MO: Amanda Barnes 800-349-8262

Kansas City, MO : Katrena Bentley 800/525-1483

Wichita, KS: Laurie Pfeiffer 888/878-6882

Fayetteville, AR: Carole McAlister 800/691-8387 Ext 5321

Marion, IL: Cynthia James 618/997-5311 ext 54559

If you would like to submit a question for Cindy, please contact her at:

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Did You Know?

- The Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay provides \$500 for each month or partial month to troops whose time was extended in the field or whose specialty was needed after the start of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Service members, veterans, and beneficiaries of servicemembers whose service was involuntarily extended under Stop Loss between Sept. 11, 2001 and Sept. 30, 2009 are eligible for RSLSP. To apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Pay fill out form DD Form 2944 Deadline must be submitted by December 3, 2010.

- The first pathological evidence that repetitive head trauma might be associated with development of a disease (chronic traumatic Encephalomyopathy)-that resembles ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. The Researchers with the Department of Veteran Affairs and the Center for the Study of Traumatic Encephalopathy (CSTE) at Boston University School of Medicine finds a possible link. Research may lead to better treatment. By studying the effects of repetitive mild head trauma, they can learn about the early triggers of ALS. www.va.gov

- Applying online for Health Benefits by submitting the 10-10EZ eliminates the signature. This process speeds up the access to their hard-earned medical benefits. Online forms are available at <https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez/>.

- Final Regulation to Veterans exposed to Agent Orange to expand the list of conditions for Vietnam Veterans for which service connection is presumed. Addition to the list is Parkinson's disease, ischemic heart disease and expanding on chronic lymphocytic leukemia to include all chronic B cell leukemia's, such as hairy cell leukemia. Veterans who served in Vietnam anytime during January 9, 1962 thru May 7, 1975 are presumed to be exposed to herbicides. Veterans with any of these medical conditions are to seek help with filing a claim with their local Veteran Service Officer. Additional information for Veterans exposed to the chemical Agent Orange is available at www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange.

- Veterans claiming service connection for PTSD (Post traumatic Stress Disorder) may have simpler process due to VA reducing the evidence needed if trauma claimed by a Veteran is related to fear of hostile military or terrorist activity and is consistent with the places, types, and circumstances of the Veterans Service. VA would not require corroboration If a VA doctor confirms that the stressful experience by a Veteran supports a diagnosis of PTSD and Veterans symptoms are related to the claimed stressor. The regulation concluded that a Veteran's deployment to a war zone is linked to an increased risk of PTSD

- MU Veterans Center and MIZZOU Student Veterans Association are located on the University of Missouri campus in Columbia, MO. The MU Veterans Center helps to assist veterans in their transition from military to campus life. A one-stop resource center - assistance in referrals for finances, health, academics, housing, and camaraderie. You can email them at veterans@missouri.edu or call 573-884-4383. Carol W. Fleisher, Director and Dawn Copeland, Advisor.



UPCOMING EVENTS

October 23 – Women Veteran's "Stand-down and Mini Retreat" 8:00am - 3:00 pm. All women veterans and their families are invited to join us for a day of learning, networking and rejuvenation. Free onsite childcare will be provided. Location at Metropolitan Community College, Pen Valley Campus, 3201 Southwest Traffic way, Kansas City, MO 64111 for more information contact Carla Tillmon, U.S. Department of Labor—Women's Bureau, 816-285-7234.

Branson Events:

November 5 thru 11 - Veterans Homecoming Week 2010. Full week of activities saluting troops and veterans in Branson, MO for more information contact www.bransonveterans.com

November 8, 2010 - Women Veterans Mini Reunion, Reception at the Branson Mall Meeting & Event Center 5:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m. and at 8:00 p.m. show at Mickey Gilley Theater. Coordinated and hosted by Branson Veterans Events & Reunions. Please RSVP by calling 417-230-2278 or email bransonveteransevents@yahoo.com or go to www.bransonveteransevent.com

November 9, 2010 – Women Veterans Rose Petal Memorial and Women Veterans Appreciation Lunch, to honor women veterans who have died for their country will be held at the Keeter Center at College of the Ozarks. Cost: \$20.00 in advance, \$25.00 at the door. Reservations required. Please call Barb Riggle at 417-337-8387.

Novembers 11 -Join the Women Veterans and ride a duck in the Veterans Day Parade on November 11, 2010. We will meet at the Ducks on Hwy 76 at 9:00 am. Fun time to be had by all. This is a free event.

November 11 – Veterans Day Parade at 11:00 a.m Branson MO

St. Louis Events:

November 6 - St. Louis Veterans Day parade, noon. Pre-parade ceremony at Soldiers Memorial, 1315 Chestnut St., 1000.

November 11 - Veterans Day Service, Soldiers Memorial, 1315 Chestnut St., St. Louis, 10:55 am.

November 11 - Veterans Day Dinner Dance, reservations required, contact Bob Gion, 314-631-4214

November 20 - The 25th Annual Tribute to Women Veterans, 11:00 am to 3:00 p.m., Saturday, November 20, 2010, **Two Hearts Banquet Center**, 4532 South Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis, MO. The guest speaker is LCDR Jill Druskis, USCG, Ret. The cost is \$22.50, reservations required no later than November 10. Make checks payable to: St. Louis Service Women's Post 404 and mail to Shirley Janes, 10903 Suanis Ct. St. Louis, MO 63123. For more Info: sajanes@yahoo.com, 314-853-4746.



New Option for Marking Veterans' Graves in Private Cemeteries Veterans' Medallion

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is offering bronze medallions to attach to existing, privately purchased headstones or markers, signifying a deceased's status as a Veteran. The new item can be furnished instead of a traditional government headstone or marker for Veterans whose death occurred on or after Nov. 1, 1990, and whose grave in a private cemetery is marked with a privately purchased headstone or marker. Under federal law, eligible Veterans buried in a private cemetery are entitled to either a government-furnished grave marker or the new medallion, but not both. The medallion is available in three sizes: 5 inches, 3 inches and 1 ½ inches in width. Each bronze medallion features the image of a folded burial flag adorned with laurels and is inscribed with the word "Veteran" at the top and the branch of service at the bottom. Next of kin will receive the medallion, along with a kit that will allow the family or the staff of a private cemetery to affix the medallion to a headstone, grave marker, mausoleum or columbarium niche cover. More information about VA-furnished headstones, markers and medallions can be found at <http://www.cem.va.gov/>. Applicants may use the form VA Form 40-1330 for ordering government headstones /markers/medallions.



Norfolk Naval Station gets first female commander



(Capt. Mary M. Jackson has been the base's executive officer since April 2009)

Capt. Mary M. Jackson is set to become the first female commander of Norfolk Naval Station today, relieving Capt. Kelly M. Johnson.

Jackson has been the base's executive officer since April 2009.

Born in Spain, she spent most of her childhood in Saudi Arabia and graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1988.

She served in Norfolk as executive officer of the destroyer Stout and commanding officer of the destroyer McFaul. Her shore assignments include head of surface junior officer assignments at Navy Personnel Command in Millington, Tenn., and flag secretary at Naval Surface Forces Atlantic Fleet in Norfolk.

Johnson is headed to the staff of the commander of Naval Installations Command in Washington.

By *Meredith Kruse*, *The Virginian-Pilot* © August 17, 2010

New proposal regulations for nine specific infectious diseases for Veterans who served in Southwest Asia during the Gulf War from 1990 to present and in Afghanistan on or after September 19, 2001. Final regulations to be published later in 2010.

Brucellosis: A bacterial disease with symptoms such as profuse sweating and joint and muscle pain. The illness may be chronic and persist for years.

Campylobacter jejuni: A disease with symptoms such as abdominal pain, diarrhea, and fever.

Coxiella burnetii (Q fever): A bacterial disease with symptoms such as fever, severe headache, and gastrointestinal problems such as nausea and diarrhea. In chronic cases, the illness may cause inflammation of the heart.

Malaria: An infectious disease caused by a parasite. Symptoms include chills, fever, and sweats.

Mycobacterium tuberculosis: An illness that primarily affects the lungs and causes symptoms such as chest pain, persistent cough (sometimes bloody), weight loss and fever.

Nontyphoid Salmonella: A condition characterized by symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Shigella: A condition characterized by symptoms such as fever, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Visceral leishmaniasis: A parasitic disease characterized by symptoms such as fever, weight loss, enlargement of the spleen and liver, and anemia. The condition may be fatal if left untreated.

West Nile virus: A disease spread by mosquitoes characterized by symptoms such as fever, headache, muscle pain or weakness, nausea, and vomiting. Symptoms may range from mild to severe.

List of Current Conditions recognized for presumptive service-connection for Gulf War Veterans:

Chronic fatigue syndrome: A condition of prolonged and severe tiredness that is not relieved by rest and is not directly caused by other conditions.

Fibromyalgia: A common condition characterized by long-term, body-wide pain, and tender points in joints, muscles, tendons, and other soft tissues.

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS): A common disorder that affects the intestines (colon) and causes cramping, abdominal pain, bloating, gas, diarrhea, and constipation.

Missouri Women Veterans News is written and published by Missouri Veterans Commission Staff.

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State of Missouri Women Veterans

Name: _____

Name you served under (if different from above) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime phone: _____

Email address: _____

Birth date: _____ / _____ / _____
Day Month Year

Place of Birth _____
City/State

Service (Circle one) USA USMC USN USAF USCG OTHER _____

Service dates: From _____ To _____
From _____ To _____

Receiving VA or Medical Benefits: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what benefit: _____ (i.e. pension, comp., medical, etc.)

Have received benefits in the past: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what benefit: _____

Would you like contact information and a schedule for a Veteran's Service Officer in your local area to explain your potential benefits? Yes _____ No _____

Do you wish to share this information with WIMSA (Women in Military Service for America Memorial) in Arlington VA? Yes _____ No _____

To receive your free Woman Veteran State Sticker

Return this to: Missouri Veterans Commission/Cindy Stivers

Women Veterans Coordinator/VSO

1716 N. Prospect

Suite A

Macon, MO 64501

660/385-6192

or send a request via email to: Cindy.Stivers@mvc.dps.mo.gov