

# Missouri Women Veterans Newsletter

Volume 2019, Issue 40

Spring/Summer 2019

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

### UPDATE FROM THE WOMEN VETERAN COORDINATOR

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## 2019 So Far!



Hello ladies, I hope your 2019 is going well. There has been some great things going on around the state. In March, Rebecca Bradley and the Kansas City Vet Center came together to recognize Missouri Women Veterans who served during a War time period. That event was at the WWI Museum in Kansas City. It was a wonderful turn out; I was amazed how many women veterans showed up. Also, in April the MVC held a Vietnam Veteran Recognition Ceremony at the State Capital Building in Jefferson City. I, unfortunately, was not able to make that one, but I heard it was fantastic. I have to say "great job" to MVC Headquarters for putting on that event. I know the Vietnam veterans and their families truly appreciated it. If you are following the Missouri Veterans Commission on Facebook, you've probably seen the video of the event. Then the following day the Mid-West Women Veterans Association (MWWVA) held a Women Veterans' Conference in Osage Beach. That Friday night we gathered to roast hot dogs and s'mores, and then we had a great time painting together. The next day they had several great speakers to help women get information about the National Children's home, WIMSA, and VA Healthcare. If you know of any events in your area that you would like me to put on the Women Veterans Facebook page, please email me at: [Toni.Swizdor@mvc.dps.mo.gov](mailto:Toni.Swizdor@mvc.dps.mo.gov)

### Missouri Veterans Commission 3 Key Messages:

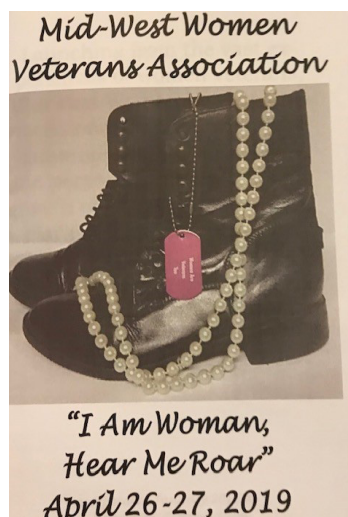


If you have ever served in the military have you:

Visited with a Veterans Service Officer?

Signed up for VA Health Care?

Joined a Veterans Service Organization?



## VET TO VET Life Crisis Team

As we all know, the suicide rate among Military Veterans is high. According to statistics, it is “22” a day. The VET to VET program is based off WAT22 in Arkansas. The goal of the organization is to reduce the suicide rate of Veterans to “0” a day nationwide.

Veterans’ volunteer their time to help Veterans in need. It can be through phone, computer, or even in person. To become a volunteer you will need a copy of your DD214 with your SSN blacked out. Your discharge has to have an Honorable or General under Honorable condition. In addition, you will need to take a 2-day course. The course does not cost anything. The only cost to participate would be to pay for your t-shirt that you would use if you respond in person. This helps identify who you are. If you are interested in volunteering, or would like to learn more, you can check them out on Facebook or [www.vettovetlct.org](http://www.vettovetlct.org)

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### Camp Hope

Camp Hope was started by the parents of Christopher Neal White, to honor their son, a 23-year-old Marine killed in action on June 20, 2006. Camp Hope is a retreat for combat wounded Veterans injured in the Global War on Terror. It helps these Veterans feel complete again with the help of the great outdoors. The atmosphere is set up to have an adventure with dignity. Camp Hope has ADA-compliant cabins, food, and supplies. The staff are all volunteers that are able to accommodate Veterans with almost any disability.

Camp Hope is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization, so every dollar raised benefits war-wounded soldiers. There are many ways individuals and groups can help war-wounded soldiers. If you are a combat wounded Veteran and want to visit Camp Hope, or an organization interested in learning more please contact them.

Camp Hope  
P.O. Box 52  
Farmington, MO 63640  
573-321-9505

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### K9s On The Front Line

K9s On The Front Line is a nonprofit organization that helps Veterans, and saves dogs, while restoring hope. An experienced team supplies fully trained PTSD service dogs at no cost to the recipient. Once the completed application is received, there are two different pathways offered.

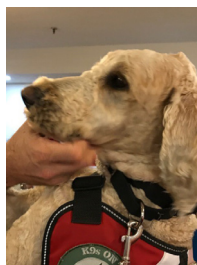
Option 1: Possibility of training your current dog. The dog is evaluated based on temperament, drives, and sociality, along with an informed decision whether to accept the dog into the program. Other options explored, if the dog does not meet criteria.

Option 2: If you do not have a dog, they will provide one. The organization has a relationship with shelters up and down the east coast and can match a dog with the veteran.

Once the dog is paired with the recipient, the two will undergo 16 weeks of training through one of the contracted K9 groups training classes. All the trainers are experienced police K9 handlers with the ultimate expertise in dog training. The classes are once a week at varying locations and you are required to keep a training log. The course is comprised of a total of at least 120 training hours, which includes daily practice at home, and weekly classes.

Once the course is completed, a lasting bond and mutually beneficial relationship will forever change both their lives. If you are currently struggling with PTSD or TBI and would like to learn more about this program, you can go to <https://k9sonthefrontline.org/>.

K9s On The Front Line  
P.O. Box 105106  
Jefferson City, MO 65110-5106  
207-332-5432



Or you can follow them on Facebook



## Ask Toni



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**Q.** How do I re-open a claim that was denied by the VA?

**A.** When the VA denies a claim, you have a year to submit a NOD (Notice of Disagreement). You can submit a 21-0995 (Supplemental Claim) with additional evidence to support your claim or 21-0966 to request a higher level Review.

If it is after the one-year mark, it will become a re-open claim. You will have to have new and material evidence before the VA will reopen the claim. This additional evidence in support of your claim has to be new and has not been seen before by the VA. Such as a nexus (linking) statement from a physician. That statement will need to say that the physician has reviewed your military service treatment records and in their opinion it's more likely than not that it was due to military service.

**Q.** I am a female Veteran that has recently found out that I am pregnant, what should I do?

**A.** First, if you are not enrolled in VA Healthcare I would recommend that you enroll right away. Once you are in the VA Healthcare system, you will need to go see your primary doctor to get a referral. I would also recommend getting the contact information of the VA Women Program Coordinator at the VA facility your VA health care is under. Each of the main VA medical centers have one.

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### VA Healthcare is focusing on Women's Health.

VA providers work with women Veterans to help address any health issues they may have. To help ensure a healthy pregnancy, the VA provider and the woman Veteran focus on addressing any health issues. Thinking about what their overall health is, and prepare themselves for a healthy pregnancy.

The VA has a full range of reproductive health services, including preconception care. Preconception care consist of several visits. The checkup visits focus on nutrition, history of smoking, drugs or alcohol use, weight, medication and family history of the Veteran and her partner.

Reproductive life plan goals focus on goals for having or not having children; and how to achieve the goals. If the Veteran is not ready for pregnancy, the VA has several different forms of birth control. The VA provider helps the female Veteran to choose a contraception that is right for them.

If a woman is interested in having children, the VA provides a preconception healthcare program. The VA has a checklist that focuses on recommended low fat diet, regular exercise, adequate sleep, and no illegal drugs or legal drug prescribed to someone else.

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### Mental Health Support

If you are experiencing an immediate crisis called the Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255, press 1; text to 838255 or chat online <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>.



## Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is a sexual assault or harassment experienced while in the military. MST is any sexual activity that you are involved with against your will. Anyone can experience MST, regardless of gender. The VA has a male/female MST Coordinator located in the VA hospitals. Some of the examples the VA provides are:

- ✓ Being pressured or coerced into sexual activities, such as with threats of negative treatment if you refuse to cooperate or with promises of better treatment in exchange for sex
- ✓ Someone having sexual contact with you without your consent, such as when you were asleep or intoxicated
- ✓ Being physically forced to have sex
- ✓ Being touched in a sexual way that made you uncomfortable
- ✓ Repeated comments about your body or sexual activities
- ✓ Threatening and unwanted sexual advances

Similar to other types of trauma, MST can have negative impact on a person's mental and physical health. It could be many years later. Some of the experiences could include:

- ✓ Disturbing memories or nightmares
- ✓ Difficulty feeling safe
- ✓ Feelings of depression or numbness
- ✓ Problems with alcohol or other drugs
- ✓ Feeling isolated from other people
- ✓ Problems with anger, irritability, or other strong emotions
- ✓ Issues with sleep
- ✓ Physical health problems

If you are looking for resources to help deal with MST or to help learn more about coping with MST, go to: <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome/resources.asp>

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## Buddy Check 22

22 Veterans commit suicide every day. Check on a veteran on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of each month to help get 22 to 0. Just ask them "Are you okay"?



## American Red Cross – Resiliency Programs

There are 3 Distinct Programs

### Coping with Deployments

When the military member goes on deployment, it can be hard on the family left behind. The American Red Cross has developed a program to support the military families during the deployment cycle. Courses to teach how to build their own and others resiliency. The family members learn psychological first aid to support themselves and others, help children cope with stress, locate resources and make referrals when needed. Service members and Veterans may also attend along with their family members.

<https://www.redcross.org/cwd>

### Reconnection Workshops

Service members, Veterans, and their families learn how to cope with the challenges that come with military-related transitions. Each of the sessions addresses a topic of relevant to readjustment. The adults session focus is on communicating clearly, exploring stress and trauma, identifying depression, relating to children and working through anger. The childrens session for teens, ages 8-18 will focus on confident coping, Roger that! Communication Counts. As for the children 5-8 years of age, they will be with an adult person in a buddy group setting.

[www.redcross.org/reconnectionworkshops](http://www.redcross.org/reconnectionworkshops)

### Mind-Body Workshop

The mind-body workshop teaches service members, Veterans, and their families how they can improve their wellbeing through skills that connect the body with the mind. Introduction to mind-body skills teaches breathing, mindfulness techniques, stretching and movement, body awareness and functioning, guided imagery. Some of the ways they teach is through drawing, journaling, meditation and mindfulness, body awareness, and self-directed imagery.

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### Army Yakisoba

Ingredients:

1 lb. spaghetti  
1 lb. lean ground beef  
1 green pepper, julienned  
1 onion, chopped  
1/4 cup soy sauce  
1 tsp garlic powder

1 tsp ground ginger  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/4 tsp black pepper  
1/2 cup water  
3-5 green onions, sliced



Directions:

Cook Spaghetti in salted water until tender, 10-12 minutes, drain.

In the meantime, brown ground beef until beef loses its pink color, stirring to break apart. Drain and skim off excess fat.

Add onions, peppers, soy sauce, salt, garlic powder, ginger, and pepper to beef. Cook until onions and peppers are tender, about 10 minutes.

Add 1/2 cup water, green onions, and spaghetti to beef. Mix thoroughly. Heat to serving temperature. Enjoy!



Check out our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/MissouriWomenVeterans/>

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