



The E-9ers

COLORADO

<http://www.e9ers.org/>
<http://www.e9ers.com/>

**Army
Navy
Air Force
Marine Corps
Coast Guard**

October 2009

Volume 12 Number 109

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Hi E-9er's:

We are in Wisconsin for a few days, by the Fox River. We're here to attend a wedding and visit friends and relatives. The weather has been great, not too hot, just the way we like it. As I said last month, summer is coming to a close, the trees here are turning colors; much more color than the Aspens in Colorado. Haven't had much of a chance to see the news, or read the paper, so I am a little out of touch with what is happening. We will be back in Colorado in time for the next membership meeting.

Take Care,

Bill

BETTIE BLAIR

The following email was received from Bettie Blair's son, Hank.

This is Hank Blair, Bettie's son, writing this email at the request of mom. Mom has been in the hospital for over the last week and she asked that I email Mrs. Keil so she could let all the WAC vets and E-9ers know.

On Tuesday (9/1), mom was taken to the hospital to be evaluated. What we found was that she had suffered another set of strokes similar to the one's she suffered two years ago. She has been in the hospital since with more left sided paralysis, weakness, and overall her body is very tired. After much discussion with the physicians and with family around her, we have decided that it is mom's best interest to make her as comfortable as possible.

Tomorrow, we will be moving mom from a room at the local hospital to Bal Four long-term nursing home where she will have round the clock care. My sister and I, along with our entire family, will be there to make mom as comfortable as possible. Mom is very aware of what is happening and has asked for prayers. As I said, her physical body is very weak and she tires very easily during the afternoons.

Feel free to contact me with questions, or ask for updates. I am including my personal email address along with my phone number. I will continue to try and check mom's email on a regular basis for her.

Thank You

Hank Blair
Email: the.tallestscouter@gmail.com
Telephone: 303.330.5640

The E-9ers OFFICERS

The following officers of the E-9ers Association are interested in hearing from you and what suggestions that you may have to improve our group. If you have any thoughts that you would like to share, please give one or more of them a call. They would love to hear from you.

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The E-9ers Association Next Monthly Meeting

October 28, 2009

11:00 a.m.

at

Mr. Panda Restaurant
2852 S. Havana Street
Aurora, CO

NEW ADDRESS? MAKE SURE TO UPDATE DEERS

Important life events like moving or having a child go off to college are milestones in military families' lives. No matter where their journeys take them, it's important for families to keep their DEERS records up to date whenever they hit these and many other milestones.

For Tricare beneficiaries, keeping Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) records up-to-date means uninterrupted access to Tricare's world-class health care. DEERS is the worldwide computer database of uniformed services members (sponsors), their family members, and others eligible for military benefits, including Tricare.

Mistakes or outdated information in DEERS can cause problems with a Tricare beneficiary's claims. For example, retail network pharmacies check Tricare eligibility through DEERS, and prescriptions are filled only for beneficiaries listed in DEERS as eligible. Outdated addresses can also mean important direct mail is misdirected.

Along with changes of address, other life events that can affect DEERS records include additions to the family, either through births or adoptions; changes in a sponsor's status such as retirement; marriage, or divorce; becoming entitled to Medicare; or the death of a sponsor or family member.

Sponsors are automatically registered in DEERS, but it is critical they register their eligible family members as well. To register family members in DEERS and receive an ID card, the family member and sponsor must bring documentation, such as a marriage or birth certificate, to a military ID card issuing facility. Locate ID card offices by ZIP code, city, or state using the ID card office locator at <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl>. Sponsors should call the ID card office first to confirm what documentation is needed and the hours of operation.

Contact information on DEERS can be updated in several different ways including in person at a military ID card issuing facility, online, and by phone, fax, or mail. There are two online options via either the new myDODbenefits Web site at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/mydodbenefits>, or the Beneficiary Web Enrollment Web site at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/bwe>.

Beneficiaries can call the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) Support Office at 1-800-538-9552 (1-866-363-2883 TTY/TDD) to update addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers. Changes can also be faxed to 1-831-655-8317, or mailed to:

DMDC Support Office
400 Gigling Road
Seaside, CA 93955-6771

For more information regarding DEERS, and how and when to update DEERS records, go to <http://www.tricare.mil/DEERS>.

Tricare Press Room Article, Dated August 31, 2009

WIN A FREE TRIP TO VIETNAM

If you received a Purple Heart for being wounded in Vietnam, you could be one of 15 veterans to win The Veterans of Foreign Wars' "Return to Vietnam" trip. This in-country tour will be from April 28 to May 9, 2010, and will visit Hanoi, Saigon, Chu Lai, Cu Chi, Hue, the DMZ, Hoi An, Marble Mountain, and China Beach. Airfare, accommodations, and meals are included. Entries must be received prior to the drawing on January 15, 2010. To claim their trip, winners must send a copy of their Purple Heart documentation to VFW National Headquarters by February 15, 2010, and their passport by March 1, 2010. An entry form and more information are available on the Veterans of Foreign Wars website at http://www.vfw.org/resources/pdf/Vietnam_Trip.pdf.

Military.com News Article, Dated September 7, 2009

VA: 600 VETS WRONGLY SENT ALS LETTER

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs now estimates that more than 600 veterans erroneously received letters telling them they had been diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease, VA spokeswoman Katie Roberts said August 27. As a result of the panic the letters caused, the agency plans to create a more rigorous screening process for its notification letters and is offering to reimburse veterans for medical expenses incurred as a result of the letters.

"That's the least they can do," said former Air Force reservist Nodya Gale Reid in Montgomery, AL. She racked up more than \$3,000 in bills for medical tests in one week to get a second opinion. Her civilian doctor concluded she did not have ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. ALS is a rapidly progressive disease that attacks the nerve cells responsible for controlling muscles and typically kills people within five years.

Since acknowledging the mistake, the VA has increased its estimate on the number of veterans who received the letters in error. Earlier, it refuted a Gulf War veterans group's estimate of 1,200, saying the agency had been contacted by fewer than 10 veterans who had been wrongly notified. Roberts said the VA plans to call every veteran who received the letter by mistake to provide an explanation about how "this unfortunate and regrettable error" occurred and to offer reassurances that the letters do not confirm diagnoses of the fatal neurological disease.

Former Army Sgt. Brent Casey, whose mother read him the letter saying he had ALS as he was driving to get the oil changed in his car, said he has not yet received a call from the VA, but is eager to hear a detailed explanation of how the mistake occurred. "I just couldn't believe it," said Casey.

The VA blamed a coding error, but said it was working to identify the specific problems behind the mistake. The letters were intended to alert ALS sufferers of disability benefits available to them as well as surviving spouses and children. The VA estimates that about 1200 letters were correctly sent to people in those groups. In the future, Roberts said notification letters will be subjected to a screening process that includes "thorough and careful screening of the data, comprehensive review, and an approval process that will include involvement from our stakeholders before release."

VA Secretary Eric Shinseki was in Sioux Falls, SD, on August 27 to speak to veterans groups at the local VA hospital. A staffer who was with him at the event said he would not have time for an interview about the ALS letters, and none of the veterans there brought up the subject during a question-and-answer session.

Military.com News Article, Dated August 28, 2009

TRICARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Web-based Tricare Assistance Program (TRIAP) demonstration began on August 1, 2009 in the U.S. and will continue until April 1, 2010. This project will expand access to existing behavioral health services by using audiovisual telecommunications systems, such as video chat and instant messaging, to access existing behavioral health centers in your region. It also expands access to the behavioral health call centers and counseling services for eligible beneficiaries. For more information, visit the TRICARE website at <http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/>.

Military.com News Article, Dated September 14, 2009

DRUG-RESISTANT BACTERIA RETURNING

A new study suggests that Military Health System hospitals and treatment facilities may be vulnerable to multidrug resistant (MDR) bacteria, but says there is no cause for alarm. The study was conducted by a team of doctors from Brooke Army Medical Center, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and the Infectious Disease Clinical Research Program. Researchers found indications that certain bacteria are developing drug resistances and may be able to survive in military hospitals. Published in the June 2009 issue of Military Medicine, the study recommends that the Military Health System place a "continued emphasis on infection control" and calls for "novel strategies" to fight infections, especially in war zones.

Military.com News Article, Dated September 14, 2009

FEMALE VETERANS FIGHT FOR HEALTHCARE

As debate heats up over healthcare reform, military veterans are fighting for another kind of improvement: the expansion of health services for female vets.

Nearly 8 percent of the veteran population is female. But the Department of Veterans Affairs' health system was designed for a male military, and it shows. A Government Accountability Office report released in August found that two of 19 facilities audited did not offer even basic gender-specific services like cervical cancer screenings, and none fully complied with the VA's policy on privacy for female veterans. Overall, "none of the facilities had fully implemented VA policies pertaining to women veterans' healthcare," the report said. Critics say those shortfalls have deterred women from using the system. And statistics bear that out. While 22 percent of male veterans use VA healthcare, only 15 percent of women do.

Because of the military's changing demographics, the VA expects the number of female veterans enrolled in the system to double within four years. Advocates argue that improvements are needed—and fast. The House unanimously passed a bill in June to address some of the inadequacies by, for example, requiring that the VA produce a report on the problems women face in the veterans' health system and creating a child care pilot program for women receiving VA healthcare. Companion legislation in the Senate is on the floor now, where Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Daniel Akaka of Hawaii is working to build consensus for passage. But some lawmakers worry that a bill alone isn't enough. "It is more complex than just legislation," says Sen. Patty Murray of Washington, one of the Senate bill's main sponsors. "It's cultural."

One particular problem is that in order to keep them out of combat, women in the military are barred from serving on the front lines. But that policy is meaningless in places like Iraq and Afghanistan, where there are no front lines and attacks can happen virtually anywhere. "One of my closest friends was told by a VA doctor that she could not possibly have post-traumatic stress disorder for just this reason. He did not believe that she as a woman could have been in combat," Kayla Williams, a former Army sergeant who came under fire multiple times while serving alongside men on patrols in Iraq, told the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee at a recent hearing.

Some injuries are even harder to prove as service-connected. One of the thorniest is mental trauma caused by sexual assault while in the military, since the assault itself can be nearly impossible to prove. "I am always hearing from women who have experienced rapes and sexual trauma, and they're not getting the treatment that they need," says Wanda Story, national commander of the United Female Veterans of America. They're being denied treatment and benefits, she says, because "they can't prove it." And the treatment itself is sometimes inadequate, with no guarantee, for example, that mental health professionals have been trained for such trauma.

The bill would address that deficiency by mandating additional training. Overall, critics worry that the legislation relies too heavily on the VA to correct its own problems. "They're doing the basics, but I don't think that they've researched it enough," Story says. "I don't think that that bill should be passed until they really get it right." The VA has already taken steps in the right direction by, for example, requiring that managers of women's veterans' programs be full-time employees. Even so, the measure could prod the department to move more quickly.

NVOA News Article, Dated August 4, 2009

OFFICIALS WARN OF SCAM INVOLVING VA PRESCRIPTIONS

Officials with the nation's veterans hospitals are warning of a new scam targeting men and women who have served in the nation's military. "A company calling itself 'The Patient Care Group' is conducting a scam against veterans who receive VA prescriptions," a circular issued by the VA says. "Callers claiming to be representatives of this group tell veterans that their prescriptions are being administered by the company. They then ask for credit card information so that the veterans can continue to receive their medications."

VA officials say they have not made any changes to the system's prescription process and they warn veterans to not provide such information to callers.

NVOAA News Article, Dated September 8, 2009

NEW POLICY DELAYS ARLINGTON BURIALS

There is nothing so impressive or sobering as a burial at Arlington National Cemetery. The caisson, the gun salute, the bugler, and the folded flag -- all reinforce the absolute sacredness of the cemetery itself and the massive weight of sacrifice made by those buried there. It is an amazing honor to be buried at Arlington, but it's one that has become increasingly difficult and delayed.

Like many others around the country, the family of Capt. Ronald G. Luce will have to wait a bit longer for the active duty 20th Special Forces Group National Guard soldier to reach his final resting place at Arlington. Luce, who was 27 years old, died in Afghanistan on August 2 after insurgents attacked his vehicle with an IED. Within a few days his body was brought to Fort Bragg and a memorial service was held for him there on August 13. His funeral at Arlington National Cemetery is scheduled for October 21. Until then, Capt. Luce's body waits in a funeral home in Fayetteville, NC as his family waits to make the final leg of a miserable journey.

Funeral directors say that it currently takes about two months to schedule a burial at Arlington and they say they typically have to spend thirty to forty-five minutes on hold just to talk to Arlington officials to schedule a burial there. "They're doing about 30 funerals a day there, with people from all over the country. They are busy," said Harry Carter, a funeral director with Rogers and Breece Funeral Home in Fayetteville, NC, the city which neighbors Fort Bragg. Carter said this is not a problem for his funeral home, as they typically only arrange four or five Arlington burials each year.

Arlington officials are well-aware of the long delays and they are quick to express their regrets and apologize for keeping military families waiting. "No one wants these families to wait a day longer than they have to," said Dave Foster, a public affairs officer for Arlington National Cemetery. "This is closure for them. These men and women have paid the ultimate price and they deserve these honors." In fact, granting full honors to service members is one of reasons for the long delay, Foster said.

A policy change in January now allows any service member who dies from wounds as a result of enemy action to receive an Arlington burial with full military honors. Before the change, some of these honors were reserved for Flag Officers. Enlisted soldiers, regardless of the circumstances of their death, were granted pall bearers, a firing party, and a bugler, but not the caisson, band, and escort troops -- though some additional honors were available for certain E-9's depending on their branch of service.

But the change has brought a glut of requests for a full honors burial. Coordinating the caisson, band, and escort troops takes time, Foster said. He said the increased operational tempo in Afghanistan has also led to more requests for full honors burials. Foster is quick to add, however, that the majority of the 27 to 30 burials that take place each day at Arlington are not for troops killed in present-day military actions. "We have all of these veterans from past wars -- World War II, Korea, even Vietnam -- they also made the ultimate sacrifice and are deserving," Foster said.

Scheduling services can be a delicate balancing act as Arlington officials strive to plan each service so that the ceremonies don't intrude on one another. There are 70 sections in the cemetery, so many times it is not a problem to have two services occurring at once. But, he said, most of the time, the families of troops killed in Iraq and Afghanistan want their loved ones to be buried in Section 60 with other veterans of those wars. Scheduling those burials so they don't conflict can be tough. "The key point," Foster said, "is that each service member deserves our utmost respect and everyone here understands and strives to give that. We will do everything in our power to make that happen."

Military.com News Article, Dated September 4, 2009

MILITARY NEWS, INFORMATION SITE SEEKS INPUT

The new Defense Department website at www.defense.gov is designed to make military news and information more accessible while inviting greater participation from the public. The new "We Want to Hear from You" feature on www.defense.gov invites users to ask questions and vote on policy issues they want explained. Submissions will be tallied every few weeks, and Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and other senior leaders will reply to questions that garner the most interest. The new website replaces www.defenselink.mil/ as the department's main Internet entry portal.

Military.com News Article, Dated August 31, 2009

TRICARE STANDARD PAYS TO BE PREVENTIVE

Obtaining clinical preventive services helps prevent illness before major health problems occur. Section 711 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2009 encourages eligible Tricare Standard beneficiaries to use preventive health services by waiving all cost shares for certain types of these services starting September 1. These services include screenings for colorectal cancer, breast cancer, cervical cancer and prostate cancer; immunizations; and well-child visits for children under 6 years of age.

Also, for all beneficiaries over age six, when a visit to a health care provider includes one or more of the benefits listed above, the cost share for the visit is waived. However, other services provided during the same visit are subject to cost shares and deductibles. "Early disease detection and chronic condition management programs result in the prevention of long term health conditions and add savings for beneficiaries and the government in the long term," said Navy Rear Adm. Christine S. Hunter, deputy director of the Tricare Management Activity. "It's a great new benefit under Tricare Standard."

The cost share waiver applies to non-Medicare eligible, Tricare Standard or Extra beneficiaries; even if the beneficiary hasn't met the annual deductible. Beneficiaries enrolled in Tricare Prime are unaffected, since they do not have copayments for preventive services. Medicare-eligible beneficiaries are covered by Tricare For Life (TFL), which generally pays the remainder of any costs not paid under Medicare, including amounts for the listed preventive services. However, preventive services and all immunizations not covered by Medicare require Tricare Standard cost shares and deductibles for TFL beneficiaries.

Criteria such as age, frequency of care, and family history have to be met in order to waive cost shares for the six clinical preventive services. All other preventive services not included in the services listed in Section 711 are subject to cost shares and deductibles. This benefit can be applied to any services received on or after October 14, 2008. Beneficiaries can request reimbursement for services received after October 14, 2008, and before the implementation date of September 1, 2009.

Reimbursement requests can be made by phone or in writing to the region where the beneficiary lives. For requests by phone:

North Region

Net Federal Services, LLC
1-877- 874-2273

South Region

Humana Military Healthcare Services, Inc.
1-800-444-5445

West Region

TriWest Healthcare Alliance
1-888-874-9378

Requests submitted in writing to the regional claims processor should include the sponsor's social security number, full names and dates of birth of all dependents, and current mailing address. For written requests:

North Region

Health Net Federal Services, Inc.
c/o PGBA, LLC/TRICARE Claims Correspondence
PO Box 870141
Surfside Beach, SC 29587-9741

South Region

Humana Military Healthcare Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 740062
Louisville, KY 40201-7462

West Region

West Region Customer Service
P.O. Box 77029
Madison, WI 53707-7029

SOCIAL EVENTS

DECEMBER: E-9erS Christmas Party

DATE: Sunday, December 13, 2009

TIME: 11:30 AM

PLACE: Marie Callendar's Restaurant; 51 West Dry Creek Court, Littleton, CO.

COST: \$19.69 for Sunday Brunch. Tax and tip included. Reservations & Money to Mardy by the November E-9 meeting.

A note to the E-9ers from Mardy: "I will not be doing the Socials for E-9ers after 2009. I would like for you all to know I have thoroughly enjoyed doing the Socials. The E-9ers Organization is the best in the whole wide world. Not the USA, but the Whole Wide World. I know when it is time, hopefully, for someone else to take over, and this is the time. I wish to thank all E-9 members for positive comments, assistance with socials, and attending members. Just Me Mardy"

IN MEMORIAM

Henry F. Sexauer, CMSgt, (USAF, Ret) and Marie C. Boucher recently passed away. Henry passed away in June and Marie in August. While neither had been active in the association the last few years, both were charter members, and helped build our outstanding association. Both will be greatly missed. Please remember them in your prayers.

COMMISSARY COUPONS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT

Although most customers know they can redeem coupons from the DeCA website at commissaries, few are aware they can also pick them up at the store entrances and checkout counters, collect them from displays on store aisles, and use coupons that are attached to products. Thousands of coupons are redeemed at commissaries throughout the U.S. and overseas daily, and deliver significant savings for military families. For more information, contact your local commissary.

Military.com News Article, Dated August 24, 2009

WELCOME ABOARD!

The following new member has recently joined our association. Please welcome her into our elite group of E-9ers and spouses:

Joyce Ross

NEW NAVAL MUSEUM COMING

The groundbreaking ceremony for the new Seabee Museum took place recently at Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC), Port Hueneme, CA. Established in 1947, the Seabee Museum is the only official Navy museum, and is owned and operated by the Navy as part of the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC). In June 2008, the CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation gifted \$10 million to the Navy for the purpose of building the new museum. Although the new museum will be approximately the same size as the former facility -- 36,000 square feet -- the purpose-built facility will allow a more comprehensive story of the Seabees. The new museum will open in the spring of 2011. For more information, visit the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum website at <http://www.seabeehf.org/museum/index.htm>.

Military.com News Article, Dated September 7, 2009

FRA SCHOLARSHIP SEASON OPENS

The Fleet Reserve Association is kicking off its 2010 scholarship season. Applications are now available at www.fra.org for students to apply for nearly 30 scholarships for the 2010-2011 academic year. FRA's scholarship program has been helping deserving students reach their educational and professional goals for decades, presenting annual awards of up to \$5,000 to FRA members, their spouses, children, and grandchildren who are pursuing college degrees. Scholarship applications must be mailed to FRA no later than April 15, 2010.

Military.com News Article, Dated September 7, 2009

2009
CALENDAR



OCTOBER

- 12 Columbus Day Holiday
- 13 US Navy Established (1775)
- 13 UVC Meeting
- 16 National Boss' Day
- 24 United Nations Day
- 27 Navy Day
- 28 Membership Meeting
- 31 Halloween

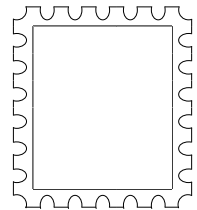
HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- Oct. 5, 1963 (46th) William & Marcia Allan
- Oct. 5, 2003 (6th) Paul & Julie Lietz
- Oct. 5, 1962 (47th) Genaro & Wolsun Salazar
- Oct. 7, 2000 (9th) Wayne & Sharon Ortiz
- Oct. 9, 1942 (67th) Rollie & Arlene Vencill
- Oct. 9, 1976 (33rd) Joseph & Lois Sykora
- Oct. 15, 1998 (11th) Manuel & Bijen Maciel
- Oct. 23, 1954 (55th) Bob & Mardy Flor
- Oct. 24, 1958 (51st) Bob & Sylvia Olsen
- Oct. 24, Kenneth and Joyce Ross
- Oct. 26, 1977 (57th) Owen & Irene Hefner
- Oct. 29, 1977 (32nd) David & Leslie Jones
- Oct. 30, 1964 (45th) Samuel & Janice Winter

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- 6 Roger Dewey
- 8 Weston Staggers
- 9 Vera Brantley
- 10 Lila Walowen
- 13 Elmer Leitner
- 14 Shirley Deal
- 14 Sally Giese
- 15 Janiece McCasky
- 24 Bill Wells
- 25 Elizabeth Papineau
- 25 Julie Lietz
- 27 Frank Alfaro
- 28 Richard Pool
- 28 Ingrid Camell
- 31 Melinda Sigle
- 31 Gail Moses

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

