



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

1822 W 122nd St, Gardena, CA 90247

Phone: (310) 324-6161



September 2023

GENERAL WILLIAM STARK ROSECRANS  
VFW POST 3261

*It's not the dues you paid to be a member, it's the price  
you paid to be eligible.*

### COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

VFW Post 3261 would like to recognize Gil & Connie Crenshaw for their recent donation to our Post Clothing Drive. The clothing they provided for men, women and children, including a large bag shoes, will help our homeless veterans and their families who are in urgent need of support.

We appreciate the thoughtfulness of this amazing couple who took the time



Gil & Connie Crenshaw

and energy to make this donation possible. Thank you Gil & Connie .

I would also like to thank our 1<sup>st</sup> Trustee Robert J. Galda who personally delivered a large donation of clothing to the Collection Center.

Post 3261 also donated \$200 for undergarments for our veterans along with other Posts in our District.

Our Post Clothing Drive helped to support the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual *Compton Veterans Stand-Down* which is hosted by the Compton Chamber of Commerce to not only provide clothing donations but also assistance with employment and housing, and legal services. Medical and vision exams and a host of other needed services for veterans are also provided. The *Compton Veterans Stand-Down* will be held September 23-25, 2023. For more information contact Dr. L. M. Johnson at [cptchamber@aol.com](mailto:cptchamber@aol.com).

Be sure to read the article on pages 2 of this month's Newsletter, which highlights the VFW's commitment to provide housing for 38,000+ veterans in 2023. The article on page 3 provides safe and useful tips on how we can all support Veterans experiencing homelessness.



James "Jimmy C" Carradine  
Post Commander

**CANTEEN**  
Open Monday - Sunday  
2 - 10 pm

Enjoy Trina's Sunday Dinner  
Every Sunday 2 - 9 PM  
Menu varies each Sunday.

**TACO Tuesday 4-9 pm**

- Tacos \$1.50  
(Asada & Chicken)
- Wet Burrito \$7.00  
(Asada or Chicken)
- Nachos \$5.00  
(Asada or Chicken)

**BINGO Wednesday**

Open @ 4:30 pm Starts at 6:30 pm

#### MENU

- Hot Dogs / Hamburgers
- Cheese Toast / Patty Melt
- Taco Salad / French Fries
- Desserts: Brownies & Pineapple
- Upside Down Cake

**RENT THE HALL FOR  
YOUR NEXT PARTY OR  
EVENT!**

- (Capacity: 250 Persons)
- Security Deposit is \$500  
(Required to hold the date)
- Friday & Saturday \$2,000  
(Bar closes at midnight)

FOR MORE  
INFORMATION ON VFW POST  
3261 GO TO OUR WEBSITE AT  
[VFW3261.ORG](http://VFW3261.ORG)

**Veterans  
Crisis Line**



DIAL 988 then  
PRESS 1

## VA ON TRACK TO HOUSE 38,000+ HOMELESS VETERANS IN 2023, AWARDS \$1B IN GRANTS TO HELP HOMELESS AND AT-RISK VETERANS.

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced it has permanently housed 26,470 Veterans through July 2023, on pace to exceed [its goal of housing 38,000 homeless Veterans](#) in 2023. VA also announced more than \$1 billion in grants to help homeless and at-risk Veterans through the [Supportive Services for Veteran Families and Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem](#) programs. These grants are a critical part of VA's efforts to provide housing for Veterans in collaboration with the community.

Under the [Supportive Services for Veteran Families](#) program, VA is awarding 256 grants totaling approximately \$799 million to community organizations that help rapidly rehouse Veterans and their families, prevent the imminent loss of Veterans' homes, or identify more suitable housing situations for Veterans and their families. Through the [Grant and Per Diem](#) program, VA is awarding 454 grants

totaling approximately \$257 million to community organizations that provide Veterans with transitional housing and case management — including connecting Veterans to VA benefits, community-based services, and permanent housing.

Ending Veteran homelessness is a top priority for VA and the [Biden-Harris Administration](#). In 2022 alone, [VA housed more than 40,000 formerly homeless Veterans](#), prevented more than 17,700 Veterans and their families from falling into homelessness, and helped nearly 191,700 additional Veteran families who were experiencing financial difficulties retain their homes or avoid foreclosure.

Thanks in part to these efforts, the number of Veterans experiencing homelessness has fallen by 11% since early 2020 and by more than 55% since 2010.

*We won't rest until every Veteran has the safe, stable home that they deserve — because none of our nation's heroes should be homeless in this country they fought to defend,"* said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. *These grants will allow VA, alongside our community partners, to help provide more housing and wraparound services to more homeless and at-risk Veterans than ever before."*

Earlier this year, the Biden-Harris Administration [announced](#) major new actions to prevent and reduce homelessness among Veterans, including launching supportive services to quickly rehouse Veterans experiencing homelessness; providing new legal services for Veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness; and funding programs to help Veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness find jobs and connect to work.

VA's efforts to end Veteran homelessness are built upon the [evidence-based "Housing First"](#) approach, which prioritizes getting a Veteran into housing and providing them with the wraparound support they need to stay housed, including health care, job training, legal and education assistance and more.

For more information about VA's comprehensive efforts to end Veteran homelessness, visit [VA.gov/homeless](#). To learn more about the Grant and Per Diem program or view the full list of grantees, visit the [Grant and Per Diem website](#). To learn more about the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program or view the full list of grantees, visit the [Supportive Services for Veteran Families website](#).

If you are a Veteran who is experiencing homelessness or at risk for homelessness, call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 877-4AID-VET (877-424-3838). Visit the [VA Homeless Programs website](#) to learn about housing initiatives and other programs for Veterans exiting homelessness.

SOURCE: <https://news.va.gov/press-room/https-news-va-gov-press-room-homeless/>

# HOW TO PROVIDE AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND HOPE TO HOMELESS VETERANS

## 1. HELP THEM CALL THE NATIONAL CALL CENTER FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

The fastest way for Veterans to get connected to VA is to call the [National Call Center for Homeless Veterans](#) at 877-424-3737. The call is free, confidential and staffed 24/7 with trained counselors who will connect them to their nearest VA medical center for help. Each VA medical center has a [Health Care for Homeless Veterans \(HCHV\)](#) program with team members who are trained to connect Veterans with resources, such as housing assistance, medical and psychiatric inpatient and outpatient treatment programs, and other community-based residential programs or social services.

In some cases, the team may already have a relationship with the Veteran you've encountered and may have begun building their trust, which is an important step when it comes to engagement efforts. Many Veterans aren't willing to get care after a first encounter, but after building a rapport with a social worker or case manager, they decide to come to VA for help. Remember to treat Veterans experiencing homelessness with respect, and don't rush them to access services they aren't comfortable with.

It's not your role to build a relationship with a Veteran experiencing homelessness, but connecting them with trained staff who can help is a crucial first step. If you believe a person is a Veteran and could benefit from VA services, ask if they have served in the military. Some do not identify as a Veteran despite fitting the description.

## 2. SHOW HUMANITY AND KINDNESS TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Veterans experiencing homelessness are going through several different physical struggles at any given time, whether they be health issues, hunger, thirst, exhaustion or something else. Keep in mind that many have also experienced trauma that brought them to where they are now. Not knowing where their next meal will come from, where they'll sleep or if they'll be safe is likely to make anyone distrustful of institutional services.

## 3. OFFER A CONNECTION TO RESOURCES

If you're looking for a simple way to share the resources VA has available to help Veterans, we encourage you to carry printouts with information or water bottles with the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) and [National Call Center for Homeless Veterans](#) written on it so Veterans know where they can go for help when they are ready. If a Veteran isn't comfortable using VA services, there are community agencies VA can connect them with. These community providers often offer things VA cannot, such as support geared toward families. Libraries are also great hubs for homeless Veterans to find resources to help them through the day, including bathrooms, air conditioning, computers, entertainment and more.

## 4. LEAVE JUDGMENTS AND MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT HOMELESSNESS ASIDE

There are lots of misconceptions about homelessness, including how it happens and why people remain homeless. Unfortunately, homelessness tends to be a cycle that is hard to break out of with job instability and lack of medical care contributing to the issue. Veterans become homeless in several different ways, including job loss, illness of themselves or a family member, shortage of affordable housing, loss of a home, health issues and substance abuse to name a few. Showing kindness and instilling hope can go a long way: Smile, say hello and ask their name. Treat them as you would treat any other person having a bad day. If you are able and comfortable, give them a bottle of water, or a prepackaged snack or food for their pet.

## 5. CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING TO HELP VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

If you are interested in providing more help than a single interaction can provide, consider volunteering at a local [Stand Down event](#). Stand Downs are typically one-to-three-day events during which VA staff and volunteers provide food, clothing and health screenings to homeless and at-risk Veterans. Veterans receive referrals for health care, housing solutions, employment, substance use treatment, mental health counseling and other essential services. You can also reach out to your local VA for [information on volunteering](#), as they have services that allow you to provide help in a more structured environment and share your time and resources with the local Veteran community.



Every Veteran experiencing homelessness has a story to tell and, often, it involves one or more traumas that led them to where they are now. If you encounter a Veteran living in an encampment, on the street or in a vehicle, you may feel compelled to help. In this article, we hope to provide you with safe, useful ways to support Veterans experiencing homelessness should you feel empowered to do so.

Imagine seeing an unsheltered homeless Veteran as you walk down the street.

Then, imagine your immediate reaction: Is it compassion as you momentarily put yourself in their shoes? Is it anger that America has failed so many? Is it a feeling of displeasure that the street has become a home to those with nowhere else to go?

Or do you feel a sense of duty to offer them something—anything—that might make their day better?

## LEARN ABOUT VA PROGRAMS

Visit the [VA Homeless Programs website](#) to learn about housing initiatives and other programs for Veterans exiting homelessness.

[Find your nearest VA.](#)

Check out the [Ending Veteran Homelessness podcast](#) to learn more about what VA is doing about Veteran homelessness. Learn how to [get involved with housing homeless Veterans](#).

**SOURCE:**

<https://news.va.gov/123212/five-tips-on-how-to-engage-homeless-veterans/>

## VETERAN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (VCP) PROGRAM

Shelena Drollinger shares her story of finding support through VA's [Veteran Community Partnership \(VCP\) program](#) and her community to care for her husband who experienced trauma during his deployment to Afghanistan. The VCP program connects VA with community providers and organizations, ensuring support to meet the diverse needs of all Veterans. The [National Center for Healthcare Advancement and Partnerships \(HAP\)](#) works with the VCP initiative to create a system of support for Veterans, families and caregivers.



*Army veteran Joe Drollinger and his family.*

“Collaborating with HAP and other organizations is instrumental in elevating the health and well-being of Veterans and their families through partnerships,” said Lori Paris, VCP education lead caregiver support coordinator. “Shelena’s experience illuminates the daily challenges caregivers encounter and highlights the invaluable resources offered by VA to support them.”

### JOE’S DEPLOYMENT AND TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE

Shelena and her husband Joe Drollinger met in 2015, eight years after his discharge from the Army. Joe’s military service from 2004 to 2007 included a deployment to Afghanistan. During a convoy mission, his Humvee struck a roadside bomb, flipped over and rolled down an embankment. Joe suffered physical injuries including broken teeth and severe bruising, as well as posttraumatic stress disorder, emotional trauma from witnessing the loss of fellow soldiers and a suspected traumatic brain injury.

### NAVIGATING DAILY CHALLENGES

Shelena describes the daily challenges her husband faces, including difficulty staying focused, hypervigilance, auditory hallucinations and night terrors. She shares the impact these issues have on Joe’s daily life and their family dynamic, illustrating the magnitude of obstacles they encounter.

*“My husband has difficulty staying focused on any task. Every loud noise, even our boys popping bubble wrap when he doesn’t expect it, will cause him to startle and can set off auditory hallucinations. He is so hypervigilant that he is extremely forgetful. He sets multiple alarms throughout the day to help him remember simple tasks like taking his medicine and eating. “He gets frustrated with himself for being so forgetful and will talk poorly about himself and say things about how he feels like a burden to me and our family. And at times says we would be better off without him.”*

### VA AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Initially, Shelena did not fully grasp the extent of Joe’s ongoing battle with the aftermath of his military service. After an outburst of anger and a few incidents which included night terrors and suicidal thoughts, she recognized the need for professional help. She called VA’s [Veteran’s Crisis Line \(VCL\)](#), a confidential, toll-free hotline that provides 24/7 support and assistance to Veterans in crisis and their families. The VCL is staffed with trained professionals who specialize in handling challenges that affect Veterans. They listened to the couple’s struggles and promptly connected them to the Louisville VA.

While Shelena and Joe express immense gratitude for the strategies and resources provided by VA, they are also thankful for the support of their neighbors who check on Joe when Shelena is at work. Additionally, their church family plays a significant role in their lives, offering Joe odd handyman jobs that provide him with a sense of purpose during periods of depression.

(Continued on page 5)

## VETERAN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (VCP) PROGRAM (Cont. from page 4)

### AFGHANISTAN AND OUR VETERANS PANEL DISCUSSION

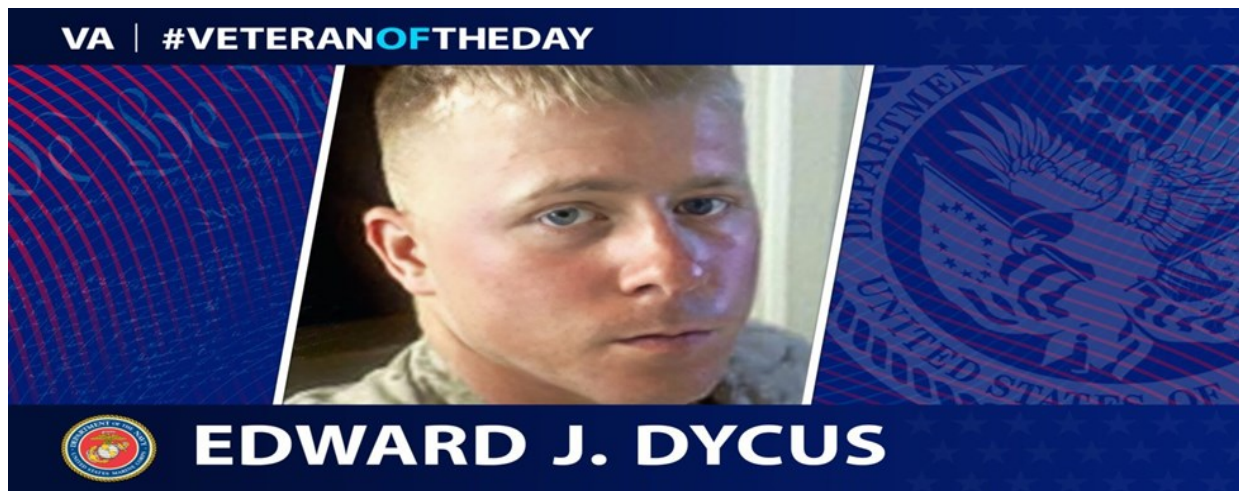
In 2021, Shelena's participation in "[Afghanistan and Our Veterans](#)," a virtual community conversation conducted by the Kentuckiana Veteran-Community Integration Coalition, opened doors to additional support for their family. After the panel, they were interviewed by a local news outlet and referred to a [Veteran Service Officer \(VSO\)](#), a trained professional who advocates for Veterans and ensures they receive necessary support. Their VSO has been helpful in guiding them through the process of filing for service connection benefits and assistance with legal matters.

### CARING FOR CAREGIVERS

Shelena emphasizes the importance of seeking help not only for Veterans but also for caregivers. She expresses gratitude to Lori Paris for the guidance, resources and assistance she received through the VCP Program and [Caregiver Support Program](#). *"Ultimately, I have helped Joe most by looking for help for myself. The strain on our finances, family and relationship has been extremely trying. I really needed guidance to handle what he was dealing with and trying to help him manage and navigate. Lori is amazing about reminding me that in order to take care of someone else, I have to take care of myself."*

For more information about the Veterans Crisis Line, visit <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>.

SOURCE: <https://news.va.gov/123222/caregiver-finds-support-through-veterans-community/>



Edward Dycus [was born](#) in Greenville, Mississippi, in December 1989, to Randy and Theresa Carol Dycus. As a child, he had always [dreamed](#) of joining the military. Two years after his 2008 Riverside High School graduation, he joined the Marine Corp, completing basic training at Parris Island, South Carolina, in 2011.

Dycus [served](#) at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, with the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force.

On his birthday that year, he deployed to Afghanistan. Only a few weeks later, on Feb. 1, 2012, he was killed by an Afghan soldier while protecting a joint U.S-Afghan base in the [Marja](#) district in Helmand. He was 22, and his death marked the first Mississippian in Afghanistan that year.

Several initiatives honored Dycus' life shortly after his death. The Mississippi State Senate passed CR 557, which commemorated his service, while the superintendent of his school district planned for a candlelight service.

"Eddie was born for the military," one of his friends had said. He "was always more worried about someone else than himself," said another. [Following](#) the funeral held at his high school, the Patriot Guard Riders led a procession along streets lined by hundreds of residents, taking Dycus to be [buried](#) in Greenville Cemetery with full military honors. He was honored at the 2021 NASCAR 600 Miles of Remembrance, with his name on the windshield of the no. 5 car.

We honor his service.

## VFW ASKS THIS QUESTION OF ALL AMERICANS 22 YEARS AFTER

### HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?

As time marches on, America continues to deal with new challenges, tragedies and turmoil that arise in the world. That is why the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) challenges all Americans to remember and honor the lives of so many who were tragically taken from us during the terrorist events that took place in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, on Sept. 11, 2001.

#### Let us recount the events of that tragic day:

It was at 8:46 a.m. Eastern Standard Time on that Tuesday morning when the first plane, American Airlines Flight 11, hit the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City.

The second plane, United Airlines Flight 175, struck the South Tower of the World Trade Center at 9:03 a.m. News anchors announced that planes were being hijacked and used by terrorists as guided missiles ... the nation was under attack.

Photo:



Photo: Free Download on Freepik

Thirty-four minutes later, at 9:37 a.m., American Airlines Flight 77, crashed into the Pentagon collapsing part of the building. Then at 9:59 a.m., the burning WTC South Tower collapsed. Four minutes later, at 10:03 a.m., United Airlines Flight 93, crashed in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. At 10:28 a.m., the WTC's North Tower collapsed. In just 102 minutes, 19 hijackers would succeed in taking the lives of 2,977 Americans and terrorizing our country with the entire world watching in horror.

Yet, in the midst of this unimaginable tragedy, stories of unbelievable heroism were being reported from every location. Firefighters and law enforcement officers running into the burning World Trade Center buildings, rescuing hundreds of people. Service members leading others through the burning, smoldering Pentagon rubble to safety. Passengers of Flight 93 who decided to fight back against hijackers to prevent them getting to their intended target. The selfless sacrifice would come to define that day as much, if not more so than the attacks themselves.

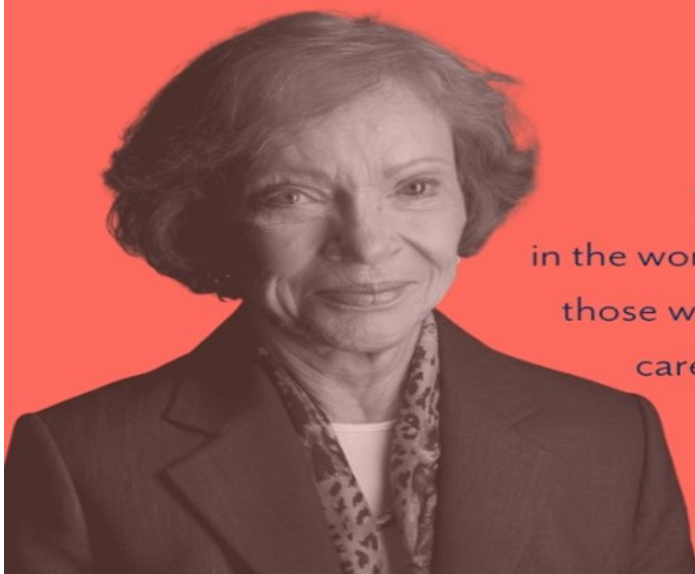
A little more than twenty years ago, country music artist Darryl Worley released a song titled, "Have You Forgotten" about the Sept. 11 attacks. At the time, it seemed unfathomable that anyone would forget what happened on that day. Yet two decades later, many people cannot recall the reason for the 20-year long war in Afghanistan and why service members are still being deployed to the Middle East, even today.

This Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance, the VFW encourages every American to take time to remember the victims, reflect on the extraordinary courage of first responders and ordinary citizens alike, pay tribute to those who took the fight to the enemy and sacrificed to protect and defend our freedom, and never let Sept. 11, 2001, fade from our memory.

Always remember.

**SOURCE:** <https://www.vfw.org/media-and-events/latest-releases/archives/2023/9/have-you-forgotten>

## NEW TOOLKIT PROVIDES GUIDANCE FOR VETERANS' CAREGIVERS IN TIMES OF DISASTER



ROSALYNN FOR  
CARTER CAREGIVERS  
INSTITUTE

“There are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who need them.”

- Rosalynn Carter

As many of us know firsthand, caregiving can be one of the most rewarding experiences you will ever have, but it can also be one of the most challenging—especially when you are facing an emergency in your home or a disaster in your community. To make matters worse, resources to help families prepare for disasters often lack content that reflects the unique needs of family caregivers, despite the critical role they play in these crises.

In partnership with VA, the [Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers \(RCI\)](https://rosalynncarter.org/emergency-preparedness/) set out to change that. Together, we developed a new toolkit, “Prepared Caregivers,” to support caregivers of Veterans and the unique challenges they may face in times of disaster, so that they are better prepared for even the most difficult days.

Prepared Caregivers is made up of plans, advice, insight and conversation prompts for caregivers of Veterans, with customizable checklists designed to create a plan suited to caregivers’ unique needs. Resources include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Explanations of key terms used in the preparedness sector but that are not commonly known
- ◆ A military-caregiver-specific emergency plan
- ◆ Checklists for caring for people with special needs, pets and service animals in an emergency
- ◆ Insight into how the physical and mental wounds of war may cause Veterans to experience disas-

ters differently than other care recipients

- ◆ Strategies to help Veterans process their emotions in precarious situations
- ◆ Tips for service animals
- ◆ Month-by-month guides for assembling disaster kits
- ◆ Procedures for navigating life after a disaster

This toolkit is free for download, fully customizable to meet the unique needs of each military caregiver and is designed to be self-paced. To access the toolkit, visit <https://rosalynncarter.org/emergency-preparedness/>.

Prepared Caregivers will walk you through every step of your emergency preparedness plan, because being prepared for these devastating events is one way to help offset the challenges you may face in times of emergency.

The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers promotes the health, strength and resilience of caregivers in the United States. Established in 1987 by former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, the institute’s priority is the unpaid family caregiver, the people who care for a relative, friend or loved one. To learn more about the institute, its advocacy and how to participate in programs or build a partnership, visit [www.rosalynncarter.org](http://www.rosalynncarter.org).

**SOURCE:** <https://news.va.gov/123768/new-toolkit->

## DOCTOR AND DAV DRIVER SOLVE ELDERLY VETERAN'S GENERATOR PROBLEM



On Aug. 30, Hurricane Idalia tore through the Florida gulf coast with 125 mph winds, flooding streets, damaging homes and shifting the lives of countless impacted by her destructive force. Perry, a small quiet town in Florida's big bend, was hit hard, and the [VA Clinic](#) located there had to temporarily close its doors for official services due to damage.

VA clinical providers, among other resources, were sent to provide assistance to Veterans who were impacted within the surrounding area of Perry. "It was

important we came here to provide in-person services to our Veterans in this community," said Wende Dottor, North Florida/South Georgia VA director.

From bumps and bruises to scrapes and scratches, staff members were able to provide triage to Veterans, many of whom were without electrical power. The situation was dire for one Veteran who relies on an oxygen tank to breath when his power went out. His generator was having issues and he was forced to sleep in his vehicle so he could plug in his oxygen tank.

### RELOCATED GENERATOR FOR ELDERLY COUPLE

Dr. Stephen Armisted, assigned to the Earnest I. "Boots" Thomas VA Clinic in Tallahassee, was one of the staff members rapidly deployed. He refused to let this Veteran go unassisted and remained committed to help.

Armisted found out the Veteran and his wife were elderly, living alone and with little help at their house. Their generator was too heavy to carry and, due to carbon-monoxide alarms, the couple was unable to keep the generator running consistently.

Armisted knew he could help. He and Chris King, a DAV maintenance technician and driver, followed the couple to their home and realized the generator just needed to be moved to a better area so it could be accessed and used appropriately.

VA defines its ICARE Value of commitment as working "Diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities."

Armisted's commitment is the epitome of what VA is all about.

"VA has adopted our ICARE Values and these are our core belief systems," said Dottor. "What we do in VA is special, and I whole-heartedly support our staff members who go above and beyond to ensure that our Veterans are taken care of, just like Chris and Dr. Armisted did today." "We wanted to make sure they were in good shape," said Armisted. "We were happy, they were happy and I'm just glad we were able to help them. We're here to help Veterans."

SOURCE: <https://news.va.gov/123721/deployment-team-assists-veterans-hurricane/>



**RAPID DEPLOYMENT TEAM**

## AVIATION TEAMS HAVE HIGHER RATES OF CANCER



Researchers found military air and ground aviation crews have higher rates of cancer than the general U.S. population, according to a Department of Defense (DOD)-conducted study.

The report is titled *Study on the Incidence of Cancer Diagnosis and Mortality Among Military Aviators and Aviation Support Personnel*. Researchers followed 156,050 air personnel and 737,891 ground personnel. Active-duty, National Guard and Reserve troops from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps were a part of the study.

Navy Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman Amado Banos Derrickson signals to a UH-60Q Blackhawk helicopter as it takes off from the USS Green Bay (LPD-20) on Feb. 22, 2017, in the Gulf of Thailand.

The study was published in response to the National Defense Authorization Act of 2021 (P.L. 116-283) mandating that the DOD conduct an aviation cancer study. Air crewmembers observed had a 24 percent higher chance of cancer compared to the U.S. population. **Of the airmen studied, statistics revealed that they had:**

- An 87 percent higher rate of melanoma (skin cancer)
- A 39 percent higher rate of thyroid cancer
- A 16 percent higher rate of prostate cancer
- A 24 percent higher rate of cancer for all sites

According to the report, ground crewmembers had a 3 percent higher rate of cancer compared to the general population. **Troops on the ground also had a:**

- 19 percent higher rate of brain and nervous system cancers
- 15 percent higher rate of thyroid cancer
- 9 percent higher rate of melanoma
- 9 percent higher rate of kidney and renal pelvis cancers

Also reported, air crewmembers had a 56 percent lower mortality rate for all cancers when compared to the rest of the population, and ground crewmembers had a 35 percent lower mortality rate. About half of those observed joined the military before 1990. Available data through 2017 was collected by researchers.

To compare the results of the study to the general U.S. population, researchers used statistics from the Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results Program (SEER). The database is maintained by the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute.

P.L. 116-283 also requires additional research about cancers among air and ground troops. The DOD will attempt to identify the following:

- ◆ Toxins and hazardous materials associated with military flight operations
- ◆ Operating environments associated with increased amounts of radiation
- ◆ Duties, dates of service and types of aircraft flown that could have increased the risk for cancers
- ◆ Locations associated with a higher incidence of cancers
- ◆ Military-related exposures that are not related to aviation
- ◆ The appropriate age to begin screening military air and ground crewmembers for cancers

On page 8 of the April 2022 issue of VFW magazine, an article reported that an Air Force study found pilots and crew members who served aboard aircraft from 1970 to 2004 are more likely to be diagnosed with and die from skin or prostate cancer. However, the study only examined aircraft personnel and not ground crew troops. Read the article [here](#).

This article is featured in the 2023 September issue of [VFW magazine](#), and was written by [Dave Spiva](#), associate editor for VFW magazine.

**SOURCE:** <https://www.vfw.org/media-and-events/latest-releases/archives/2023/9/aviation-teams-have-higher-rates-of-cancer>



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## **VFW POST 3261 OFFICERS**

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