



Manuel Schneidmiller Post 154, Inc.

Rathdrum Idaho

Newsletter

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Email: rathdrum154@gmail.com

Website: Rathdrumpost154.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RathdrumAmericanLegion>

Mailing Address: PO Box 1116, Rathdrum ID

Meeting at: Lions Club 16114 N. Meyer Rd Rathdrum

Editor: Jean Bledsoe



American Legion Post 154 Mission Statement

The American Legion Post 154 is a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness to support Veterans and the Community at large. We are committed to mentoring and sponsorship of youth programs, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting a strong national security, and continued devotion to our fellow service members, veterans, and their families in our communities. Our success depends entirely on active membership, participation and volunteerism. This organization belongs to the people it serves and the community in which it thrives.

Commander's Comments:

I would like to start by saying without you, there would be no Post 154. As we move forward in 2021 we must remember what unites us as one. Pandemics, presidents and prejudices cannot come between our Legion family members, as we are all Americans first and foremost. Getting back to the days of family and friends gatherings, baseball games and having pot luck meetings will come again soon; we just have to be patient.

As Legionnaires our most sacred responsibility is to look out for each other and our fellow veterans. Our National Commander, James W. "Bill" Oxford has called for us to continue our Buddy Check to reach out to present as well as former members who may need help. Perhaps they have been waiting for a personal call or a visit to renew or rejoin. No matter their situations, we can do as our founders did by making personal contact with the veterans in our community. Our 1st Vice-Commander Bill Kinder has been doing a fantastic job with our Buddy Check Program but if you know of someone please just give them a call and see how they are doing.

Also, I would like to thank Bill and Helen Kinder on their great accomplishment of reaching 100% membership. If it was not for them and all of their efforts, we would not have been able to make that happen.

As we come upon the 1st anniversary of the State of Emergency due to Covid-19 and some restrictions are still in place we are now in Stage III, and with that we are looking forward to our annual Easter Egg Hunt at Majestic Park in Rathdrum. Please volunteer to help. It is a very fun event and does not take up too much time. Other dates to remember are March 15th is the 102nd birthday of The American Legion, March 25th as Medal of Honor Day and March 29th as National Vietnam War Veterans Day

Reminder, elections are being held at the April General Membership Meeting. We will be putting together an election committee this month so if you are interested in becoming an officer please let us know and we will be glad to review what those duties entail.

I am grateful for all the support that has been given. Again, THANK YOU!

Your Commander, Dee Sasse

P.S. If you have not provided your Email address to the Post, consider doing so, so we can update you on what's happening on a more regular schedule. Just Email your name to: Rathdrum154@gmail.com Additionally, mark on your calendar to attend the next General Meeting on March 25th at 5:30 p.m. If we are still in Stage III we will be meeting in person. See firsthand how your Post is doing.



Finance Officer:

As I write this on February 25, our Post has spent a total of \$1,100 in February and received \$551 in income for a net loss of (\$549). Major expenses include our annual contribution to the Rathdrum Lions Club (\$300) for use of their building, renewal of our insurance (\$550), (\$100) for Easter Egg Hunt and (\$180) for membership expenses.

Income items include \$225 in membership renewal income, \$300 in member donations and \$26 in flag sales.

Due to the need to submit this report prior to the end of the month, I do not have the bank statements and cannot update the Net Worth report.

On a happier note...the Legion's Federal and State Income Tax returns are completed and are waiting only the Commander's review and signature so they can be submitted. Also, the Audit Committee reviewed all our financial operations, check book, deposits, expenses, etc. and gave us a clean bill of health.

Stay safe, healthy and happy! - Len Crosby, Finance Officer



Legislative Chairman:

VA Continues COVID-19 Debt Relief:

VA will continue to suspend debts in order to provide critical financial relief for veterans affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. VA's suspension of collections will apply to all veteran benefit overpayments and medical copayment debts incurred after April 1, 2020. VA will notify veterans of their current debt and their options for relief. For benefit overpayment questions, you can [submit a request online](#) or call 800.827.0648. For health care debts, veterans should contact the Health Resource Center at 866.400.1238.

Foreclosures:

VA's current moratorium on evictions and foreclosures was set to expire on March 31, and is now extended to June 30, 2021. VA will also extend VA loan forbearance requests. VA home loan borrowers can find helpful information from the [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, online from VA](#), or they can call VA at 877.827.3702.

Veteran Legislation Pending in Idaho Legislature:

HOUSE BILL 120 - This legislation allows a qualified disabled veteran who has applied before April 15th for the special property tax reduction outlined in Idaho Code Section 63-702 and 63-705A, to transfer their property tax reduction or occupancy tax reduction benefit upon changing their residence to a new residence after April 15 but before October 15th.

SENATE BILL 1040 - This legislation amends the Idaho Code 49-418 to provide for American Legion or Veterans of Foreign Wars designations on the special veterans' plates. Veterans are proud of their membership and participation in these well-known veterans service organizations, and this gives them an opportunity to express their membership. The distribution of money from the plates will require no charge, and revenue from the plates will still go to the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery as under current law. Adding these additional plate options will expand the opportunity to increase the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery funding.

SENATE BILL 1083 - This legislation relating to occupational licensing reform improves the clarity of the license by endorsement process for our military members, veterans, and spouses. It includes a deadline for processing applications for licensure. It provides for basic requirements for proof of military or veteran status and licensure in another jurisdiction and allows for a limited scope of practice rather than outright denial. It also maintains the ability to benefit from existing interstate compacts for licensure.

HOUSE BILL 132 - To designate Hwy 26, as it crosses Idaho, as the POW/MIA Highway. This is part of an effort to designate Hwy 26 as the POW/MIA Highway as it crosses the nation. - Ln Crosby, Legislative Chairman

Service Officer:

Whether you're just getting out of the service or you've been a civilian for years now, the VA Welcome Kit can help guide you to the benefits and services you've earned. Based on where you are in life, your VA benefits and services can support you in different ways.

[Your VA Welcome Kit in black and white \(PDF\)](#)

[Your VA Welcome Kit in color \(PDF\)](#)

Here are other helpful guides:

[Apply for VA health care \(PDF\)](#)

[Get started with mental health services \(PDF\)](#)

[Get started with health services for women Veterans \(PDF\)](#)

[Understanding community care \(PDF\)](#)

[Accessing urgent care \(PDF\)](#)

[Apply for a disability rating \(PDF\)](#)

[Apply for education benefits \(PDF\)](#)

[Apply for burial in a VA national cemetery and for memorial products \(PDF\)](#)

[Understanding the modernized decision review process \(PDF\)](#)

[Get started with services for Veterans ages 65+ \(PDF\)](#)

[Get started with Veteran state benefits and services \(PDF\)](#)

[Get started with Vet Center services \(PDF\)](#)

- Ruth Aresvik, Service Officer



We have been able to meet our Department of Idaho membership goal of 133 paid members, out of 149 members. I thank you for ensuring that The American Legion remains the most powerful voice in America on behalf of veterans, their families and communities across the nation. However, there are 16 members who have not paid dues for 2021. Take out your membership card and look at the date. If it is for 2020, please take the time to support your American Legion so we may continue to assist you and all veterans in 2021. I strongly suggest you renew online as it is quicker and easier than having to mail it to the post. Simply go to: www.legion.org/renew

Thank you. Bill Kinder, 1st Vice Commander, Membership Chairman

Chaplain's Pew

Lord,

We find ourselves in very unfamiliar territory – strangers without knowing exactly what to do and how to maneuver through this time. As heightened of a season that this has been, and may continue to be, we ask for an abundance of your peace. While it may be easy to cling onto the anxiety and fear of not knowing when things will subside, Lord, let us choose to look to you – relying on who you are and your unchanging nature found there within. Allow for us to bring to you our feelings surrounding this time, and to lay them before you. We pray that you will meet each and every one of us where we are, and to see us through. Amen.



Welcome March

New month, new chapter, new page
and new wishes. May the month
give you **courage, strength,
confidence, patience, self-love &
inner peace.** May every day in March
fill your days with **hope, love,
sunshine and energy.**

Let there be joy, fun, and laughter!

Submitted by Helen Kinder, Chaplain



AMERICAN LEGION POST 154 POPPY PROJECT FOR 2021

The 2021 Poppy Project is underway. I do not know when we meet again so members wanting to help please contact me and I will sign you up. Each month in the newsletter, I will show where help is still needed.

Stores, dates, locations and times are as follows:

Super-1 in Athol, May 14th 0900-1300, 1300-1700, 2 people each shift

Wal Mart in Hayden, May 14th 0900-1300, 1300-1700, 4 people each shift

The above stores repeat on Saturday, May 15th

Ace Hardware in Rathdrum, May 21st 0900-1300, 1300-1700, 2 people each shift

Bi-Mart in Rathdrum, May 21st 0900-1300, 1300-1700, 2 people each shift

The above stores repeat on Saturday, May 22nd

Super-1 in Rathdrum, May 28th 0900-1300, 1300-1700, 2 people each shift

Trading Post in Rathdrum, May 28th 0900-1300, 1300-1700, 2 people each shift

The above stores repeat on Saturday, May 29th

Call me at 208.777.5157 or email me at lionlonnie@gmail.com

Thank you for helping. Lonnie Morse, Poppy Project Chairman



If these cookies look tempting, you can find an easy and delicious recipe on the last page of this newsletter.

WHAT IS THE AGENT ORANGE REGISTRY?

Editor's Note: This article is taken from the *Vietnam Veterans of America Self-help Guide To Service-Connected Disability Compensation For Exposure To Agent Orange for Veterans and Their Families*. The information contained here becomes more important as our Vietnam Veterans and their descendants age. The complete guide can be found [Here](#).

In 1978, the VA began a program to examine and to record the names of veterans concerned about health problems related to their exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides during their military service in Southeast Asia. Eligible veterans qualify for an Agent Orange Registry examination at the VA.

Almost 500,000 veterans — or one out of every six who served there — are in the registry.

Who Is Eligible for the AO Registry Exam?

Under Public Laws 102-585 and 100-687, any U.S. male or female veteran who served on active duty in the military, naval, Coast Guard, or air service in the Republic of Vietnam, regardless of the length of that service during the period January 9, 1962, to May 7, 1975; in Korea between April 1, 1968, and August 31, 1971, in a unit recognized by the VA and DoD to have operated in an area in or near the Korean DMZ in which herbicides were applied (for a list of units currently recognized, go to <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/korea.asp>) is presumed to have been exposed to phenoxy herbicides and is therefore eligible to enroll and obtain an AO Registry exam. Verifiable evidence of such in-country service constitutes eligibility.

Under these same laws, however, any other U.S. veteran who may have been exposed to dioxin or other toxic substance in an herbicide or defoliant during their military service must provide proof of exposure to enroll and obtain an AO Registry exam. For an incomplete list of locations and dates where dioxin (Agent Orange and other agents) was used, consult the VA information available online at: <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/militaryexposure.asp>

Veterans eligible for inclusion in the AO Registry do not need to be enrolled in the VA healthcare system.

Does Participation in the AO Registry Constitute a Compensation Claim for VA Compensation?

No, although the results of an AO Registry exam may be used to support a subsequently filed claim, the exam in and of itself does not constitute the filing of a claim.

Get an Exam. Even if you feel healthy, there are several exam options available to you, including the VA or a private healthcare facility or physician. If you use the VA system for your examination, consider getting added to the Agent Orange Registry.

What Does an AO Registry Exam Entail?

The exam consists of four basic parts:

An exposure history to determine where, when, and how the veteran was exposed to AO or other toxic chemicals before, during, and after service in Vietnam;

A medical history to document health problems experienced by the veteran since the time of exposure;

Laboratory tests such as blood chemistries, urinalysis, and a chest x-ray;

and a physical examination of 21 body parts, focusing on those systems commonly affected by toxic chemicals, such as the liver, kidneys, skin, and reproductive, endocrine, immunological, and nervous systems.

You should try to arrange for the lab tests to be done at the same time as the scheduled physical exam.

You may also be eligible for reimbursement from the VA for the cost of travel to the VA exam.

VVA encourages all veterans with Vietnam service to have an Agent Orange Registry exam, regardless of their current health status, as it is always possible that the exam may detect health problems that are caused by something else for which the VA may provide treatment and/or compensation. (cont. below)

What If the AO Registry Exam Uncovers a Medical Condition That Requires Further Treatment?

If the AO Registry exam uncovers a condition in a veteran who is enrolled or otherwise eligible for VA healthcare, and that condition requires further treatment, the veteran is to be referred to a VA primary care clinician to obtain the necessary medical assessment and appropriate treatment. If you are not enrolled or otherwise eligible for VA health care, the VA may suggest that you enroll in the VA or seek non-VA care.

Private Healthcare Examination for Claim Purposes If you use a private healthcare facility for your examination, you will need to submit a detailed medical report to the VA Regional Office which includes documentation of your diagnosis and whether it is as likely as not due to herbicide exposure and to explain its impact on your life.

In addition, always request copies of the lab results and copies of the medical history and examination reports whether you use the VA or private healthcare provider.

Who Is Eligible? (children, grandchildren)

To be eligible for these benefits, you must show three things:

- 1) You are the natural, biological child of a Vietnam veteran – one of your biological parents served in the active military, naval, or air service in the Republic of Vietnam for at least one day during the period January 9, 1962, to May 7, 1975;
- 2) You were conceived after the veteran parent first began service in Vietnam; and
- 3) You were born with a birth defect listed on page 5 of this guide.

Proof of the parent's exposure is not necessary. These children are entitled to three types of benefits:

- a) monthly compensation payments based upon the degree of the child's disability;
- b) VA medical care or reimbursement from the VA for private medical care for medical problems related to the birth defect; and
- c) vocational rehabilitation services.

What if I am the child or grandchild of a Vietnam veteran and have a medical condition not listed on page 5 [of the VVA Self-Help Guide from which this is taken]?

File a claim and attach a medical opinion, if possible. Though your condition is currently not recognized, it may be at a future date.

How Do I File a Claim?

The procedures used by the VA for this type of claim are generally the same as those used to handle a veteran's claim, but a special application, VA Form 21-0304, is used. Information needed for an informal claim letter can be found on page 18 of this guide. Such children are generally not required to undergo a VA medical exam.

Note: In addition to the Service-connected Agent Orange Disability Compensation award noted above, the VA also offers "dependents' allowance" to children of veterans who have been rated with at least a 30 percent service-connected disability. Children of veterans who are rated with a 100 percent permanent disability also are eligible for education assistance and health care under a separate VA program, CHAMPVA (the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the VA). This program covers dependents and survivors of certain veterans who are ineligible to receive health benefits under the Department of Defense TRICARE program.

- Submitted by Post 154 member Jean Bledsoe

Training Officer:

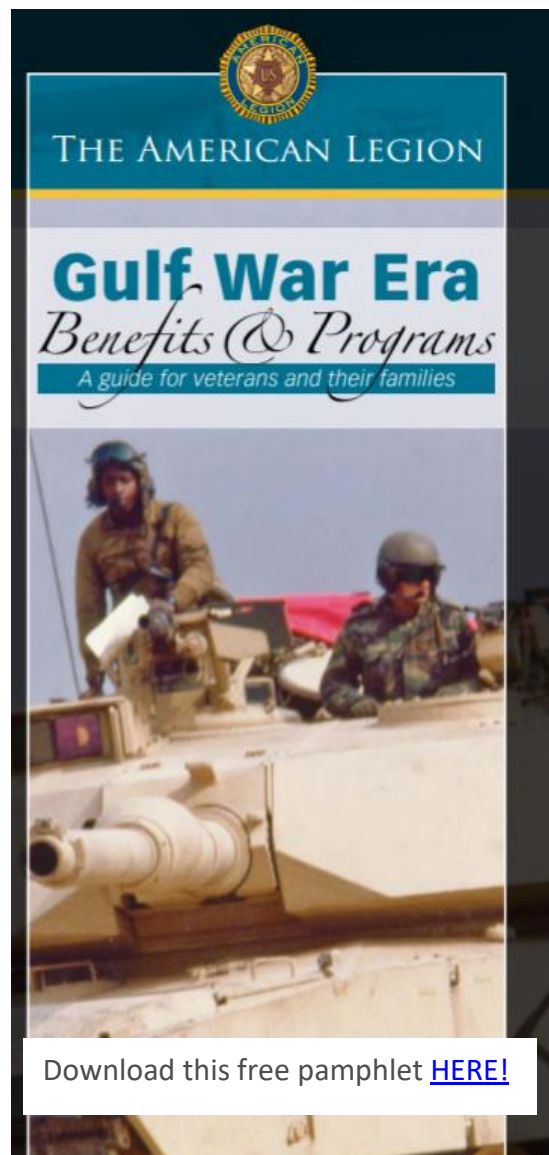
This month's American Legion training comes from the two pamphlets found below. So many of our veterans - members or not - are from the Vietnam and Gulf War eras. This means they have very often been exposed to toxins which cause serious diseases for them as well as their descendants. The Veterans Administration recognizes some of these conditions, therefore benefits and programs have been established to meet some of the needs of these affected veterans and their families. These brochures will give you basic information you may be able to use personally and share with other veterans to help them receive the help they deserve and have earned. Remember, one of the most important commitments of the American Legion is to help our fellow Veterans and their families. Sharing this information can do that in a very big way. Follow the links at the bottom of the picture to access these free brochures. - Jean Bledsoe, Training Officer



Agent Orange
Benefits & Programs
A guide for those who served in Vietnam,
Korea and Thailand, and their families

Download this free pamphlet [HERE!](#)

The pamphlet cover features the title 'Agent Orange Benefits & Programs' in a mix of bold sans-serif and cursive fonts. Below the title is a subtitle 'A guide for those who served in Vietnam, Korea and Thailand, and their families' in a smaller font. The background image shows a military helicopter spraying a field of palm trees in a tropical setting.



THE AMERICAN LEGION
Gulf War Era
Benefits & Programs
A guide for veterans and their families

Download this free pamphlet [HERE!](#)

The pamphlet cover features the American Legion logo at the top. Below it is the text 'THE AMERICAN LEGION' in a bold, sans-serif font. The main title 'Gulf War Era Benefits & Programs' is displayed in a mix of bold sans-serif and cursive fonts. A subtitle 'A guide for veterans and their families' is located below the title. The background image shows two soldiers in military gear operating a tank in a desert environment.

Did you know...?

VA Launches Public Guidance to Further Protect Vets' Personal Information. On February 22, the VA's Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs announced its "Ethics Principles for Access to and Use of Veteran Data" ... [Read more here](#)



The Rathdrum Easter Egg Hunt is fast approaching, and we need lots of volunteer assistance. The Hunt will be held at Majestic Park on Saturday April 3, 2021 with set-up starting at 9:00 a.m., with the Hunt to begin at 11:00 a.m. sharp. American Legion Post 154 has been a sponsor for this event for the past five years and it has grown each year. Please give us a few hours of your time! If you can help, please email Sue Fevold by March 20, 2021, at schoolmarm66@hotmail.com. or call Bill Kinder 208-661-6850. For those planning on bringing family to the Easter Egg Hunt, I suggest you get there quite early to get parking close to the fields. Otherwise, parking is on the street and late arrivals may miss the event. Thank you for all you do.
Bill Kinder 1st Vice-Commander

Mark Your Calendar:

- March 8th International Women's Day
March 11th Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting
March 14th Daylight Savings Time & National Write Your Story Day
March 15th American Legion 101st Birthday
March 17th St Patrick's Day
March 18th National Supreme Sacrifice Day
March 19th Start of Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003)
March 20th First Day of Spring (changes annually)
March 25th Post 154 General Membership Meeting
March 25th Congressional Medal of Honor Day
March 28th Passover
March 28th Palm Sunday
March 29th National Vietnam War Veterans Day



RATHDRUM SENIOR CENTER/COMMUNITY CENTER CALENDAR

- Sit Down Lunch* Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 11:30 AM-1:00PM.
- Quilting, March 1st and 15th @ 10 AM.
- Payout Cash Bingo, Tuesdays @ 6 PM
- Family night Bingo Thursday March 18th @ 6 PM.
- City of Rathdrum Open House March 22nd @ 5 PM.
- Casino Excursion March 29th @ 10 AM.
- FIT & FALL PROOF (FFP) sessions are every Tuesday & Thursday @ 1 PM.
These 1-hour sessions start Tuesday, March 16th. They are FREE!

* Donations of \$5.00 per meal are requested for seniors 60 years old or older; payment for adults under 60 is \$7.00. Lunch menus are published in the CDA Press each week on Mondays. Additionally, pick-up lunches are available by reservation, call 208-687-2028, preferably the day before, and are available from 11 AM-Noon. - Submitted by Post member Jet Strong

Bits & Pieces

- Below is the site where people can make an appointment for the covid-19 vaccine shots through Kootenai Health. **The bulk of appointments are available on Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m. However, some appointments are released throughout each day if we end up having more doses than anticipated, or people not showing up for their appointments.**

<https://square.site/book/LTB22KW875N3E/kootenai-health-coeur-d-alene-id>

Here is the link to all appointments in the Panhandle Health District:

<https://panhandlehealthdistrict.org/covid-19/vaccine/>

- Also, please remember to send your volunteer hours to Len Crosby so he can compile them. These include hours devoted to Veterans, Youth, Honor Guard and Community. His email is: crosbylenmary@frontier.com



Post 154 Honor Guard:

For those of you not aware, our Post has an Honor Guard. They march in parades, present the colors at ceremonies, and most importantly, provide a rifle salute to honor Veterans at their funerals. Starting this month there will be an account of the honors and hours given by the men and women in our Honor Guard. However, more members are always needed to serve in this capacity. If you are interested in participating in this very fulfilling activity, contact Todd Halvorson at keltod11@gmail.com or by phone at 509-226-5355.

Todd reported the Honor Guard provided services on Wednesday Jan 27th at Riverview Cemetery for an Army Veteran. One is upcoming up for an Army vet on March 19th at Real Life Church.

A Healthier You:



Why Are Gin-Steeped Raisins in the New York Times?

We never thought we would see one of our favorite home remedies in the NYT. We've been writing about gin-steeped raisins for decades!

We were astonished to see a home remedy we have been writing about for 27 years show up in the [New York Times \(Feb. 23, 2021\)](#). Most people laugh at the gin-steeped raisin remedy. Many dismiss this arthritis treatment out of hand. Others swear it works better than any drug. Now, a 105-year-old lady named Lucia DeClerck says she survived COVID 19 in part thanks to: "the nine gin-soaked golden raisins she has eaten each morning for most of her life."

[Read the Story Here](#)

I see people around my
age mountain climbing, I
feel good getting my leg
through my underwear
with out losing my
balance

Thank you again, Len, for sharing the
humor.

You Know You're
Getting Old When
"Friends With
Benefits", Means
Having Someone Who
Can
Drive At Night.





These young men were chosen from the Stem Charter Academy to attend Department of Idaho Boys' State. Congratulation to them. From left are: Bronson Fulk, Joshua McKenna, Basquat Nelson, & Brennen Drake. To the far right is Post member Leo Calhoun, Boys' State Project Chairman for Post 154.



A Message from VA Secretary Denis McDonough

The U.S. Senate confirmed VA Secretary nominee Denis McDonough Monday, Feb. 8, and he was sworn in as the eleventh VA secretary. The below was posted to VAntage Point on February 9.



As I begin my tenure at the Department of Veterans Affairs, I want to take a moment to speak directly to veterans and other VA stakeholders and share my thoughts on VA's mission and the road ahead. It is the honor of my lifetime to join the VA workforce in serving veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. We live in peace and security today because of the sacrifices of generations of veterans. My career has afforded me a privilege available to relatively few Americans: to see up close the excellence of our Armed Forces in the field on my regular visits to Afghanistan and Iraq; to witness the strength and resilience of our wounded warriors at Walter Reed; and to experience the unimaginable grief of military families there at Dover when our fallen heroes come home one final time. From that I have a passion to fight relentlessly every day to ensure that VA serves our veterans as well as they have served America.

[Read More...](#)

VA Seeks Feedback to Guide Future of VA Healthcare

The VA published a draft decision for criteria Feb. 1 in the Federal Register to be used by VA's Secretary to develop recommendations for the future of Veterans Health Administration healthcare. The criteria are based on specific factors outlined in the VA MISSION Act of 2018, which gives veterans greater access to healthcare in VA facilities and the community, and input received through collaboration with stakeholders, including veterans and VSOs. The criteria include the following categories: veterans' need for care and services; accessibility of care for veterans; impact on mission; providing the highest quality whole healthcare; effective use of resources; and ensuring a safe environment of care.

[Read More...](#)

More Than 10,000 VA Patients Have Died from Coronavirus



As reported February 17 by Leo Shane III for Military Times, more than 10,000 VA patients have died from complications related to coronavirus in less than 11 months, another grim milestone in the ongoing global pandemic. As of Wednesday morning, VA officials had reported 10,059 deaths among veterans and other patients being tracked by department medical officials. The department's first death was reported on March 18, 2020. Since then, VA has averaged about 30 deaths a day connected to the virus. However, more than 60 percent of the deaths — 6,059 — have come since Nov. 1.

[Read More...](#)

LACY OATMEAL COOKIES

Yield about 5 dozen

Ingredients:

- 1 egg
- 3 tbsp. flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 tsp. baking powder
- pinch of salt
- 1 1/4 cups old-fashioned (not quick-cooking) oatmeal
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon pure almond extract



Directions:

Preheat oven to 375°F.

These cookies are not standard cookie fare. Instead, the cookies form a lacy pattern which makes a thin, crisp cookies that can be seen through when held up to the light.

Add all ingredients to the beaten egg. Stir well.

Drop by small teaspoons onto parchment paper or silicone lined cookie sheet. Be sure to leave plenty of space between as these cookies spread about 3 times their original size.

Bake for 10-12 minutes in preheated oven.

Remove cookie sheet from oven. Allow cookies to cool somewhat before attempting to remove from baking sheet using a thin metal spatula.

These cookies may be rolled into a tube while still warm and filled with a pastry cream filling when cooled, if desired.

