

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

POST 9934 AND AUXILIARY 9934

DANA POINT, CALIFORNIA
MAY 2022



ALL STATE POST 2004-05, 2005-06, 2007-08,
2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13,
2013-14, 2014-2015, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-2018
2019-2020

ALL AMERICAN POST 2007-08
2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-2014,
2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2019-2020

2022 POST NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Greetings Comrades,

As the month of May is upon us, it is time again that we look to the remembrance of Memorial Day. It is a time to remember, reminisce, and recall the names of those long past...but never forgotten. We look to this solemn day to honor those men and women. While they are no longer here in body, they are always present in spirit, and in our memories. Those names will always live on forever. Whether the names are inscribed on a piece of marble or a bronze name plate or still lost on a pacific atoll, somewhere in Europe or some other foreign land...their spirit lives on.

So we move forward, and honor all those that came before us...that served with us and those who followed. All America's best...no matter how or when they served.

As we approach Memorial Day, we as a Post are obligated and honored to collect monies for the Buddy Poppy program. Time to get out to the community meet your neighbors and tell them who we are, why we exist; the VFW assisting the people in Orange County almost on a daily basis. Also, while you are out there talking to the community you might even collect a dollar or two for those in need.

On this same note at the next meeting on May 10, 2022, we will again be looking for volunteers to man the tables at several designated stores that have allowed us to use their store

TO CONTACT YOUR POST

Mail address 33282 Golden Lantern, Suite 103
Dana Point, Ca. 92629
Telephone Office (949) 248-1419
E-mail: vfwpost9934@cox.net
Website: <https://www.vfwpost9934.org>
Facebook: www.facebook.com/vfwpost9934

TO CONTACT U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
1-800-MyVA411

fronts to put up our tables and represent the VFW.

We will need comrades and their friends and families to man at least 3 locations, for 3 days, on May 27, 28, 29. A morning and an afternoon shift will be available. So come prepared to the meeting with the dates you want to help.

This is a team effort for 9934. We as officers of the Post would really like to see more than the usual same 6 comrades that always show up. You have the dates. Make the time and give the Post a couple of hours of your time.

For those of you that want to go that extra mile...join with Bill Cordova and his letter writing campaign. He already has a form letter and a letter of thanks already printed. So go back to your old company...current friends...fellow members of your congregation and ask them for a donation to assist the veterans and their families.

Remind them some veterans **GAVE SO MUCH MORE**, than what was asked of them.

I will see you at the May Meeting on May 10th, South Shores Church. Be Safe.

Thank You

Rick Jauregui, Commander

MAY 2022 MEETING

The next meeting of the Post and Auxiliary 9934 will be Tuesday, May 10, 2022. **The Post meeting will be at South Shores Church, 32712 Crown Valley Parkway, starting at 6:00 p.m.**

The Auxiliary will meet at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 33501 Stonehill. Auxiliary meeting time is 6:30.

QUARTERMASTER REPORT NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD!

It is a great honor for the Post. Everyone who has had a hand in working on all the program activities the past year – you know who you are – take a moment and give a little pat on the back **YOU** made this possible.

This recognition was the result of all the work in the Post programs such as Voice of Democracy, Patriot Pen, BUDDY POPPIES, First Responders, Scouting, Veterans assistance, community service such as the Summer Concerts, Swallows Day, the school programs, and many others.

Only two Posts in the Department of California received this award. The Post will send a special representative to the National Convention to represent the Post at the special presentation by the VFW Com-

mander-in-Chief.

It also appears to be a certainty that the Post will receive the Department ALL STATE award. However, this may not be presented at the state Convention because all program events should have been completed by April 15 and only the top three Posts in the state will receive such recognition.

Similarly, the Post has already been recognized at the Department level as a recipient of the National ALL AMERICAN award. However, only the top 25 Posts, nationally, will receive the award at the convention. Post 9934 currently ranks about number 106 (out of some 395 Posts in our division). We would need another 20 or so additional members (either new members or annual members to renew their membership) to move up to the elite status to the top 25 percent. All Post members who are receiving this newsletter will be eligible to purchase the ALL AMERICAN red and blue VFW caps beginning in July. The details will be provided after the Convention in the August newsletter.

The District 2 Convention is coming up soon. Some details at left. If you are going to be in attendance, and want to stay for the lunch, I need to know by Friday, May 13, to send the reservations. The Post has budgeted the funds to pay for the luncheons for Post members attending the convention.

Bill Manes, Post 9934 Quartermaster

DISTRICT 2 CONVENTION

MAY 21, 2022

VFW POST 2085

1341 EAST D STREET, ONTARIO

10:00 OPENING CEREMONIES

MEMORIAL SERVICE

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

LUNCH

INTENT TO FILE NOTIFICATION

Why Do It & How to Do It

If you plan to file or refile a claim for disability, pension, or DIC benefits and you notify VA of your intent to file, it sets a potential start date (or effective date) for your benefits. When you do this, you may be able to get retroactive payments (compensation that starts at a point in the past). This is because your start date for benefits will be earlier than the date you file your claim. Note that if you start filling out a claim form online for disability benefits, this will reserve a potential start date for your benefits and you don't need to separately call VA or submit a separate intent to file form. Go to <https://www.va.gov/disability/file-disabilityclaim-form-21-526ez/introduction> to start an online claim.

Note that automatic intent to file only applies to online disability applications. It doesn't apply to online pension or DIC applications. If you are not ready to file an online claim, but do plan to eventually file a claim within the next year, it is to your benefit to notify VA of that intention. The

notification procedure requires you to either call the VA or submit a separate form. You can call them at 1- 800-827-1000 Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET. Or submit an Intent to File a Claim for Compensation and/or Pension, or Survivors Pension and/or DIC (VA Form 21-0966) available at

<https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-0966-ARE.pdf>.

It can be filled out online and downloaded for mailing to Department of Veterans Affairs, Claims Intake Center, PO Box 4444, Janesville, WI 53547-4444. You can also turn in your form in one of these ways:

Bring it to a VA regional office near you which can be located at

<https://www.va.gov/find-locations/?facilityType=benefits>

Work with a trained professional called an accredited representative.

(<https://www.va.gov/disability/get-help-filing-claim>)

AFGHAN WITHDRAWAL REPORT ON MILITARY EQUIPMENT LEFT BEHIND

Taliban fighters are wielding American-supplied weapons, equipment and uniforms inspect equipment that was left behind at Kabul International Airport after the US military completed its withdrawal from Afghanistan in August. Approximately \$7 billion of military equipment the US transferred to the Afghan government over the course of 16 years was left behind in Afghanistan after the US completed its withdrawal from the country in August, according to a congressionally mandated report from the US Department of Defense viewed by CNN. This equipment is now in a country that is controlled by the very enemy the US was trying to drive out over the past two decades: the Taliban.

The Defense Department has no plans to return to Afghanistan to "retrieve or destroy" the equipment, reads the report, which has been provided to Congress. The US gave a total of \$18.6 billion of equipment to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) from 2005 to August 2021, according to the report. Of that total, equipment worth \$7.12 billion remained in Afghanistan after the US withdrawal was completed on August 30, 2021. It included aircraft, air-to-ground munitions, military vehicles, weapons, communications equipment and other materials, according to the DoD report.

The huge value of the hardware left behind will serve to refocus attention on the chaotic and hasty Afghanistan withdrawal that has been heavily criticized by lawmakers from both parties. "Much of the 15 remaining equipment" left in Afghanistan requires "specialized maintenance that DoD contractors previously provided" to Afghan forces "in the form of technical knowledge and support," the report states.

The Department of Defense was required to submit a report to Congress "regarding the disposition of United States

property, equipment and supplies provided to" Afghan forces that "were destroyed, taken out of" or "remain in Afghanistan," states the report, which is dated March 2022. "The \$7.12 billion figure cited in the Department's recent report to Congress corresponds to ANDSF equipment and not U.S. military equipment used by our forces," Army Major Rob Lodewick, a Defense Department spokesperson, said in a statement. "Nearly all equipment used by U.S. military forces in Afghanistan was either retrograded or destroyed prior to our withdrawal and is not part of the '\$7.12 billion' figure cited in the report."

The report also says that five Mi-17 helicopters that had been in Afghanistan were officially transferred to Ukraine in 2022, though they were already in Ukraine for maintenance before the US left Afghanistan. The Department of Defense notified Congress of its intent to transfer the helicopters in January 2022, before Russia's invasion of the country had begun, and Ukraine signed a letter of acceptance on March 11, 2022. "These five helicopters were in Ukraine undergoing overhaul maintenance when the Afghan government collapsed, and have remained there since," the report states.

Of other materials the US had previously procured for Afghanistan but not sent to the country, the US has given some "non-standard munitions" to Ukraine, including about 37,000 122mm howitzer rounds, the report states. The US has also transferred over 15 million rounds of Ball rifle ammunition, over 99,000 40mm high-explosive/fragmentation grenade cartridges, and about 119,000 82mm high-explosive mortar rounds to Ukraine from material that was previously procured for Afghanistan, the report states. These munitions have been transferred to Ukraine under presidential drawdown authority, the report states.

[Source: CNN Ellie Kaufman April 28, 2022]

VA LONG BEACH EXPANDS SURGICAL SERVICES TO INCLUDE NEUROSURGERY

VA Long Beach Healthcare System will soon begin performing neurosurgery – elective, urgent and emergent – in-house, in lieu of referring Veterans to another VA facility and/or community partner.

Veterans diagnosed with spinal disease, multiple sclerosis, Huntington's disease, epilepsy, brain tumors, lymphomas, and aneurysms are some of the many who need and/or can benefit from neurosurgery.

In 2019, VA Long Beach Healthcare System neurosurgeons identified 275 Veterans in need of neurosurgery but referred them to community partners as they could not offer the intervention.

VA Long Beach Healthcare System is investing \$1.5 million in specialized top-notch equipment and additional physicians, residents, nurse practitioners, nurses and radiologists in support of the additional services.

VA Long Beach Healthcare System expects to expedite and

improve the quality of care offered to Veterans with neurosurgical conditions by avoiding transfer delays, consolidating care and meeting individual patient needs.

Neurosurgery will be deployed progressively in a stepwise approach. The first phase will include vagal nerve stimulator implantation and/or battery change, as well as outpatient peripheral neurosurgery, such as spinal cord stimulator implantation, baclofen pump implantation, carpal tunnel release and ulnar nerve decompression. The second phase will include simple spine surgery and cerebrospinal fluid diversion. The third phase will include complex spine surgery, including thoracic and lumbar fusions. Eventually, phase 4 will include craniotomy and brain tumor operative therapies.

"We look forward to adding this specialty to our already broad array of highly complex and high-quality care," said Dr. Brian Smith, Chief of Surgical Services at VA Long Beach Healthcare System.

IRAQ'S U.S. TROOPS

Will Likely Be There for Years to Come

About six months after the U.S. ended its longest war, the outgoing head of U.S. Central Command hinted that U.S. involvement in Iraq is probably going to go on even longer. As the 19th anniversary of Operation Iraq Freedom approaches, there are roughly 2,500 troops still in Iraq, playing a strict advise-and-assist role at the invitation of the Iraqi government. "As we look into the future, any force level adjustment in Iraq is going to be made as a result of consultations with the government of Iraq," Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie told *Military Times* on Friday. "And we just finished a strategic dialogue a few months ago — we believe that will continue."

The result of that dialogue was a formal end to the U.S. combat mission there at the end of 2021, though the thousands of troops who have been rotating into the country since 2014 as part of Operation Inherent Resolve haven't led combat operations for years. Going forward, McKenzie said, the role will look a lot like it does now, as the Iraqi government comes together to make another go at strengthening the defense of its sovereignty. "So we're watching that with great interest and wish them well, despite the many roadblocks that are being thrown up by Iranian based proxy groups," he said. "They're proceeding, you know, maybe not the way we would do it. Maybe slower than the way we would do it. But nonetheless, that moving forward in the long term, we would like to have a normalized security cooperation agreement and posture with Iraq."

That could look like continued training of local forces, advising military leadership and providing weapons to Iraq to help its security forces remain effective. "You want to get to the state where nations, and security elements in those nations, can deal with a violent extremist threat without direct support from us," McKenzie said. "Right now we

have the Iraqis doing the fighting. We're still helping them. Over time you'd like for them to take a larger share of all the enabling that we're doing now."

If this sounds a lot like what U.S. military leaders said for the better part of a decade in Afghanistan, after the U.S. combat mission ended in 2014, that's because the goals are identical. Commanders consistently touted progress in wresting control of the country from the Taliban, though in reality, Afghanistan's defense forces remained dysfunctional. The difference in Afghanistan was that the political situation changed, and it became a key presidential campaign platform to end the U.S. presence there.

When President Donald Trump laid the groundwork for a full Afghanistan exit, the understanding was that the U.S. would continue to arm and fund the Afghan military, and possibly look for opportunities to keep training troops outside the country. President Joe Biden then set the 20th anniversary of 9/11 as the hard deadline for pulling all U.S. troops out of Afghanistan. The same political groundswell for a complete departure from Iraq hasn't materialized. That could be because Iraq's major security challenges are of great interest to the US: ISIS, which has shown its eagerness to attack on U.S. soil; and Iran's funding of militias in Iraq, part of its larger role in state sponsored terrorism.

McKenzie has often repeated that the Iraqi government really wants U.S. troops in its country, though of course, so did the Afghans. "Let me emphasize, whatever we do in the future is something we'll jointly arrive at with our partners: with the government of Iraq; and again, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO — very significant, important and growing presence in Iraq, again at the explicit request of the Iraqi government," McKenzie said.

RUSSIAN TANK DECAPITATION

Why It Keeps Happening in Ukraine

It's become a common sight since the start of Russia's latest invasion of Ukraine: The charred remnants of a Russian tank with its turret blown clean off. Video posted on social media has also shown the Russian tanks exploding in catastrophic fireballs when hit, causing the turrets to be hurled several feet in the air before landing next to the chassis. Known as the "jack-in-the-box effect," this type of apocalyptic explosion is caused when a blast's heat or shockwave causes all the tank's ammunition to detonate. The resulting overpressure blows the tank's turret straight up into the air.

Russian-made T-72 and T-80 tanks are particularly susceptible to being destroyed in this manner, in part because they

both have autoloading mechanisms that store tank rounds in a carousel at the base of the turret, said Steven Zaloga, an expert on Russian and Soviet armor. Those autoloaders typically store about 20 rounds when fully loaded. "If you see film footage of a hit followed by the ammunition fire, typically what happens is that one propellant casing goes off — or one or two — because of a penetration," Zaloga told *Task & Purpose*. "The explosion of the first propellant case tends to trigger more. And so, what you often-times see is a sequence where one propellant case or a couple of propellant cases go off and then the stowage down in the auto-loader goes up, basically like a string of firecrackers."

VA BUDGETING

Congress Considers Separate Funding For VA Medical Care

House lawmakers began a debate about a White House proposal to separate funding for veterans' medical care from the rest of the federal budget — an action that would treat it the same as defense spending and could allow it to grow beyond current limits. Discretionary spending, which is subject to the congressional appropriations process, is divided into two categories: defense and nondefense. Congress provided \$1.5 trillion in discretionary spending for fiscal 2022, with \$782 billion toward defense and \$730 billion going to other areas of the government. Of the \$730 billion in nondefense spending, about \$117 billion went to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

President Joe Biden proposed removing veterans' health care from the nondefense category and giving it its own funding stream. The change would free the veterans' health budget from caps on nondefense spending

The proposal than \$300 billion. About \$161 billion of the \$300 billion is mandatory spending, which includes entitlement programs, such as disability compensation. Mandatory spending does not go through the congressional appropriations process. The remaining amount, \$139 billion, is part of the nondefense discretionary budget, and approximately \$120 billion of that amount is dedicated to veterans' medical care. The White House proposed the VA get a 20% increase in funding for medical care in fiscal 2023. McDonough attributed the significant jump to health care inflation and an increase in demand for services.

To address the growing costs of medical care, the White House suggested VA health care be given its own stream of funding, sending a message that veterans' medical care should be treated with the same significance as national defense. "I thought it was a very important, innovative idea from the White House, from [the Office of Management and Budget], to separate veterans' health care," McDonough said. "I think it makes sense to separate this from the broader account to underscore, as we do with defense, the unique nature and unique importance of investments in veteran health." The separation could be more necessary if Congress approves a sweeping measure that aims to expand eligibility for health care and benefits to veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxins, McDonough said. The bill has the potential to significantly increase the num-

ber of enrollees in VA health care.

According to estimates from the Congressional Budget Office, the bill could increase spending by about \$318 billion during the next decade. It was passed by the House earlier this year and is now under consideration in the Senate. Lawmakers expressed mixed feelings about separating VA medical care from the rest of the nondefense budget. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), the chairwoman of the military construction, veterans affairs, and related agencies appropriations 23 subcommittee, suggested a change needed to be made, given the historical growth of the VA's budget.

The VA described its proposal for 2023 as a "historic increase in total funding." If the budget were approved as is, the VA's overall funding would have increased by \$104 billion, or 53%, since 2018, according to agency data. The agency is the third largest federal department in terms of budget. Only the Defense Department and the Department of Health and Human Services are slated to receive more in discretionary funding in 2023. "There really is a lot of good news in this budget, but we can't ignore the elephant in the room, and that's the ever-growing cost of veterans' medical care," Wasserman Schultz said. "We must provide for our veterans, and we're passionate about that, but if we're going to keep seeing these exponential increases year after year, we need to build a consensus on an allocation adjustment so other discretionary priorities are not affected."

Rep. Judge Carter of Texas, the ranking Republican on the subcommittee, described the VA's budget proposal as an "eye-popping request" and said he was skeptical about giving the agency its own funding stream. Carter said the change would allow for more funding toward other nondefense agencies, which he argued could lead to an increase in the budget deficit. "The rate we're spending right now is driving us over a cliff," he said. "Setting up a situation where we inadvertently create more mandatory spending, to me, is not a good idea. It could move us closer to that time when we can't pay our bills." Wasserman Schultz suggested the subcommittee hold a "deep-dive conversation" soon on the potential change.

[Source: Stars & Stripes Nikki Wentling April 6, 2022]

UPDATING ADDRESS

Recently, there was an issue with a member concerning the updating of their address. If you update your address with VFW National, the system does not update your information in Action Corp. That is because they are two separate systems and the Action Corp

server is part of the Congressional system in order for your Action Alert letters to get to the correct Representatives.

So, if you are updating your information, make sure to include Action Corp with the new information.

SERVICE-DISABLED VETERANS LIFE INSURANCE (S-DVI)

Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance (S-DVI) provides low-cost coverage to eligible service members. If you have a service-connected disability, find out how to apply for S-DVI online or by mail.

Am I eligible for Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance?

You may be eligible for S-DVI if you meet all of these requirements. All of these must be true:

- You were released from active duty on or after April 25, 1951, and didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, and
- You were rated for a service-connected disability (even if only 0%), and
- You're in good health except for any service-connected conditions, and
- You apply by December 31, 2022, or within 2 years of receiving your disability rating (whichever comes first)

Note: An increase of a rating you had before—or a rating of Individual Unemployability, meaning you can't work—doesn't qualify you for S-DVI.

Can I get more life insurance coverage if I need it?

If you carry the basic S-DVI coverage and become totally disabled and unable to work, you can apply to get up to \$30,000 more in coverage. This is called supplemental S-DVI coverage.

You may be able to get \$30,000 of supplemental coverage if you qualify for a premiums waiver, and you meet both of these requirements:

Both of these must be true:

- You apply for the coverage by December 31, 2022, or within 1 year from the date you get notice of the grant of waiver (whichever comes first), and
- You're younger than age 65

What kind of life insurance benefits can I get with Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance?

- Up to \$10,000 of coverage
- Up to \$30,000 of supplemental coverage
- How do I get these benefits?

You'll need to apply for benefits in 1 of 2 ways:

Apply for basic S-DVI online, or

Fill out an Application for Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance (VA Form 29-4364).

Securely upload the form, or mail it to:

Department of Veterans Affairs

Regional Office and Insurance Center (RH)

PO Box 7208

Philadelphia, PA 19101

Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI)

If you have a severe service-connected disability that we've concluded was caused—or made worse—by your service, you may be able to get Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI). In the event of your death, this mortgage protection insurance can help your family pay off the home mortgage on a home that's been adapted to meet your needs.

To get VMLI, you'll need to apply for our Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant. The SAH grant can help you buy, build, or make changes (like installing ramps or widening doorways) to a home so you can live more independently. When you receive an SAH grant, your loan guaranty agent will tell you if you qualify for VMLI and will help you apply.

Find out if you qualify for an SAH grant—and how to apply, or

Find out if you qualify for VMLI—and how to apply

You have to be registered with the VA to log on to the website. Go to:

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/> and log in to your account.

VA PRESUMPTIVE CANCER DISEASES

Proposed Expansion

The Department of Veterans Affairs will propose adding certain rare respiratory cancers to the list of presumed service-connected disabilities in relation to military environmental exposure to particulate matter. When the proposal becomes final, dependents, survivors, and Veterans who had claims previously denied for any of the below respiratory cancers would be encouraged to file a supplemental claim for benefits.

- Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) of the larynx;
- SCC of the trachea;
- Adenocarcinoma of the trachea;
- Salivary gland-type tumors of the trachea;
- Adenosquamous carcinoma of the lung;
- Large cell carcinoma of the lung;

- Salivary gland-type tumors of the lung;
- Sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung; and
- Typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung.

Any Veteran who had one of these cancers manifest to a degree of 0% or more at any time during or after separation would become eligible for service-connection. VA intends to focus its rule on the rare respiratory cancers above in Veterans who served any amount of time in the Southwest Asia Theater of operations and other locations. Once rule-making is complete, VA will conduct outreach to impacted veterans and survivors to inform them about potential eligibility. If you are a Veteran who has been diagnosed with one of these conditions, but have not filed a claim, please notify VA of your intent to file a claim.

VA CAREGIVER PROGRAM

Since expanding the VA Caregiver program to older veterans, the VA has received roughly 135,000 new applications and doubled the number of participants, according to the department. The law clearly states that the VA is to take into account the caregiver's assessment of a veteran's needs and limitations and the extent to which a veteran can function safely and independently. But it also stipulates that the veteran must have a "need for regular or extensive instruction or supervision without which the ability of the veteran to function in daily life would be seriously impaired."

The Mission Act which was responsible for having to reduce the number of participants getting care in the program, received overwhelming support in Congress. It had just 74 "no" votes in both the House and Senate. The tightening of the rules it contained made a culling of the veterans eligible inevitable, although lawmakers have begun to discuss countering the more restrictive guidelines. VA Secretary Denis McDonough said the department is looking to determine whether it has flexibility under the statute to make changes.

The VA has not released data for how many legacy participants have been dropped from the program, but Veteran Warriors executive director Holly Ferrell said that more than 900 have reached out to her organization seeking help with filing appeals. Ferrell said the group is seeing numerous errors and omissions in assessments, adding that obvious mistakes can help veterans win appeals when presented with medical records and other documentation. "You have assessors who are not documenting anything close to what the medical records state," Ferrell said. "A record will say 'veteran cannot be left alone,' but the assessment will say they don't require assistance with supervision. It's crazy."

She added that, based on what she has seen, the reviewers face even more difficulty assessing veterans with neurological conditions, including traumatic brain injury, migraines, neuropathy and mental health conditions. "VA has misinterpreted the need for supervision, protection and instruction, and we are now questioning whether they even know what the term 'neurological impairment' means," Ferrell said.

The new rules say that to be eligible, veterans must need assistance with activities of daily living or require supervision, protection or instruction for their personal safety. To meet the requirement, they must have "trouble maintaining in a home environment," according to Timothy Jobin, deputy director of VA's Caregiver Support Programs. Jobin didn't elaborate on what constitutes "maintaining," but nodded to examples such as a veteran with a traumatic brain injury or dementia who leaves the stove on or wanders from the home. Other symptoms such as anger -- a common symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder -- likely wouldn't meet the criteria, he said.

"We have people come to us and say, 'I need to be around in case that individual gets angry. We want to take that

very seriously, but we have different therapies that individuals can engage in to assist with that. It doesn't quite meet the threshold for supervision, protection, instruction," Jobin said.

The VA is aiming for the reviews to be completed by the end of this month. Those being dismissed from the program should receive a phone call, followed by a letter confirming they are no longer eligible but have a right to appeal and even reapply in the future, VA officials said. "They may not meet the eligibility criteria today, but if in three months from now, they need our assistance or they feel like they meet the eligibility criteria, we really want them to reapply," said Richardson, the director of the Caregiver Support Program.

The 36-year-old Afghanistan war veteran who can't be left alone with his kids because his hallucinations and outbursts make him a danger to himself and others and his wife hope their appeal is successful but also are making plans if it is not. The wife said she will find a remote work job that allows her to continue caregiving or the couple will sell their house. "Financially, we are going to be hurting, but that's not going to change the fact that I'm still going to be here for him. I don't want to go back to where we were," she said. They said they plan to appeal, based on misinformation in their assessment and will even reapply if necessary, especially if the vet's symptoms worsen with age.

But, the wife said, she still doesn't understand why the VA would take away this benefit when, if she wasn't her husband's caregiver, he would hire someone to ensure that he takes his prescriptions, maintains nutrition and makes it to medical appointments. "We worked really hard to at least be stable enough to function in this house, in a protected space," the wife said. "I had to give up on my career. But at least I am proud, because he always says that I pretty much have kept him alive."

Veterans Affairs officials announced 22 MAR that all expulsions from the department's caregiver support program will be halted while officials re-evaluate new eligibility criteria that threatened monthly support stipends for thousands of families. The move is a stunning turnaround for the department, which for months has maintained the moves are necessary to bring the program's membership into order ahead of a massive expansion in eligible families later in fall 2022. However, not all advocates were as optimistic about the long-term fate of the families who already had been marked to leave the program.

Holly Ferrell, executive director for Veteran Warriors, an advocacy group that works with more than 3,500 caregivers in the program, said she hopes the new VA announcement amounts to real change and not simply delaying pain for the families. "Is this a political stunt to get media attention off of the problems, to get caregivers to calm down and to give them false hope?" she said. "We have to remain cautious."

[Source: Military.com & MilitaryTimes Patricia Kime & Leo Shane III March 18 & 22, 2022]

POST OFFICERS FOR 2021-2022

Post Commander:	Rick Jauregui	Service Officer:	John Coon
Senior Vice Commander:	Richard Alonzo	Service Officers Team:	Jim Socks
Junior Vice Commander	Carlos Garcia		Don Ellis
Post Quartermaster	Bill Manes		Ben Valencia
Assistant Quartermaster	Wayne Yost		Aaron Pluff
Post Chaplain:	James Lofdahl		Robert Fowler
Post Surgeon	Gil Castro	Service Officer Advisor	Marty Hoffman
Judge Advocate	Dolores Padgett	Service Officer Support	Debbie Yost
Adjutant	Wayne Greenleaf	Trustee (3-year term)	Richard Carr
Women Veterans Coordinator	Marcia Kuehl	Trustee (2-year term)	David Vera
Post Color Guard Captain	Carlos Garcia	Trustee (1-year term)	Phil Jimenez

AUXILIARY OFFICERS FOR 2021-2022

President	Rebecca Dulmage	Chaplain	Yvonne English
Senior Vice President	Sharon Miller	Conductress	Terri Marr
Treasurer	Renee Fulk	Guard	Torey Boegeman
Secretary	Lisa Mers		

CALENDAR MAY 2022

- Wed., May 4 Post Service Officers at Dana Point**
Community Center, 34052 Del Obispo St
2:00 — 4:00
- Sun. May 8 V-E DAY, Declared (1945)**
- Wed., May 18 Post Service Officers at Dana Point**
Community Center, 34052 Del Obispo St
2:00 — 4:00
- Sat., May 21 District 2 Convention, Ontario Post**
2085, 1341 E. D St., Ontario, CA.
- Sat., May 21 ARMED FORCES DAY**
- Fri-Sun, May 27, 28, 29 BUDDY POPPY distribution**
9:30-6:00, at stores
- Mon. May 30 MEMORIAL DAY. Dana Point service**
at Pines Park, 34941 Camino
Capistrano, Capistrano Beach



SUNDAY, MAY 8

DANA POINT VFW POST AND AUXILIARY 9934
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