

Great Plains Veterans Services Center

"Veterans helping Veterans for a better future"





August NEWSLETTER



The Great Plains Veterans Services Center

August 2022

G.P.V.S.C ST&FF &ND BO&RD

Executive Director Chauncey Parker

Administrative Manager John Gardipee, Sr.

Veterans Transportation Manager Thomas Lewis

Transition Assistance Coordinator John Gardipee, Jr.

Communications Specialist Becky Lewis Veterans Outreach Coordinator Donald Meyers

Service Driver Weston Sutherland

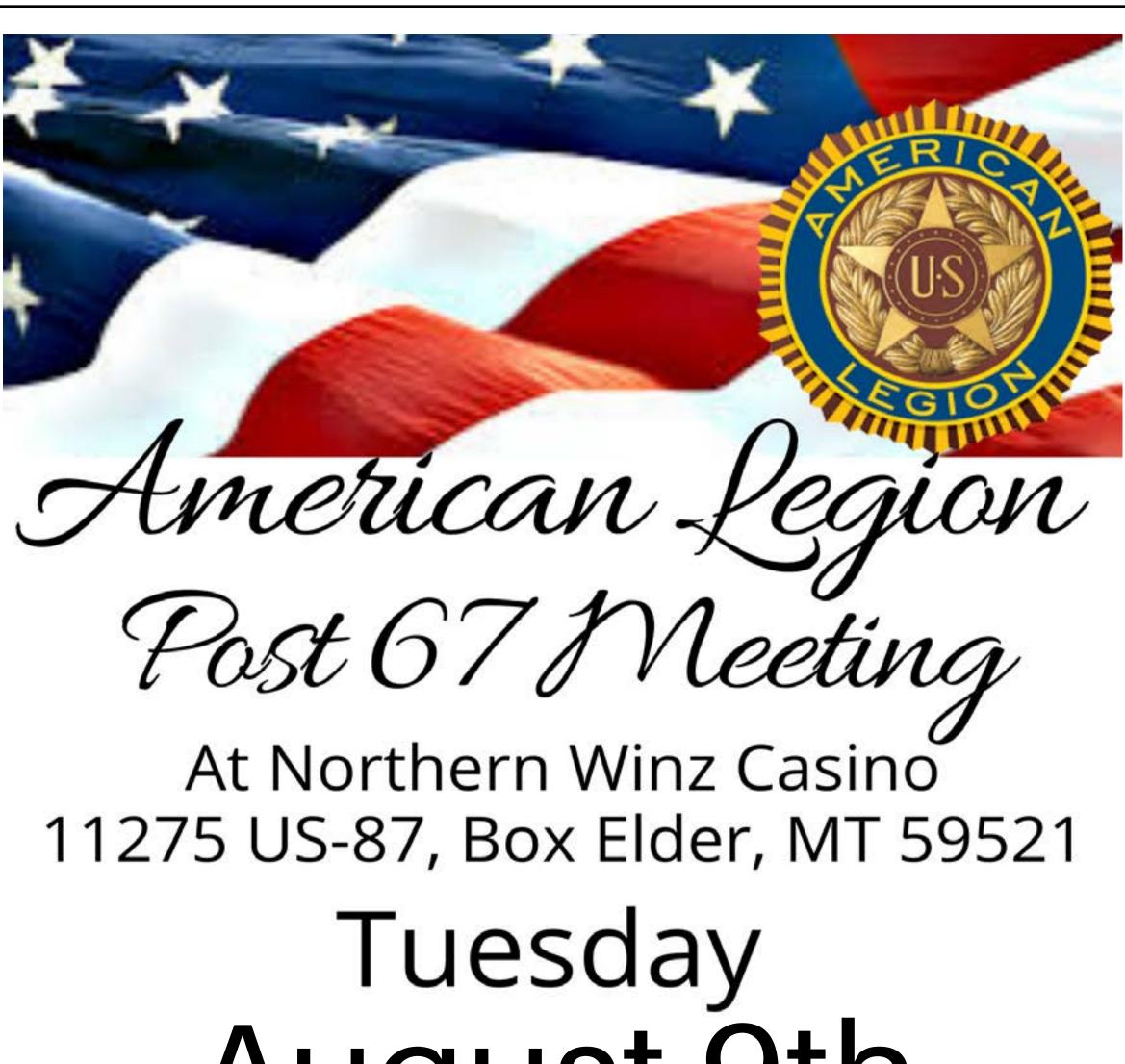
Finance Clerk/HR Assistant Cassie Morsette

Veterans Transportation Supervisor Browning Office Shane Sinclair Rocky Boy/ Ft. Belknap Veterans Transportation Supervisor Francois Nellis

Browning Drivers Matt Webber Louis Pollock

Veterans Outreach Coordinator Niles Wolf Chief

Graphic Designer Amber Lewis



Finance Manager Marianne Capellen Rocky Boy / Ft.Belknap Service Driver Keith Billy

August 9th 6:00pm

GREAT PLAINS VETERANS SERVICES CENTER **THE BIG ONE POW WOW RAFFLE** DRAWING ON AUGUST 7TH

1ST PRIZE2ND PRIZE3RD PRIZE\$10,000\$5,000\$3,000

Support the Great Plains Veterans Services Center and Donate



Non-Veteran-\$20.00

> <u>Veteran-</u> \$15.00

<u>American Legion</u> <u>Post Member-</u> \$13.00

RAFFLE TICKET PRICES: \$20 EACH \$50 FOR 3 TICKETS \$100 FOR 8 TICKETS RULES:

Players need not be present to win.
Prizes must be claimed phisically by the winner.

Follow us on Social Media visit our website at www.greatplainsveterans.org

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM PAGES FOR UPCOMING BBQ'S AND OTHER EVENTS.

August 2022 **GPVSC NEWS** 3

GPVSC CO-HOSTS FIRST STAND DOWN WITH GREAT SUCCESS

Great Plains Veterans Services Center (GPVSC) in partnership with Northern Winz Hotel and Casino hosted its first Veterans Stand Down Thursday, July 14th at the Northern Winz Hotel and Casino Event Tent, 11275 US-87, Box Elder from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The event included a Vietnam Era Veteran Commemoration and presentation.

The Stand Down event offered medical screenings and assistance, mental health services, clothing, food, housing, education opportunities, and direct Veteran services for dozens of Veterans in the local area. Job assistance and opportunities to speak with local employers were available for those seeking work. The goal is to get Veterans the resources they need to improve their lives, reintegrate into civilian life, and in some cases get back on their feet.

our community members in need. However, it is important to remember that these Veterans need our help every day and this center helps us accomplish that goal."

More than 46 Veterans received benefit information from local organizations. The Veterans, staff, and vendor participants were served a free lunch provided by Northern Winz. There were guest speakers and also representatives from the Chippewa Cree Tribe and Senator Tester's Veterans Affairs Team. The Veterans enjoyed door prize drawings and vendor giveaways.

"It's rewarding when you help people get back on their feet and they find a job, "said John Gardipee Jr., Transition Assistance Coordinator. "We couldn't pull this off without the help of our staff and vendor participants," said Niles Wolf Chief, Veterans Outreach Coordinator, and member of the planning committee for the Stand Down.

"This is our first year and we decided the location should be centrally located for Rocky Boy, Havre, and Veterans living in rural communities," said Stand Down committee member Rebecca Lewis, Communication Specialist at Great Plains Veterans Services Center. "The Veteran Center opened in June 2015 and serves our Veterans in 17 counties across Montana. Events like our Veteran Stand Down are wonderful and serve

"The Stand Down exceeded my expectations for our first year. The feedback from the entire community has been fantastic. Our planning committee is already discussing ways to improve and expand next year's event," said Chauncey Parker, Co-founder and Executive Director of GPVSC.





News Release Washington, DC 20420 (202) 461-7600 www.va.gov Office of Public Affairs Media Relations

August 2022

VETERAN CRISIS LINE UPDATES AS OF JULY 2022 NEW BENEFITS FOR BURN PIT VICTIMS

The Senate on Tuesday approved a bill to create a new entitlement program to treat veterans who may have been exposed to toxic substances from burning trash pits on U.S. military bases, sending President Biden legislation that would expand medical care eligibility to an estimated 3.5 million people.

The bill was approved on a lopsided bipartisan vote, 86 to 11, only days after Republicans pulled their support in a dispute over how to pay for the benefits, imperiling the legislation and drawing days of angry protests from veterans who gathered outside the Capitol to demand action.

for this country, that will work for the taxpayers of this country and it will work, most importantly, for the veterans and their families," said Senator Jon Tester, Democrat of Montana and the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. "We put politics aside. We delivered results through action, through real action. And we said thank you to the men and women who have

HELENA, Mont.— Montana VA Health Care System (Montana VA) encourages all Montana Veterans and non-Veterans to share the news -- the Veterans Crisis Line is adding a new number.

Beginning July, 16, 2022, Lifeline. Because VA Veterans and their loved ones Line through the Lifeline's will be able to dial 988 then Press 1 to reach the caring, qualified responders at the Crisis Line is affected by this Veterans Crisis Line, 24/7. Even transition. after the new number launches, Veterans will still be able to call Though the number is 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, updating, the Veterans Crisis Line dedicated service is still chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net/ Chat, and text 838255 to reach the same. The Veterans Crisis responders. Line is available 24/7, 365 days a year to provide confidential crisis support to Veterans and "The VA is always looking for new and innovative ways for their loved ones.

This decision to update the number is a result of the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020, which requires all telephone service providers in the U.S. to activate 988 by July 16, 2022 for the National Suicide Prevention administers the Veterans Crisis national network, the Veterans

served in our military," Tester said.

Montana Republican Senator Steve Daines voted for the bill Tuesday after voting against it last week. The text of the bill did not change during that time.

The new legislation would Daines says he is effectively presume that any disappointed the bill did American service member stationed in a combat zone for the last 32 years could have been exposed to toxic substances, allocating a projected \$280 billion over the next decade to treat ailments tied to those exposures and streamlining veterans health care or a veterans' access to such care.

not pass with amendments to its funding mechanisms, but the "PACT Act passed with my full support." Daines' office previously told MTPR that Democrats must either invest in separate spending package that includes key provisions of President Biden's economic and climate agenda.

us to care for our Veterans or and improve services to meet Veterans' needs," said Executive Director Dr. Judy Hayman. "While this may seem like a small change, it can have a tremendous impact on Montana Veterans, their families and our communities. Especially during a time of

In addition to the recent phone number update, the Veterans Crisis Line is also evaluating a possible new text option for Veterans and their supporters to reach caring, qualified responders 24/7. The implementation timeline is still being determined.

Montana Democratic Senator Jon Tester, chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, spoke on the chamber floor shortly after the bill passed.

"This is a bill that will work VA.

About 66,000 Montana veterans were likely exposed to toxic substances during their service, according to data from the

crisis, having an easy process to get assistance to those who need it most can really save lives."

The new, shorter number directly addresses the need for ease of access and clarity in times of crisis, both for Veterans and non-Veterans alike. To help Veterans' access support, the Veterans Crisis Line has been preparing for this change since the inception of legislation.

Montana VA serves over 47,000 enrolled Veterans across Montana—an area roughly 147,000 square miles in size. Veterans are cared for by a staff of 1,400 at 18 sites of care across the state. One third of Montana VA employees are Veterans. Veterans can connect to their VA healthcare records, information, and message their VA care teams 24 hours a day through the MyHealtheVet patient portal.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!



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MARINE VETERAN RECOGNIZED FOR DECADES OF SMOOTH FLYING



around Elm Grove. Depto said he'd loved aircraft and regularly went to look at commuter aircraft at the local airport, but growing up, he had no aspirations of becoming a pilot.

His career began as an aircraft mechanic shortly after high school. He enlisted for the Marine Corps, fully expecting to become an infantryman, but his recruiter steered Depto toward aviation, where there was a critical need for engineers and mechanics.

"I could not, for the life of me, ... figure out how these huge, metallic machines could suspend in the air and transport people," he said. "I was born in 1945, and it was common for people, men especially, to feel obligated to look on their face as if they were staring at a serve their country in the military. ... Long story short, I was accepted, I took the test, went into the aviation program in Memphis, took various classes to become a mechanic.

in education and a minor in geography, pursuing a career in adult education.

Since leaving the Marines, Depto has been a member of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, a large, international organization for aviators. Depto is also a member of the Experimental Aircraft Association, where he participates in the Young Eagles program, which promotes interest in aviation in local youth.

"We fly these kids and introduce them to the world of aviation, hoping they'll find a career in it," he said of the Young Eagles. "When they board our aircraft, they have a Tyrannosaurus rex. No fear, just awe. We fly around, and I let them take the controls.

WHEELING, W.Va. — A lifetime of work on the tarmac and in the clouds earned a Wheeling man the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award in recognition of decades of smooth flying.

Al Depto, an Elm Grove native, was presented with the award at a pilots' picnic at the Wheeling-Ohio County Airport on June 25. The award recognizes certified pilots with more than 50 years of piloting and operations experience who have maintained their good standing. Depto's partner, Mary C. Davis, submitted his application to the Federal Aviation Administration in secret, catching him completely by surprise when the award was presented at the picnic.

"The FAA gentleman started by explaining what the Wilbur and Orville Wright Award is and what qualifications were needed, and then my name came up," he said. "They asked if I had anything to say, I opened my mouth, and nothing came out." Depto said he dreamed of flying ever since he was a young kid, imagining running down the sidewalk and flying, like Superman,

"I was sent to a squadron headquarters, originally stationed at Santa Anna, California, he added. and there were three jets waiting for me, still 18 years old. They told me, 'Those are yours!' so I had complete and utter responsibility for those jets straight out of school."

Depto said he eventually made the same qualifications that the pilots did in his time there, obtaining ejection seat training, highpressure altitude training, physiological training, and his own G-suit and oxygen equipment. Depto began to fly in the rear when openings presented themselves. After four years, he was transferred to another outfit, where he served as captain until his discharge in 1967.

"One young lady, around 13 or 14, landed, ran up to her parents, jumped on her father, and started yelling, 'I got to fly the airplane!"

In a less official capacity, Depto also participates in the "Come Fly With Me" fundraiser, where private flights with Depto and other pilots are offered as raffle prizes and other fundraising efforts for local causes. These flights, he said, typically involve flying the passenger over the location of their choice, such as their neighborhoods.

Depto holds his memories of the Marine Corps dear to his heart, as the only enlisted non-pilot authorized to fly in the jets he serviced.

Depto earned his civilian certification while enlisted at the age of 19 in 1965 at Wheeler Air Force Base in Hawaii. When he returned home, Depto graduated from West Liberty State College in 1972 with a degree

"I'm with these pilots in the back seat of this jet, we're doing barrel rolls and simulated attacks on barges in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, doing all these things you'd see in 'Top Gun," Depto said. "That is an experience that I wouldn't sell for \$25 million."

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

AUGUST IS IMMUNIZATION AWARENESS MONTH

Quality of care for Veteran's in-Immunizations or vaccines are cludes raising awareness around medical preparations given important health topics. By highlighting some of the nation-body's resistance to an illness or al health awareness campaigns each month, Veterans can get ideas, information, and resourc- of many types of diseases and es on a variety of health matters. can also save lives. That's why

August is Immunization Aware- your vaccinations. ness Month, and we want to

shed light on the importance of keeping up with your vaccinations. By keeping up-to-date with your vaccinations, you not

to people to help improve the specific disease. Getting vaccinations will prevent outbreaks it's important to keep up with

Guidelines for getting vaccinated depend on your age, gender,

ans over 65 with the flu vaccine • Vaccines are one of the safest medical interventions we have • VA provides the pneumococcal vaccine to almost 95% of Veteran patients who should receive it

• People 6 months and older should receive a flu shot every year

• People age 65 or older need a one-time shot to help prevent pneumonia

health status, and family history. • Once you get a vaccine it also protects others around you from to your healthcare provider. only protect yourself and your getting that disease Did you know that: loved ones, but the community • All adults need a booster shot and people around you as well. • VA reaches over 80% of Veter- every 10 years to protect against

tetanus and diphtheria • Vaccines eliminated smallpox and polio in the U.S. • Measles and other diseases have been significantly reduced in the U.S. because of Vaccines

By educating ourselves and taking the proper precautions you and your loved ones can stay healthy and avoid these common illnesses. If you have any questions or concerns about getting vaccinated, be sure to talk

PROTECT YOURSELF BY GETTING IMMUNIZED.

Vaccines are some of the safest medical products. But, like any other medical product, there may be risks. Talk to your health care provider about the value of vaccines and their side effects.

Vaccines to consider

• Influenza (flu): People who are 6 months and older should get the flu vaccine (flu shot). Get the vaccine each year because flu virus can change from one year to the next.

• Hepatitis B: More contagious than HIV, hepatitis B is the type of hepatitis most often spread through sexual contact. It can also be passed from an infected mother to newborn, the sharing of needles or personal items with an infected person, and other contact involving bodily fluids. The hepatitis B vaccine can prevent the disease. • Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR): People born after 1956 and all women of childbearing

vaccine because you can get the disease more than once. You may have already got a different shingles vaccine called Zostavax. If you did, you still need 2 doses of Shingrix. Your risk of shingles and complications increases as you age. You need 2 doses of Shingrix. Get the second dose 2 to 6 months after you get the first dose. For more information, see Shingles Vaccine Fact Sheet for Adults.

are in contact with infants should get a one-time dose of tetanus-diptheria-pertussis (Tdap) to also protect against whooping cough.

Vaccines for international travelers: Many Veterans and other Americans traveling abroad are likely to be exposed to diseases common in those countries.

To learn more, visit VA's

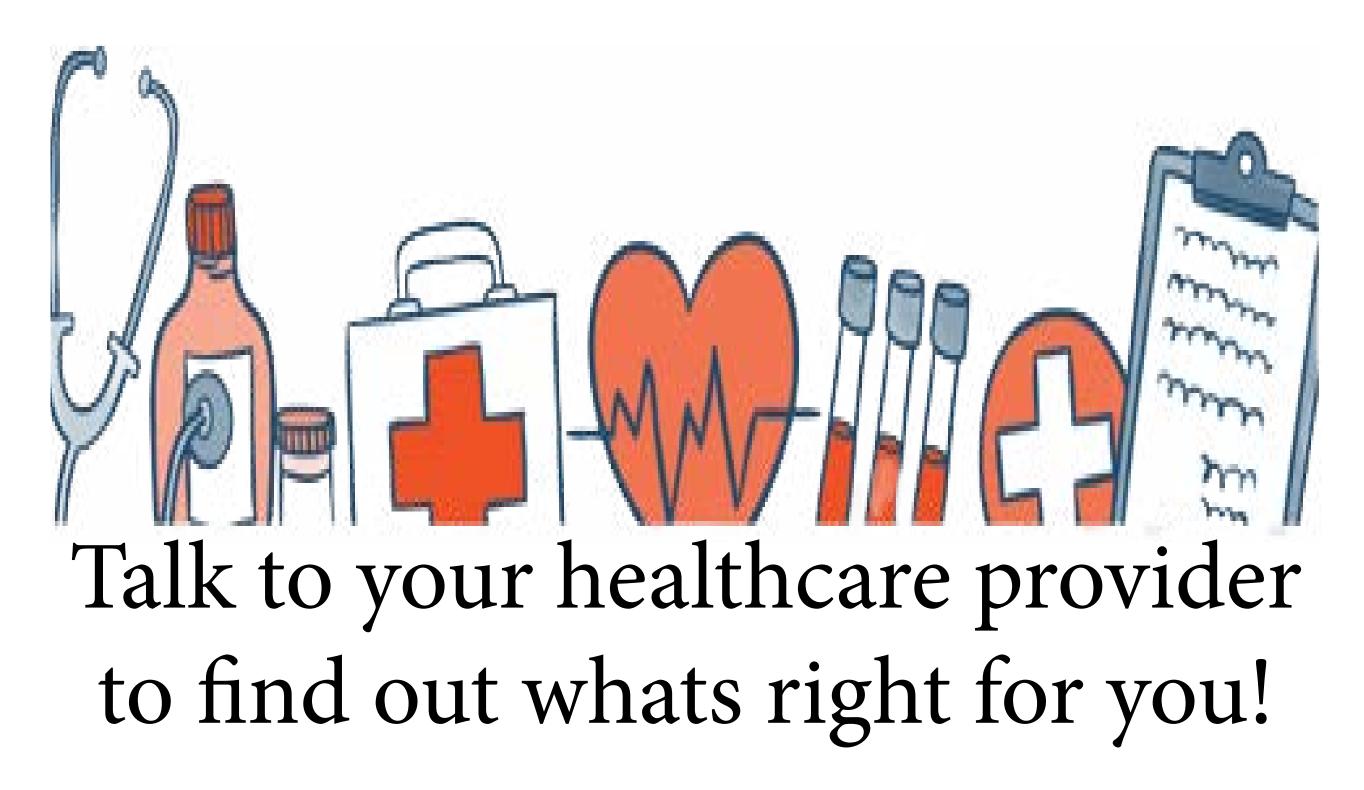
• Pneumococcal: Older people and those with certain medical conditions are most susceptible to pneumonia. People under 65 will need a booster shot when they reach 65 if more than five years have passed since the initial dose. Learn about pneumococcal pneumonia and vaccines.

• Hepatitis A: Recommended for those who travel to other countries or live in a U.S. community with high rates of hepatitis A; or who have chronic liver disease, engage in male-to-male sex, or inject drugs. Learn more about the hepatitis A vaccine.

age who have not had these diseases or been vaccinated against them need to get the shots to be protected.

- Chickenpox (varicella): Protection is necessary for those born in the U.S. after 1966 and have not had this disease and have not been vaccinated. Adults are at a far greater risk of complications.
- Shingles (herpes zoster): Shingles is a painful, rash-like illness. If you are 50 or older, get Shingrix which provides strong protection from shingles and long-term nerve pain. Even if you've had Shingles, it's important to receive the
- Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis: Booster doses of tetanusdiptheria (Td) are needed at 10-year intervals. In place of the Td booster, people age 19-64 and those 65 and older who

National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention page on recommended vaccines and screening tests, or go to Vaccines.gov.



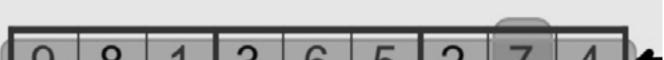
July 2022

Instructions:

Suduko puzzles require you to find the missing numbers in a 9x9 grid, with that grid itself divided into 9 square grids of 3x3. You can't just add any numbers though. There are rules that make solvingo the puzzle challenging.

To solve a Suduko, look for open spaces where its row, colomn and square already have enough other numbers filled in to tell you the correct value. The more squares you fill in, the easier the puzzle is to finish!

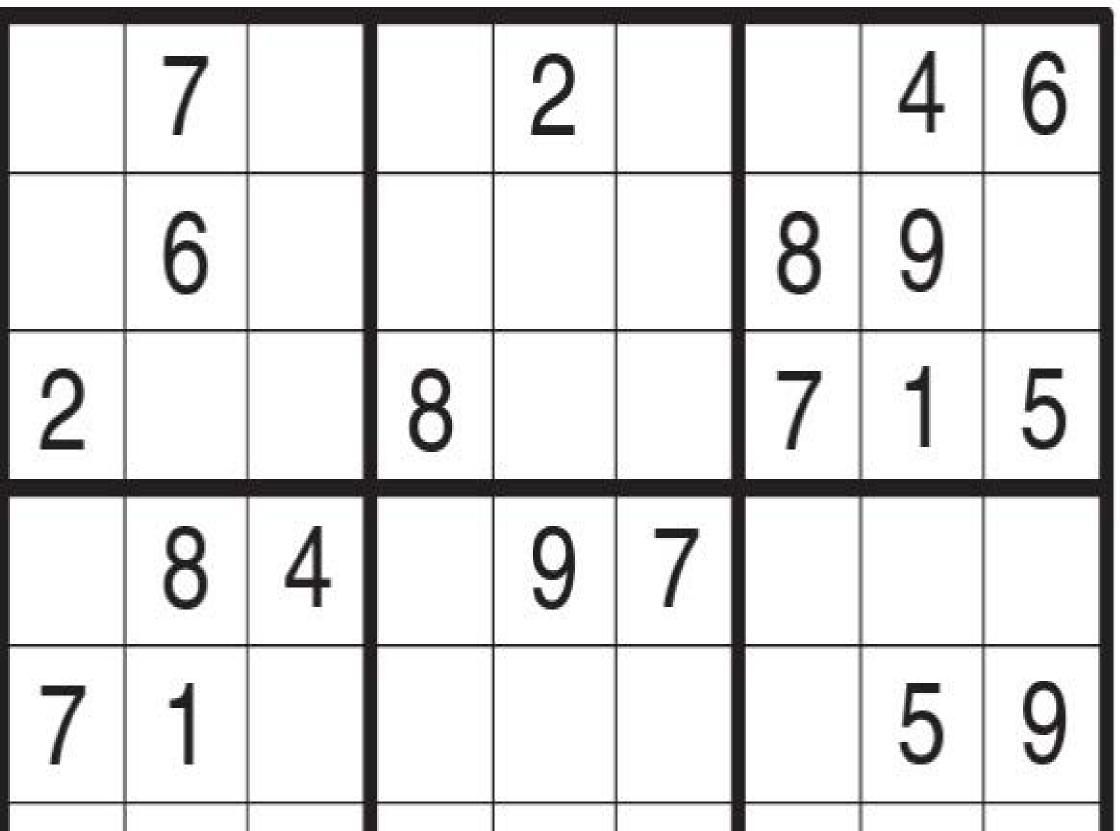
A number can only occur once in a row, column, or square.



July's Answers

7	9	3	8	6	4	5	1	2
6	5	4	1	2	3	8	9	7
1	2	8	9	7	5	3	6	4
5	8	6	2	1	9	7	4	3
2	7	9	3	4	6	1	8	5
3	4	1	7	5	8	6	2	9
8	3	5	4	9	1	2	7	6
9	1	2	6	3	7	4	5	8
4	6	7	5	8	2	9	3	1

August 2022 Suduko Puzzle Answer in September's Newsletter

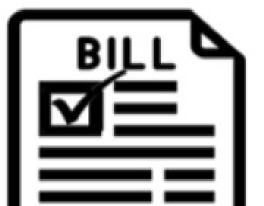


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	7	6	5	4	8	2	3	1	9	
	2	4	3	1	7	9	8	5	6	h
	1	9	2	6	3	4	7	8	5	
	4	3	7	5	2	8	9	6	1	
	8	5	6	9	1	7	4	3	2	
	3	2	4	7	5	6	1	9	8	
	5	1	8	2	9	3	6	4	7	
	6	7	9	8	4	1	5	2	3	

			1	3		4	8	
6	9	7			2			8
	5	8					6	
4	3			8			7	

CHECK CASHING SERVICES

Unload Debit Card, Bill Pay, Buy Bitcoin









DEBIT CARD SERVICES

Cash withdrawal fees: Post 67 Member: \$1 Veterans: \$1.50 Non-Veteran: \$2.50

CHECK CASHING SERVICES

Fees: Post 67 Member: 1% Veteran: 1.5% Non-Veteran: 2%



BILL PAY SERVICES

Same Day Venders: Hill County Electric **Triangle Communications** Non-Veteran: \$3.50

Other venders allow 1-3 days posting time to your account

CHECK CASHING POLICIES

NO MONEY ORDERS

Fees

Veteran: FREE

✓ WE CASH CANADIAN CHECKS UP TO \$500

✓ US GOVERNMENT CHECKS CAN ONLY **BE CASHED BY THE INDIVIDUAL TO** WHOM THE CHECK IS ISSUED

CHECK CASHING HOURS:

MON-FRI: 8:30am - 4:00pm SAT-SUN: CLOSED

"BECAUSE I WANT TO KEEP MY CULTURE AND TRADITIONS ALIVE" - BRFFANNA -

ALWAYS BUCKLE UP AND DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK OTHERS TO DO THE SAME

When you don't buckle up, you endanger more than just your own life. Drivers and passengers often don't consider hew unbuckled occupants can be threwn at high speed. during a creah and can cause serious harm or even death, not only to thereaches but to others in the vehicle. That's aity it's so important to backle up and ireist others to the same



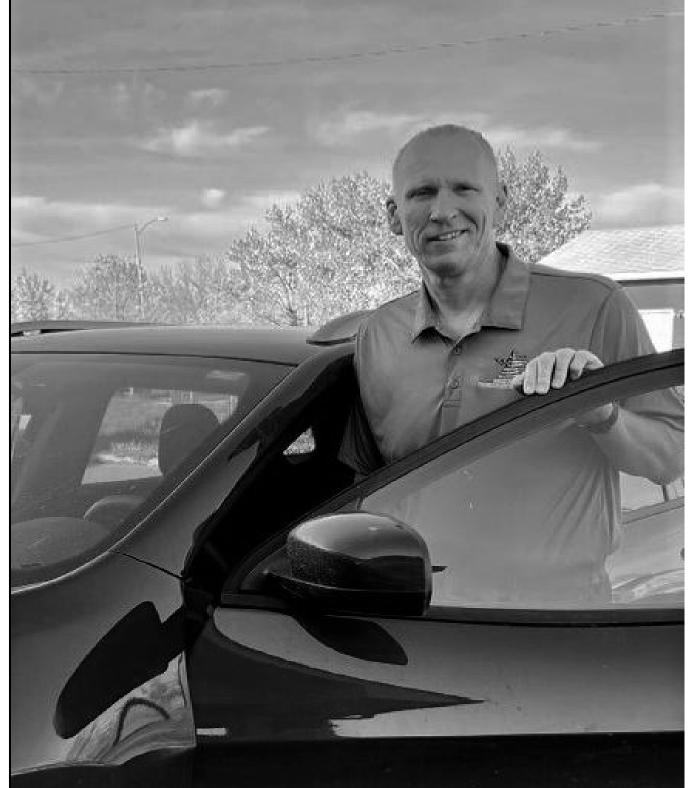
G /SafeOnAllRoads



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The Great Plains Veterans Services Center

Employee Spotlight



August's Employee Spotlight is featuring François Nelis. Francois has recently been promoted to Transportation Supervisor. He has been a Veterans Service driver for the GPVSC since April 2021, in that time he has transported over 60 veterans and covered over 15,000 miles.

He was born and raised in the Netherlands. In 2003,

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moved to New Jersey to be with his wife, who he met while stationed in the Dutch Antilles. They lived in New Jersey until December 2020, when they moved to Montana to live on Fort Belknap Reservation, as his wife accepted a position working for the Indian Health Service.

François' country of origin is as flat as can be and without any mountains and 40% of the county is below sea level. Life in Montana couldn't be more opposite!

He is a driver for GPVSC and it has given him the opportunity to travel around the great state of Montana while meeting so many wonderful Veterans and helping with their transport needs. "I thoroughly enjoy the work I do and all the amazing people I work with at GPVSC," said François.

When not at work, he spends free time enjoying the outdoors year-round. He likes to be active and take on new adventures. Enjoying traveling, working out, cooking, and spending time with family. He also has a great passion for history and culture.

François said, "I enjoy learning a lot about the local history and culture from the Veterans during our road trips."



After serving his obligatory 2 years in the Dutch Military, he chose to extend his service and joined the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps (founded in 1665). During the seven years he served, he was fortunate to travel to many places around the world. François commented, "Being a Marine is something I am very proud of."

The motto of the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps is "Qua Patit Orbis" translated from Latin to mean " as far as the world extends". He lives by that motto in his work. His dream is to help GPVSC, in any capacity he is able, to expand all over the Great Plains in order to reach and help as many Veterans as possible. Strengthening Native Communities for 45 Years

SPECIALIZING IN

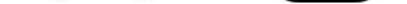
- Grant Writing Training
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The Great Plains Veterans Services Center



THE GREAT PLAINS VETERANS SERVICES CENTER IS PROUD TO BE IN PARTNERSHIP OF THESE FOUNDATIONS.



MAY & STANLEY SMITH CHARITABLE TRUST



BlueCross BlueShield of Montana



Wells Fargo Foundation







OTTO BREMER TRUST

Help for Homeless Veterans 877-4AID-VET va.gov/homeless (877) 424-3838



A representative from the Great Falls Vet Center will be at the office a couple times a month to answer any VA related questions, aid in enrollment, and offer counselling services for eligible Veterans. The representative will also be available to answer questions about benefits and services.

For more information or to schedule and appointment Call Rich or Becky at (406) 452-9048



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WARRIORS CURRENTLY SERVING IN THE **ARMED FORCES**



ARMY

Royce Bird Forest Doney Richard Lujan Justin Murphy Small Orion Wolf Chief Shane Ketchum Leo Johnson

<u>NAVY</u>

Kristen LaMere Jessica Stump

AIRFORCE

Trey Henderson

Maia Henderson VET CENTER \$ Future 10:30am-2:30pm Fortune Weekly Raffle \$ Drawing NATIONAL GUARD/ RESERVE Chauncey Parker **Charles** Parker Dominic Pullin Jonas Rockett **FOLLOW US FOR NEWS AND UPDATES** WWW.GREATPLAINSVETERANS.ORG

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August 2022 4TH ANNUAL VETERANS FLOAT TRIP DOWN THE MISSOURI RIVER NEAR CRAIG

In recent years, mental health has become an increasingly significant issue for veterans, with more than one-third of veterans who enter Veterans Affairs services receiving medical diagnoses related to mental health. Skepticism of therapy and stigma are significant barriers for veterans with mental health issues. "These programs may be ideal to provide social support for veterans and improve mental health," Leonard said. "We hope these results lead to policy changes that make it easier for all veterans to find respite and healing in the outdoors." Research has confirmed the psychological benefits of outdoor recreation for Veterans. Taking part in outdoor group activities, like camping, hiking, or rafting, could prove beneficial for Veterans with mental health problems. The findings suggest that extended group-based nature recreation can have significant positive impacts on Veterans struggling with serious health problems," said Dr. Jason Duvall, a research scientist at the University of Michigan and one of the study's lead authors, in a statement. "Nature," Dr. Jennifer Romesser says, "can help reconnect Veterans with the experience of positive emotion and develop a renewed sense of awe and appreciation for the outdoors." "Nature-based interventions show important promise as places in which veterans can receive peer support, as well as potentially experience mental health symptom reduction," Dr. Schaefer said. "Nature-based programs are wonderful alternatives to traditional treatment environments for veterans who want to feel better, but may have internalized stigma related to mental treatment in traditional clinic settings."



On Saturday, July 23rd, Great Plains Veterans Services Center Hosted their 4th annual float trip along the Missouri River. The float started in Craig, Mt and ended at Dearborne Landing. There was a total of 20 guests that went on to float the river. Packed lunches and snacks were provided while on the rafts. Co-directors Chuncey Parker and John Gardipee Sr. provided a Veterans BBQ for all attendees after the float was over. Some guests stayed after the Veterans BBQ and camped at the Mid- Canon fishing access site.



GPVSC 4th Annual Float Trip attendees



Co- Directors Chauncy Parker and John Gardipee Sr. provided a Veterans BBQ for all attendees





Guests enjoying the food and cornhole games

A photo snapped along the float of the beautiful scenery along the Missouri River



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