



# Great Plains Veterans Services Center

*"Veterans helping Veterans for a better future"*



## PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS TODAY

GREAT PLAINS VETERANS SERVICES CENTER



### RAFFLE

DRAWING ON AUGUST 6

1ST PRIZE	2ND PRIZE	3RD PRIZE
\$10,000	\$5,000	\$3,000

## DRAWING AUGUST 6TH



**August  
2023**

# NEWSLETTER

# G.P.V.S.C STAFF

Executive Director  
Chauncey Parker

Administrative Manager  
John Gardipee, Sr.

Veterans Transportation Manager  
TBD

VTS Administrative Assistant  
Tallis Caplette

Communications Specialist  
Becky Lewis

Finance Manager  
Marianne Capellen

Finance Clerk/HR Assistant  
Leo Johnson

Veterans Outreach Case Managers  
Rocky Boy Office  
John Gardipee, Jr.  
Jeffery Jones

Veterans Outreach Case Managers  
Browning Office  
Patrick Calf Looking  
Ryan Hoyt

Veterans Service Driver  
Rocky Boy Office  
Keith Billy

Veterans Support Services Manager  
Wesley Old Coyote

Veterans Transportation Supervisor  
Browning Office  
Shane Sinclair

Veterans Service Drivers  
Browning Office  
Matt Webber  
Louis Pollock

Veterans Transportation Supervisor  
Ft. Belknap Office  
Francois Nelis

Veterans Service Driver  
Rocky Boy / Ft. Belknap  
Weston Sutherland

Food Service Operator  
Rocky Boy Office  
Coby Stump

Food Service Assistant  
Rocky Boy Office  
Brian Jones

Veterans Service Driver  
Ft. Belknap Office  
Verlin Littlelight

Graphic Designer  
Amber Lewis

# G.P.V.S.C BOARD MEMBERS

Jon Monteaux  
Board President

Robert Belcourt  
Board Vice President

Joseph Eagleman  
Board Treasurer

Darrell Sun Child  
Member-at-Large

Marlene Kay Azure  
Member-at-Large

Brandi King  
Member-at-Large



## American Legion Post 67 Meeting

At Northern Winz Casino  
11275 US-87, Box Elder, MT 59521

**Tuesday  
August 8th  
6:00pm**

### Support the Great Plains Veterans Services Center and Donate



Non-Veteran-  
\$19.00

Veteran-  
\$18.00

American Legion  
Post Member-  
\$17.00



Follow us on  
Social Media



visit our website at [www.greatplainsveterans.org](http://www.greatplainsveterans.org)

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

# GPVSC HOSTS SECOND ANNUAL VETERANS STAND DOWN

Great Plains Veterans Services Center (GPVSC) hosted its second Veterans Stand Down Thursday, July 27th at the Northern Winz Hotel and Casino Event Tent, in Box Elder, Montana from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The event brought together guest speakers, various groups, and service providers to supply a wide-ranging system that encourages and assists our local Veteran community.

The Stand Down event offered health benefit and 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. Together, we can aid Veterans in improving their lives, getting the help that they have earned, and matching them with organizations that are available.

“We’ve been planning this event for the past ten months and I couldn’t be happier with our turn out,” said Communication Specialist Rebecca Lewis, at Great Plains Veterans Services Center. “This is the Veteran’s Center largest single event of the year and it’s a

wonderful accomplishment to serve so many Veterans in just one day. We really appreciate all the hard work of our staff, volunteers, vendors, and participants. Events like our Veteran Stand Down are a fantastic way to reach our community members in need. As always, it is crucial to consider that our nation’s Veterans need reinforcement, resources, and assistance every day. It is our job to support our Veterans and Service Members by helping them obtain the care and benefits they have earned through their service to this country. Now serving Veterans in seventeen counties, GPVSC plans to further expand our outreach across Montana in the next year.”

More than 66 Veterans received benefit information from local organizations. The Veterans, staff, and vendor participants were served a free lunch provided by Northern Winz, desserts provided by The Infinity Bake Shoppe, and enjoyed door prize drawings and vendor giveaways. The guest speakers this year included, Jon Monteau (USAF Veteran, GPVSC Board President), Lawrence B.G. Rhone (US Army DAV, OGC Accredited, Veteran’s Advocate), Brandi King (US Army

Veteran), representatives from the Chippewa Cree Tribe, Senator Tester’s Veterans Affairs Team and Senator Daines VA/DOD Casework Liaison. “It was amazing to see our Veteran speakers open up. As a fellow Air Force Veteran, the speech given by Board President Jon Monteau was heartfelt and inspirational, shared Leo Johnson, Payroll Clerk at GPVSC.

Wes Old Coyote, Veteran Support Services Manager at GPVSC added, “Thank you to the GPVSC staff for hosting a meaningful Stand Down! A great opportunity to meet many of our Veterans and Veteran Support Organizations at the event. Enjoyed participating and supporting the mental health focus of the event and our efforts in reaching Veterans in Northcentral Montana”.

And from the Executive Director, Chauncey Parker, “A BIG THANKS to all GPVSC staff and attending service providers for a successful 2nd annual Veteran Stand-Down. Our sincerest hope was that all attending Veterans received services they have rightly earned. We look forward to another great event in 2024”.



# GPVSC U PICK 'EM

# FOOTBALL RAFFLE

# PICKS OPEN 9/4/2023

# NFL SEASON BEGINS 9/7/2023



## SPINAL MUSCULAR ATROPHY (SMA) AWARENESS MONTH

Spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects the motor nerve cells in the spinal cord and impacts the muscles used for activities such as breathing, eating, crawling, and walking.

SMA is caused by a mutation in the survival motor neuron gene 1 (SMN1). In a healthy person, this gene produces a protein that is critical to the function of the nerves that control our muscles. Individuals with SMA produce low levels of survival motor neuron (SMN) protein. Without this protein, those nerve cells cannot properly function and eventually die, leading to debilitating and sometimes fatal muscle weakness.

SMA affects approximately one in 11,000 births in the U.S., and about one in every 50 Americans is a genetic carrier. SMA can affect any race or gender.

Historically SMA was classified by five primary types of SMA — 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 — based on the age that symptoms begin and highest physical milestone achieved. However, disease modifying treatment and newborn screening are changing the way we classify and describe SMA.

Individuals with SMA may have difficulty performing some of the basic functions of life. However, SMA does not affect a person's ability to think, learn, and build relationships with others.

August is SMA Awareness Month! While we work year-round to raise awareness and funds for SMA, August is our time to shine a brighter spotlight on the needs, wants, hopes, and experiences of our community. SMA Awareness Month strives to raise awareness of the condition caused by the deficiency of a motor neuron protein called SMN and other rare forms of SMA that stem from chromosome mutations.

This month, Cure SMA is offering a variety of ways that you can participate by advocating, giving, fundraising, educating, and raising awareness of SMA. Below, we've compiled ideas for how you can honor SMA Awareness Month on your own, in your community, or with those you love.

It is through your support that Cure SMA funds research, care centers, and support programs to make life better for those living with SMA. Please join us throughout the month of August in fostering conversation, connectedness, and understanding, and most importantly, action amongst and for our SMA community.



— August —  
**SPINAL  
MUSCULAR  
ATROPHY**  
Awareness  
Month

# AUGUST IS NATIONAL IMMUNIZATIONS AWARENESS MONTH

National Immunization Awareness Month provides us an opportunity to think about how far the development and advancement of immunization science has come, and its impact on public health. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration plays a key role in immunization by evaluating vaccines for safety and effectiveness before they are made available to the public.

Vaccines work by stimulating the body's immune system to safely provide protection against viruses or bacteria that cause infection. After vaccination, the immune system is prepared to respond quickly when the body encounters the disease-causing organism.

Why are vaccines important? They help provide protection from an infectious disease and can lessen the severity of illness. If you are immune to a disease, you can be exposed to it without becoming sick. Simply put, because of advances in medical science, vaccines can help protect us against more diseases than ever before. Some diseases that once injured or killed thousands of

people have been eliminated primarily due to vaccines.

As a medical doctor, I know all too well how important vaccinations are throughout life, helping people of all ages live longer, healthier lives. The World Health Organization estimates that immunization currently prevents 3.5-5 million deaths every year from diseases like diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, influenza and measles and tens of millions of people are alive today because of the COVID-19 vaccines.

Getting the right information about immunization in the digital age, however, can be like drinking from a fire hose. Most Americans are on the receiving end of a constant barrage of information coming at them through phones, laptops, TVs, and social media. Trying to filter fact from fiction can be a challenge, but oh so critical when it comes to public health.

## 1. FDA Authorizes or Approves Vaccines Based on Rigorous Evaluation and Analysis

of Data.

Vaccines to prevent infectious diseases are given to millions of babies, children, adolescents and adults, so it is critical that they are demonstrated to be safe and effective. Vaccines undergo a rigorous FDA evaluation of laboratory and clinical data to ensure their safety, effectiveness and manufacturing quality. The FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER) is responsible for regulating vaccines.

## 2. COVID-19 Vaccines and Flu Vaccines Save Lives

Specific to COVID-19 vaccines, CBER has been integral in overseeing the development of the vaccines to prevent COVID-19 and authorizing and approving the vaccines that are proven to meet criteria for safety and effectiveness. Working with manufacturers in order to get the vaccines

to the public as quickly as possible, while adhering to the FDA's rigorous scientific and regulatory evaluation process, has enabled one of the major achievements in the history of biomedical science. The FDA



THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

# SURVIVE AND THRIVE

YOU MATTER • YOU ARE NOT ALONE • HELP IS AVAILABLE

Veterans  
Crisis Line



DIAL 988 then  
PRESS 1

## SUICIDE PREVENTION COLUMN: HOW SUMMER AFFECTS SUICIDE RATES

There is a common belief that suicide occurs most often in the cold months, especially around Thanksgiving, Christmas and other winter holidays. This is actually a misconception, however, as suicide rates often increase during the spring and summer. Since 2002, Centerstone has recorded the number of suicide deaths occurring each month, and the summer months have routinely seen the most suicides, with July being highest.

### Why summer?

While it is easy to see the data and observe that suicide rates increase in the summer, figuring out the cause is not simple. There are no definitive seasonal causes of suicidal ideation and action. However, there are some consistent causes seen across many studies.

The warm weather and increased sunshine could contribute to increased energy needed to act on suicidal thoughts for those who experience them. Megan Williams, Director of Suicide Prevention at Centerstone, says, “Warm weather also often means that people are more active and participating in more outdoor activities. This can cause those suffering from depression, anxiety and/or suicidal ideation to become more depressed seeing others enjoying themselves.” This, coupled with an increase in energy, could contribute to higher suicide deaths in spring and summer.

There are other aspects of summer, such as seasonal socioeconomic factors, seasonal allergies and more that can contribute to suicidal ideation and action.

### Tips for prevention

Fortunately, there are ways you can help prevent suicide in others by being attentive and showing your support.

If someone you know who had been demonstrating depressive mood has a sudden change in attitude and appears more cheerful, it could be a sign that they have decided to act on suicidal ideation. The same applies if someone suddenly thanks you for being there for them, as they could be “saying goodbye.” These behaviors do not always have to mean a person is planning suicidal action, but they can be signs to watch for.

If you know someone who has expressed suicidal ideation to you in the past, support them in their care. If they are receiving mental health care, walk with them through their treatment. Partner with them, helping them establish their safety plan for any potential crises. Be someone that they can rely on when they need help.

Check in on them. Send a caring text, call or email to someone you may be worried about. A simple, “I was just thinking about you and wanted to say hello,” could go a long way.

## HRTG GRANT NEWS: MANY SUBSTANCES CAN IMPAIR DRIVING

Many substances can impair driving, including alcohol, some over-the-counter and prescription drugs, and illegal drugs.

- Alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs can impair the ability to drive because they slow coordination, judgment, and reaction times.

- Cocaine and methamphetamine can make drivers more aggressive and reckless.

- Using two or more drugs at the same time, including alcohol, can amplify the impairing effects of each drug a person has consumed.

- Some prescription and over-the-counter medicines can cause extreme drowsiness, dizziness, and other side effects. Read and follow all warning labels before driving, and note that warnings against “operating heavy machinery” include driving a vehicle.

Impaired drivers can’t accurately assess their own impairment – which is why no one should drive after using any impairing substances. Remember: If you feel different, you drive different.

### MARIJUANA IMPAIRS

There are many misconceptions about marijuana use, including rumors that

marijuana can’t impair you or that marijuana use can actually make you a safer driver.

Several scientific studies indicate that this is false. Research shows that marijuana impairs motor skills, lane tracking and cognitive functions (Robbe et al., 1993; Moskowitz, 1995; Hartman & Huestis, 2013). A 2015 study on driving after smoking cannabis stated that THC in marijuana also hurts a driver’s ability to multitask, a critical skill needed behind the wheel.

NHTSA continues to conduct research to better understand the relationship between marijuana impairment and increased crash risk. NHTSA’s Drug and Alcohol Crash Risk Study found that marijuana users are more likely to be involved in crashes. However, the increased risk may be due in part because marijuana users are more likely to be young men, who are generally at a higher risk of crashes.

Research indicates drug prevalence is on the rise among drivers. NHTSA’s 2020 study of seriously or fatally injured road users at studied trauma centers (Thomas et al., 2020) suggested that the overall prevalence of alcohol, cannabinoids and opioids increased during the public health emergency compared to before.

While evidence shows that drug-impaired driving is dangerous, we still have more to learn about the extent of the problem and how best to address it. In January 2018, NHTSA launched a new initiative to address drug-impaired driving. NHTSA’s National Drug-Impaired Driving Initiative brings together experts, including law enforcement officials, prosecutors, substance abuse experts and others, to discuss strategies that can reduce drug-impaired driving.

### IT’S ILLEGAL

Driving impaired by any substance—alcohol or other drugs, whether legal or illegal—is against the law in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Law enforcement officers are trained to observe drivers’ behavior and to identify impaired drivers. Even in states where marijuana laws have changed, it is still illegal to drive under the influence of the drug.

NHTSA’s National Roadside Survey conducted in 2013-2014 (PDF, 173 KB) found that 20 percent of surveyed drivers tested positive for potentially impairing drugs.

Surveys conducted by NHTSA show the number of drivers testing positive for marijuana increased between 2007 and 2014. In 2007, NHTSA’s National

Roadside Survey (PDF, 1 MB) found that 8.6 percent of weekend nighttime drivers tested positive for marijuana. In the 2013-2014 survey, 12.6 percent of weekend nighttime drivers tested positive for marijuana. That’s a 48-percent increase in less than 10 years.

While the presence of a drug in a driver’s system doesn’t necessarily mean that they’re impaired, these findings show the importance of raising awareness about the risks of drug-impaired driving.

### THE ISSUE

#### Responsible Behavior

We can all save lives by making smarter choices.

- Plan ahead for a sober driver, if you plan to use an impairing drug.

- Don’t let friends get behind the wheel if they’re under the influence of drugs.

- If you’re hosting a party where alcohol or other substances will be used, it’s your job to make sure all guests leave with a sober driver.

- Always wear your seat belt—it’s your best defense against impaired drivers

# Instructions:

Sudoku 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 solving the puzzle challenging.

To solve a Sudoku, look for open spaces where its row, column 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.**

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

## July's Answers

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

# August's 2023 Suduko Puzzle

Answer in September's Newsletter

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

## 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



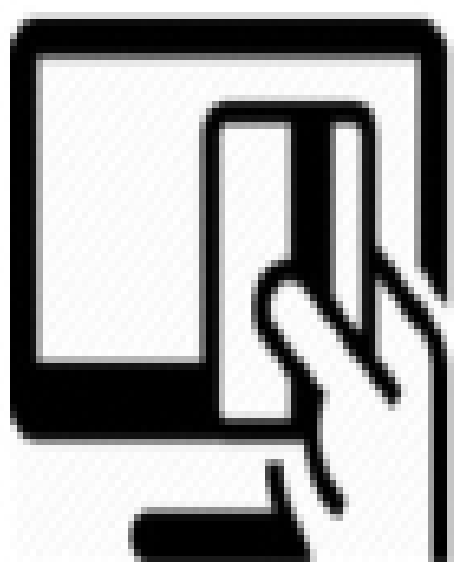
### CHECK CASHING SERVICES

Fees:

Post 67 Member: 1%

Veteran: 1.5%

Non-Veteran: 2%



### BILL PAY SERVICES

Fees

Veteran: FREE

Non-Veteran: \$3.50

Same Day Venders:

Hill County Electric

Triangle Communications

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

### CHECK CASHING POLICIES

- ✓ NO MONEY ORDERS
- ✓ 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



# MY ONE REASON FOR BUCKLING UP

**"BECAUSE I WANT TO KEEP MY CULTURE AND TRADITIONS ALIVE"**

- BREEANNA -

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 how unbuckled occupants can be thrown at high speed during a crash and can cause serious harm or even death, not only to themselves but to others in the vehicle. That's why it's so important to buckle up and insist others do the same.



[f /SafeOnAllRoads](#)

# GPVSC HOSTS IT'S 5TH ANNUAL VETERANS FLOAT TRIP



On Saturday, July 22nd, Great Plains Veterans Services Center Hosted their 5th annual float trip along the Missouri River. The float started in Cascade, Mt and ended at Hidden Canyon Lodge. There was a total of 8 Veterans that participated in the river float. Transportation was provided as well as packed lunches and snacks. Co-directors Chauncey Parker and John Gardipee Sr., in addition to Wes Old Coyote Veteran Support Services Manager provided a Veterans BBQ for all attendees after the float was over. Some Veterans and staff elected to stay after the Veterans BBQ to camp and enjoy the great 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 and their mental health. This event was started in 2019 by former GPVSC Veteran Support Services Warrior Advocate, Samantha LaMere.



## WARRIOR WEDNESDAYS MEET 'N' GREET BBQ'S

Check out our Facebook page for dates and more details.

Meet 'n' Greet Barbeques are great way to enhance communication and foster bonds among Veterans and others in the community. They are a place to meet friends, find resources, and have fun with other Veterans and community members.

**ALL VETERANS EAT FREE**

## Warrior Wagon Food Truck

Now opened  
Tuesday- Friday

Follow us on Facebook  
[@rockyboyveteransfoodtruck](https://www.facebook.com/rockyboyveteransfoodtruck)  
for updates and menus

GPVSC OFFICE-46 Veterans Park Rd.

**FOLLOW US FOR NEWS AND UPDATES**



**WWW.GREATPLAINSVETERANS.ORG**

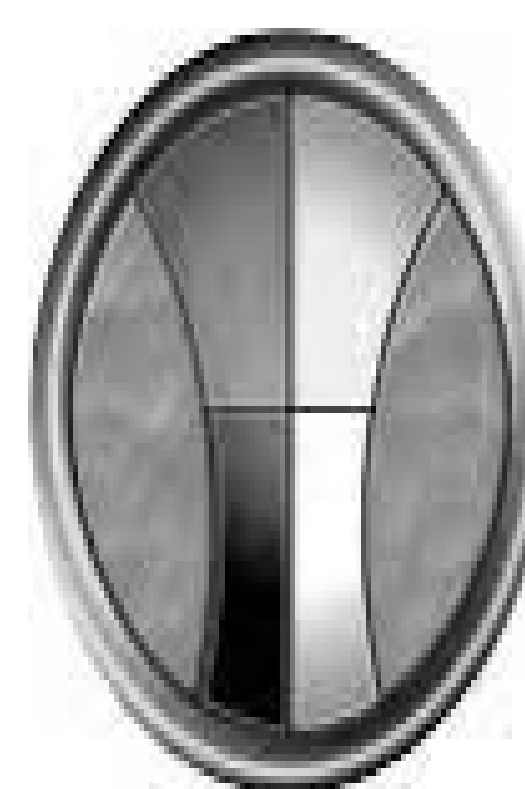




**THE GREAT PLAINS VETERANS SERVICES CENTER IS PROUD TO BE IN PARTNERSHIP OF THESE FOUNDATIONS.**



**BlueCross BlueShield of Montana**



**POTLATCH FUND**



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



## Community Events

Antiterrorism Awareness Month

National Financial Awareness Day- August 14th

National Nonprofit Day- August 17th

World Humanitarian Day- August 19th

International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism- August 21st

National Grief Awareness Day- August 30th

International Overdose Awareness Day- August 31st

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> AirForce Day	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Rocky Boy Pow Wow	<b>4</b> Rocky Boy Pow Wow	<b>5</b> Rocky Boy Pow Wow
<b>6</b> Rocky Boy Pow Wow	<b>7</b> All GPVSC Offices Closed Purple Heart Day	<b>8</b> American Legion Post 67 Meeting 6pm	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> US Department of Defense Birthday Agent Orange Awareness Day	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> VET CENTER 10am-3pm Warrior Wednesday's Meet-N-Greet BBQ 10am-2pm National Airborne Day	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> VET CENTER 10am-3pm Warrior Wednesday's Meet-N-Greet BBQ 10am-2pm	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> Happy Birthday Jeff	<b>28</b> All GPVSC Offices Closed for Staff Training	<b>29</b> Happy Birthday Shane	<b>30</b> VET CENTER 10am-3pm Warrior Wednesday's Meet-N-Greet BBQ 10am-2pm	<b>31</b>		

**FOLLOW US FOR NEWS AND UPDATES**

**WWW.GREATPLAINSVETERANS.ORG**





**WORLD CANCER  
SUPPORT MONTH  
AUGUST**

## \$ GPVSC Weekly Raffle \$



**WIN!!!**

**\$1,000 CASH**

SECOND CHANCE  
DRAWING

**\$100 CASH**

**DRAWINGS**

FRIDAY  
@ 3PM



# WARRIORS CURRENTLY SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

### ARMY

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

### AIRFORCE

Trey Henderson  
Maia Henderson

### NATIONAL GUARD/ RESERVE

### NAVY

Jessica Stump

Dominic Pullin

## ATTENTION!!!!

Guard and Active Duty members or family members please contact the GPVSC to update your status.



@GREATPLAINSVETERANS



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING AND  
ADVERTISING WITH GPVSC....  
CONTACT REBECCA LEWIS FOR DETAILS  
406-395-5610