



Cpl. William F. Reardon
Disabled American Veterans
Chapter 57 Newsletter

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CHAPTER OFFICERS

508-828-1808

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Sr. Vice Commander	Leroy Crossman
Jr. Vice Commander	Bruce Crossman
Adjutant	Paul Waldron
Treasurer	Martin Fox
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Officer of The Day	William Laliberte
Sergeant At Arms	Stephen Horton
Service Officer	John Fielding
Service Officer	Mort Morin
Legislative Officer	Martin Fox
Armorer	Frank Ardita

July / August 2007

Volume 4 Number 6

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COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Those of you who have been the meetings recently know that Chapter 57 keeps moving forward. We're trying not to become stagnant. It isn't easy; but, with help from a lot of newer angles we are keeping the momentum up.

Our negotiations with Ocean State Job Lot - they matched us dollar for dollar, our purchase (at their cost was matched with a equal donation - have seen boxes go off to shelters in Fall River, Northampton, Pittsfield and Worcester. And we have a feeler out At Davis Park and are gearing up for another session in Brockton's Building 2 and possibly Building 4. Between our Ocean State effort and what we had on hand the Chapter has processed almost \$10,000 worth of clothing and comfort items. Not bad for a Chapter that five years ago didn't have a pot to p- in or a window to throw it out of.

We continue to dress up in our Chapter uniform of grey trousers, white shirt and navy blue or black blazer for meetings and public affairs. This is getting to look both professional and colorful, particularly as more members earn Incentive Award Ribbons. While it isn't mandatory to wear the uniform more members are dressing up. And it isn't very difficult to earn anyone of our many award ribbons for service to the Chapter and to our disabled comrades or their families.

We will have had our annual, members, cookout by the time most of you have gotten around to reading this. This is a reservation only deal, with the arrangements similar to our December and Installation meetings. Might I suggest that if you don't know how these work that you get to one of the meetings to find out more about these events.

We will be kicking off our Forget-Me-Not Drive very shortly. Please, contact Treas. Pete Fox at 508 822-4165 or me at 508 828-1808 to volunteer to do a little canvassing. We will be getting into our Fall session in Building 2 with pizza and/or ice cream socials and will be looking for soda jerks and other wait staff. We would like to build up a regular Honor/Color Guard Team and need about a dozen volunteers.

I'd like to see more of you at our regular meetings. Please, make every effort to come and participate. Remember, we are only as good as and as strong as YOU. If you show up and participate in Chapter activities we are all that much stronger and better.

CHAPTER UNIFORMS A HIT AT DAV STATE CONVENTION



L- R, Adj. Waldron, Treas. Fox, Cmdr. Morin & QM. Willoughby

Chapter 57 had four delegates in attendance at the DAV State Department of Massachusetts Convention. This is the first time in recent memory that we have had such representation. Until this year, the Chapter has always sent two delegates.

The Chapter is entitled to 31 delegate votes, based on the number of members. It has become one of the larger delegate vote chapters.

The members received several compliments for the uniform that the Chapter has adopted. One of the comments was at the Friday night dinner, when we were told that we were the best dressed Chapter in attendance. Another comment from other delegates was "I wish our Chapter could adopt a uniform like that. They look really good."

The uniform was adopted by the Chapter in order to present an orderly, business like appearance by members at official functions and public appearances. It was adopted as mandatory for Chapter officers and optional for members.

The "Uniform", in addition to the DAV Cap, consists of a blue blazer, gray slacks, black shoes and belt. The insignia and other attachments to the blazer are available to members through our Quartermaster, Norm Willoughby. The blazer is optional for hot weather and for colder weather. The jackets

PRIZE DRAWING UPDATE

We have two different monetary prizes at each meeting. The first is a door prize with a chance being given to every member in attendance. It is \$25.00 for some lucky attendee at the meeting. Secondly, we have a Membership drawing which requires the member to be in attendance or forfeit the prize.. The names of each individual member are maintained in a jar. One name is drawn at each meeting. This drawing is progressive, in that, the amount is increased each month until won by a member who is in attendance.

PRIZE DRAWINGS**\$25.00 Attendance Door Prize :**

May -No Drawing Installation
April – Lou Demers (Donated back)

Membership Prize

(If not present the prize is forfeited).

May – No drawing Installation
June - \$45 Stanley Amora - Forfeited

CH. 57 CALENDAR

Third Tuesdays - Meeting time - 6:30PM
Elk's Lodge 119 High St. Taunton, MA.

August 18, 2007 Annual Cookout**RESERVATION ONLY**

Respond by July 30, 2007

Must be paid in advance

Call 508-828-1808 for details

Next Regular Meeting

September 18, 2007

RECENTLY DEPARTED COMRADES

Arthur T. McDermott

May 2007

United States Army

World War II

57'S CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Lately, I've been thinking That life is like a five string guitar. The first string is about History. The second is family. The third is our friends. The fourth is our job. The fifth is our attitude. We play many tunes on this old guitar every day.



The history string isn't played too often. It is one that we can learn from and some of it might be important for us, But, many times we loose touch with what happened this string breaks, which leaves four.

The second string Family is important for support and with help in understanding who we are and especially about family medical history, so we know what to expect. Sometimes this string breaks.

The third string, our friends, is a fragile string indeed and is often broken for a thousand reasons. Sometimes we don't know why and we never find out.

The fourth string is our job. Now we know this is never permanent and is often broken by us or others. If we use this as our identity we are really in trouble. This is the weakest string of all.

The fifth string, our attitude is the one that we play most of all! It will carry us when all the others are broken as long as it remains positive. If it breaks all is lost! Keep a positive attitude in all you do and it will see you through..

We can all make a difference with our attitude. We need everyone's positive attitude to help in our chapter good works.

Call 1-508-824-4920 or 1-774-526-3212. to notify me about the sickness or death of members God Bless until next edition!

Chaplain Lou Demers

WALK WITH US

It is really great to see the new people coming in to meetings and taking an active role in the Chapter. We have been seeking volunteers for several projects and activities and people are responding.

Our work must go on. We have our annual, Forget-Me-Not, fund raising drive coming up. This provides the operating funds that let us sponsor parties at the VA Hospital, purchase clothing and personal care items for distribution to Veterans Centers as well as the VA Hospitals. We need volunteers to help in manning various collecting points. You would be with other members during your volunteer assignment.

As we become more active it is important that we look to our newer and younger members for ideas, assistance and for their move into Chapter Officer positions. It is hoped that with new members volunteering we will have the benefit of new ideas and find better ways of doing what we do, to continue our lasting commitment to our Disabled Veteran population.

We welcome all of our Auxiliary DAVA members to fill in gaps in our organization. We'll show you how to do various tasks. Together we can make Chapter 57 --- Outstanding!!!

Please consider joining our active ranks. **Call 508-588-5245** for more information about volunteer opportunities.



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ABOUT MORSE CODE?

-- --- .- . . . / -.- --- -.. / . . . / -.- --- - / -..
 .- -.. What the heck is that? Translated it says,
 MORSE CODE IS NOT DEAD.

Morse code is a character code invented by Samuel Morse that is represented by the duration of a single tone. Written as dots, dashes and spaces, the first Morse code message was sent in 1844 over a newly constructed telegraph line between Baltimore and Washington. It was also used in World War II for signaling with flashes of light.


A variation of Morse's original code was made by Friedrich Gerke in 1848, which evolved into the International Morse Code that is still in use. The coding system was based on the frequency of letters used in the English language, E and T being the most frequent, hence one dot, one dash. The written system is dot and dash, but it is pronounced "dit" and "dah." Timing within the code is one dit between each dit and dah, three dits between letters and seven dits between words.

As of late the code has been dropped as a requirement to pass the Federal Communication Commission's Ham Radio Operators Licensing test. It is no longer seen in general usage. The interesting thing is that it is being used by increasing numbers of ham radio operators, even though it is not a requirement.

It is interesting to note that Samuel Morse didn't actually invent the code. Although Morse invented the telegraph, he lacked technical expertise. He entered an agreement with Alfred Vail who built more practical equipment. Vail developed a system in which each letter or symbol is sent individually, using combinations of dots, dashes, and pauses. Morse and Vail agreed that Vail's method of representing individual symbols would be included in Morse's patent. This system, known American Morse code, was the version that was used to transmit the first telegraph message.

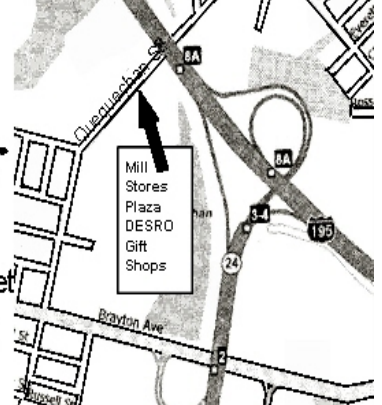
Amateur and military radio operators skilled in Morse code can often understand ("copy") code in their heads at rates in excess of 40 WPM. Although the traditional telegraph key is still used by many amateurs, the use of semi- and fully-automatic electronic keyers is prevalent today. Computer software is also frequently employed to produce and decode Morse code RF signals.

It is not an old castoff yet, but it may be heading that way in a few more years.



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NEW CHAPTER 57 MEMBERS CONTINUE THE OLD TRADITION OF VOLUNTEERING

Chapter 57 had the participation of it's newer members as active members of our Color Guard Detail, on Memorial day. Three of the members of the detail were replacements for the regular members that were taking part in the Middleborough Parade at the same time as the Memorial Ceremonies in Taunton. The three members were Greg Sullivan, Macaila Britto and Steve Muncy. They all did a great job representing the Chapter at this important ceremony.

It is indeed Heartening to see our young members take active roles in our activities. It is they, who are the future of the Chapter. The DAV, unlike some groups, crosses all ages and wars. It is a group created to survive, made up of survivors.



With the active participation of our younger members the Chapter demonstrates it is healthy and viable. It is open to new ideas and to change with the times.



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Editors Note: We welcome our newest columnist to our Newsletter... Kimberly Matthews. Kim will be involved in doing short articles about the 57 Show. She is the Executive Director of Taunton Community Access & Media, Inc. She is also the Studio Manager for our Cable TV show. Thank you for your contribution to the Chapter

THE 57 SHOW

It all started one summer day in 2005, when I was contacted by Bruce Crossman, about the possibility of the Chapter 57 D.A.V. starting a cable program. Well, I had no idea about what I was in for (and I mean that in the nicest possible way!) I have had the pleasure of working with a group of the kindest, funniest, most capable and intelligent people that I have ever met in my life.

Soon after meeting with Bruce, I was introduced to Paul Waldron. Paul has served as the organizer for the show. He is the producer, the director, the time keeper. He edits together openers, and closers and video clips. He organizes out of studio shoots and more. Is there anything that Paul cannot do? I doubt it.

"The 57 Show" taped their first program on August 30, 2005 and it was on that day that I met the talent and crew. There was the very capable John Fielding, who would serve as host. Over the past 2 years, John has grown so much as an on air talent. His easy conversation style and charm put the guests at ease and he only gets better with each show. I also met Commander Mort Morin. Mort is responsible for preparing and delivering the news each month. He provides valuable information to veterans concerning their healthcare and benefits, and he does so with humor, grace and style.

During the past 2 years, the "57 Show" has visited the U.S.S. Salem, the U.S.S. Massachusetts. Their guests have included military officials and doctors. But on show #3, they had one very special guest, Prisoner of War, WWII vet and author, Bob Doherty. After that day, it was decided that Bob would join the show as co-host. Bob's kindness, intelligence and expertise add so much to the show.

And the crew! How could I forget the crew! For many months we had the pleasure of working with Dick Lavoie, who acted as floor director, camera operator and so much more. Since then, "The 57 Show" has received help from many, including Norm Willoughby, Steve Horton, Pete Fox, Louie Demers. Whether they are manning a camera, setting up a microphone or helping to hang or move set pieces around, these gentlemen are there for the show 100% We couldn't do it without them! Continued next column -

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THE 57 SHOW Continued

Every month, the talent and crew of "The 57 Show" put together a show that is informative and interesting. They provide information to veterans and their families about healthcare, benefits and more. Their guests have included doctors in various areas of medical expertise, and military officials who have been kind enough to come on to the show and share their own experiences, experiences that I am sure other veterans watching the program may be able to relate to. Their show reaches 10 different communities.

They are wonderful to work with. Each month, they come to the studio capable and ready to go and they always make me laugh. John Fielding often asks me "How do you put up with us?" I wish everyone were like you, my friends!

By Kimberly Matthews, Executive Director
Taunton Community Access & Media, Inc.

HOMES FOR OUR TROOPS

Homes for Our Troops is a non-profit, non-partisan organization, based in Taunton, MA, that assists severely injured Servicemen and women and their immediate families by raising donations of money, building materials and professional labor and coordinating the process of building a new home or adapting an existing home for handicapped accessibility. The organization has another 20 houses in progress, each of which will include features geared toward each individual service member's specific injury. The group is anticipating taking on another 10 to 15 houses in the near future. Visit their website homesforourtroops.org

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TIDBITS

1 - Most of us manage to pay our rent and put food on our table. But, there are a few individual members in dire straits. If you know of such an individual give Chaplain Lou Demers a call at 508-824-4920. Not all deserving members or members of their family are in VA facilities or shelters. There are still needy veterans out there that we can help.

2 -The Chapter has several Medical Dictionaries with a section on veterinary medicine that we would like to send to an Armed Forces unit that has working animals, such as dogs. Do any of you have knowledge of such a unit? If so, please contact Cm'dr. Mort Morin at 508-828-1808. He will see if we can get one of these items to that unit.

3 – When the National Anthem is played those in uniform or wearing the cap of a veterans organization should begin saluting at the first note and hold the salute to the end of the anthem. Others render respect by placing their right hand over their heart.



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Medical Fight Over 'Group 8' Vets Tom Philpott from Military.com

Since January 2003, nearly 400,000 veterans have been denied enrollment in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health system because they have no service-connected disabilities and have incomes that exceed a VA means test, the same one used to screen for federal housing assistance.

The Bush administration's decision to suspend enrollment in VA healthcare for these "Priority Group 8" veterans was explained four years ago as necessary to ensure continued access to VA care for higher priority veterans – those with service disabilities, low incomes or special needs.

Whether Congress should force the administration to reopen the VA system to new Group 8 enrollees was the topic of a contentious hearing June 20 of the House Veterans Affairs Committee.

The timing might seem questionable given how veterans physically and mentally wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan are a rising challenge for VA medical staffs and resources. But the treatment of Priority 8 veterans is tied to Democratic election promises of "full funding" for VA health care. Also, it's an issue guaranteed to light off partisan fireworks on which so many lawmakers today seem to thrive.

Rep. Steve Buyer (R-Ind.), the committee former chairman and ranking Republican, said VA needs to do more for disabled veterans and those in financial need -- the VA's "core constituency," rather than "open the gates" for a "surge" of Group 8 veterans. VA estimates that 1.7 million new Group 8 veterans would enroll, if given the chance, and 600,000 would seek VA care. The added cost to VA over the next 10 years would be \$33 billion.

Rep. Bob Filner (D-Calif.), shot back that Buyer and Republican colleagues are all too willing to "support a surge when it comes to military action but cannot have a 'surge,' in your words, when it comes to treating our veterans." **See Related Article –pg. 8**



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Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

The following information is presented for a second time in the newsletter, as we consider it important to make people aware that the Veterans Administration has a program to assist survivors of veterans. You may contact the Veterans Administration, as described below or contact your local City or Town Veterans Agent for questions regarding this program.

What Is DIC? DIC is a monthly benefit paid to eligible survivors of a

- military service member who died while on active duty, OR
- veteran whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease, OR
- veteran whose death resulted from a non service-related injury or disease, and who was receiving, or was entitled to receive, VA Compensation for service-connected disability that was rated as totally disabling
 - for at least 10 years immediately before death, OR
 - since the veteran's release from active duty and for at least five years immediately preceding death, OR
 - for at least one year before death if the veteran was a former prisoner of war who died after September 30, 1999.

Who Is Eligible? The surviving spouse if he or she:

- validly married the veteran before January 1, 1957, OR
- was married to a service member who died on active duty, OR
- married the veteran within 15 years of discharge from the period of military service in which the disease or injury that caused the veteran's death began or was aggravated, OR
- was married to the veteran for at least one year, OR
- had a child with the veteran, AND
- cohabited with the veteran continuously until the veteran's death or, if separated, was not at fault for the separation, AND
- is not currently remarried.*

Note: A surviving spouse who remarries on or after December 16, 2003, and on or after attaining age 57, is entitled to continue to receive DIC.

The surviving child(ren), if he/she is:

- not included on the surviving spouse's DIC
- unmarried AND
- under age 18, or between the ages of 18 and 23 and attending school.

Note: Certain helpless adult children are entitled to DIC. Call the toll-free number below for the eligibility requirements.

The surviving parent(s) may be eligible for an income-based benefit. See our fact sheet, Parents' DIC.


How Much Does VA Pay?

The basic monthly rate of DIC is \$1,067 for an eligible surviving spouse. The rate is increased for each dependent child, and also if the surviving spouse is housebound or in need of aid and attendance. VA also adds a transitional benefit of \$250 to the surviving spouse's monthly DIC if there are children under age 18. The amount is based on a family unit, not individual children. Benefit rate tables, including those for children alone and parents, can be found on the Internet at <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates> or call the toll-free number below.

How Should a Claimant Apply?

Claimants should complete VA Form 21-534 *Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and Accrued Benefits by a Surviving Spouse or Child*.

For More Information, Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000



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HISTORY LESSON FOR JULY / AUGUST

- 2 July 1926 Army Air Corps established
- 20 July 1969 Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin place the US Flag on the Moon
- 27 July 1953 Korean War ends
- 28 July 1914 World War I Begins
- 1 August - Air Force Day
- 4 August 1790 Coast Guard Established.
- 7 August 1782 Purple Heart Medal Created
- 14 August - National Navajo Code Talkers Day
- 14 August 1945 End of World War II Japan Surrenders
- 16 August National Airborne Day
- 16 August 1945 Chapter 57 Commander Mort Morin returns from Europe for further assignment Checked into Fargo Bldg.

Send us your funny stories. We'll use non offensive, family style jokes. Please include your name.

BEAVER TALE

by Ken Penland from Paddling.net

In 2001 I had just finished a 300+ hour restoration job on one of my wood canvas Old Town canoes. I took it out for a first paddle on the C&O canal at Angler's Inn on the Maryland side of the Potomac River. It was a beautiful day for a paddle and I had a very relaxing trip. About 1/4 mile from the take out I saw an adult beaver swimming about ten feet off the end of my boat. The beaver was an adult and appeared to be missing one eye. I was paddling solo but saw a jogger on the towpath and called out to him as he passed: "Hay, check out the beaver." The jogger nodded a response. I had stopped paddling, and was turned around in my seat, when I saw the animal swim up five feet from my boat, dive with a loud tail slap, and disappear. Then suddenly I heard scrapping CLAWS AND TEETH being applied to my just re-done canoe!

In momentary shock, I said "what the?????" jogger who saw it happening responded "Oh, he is just playing with you!" I said: "Playing with me? - Hell, he is chewing a hole in my boat!"

I rolled the boat side to side shaking him free, but soon felt him latch onto the bottom of my boat's keel at the midsection! I took to shaking the boat again and again. Then I tried poking him with the blade of my wood paddle. That dissuaded him briefly, but he swam along the side of the boat scratching at it. Finally I struck him very hard with the edge of my paddle directly on his head but doing little damage to the critter. When he came in reach again I struck at him over and over. Our fight 185 lb man vs. 45 lb demonically possessed beaver lasted over two solid minutes. It ended when the beaver broke off the engagement by surfacing just out of my paddle reach and eyed me coldly with his one eye as if to say "and if you want any more of this just come back sometime!"

I hastily retreated towards the takeout where I pulled the boat from the water, inverted it, and checked the damage. The animal had scraped the paint all the way down to the canvas filler in ten places. He had punctured the new canvas below the waterline along the stem of the boat. He had bitten half way through the inch and a half thick ash keel. Even my paddle had suffered a significant crack that required fiberglass repairs where it had been used as a club on his head. I was so shocked by this encounter that I reported the incident to the C&O canal park managers. Additionally, I showed my boat off at a local paddle shop with the water still dripping off the fresh damage. I even took pictures of the damage with a disposable camera. I have since repaired the damages but if you look carefully, you can still see where the incisors were dragged along the stem in an attempt to chomp through the boat. The new brass stem band probably save the boat from extensive end damage.

Lessons learned:

Don't mess with beavers and don't trust them to not mess with you.

LETTER FROM HOME

Dear Son, (Now don't think that this is from an Irish Mom!)

I'm writing this slowly cause I know you can't read fast. We don't live where we did when you left. Your dad read in the paper that most accidents happen within 20 miles of home, so we moved. I won't be able to send you the address cause the family that used to live here took the numbers with them for their next house so they wouldn't have to change their address.

This place has a washing machine. The first day I put four shirts in it, I pulled the chain and haven't seen them since. It only rained twice this week, three days the first time, and four days the second time. The coat we wanted to send you, your aunt said it would be a little too heavy to send in the mail with them heavy buttons so we cut them off and put them in the pockets.

We got a bill from the funeral home. They said if we didn't make the last payment on grandma's funeral - "Up she comes". About your fadder, he has a lovely job. He has 500 people under him - he is cutting grass at the cemetery. About your sister, she had a baby this morning. I haven't found out whether it is a boy or a girl, so we don't know whether you're an aunt or an uncle.

Your uncle John fell into the whiskey vat. They tried to pull him out, but he fought them off bravely, so he drowned. We cremated him and he burned for three days. Three of your friends went off the bridge in a pickup truck; one was driving and the other two were in the back. The driver got out by rolling down a window and swimming to safety, while the two in the back drowned. Apparently they couldn't get the tail gate down.

Love Mom

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PANEL APPROVES VA HEALTH CARE FOR ALL VETS

From Military.com by Tom Philpott June 29, 2007

If there are silver linings behind the grinding sacrifice and heartbreak that the invasion of Iraq has brought to the U.S. military, one of them is likely to be comprehensive reform to the way disabled military members and their families are helped by the government before and after leaving service.

The Senate armed services and veterans' affairs committees this month sprinted ahead of House colleagues, and ahead too of various commissions and task forces, in the race to do whatever seems right and affordable for America's veterans, particularly wounded warriors.

The veterans' affairs committee, chaired by Sen. Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii), approved legislation Wednesday that would re-open the Department of Veterans Affairs health system to 1.7 million veterans in Priority Group 8, those who have adequate incomes and no service-connected ailments.

The Group 8 provision is in the Traumatic Brain Injury and Other Health Programs Enhancement Act (S 1233). Other provisions would.

-- Require the VA to develop individualized plans for rehabilitation and reintegration of veterans who suffer traumatic brain injury (TBI), a signature injury of current wars where the enemy relies on roadside bombs.

Continued next column -VA

VA Continued

--Extend eligibility for VA healthcare for all combat veterans from two years up to five years after release or discharge. This would provide more time to identify and treat TBI and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).-- Directs that VA enter into agreements with non-VA care facilities to provide TBI care and rehabilitation when VA care is not available at a reasonable distance from the veterans' home.

-- Directs that VA conduct a five-year pilot program to assess the effectiveness of providing assisted living services to veterans with TBI to enhance rehabilitation and quality of life.

The committee grabbed its Group 8 language from a separate bill introduced by Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.). It would order VA to rescind a four-year-old regulation that bans new Group 8 enrollments. VA Secretary Jim Nicholson would retain authority to impose the ban again. However, he would have to reaffirm that the ban is still necessary.

Let your U.S. Senators know how you feel about Senate Bill (S 1233), the Traumatic Brain Injury and Other Health Programs Enhancement Act.

Senator Edward M. Kennedy Senator John F. Kerry
317 Russell Senate Off. Bldg. 304 Russell Senate Off. Bldg
Washington, DC 20510 Washington, DC 20510

Come and join us. ----- We can use your skills if you would like to help. ----- Will you walk with us???

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