



Cpl. William F. Reardon
MA. Chapter 57
“The Can Do Chapter”
Chapter 57 Newsletter
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Sr. Vice Commander	Leroy Crossman
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Adjutant	Paul Waldron
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Chaplain	Armando Medeiros
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Sergeant At Arms	Stephen Horton
Service Officer	Frank Ardita
Quartermaster	Norman Willoughby
Legislative Officer	Bill Blight
Armorer	Mort Morin

July / August 2009

Volume 6 Number 6

Page 1

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Another season has come and gone. Another year has passed: --- we've gotten older and yet we're just starting out.

Life is a contradiction in living. Chapter 57 is a period in our life. We were kids and Chapter 57 had no meaning for us. We were in the service and, we knew we would never have the occasion to be a member of Chapter 57. Those days have gone by. We've become involved with veterans affairs. We are veterans' affairs. We are Chapter 57.

We, you and I, have an obligation to work for the improvement of the Chapter and the people that the Chapter represents. This means that we have to work on self-improvement and on making the quality of life better for those less fortunate than ourselves. This can be done in many ways; we could donate time, money or effort working with an individual, a family or a group.

How many of you attended the chapter cookout? Why were you there or not there? How many of you have volunteered to collect for the Forget Me Not campaign; how many have actually begun putting in their hours? How many of you have come with the "gang" when we visit the patients at the hospitals: could you have gone, but said, "S/he'll cover for me?"

We've moved into our Chapter's home on Taunton Green. How many of you volunteered to lug stuff in or out, paint, sweep, set up the furniture. How many of you have contributed to the Chapter's administrative fund? How many of you went out to eat at UNO August 6 when UNO donated a percentage of their patron's bill to Chapter 57? Let's get nasty — how many of you come to meetings?

The simple fact is that giving of our self often, is not easy. It may be a contradiction in that we diminish our self by giving and at the same time we enhance our self by giving to others. Please, will each of you make a real effort to contribute something to the Chapter. Sign up for the Forget Me Not campaign. Come to a meeting give some input.4

Our season starts the third Tuesday in September, September 15 Please come. Help us start the season out right.



Pictured at the left is our Headquarters Building with the new sign installed on the facade. We have a presence in downtown Taunton to better serve our members.

CHAPTER 57 INITIATES TAUNTON “LET FREEDOM RING” CELEBRATION

Chapter 57 initiated the celebration of the National “Let Freedom Ring” program in Taunton on July 4, 2009. The program is a celebration of our liberty and the original thirteen colonies that began this United States.

“Let Freedom Ring™ is a nationwide celebration honoring those who helped achieve our country's independence during the American Revolution. The Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution and its Color Guard began stewardship of the event in 1969. Richard W. Thorington, then President of the Society, said at the time, that "Let Freedom Ring" was established to "revive the spirit of patriotism" and to provide "a dignified ceremony which will have important meaning for millions of Americans who love their country and have faith in its future."

Although this celebration was initiated in Philadelphia, birthplace of our nation's freedom, it is truly a nationwide event. In accordance with the U.S. Congressional Resolution Number 25, bells across the country are rung thirteen times at exactly 2:00 p.m. (E.D.T.), in honor of the thirteen original states that the signers of the Declaration of Independence represented.”

The 4th of July was at one time about parades and patriotic events, that celebrated the roots of our Liberty and the beginning of our great nation.

Today we think of beaches, cookouts, ball games and many other activities. OH! Sure we remember it is our Nation's Birthday but the true meaning and sacrifices somehow get lost amid all our other activities.

In initiating this program in Taunton, as one of our cradles of liberty, Chapter 57 hopes to rekindle the real meaning of the 4th of July.

The photo at the right is Taunton Green with Chapter 57's bell poised to ring thirteen times. *See related article on Page 3*



**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- Installation - No Drawing
June - Frank Arditia

Membership Prize

(If not present the prize is forfeited).
May - Installation - No Drawing
June - Paul Lynch - Forfeited

CH. 57 MEETINGS

Third Tuesdays of each month
Except July & August
Meeting time - 6:30PM
5-7 Taunton Green
Taunton, MA.

MEETING DATES

No Meetings in July or August
Have a safe, enjoyable summer.

MEETINGS RESUME

Sept. 15, 2009 - Regular Meeting
Oct. 20, 2009 - Regular Meeting

**RECENTLY DEPARTED
COMRADES**

Richard B. Mellon Army Vietnam
Anibal "Bo" Costa Army WW II

57'S CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

You have in all likelihood heard the statement "What Would God Do" Or "What Would Jesus Do". It may take time to figure out the answer to the question. It took some thinking to come up with an answer, at least for me.



I began by asking myself "What did God do?" We have all heard that he created the world! He is able to cure the sick. He answers prayers. He has turned people into stone, he caused it to rain for forty days and nights. He talked with Moses and many others. He gave us trees, mountains, lakes and seas. He gave us --- us! This list could go on and on. But, you get the idea.

Next, was the question of why he did this. This took more thinking. Was he lonely? Was he looking for something to play with. Did he do it to be happy, sad, angry, depressed or a sundry of other feelings. No none of these. He did it out of love.

It is my conclusion that God did things voluntarily out of love for others. Sure, we think we all have the answer to these complicated questions. You hear people saying "God help me", "Oh, God" "So help me God", "In God We Trust. and many other clichés. Most people see god as a helping friend, while others don't see or recognize him at all. Some just recognize a "Higher Power". In the later view we can rephrase the original questions to be "What would a Higher Power Do?".

If we reason that our God, or Higher power is a helping, loving being, we recognize that this is the highest for of volunteering. So we may see our higher power as a volunteer. Yes, you are right our God and Higher Power sometimes gets upset with us. But, like all volunteersForgives.

If we try answer the questions posed we will see the answer is to become a volunteer. Volunteers do things out of love for others. Volunteering will put us a step closer to our God or Higher Power! There are many opportunities to volunteer.

Please notify me of any illness or passing of members at **508-822-4837** Armando Medeiros

WALK WITH US

We are in real need of Color Guard and Honor Guard members. We hope to be able to perform rifle volleys with the M-1 Rifles at ceremonies. If interested contact Commander Morin as listed below. The Honor Guard and Color Guard will perform as a Unit

Our **Forget-Me-Not, annual fund raiser is in need of volunteers to help us in various locations.** This is our most important fund raising event of the year. 100% of the funds collected go to support Disabled Veterans in a variety of ways and in particular the donation of clothing, hygiene items and the pizza parties at the VAMC Brockton. We hope to see some new members involved in this heart of the DAV event.

Call Pete at 508- 823-0409

If you would like to assist Chapter 57 at **Homes For Our Troops**, Call Sgt. at Arms, Steve Horton, for more info at 508-339-6587.

We are in need of help in a variety of help at our new headquarters. If you can spare some time wallpapering, and painting call Paul at 508- 823-0409

For more information on other opportunities to help out call Mort Morin at 508-828-1808 and help us in our commitment to Disabled Veterans.

Commander Morin is constantly in awe of all our members contribute He notes the praise that our Chapter receives from within and without the DAV community as a result of your our accomplishments actions. Keep up the good work!

Do something for others as you have given of yourselves in the past. You can still serve you fellow veterans and countrymen just in a different way than before



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TAUNTON'S FIRST LET FREEDOM RING CEREMONY

On a partly cloudy July 4, 2009 s small crowd of pioneers gathered on Taunton Green in the center of Taunton, MA. The occasion was hopefully the beginning of an annual tradition to celebrate "Liberty" and recognize the thirteen original colonies that began this great United States, with the Declaration of Independence.

The idea for the Taunton participation in this national event began with, DAV Chapter 57's, Commander Mort Morin's concern about people loosing sight of the meaning of July 4th. He appointed a Committee of Chapter members to attempt to organize the event. There were plans to include many of the surrounding towns, civic groups, veterans groups churches and other organizations. The fact that the Chapter was preoccupied with establishing its own home led to the scaling back of the grand scheme. It was decided by Commander Morin to try to celebrate, for this year on a small scale.

This decision led to Taunton being the testing ground for this event. So it was that City Officials including Mayor Charles Crowley, Acting Police Chief John Reardon and Fire Chief Padelford joined color guards from our own DAV Chapter 57, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 611, the Taunton Area Vietnam Veterans Association and Sons of Union Veterans along with the public gathered for this occasion.

The Star Spangled Banner and God Bless America. Were sung by Michaela Gordon

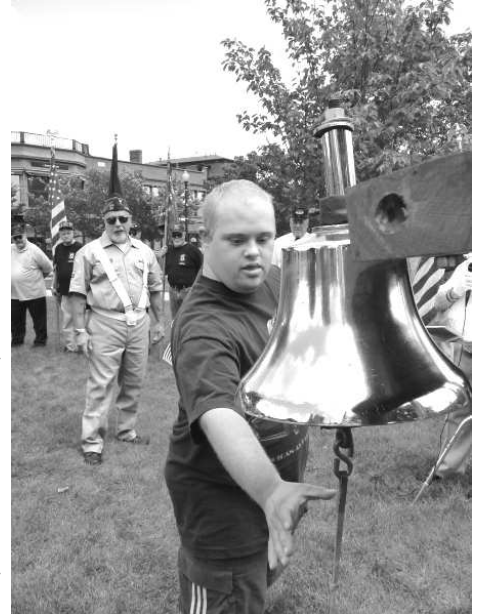


Singing God Bless America is Michaela Gordon

The speakers included Mort Morin, who explained what this event was about and the purpose of celebrating Liberty and Independence. Mayor Crowley spoke on the appropriateness of having this celebration on Taunton Green. He stated that the Green was originally a training ground for the Colonial Militia. He said that in 1774 Taunton residents came from a tavern meeting, across the street and raised the Liberty and Union Flag, known as the Taunton Flag over Taunton Green in a first act of defiance against the British. The Mayor also recounted how Thomas Treat Paine, a Taunton resident, was one of the signers of the declaration of independence. It also happens that Paine's home stood on the location of Chapter 57's present headquarters..

Thirteen individuals were selected to ring the bell one time for each of the thirteen original colonies. As Commander Morin called out the names of the Individual and State represented the individuals came forward and tolled the Chapter 57 Bell. The Bell was acquired by Chapter 57 from the Merger with Middleboro's Chapter 36.

Mayor Crowley was the first to ring the silver Navy bell. He was followed by Don French of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Les Sposta of the Taunton Area Vietnam Veterans Association, next Ernie Cardoza of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 611, Steve Kastanopolous of the Dept. of Massachusetts Disabled Veterans, Ed Nunes of Taunton DAV 57, Lorie J. Mathias of Taunton DAV 57, Terri Sweeny volunteer, Armando Medeiros of Taunton DAV 57, Taunton Fire Chief Leman Padelford, Taunton acting



Pictured above is the last Bell Ringer is Donny Wood reaching to ring the Bell

Chief John Reardon. After the Ceremony everyone was invited to Chapter 57's Building for a small collation. Commander Morin was pleased with this years celebration and next year hopes to see it expanded to other local towns. It is important that we not loose sight of our country's beginnings. With these types of ceremonies people are reminded of the sacrifices of our forefathers, how we obtained our freedom.

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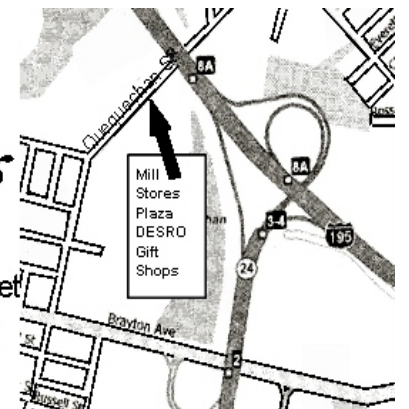
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**WOMEN FLOGGED AT
POLICE STATION**

Aug 4, 11:56 AM (ET)
By MOHAMED OSMAN

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) - Sudanese police fired tear gas and beat women protesting outside a Sudanese court Tuesday during the trial of a female journalist accused of violating the Islamic dress code by wearing trousers in public.

Police moved in swiftly and dispersed about 50 protesters, mostly women, who were supporting Lubna Hussein, a former U.N. worker facing 40 lashes on the charge of "indecent dressing." Some of the women demonstrators wore trousers in solidarity with Hussein while others wore more traditional dress.

Trousers are considered indecent under the strict interpretation of Islamic law, adopted by Sudan's Islamic regime which came to power after a coup led by President Omar al-Bashir in 1989. But activists and lawyers say the implementation of the law is arbitrary.

Hussein was among 13 women arrested July 3 in a raid by the public order police on a popular cafe in Khartoum. Ten of the women were flogged at a police station two days later and fined 250 Sudanese pounds, or about \$120.

But Hussein and two others decided to go on trial. She has sought to publicize her case internationally, inviting human rights workers, Western diplomats and fellow journalists to witness her trial.

"I am not afraid of flogging. ... It's not about flogging. It's not about my innocence. It's about changing the law," Hussein said, speaking to The Associated Press after the hearing Tuesday

continued next column

Comments on the AP Story.

Can you imagine the mind set of people that have laws against women wearing slacks! Worse yet is the punishment that is doled out ... 40 Lashes! Does that offend your values? Probably it does. We all talk of our freedoms and many of us take them for granted. We forget that the rest of the countries in the world do not share our freedoms and values.

We do not speak up about some problems that we see or hear about. The story about the flogging of women in Sudan is minor compared with the horrors being visited on men women and children in Darfur. According to Amnesty International "Violence against women in Darfur is widespread. Since February 2003, armed actors in Darfur, including Sudanese government forces, the pro-government Janjawid militia and rebel groups, have used rape, displacement, and mass murder as weapons of war. Women and girls, especially those who have been displaced from their communities, have been subject to acts of sexual violence and other brutal assaults. Many women and girls that survive this violence suffer long-term mental and physical illness, social stigmatization and significant economic hardship.

Rising insecurity in the region now threatens to further escalate the human rights and humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in Darfur and eastern Chad."

There is no end in sight for those suffering from these traumas. Various agencies are trying to help and internally there is resistance. There is no real outside assistance from other countries, except in the immediate area.

Then we have the Somali Pirates, who pretty much do as they please! Remember, in the 1800's this Country sent Marines after the Pirates in Tripoli! But now our military is busy in other places.

You wonder where this is all going to end! And more importantly HOW!!!

**FIRST-EVER "VIRTUAL
MARCH" ON WASHINGTON
FOR DISABLED VETS**

Please Sign Up to Participate

<http://march.dav.org/default.aspx>

The DAV is organizing a march on Washington to raise public awareness and let lawmakers know voters care about veterans. But you won't need to travel to participate and have your voice heard.

This march is going to be completely online, the first-ever Virtual March on Washington for Veterans. The DAV is working to ensure this will be the easiest and most convenient way ever to stand up for veterans. Together, we will generate greater public awareness and support for strengthening federal policies that provide health care and other earned benefits to disabled veterans

To sign up to participate in the Sept. 15 virtual march, simply visit <http://march.dav.org/default.aspx> and enter your e-mail address at the top of the page. Your ZIP code will also be needed so lawmakers know which constituents care about the needs of veterans and their families. DAV will send you an e-mail the night before the "march" as a reminder. DAV will not share your e-mail address with or sell it to anyone, nor will DAV use it to solicit donations.


On Sept. 15, the official day of the march, there will be video messages posted from a variety of veterans, family members, veterans' advocates, lawmakers and a few surprises. There will be opportunities to chat with those leading efforts to better the lives of veterans. And there will be easy-to-use tools for you to directly contact your representatives in Washington, D.C. If you cannot visit the site the day of the march, don't worry; it will all remain online.

Remember, after you sign up, please help encourage others to do the same. Forward this e-mail, post links on your social networks, BLOG and about it and tell everyone you know.



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Veterans Health Care Funding Reform Bill

WASHINGTON, Aug 7—The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) applauds the Senate’s passage last night of critical legislation that would authorize Congress to approve medical care appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) one year in advance of the start of each fiscal year, effectively ending the funding delays that have plagued the VA when Congress has failed to pass an appropriations bill on time.

“The Senate’s approval of the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act (S. 423/ H.R. 1016) is another major step toward ensuring sufficient, timely and predictable funding for veterans health care programs,” said National Commander Raymond E. Dempsey. The legislation must now be reconciled with a slightly different House version approved in June before it can be sent to President Obama, who has promised To sign it into law.

Key to the bill’s passage has been Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii) who has championed this legislation from day one. “His vigorous and tireless advocacy throughout this process has been much appreciated,” said Commander Dempsey. “The DAV also applauds the dedicated efforts of Sen. Richard Burr (R-N.C.), the Ranking Member of the Committee, who has worked in a bipartisan manner to pass this legislation and ensure that millions of veterans can access VA health care services when and where they need them.”

The effort to ensure sufficient, timely and predictable funding for VA health care generated an unprecedented level of grassroots support among DAV members who urged lawmakers to ensure that veterans, particularly sick and disabled veterans, have access to quality and timely health care.

With 56 bipartisan cosponsors in the Senate, this legislation had a number of important supporters who contributed toward its approval, including Sen. Tim Johnson (D-S.D.), who Chairs the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee that has already approved \$48.2 billion in advance appropriations for fiscal year 2011 and Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.), who offered a crucial floor amendment to the budget resolution that cleared the way for Senate passage of this legislation.

The DAV and the eight other members of the Partnership for Veterans Health Care Budget Reform, along with a growing coalition of military and veterans groups have made advance appropriations their top legislative priority. A number of former VA officials and hospital directors, and an overwhelming majority of American voters, all support legislation to approve VA’s health care funding one year in advance.

CHAPTER 57 ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

This contest was open to all Children, Grand Children and Great Grand Children of Members of Chapter 57.

The Essay had to be titled and about;
 “WHAT A MILITARY VETERAN
 MEANS TO ME”

The two top place contestants are
 FIRST PLACE ----- \$200.00 Valerie Nunes-Danca
 SECOND PLACE -- \$175.00 Ashley Willoughby

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHAPTER 57’S
 ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUILDING FUND**

This fund is to be used to cover administrative and building needs. It is totally separate from the Forget-Me-Not funds. We will put this column in each newsletter to recognize those that have contributed to this important fund. This drive is on going and our members are responding. We are grateful for this and for the groups and families that have responded. Please consider donating to this fund.

CONTRIBUTORS

\$1- \$99

**Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Leavitt
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert Longshaw
 Mr. and Mrs. Gardner P. Sherman**

WEIGHT LOSS DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS RECALL

Four weight-loss dietary supplements marketed by Young You Corporation have been recalled:

- Slimbionic, 30 capsules/box
- One Weight Loss Pill, 30 capsules/bottle
- SlimDemand Capsules, 30 capsules/box
- Botanical Weight Loss, 30 capsules/box

The products were sold and distributed nationwide via the Internet and at the company’s Weight Loss and Rejuvenation Center in Tarzana, Calif.

The risk: FDA laboratories have found that these products contain sibutramine, which is not declared on the label. Sibutramine is an FDA-approved drug used to curb the appetite for weight loss. FDA has not approved the Young You products as drugs; therefore, the safety and effectiveness of these products are unknown. Sibutramine is known to substantially increase blood pressure or pulse rate in some people and may be especially dangerous for people with a history of coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure, arrhythmias (disorders of heart rate or rhythm), or stroke.

Recommendations

Destroy these products or return them to Young You at 19590 Ventura Blvd., Tarzana, CA 91356. Contact Young You Corporation at 818-344-3344 for more information.



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Protections for Veterans in Health Reform Bill

WASHINGTON, Aug 3—The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) today applauded adoption of two amendments to health care reform legislation that would protect veterans' health care choices. The amendments to the America's Affordable Health Choices Act (H.R. 3200) being drafted by the House Energy and Commerce Committee came in response to a July 31 letter from DAV and other veterans organizations to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) outlining their "grave concerns" that the measure could limit health care choices for veterans, increase their costs, deny coverage to their dependents and threaten the quality of care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) system.

"Unfortunately, H.R. 3200, as initially drafted, fails to recognize, protect and preserve the Veterans Health Administration's medical care service for our nation's 24 million veterans," said DAV National Commander Raymond E. Dempsey. "Any national health care reform legislation must make certain all veterans, including those enrolled in VA health care, remain eligible to enroll in any exchange-participating health benefits plan offered under H.R. 3200 through the Health Insurance Exchange, or in any other public or cooperative health insurance program."

One amendment, offered by Rep. Steve Buyer (R-Ind.), Ranking Member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, would allow veterans receiving VA health care to also enroll in a plan through the bill's proposed Health Insurance Exchange. This would provide veterans the opportunity to obtain additional coverage for themselves and their dependents if they desired. The second Buyer amendment would make clear that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs retains full authority to operate the VA health care system without interference from any new organizations, agencies or commissions established by the legislation.

Both amendments were adopted by voice vote. That achieves three of the four goals set forth in the letter sent to Speaker Pelosi last week.

A third amendment also proposed by Rep. Buyer aimed to ensure veterans in the VA health care system would not be subject to a tax for uninsured or underinsured individuals. The amendment met with opposition from committee members and was withdrawn, but only after Buyer first secured a pledge from Committee Chairman Henry Waxman (D-CA.) that he would seek support for the Rules Committee to allow such an amendment to be introduced on the House floor.

"I applaud Representative Buyer for moving so quickly to amend this legislation in defense of veterans and their families," Dempsey said. "His amendments and bipartisan support from Chairman Waxman are big steps in the right direction. But until that floor amendment is made, our concerns are not fully resolved." As the bill continues through the legislative process, the DAV will continue to closely monitor the process.

"The DAV will continue to do more analysis of this voluminous bill, not to mention future versions, before we can have true assurance that veterans are protected," Dempsey said. "But for now, we are pleased lawmakers are willing to make the fixes necessary to protect those who sacrificed to protect us."

I HAVE TO GO TO A WAKE!

How many times have you heard somebody say "I have to go to a wake!"? It is almost like they dread this type of event. It is always a sad occasion to attend this type of gathering. However, almost invariably people add "I never know what to say in these circumstances". Well, that is a very good question and one many people never seem to find the answer to. Let's see if we can help in finding the right combination of things.

Things will depend on the relationship to the deceased. Therefore, your length of stay at a wake is partly determined on that. In the case of a relative you may stay through the entire wake. In the case of a friend you need not stay long. With friends about fifteen minutes gives you ample time to express your sympathy and offer your support.

In the case of a friend it is sufficient to say something along the lines of "I was very sorry to hear of (Name) passing. He / she was a wonderful friend and I will miss him /her. If the family member wants to talk, simply listen. They may ask questions for which there is no answer. The best response to their comments is determined by what they say and this is why listening is so important. One response is to tell the person that you understand.

Never ask what the cause of death was. If the family wants you to know let them bring it up. Remember at this time they do not need or want advice. What they need is understanding of their feelings of hurt. Never play down the importance of their loss with statements like "I been through this myself".



Remember listening and understanding is key to helping the bereaved individuals.

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TCAM 15 - YOUR COMMUNITY CHANNEL

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

FUNNY STORIES

Good Old Fashioned Hard Work

A feisty 70 year-old woman had to call the electric company for a repair man. After a quick inspection, Al, the man from the power company found the problem and handed her a \$70 bill for "Labor charges"! One hour?" she exclaimed. "It only took you five minutes! Al explained that his company had a minimum one-hour charge on every house call. Well, I want my remaining 55 minutes of labor," the lady responded, and she handed him a rake. Al spent the next 55 minutes in her yard bagging leaves.

Health Advice

A woman walked up to a wrinkled, little old man rocking in a chair on his porch. "I couldn't help noticing how happy you look," she said. "What's your secret for a long happy life?" "I smoke three packs of cigarettes a day," he said. "I also drink a case of whiskey a week, eat fatty foods, and never exercise." "That's amazing," said the woman, "how old are you?" "Twenty-six."

Out for a While

A man was known among his friends to be very brief and to the point - he really never said too much. One day, a saleswoman promoting a certain brand of cosmetics knocked on his door and asked to see his wife. The man told her that his wife wasn't home.

"Well," replied the saleswoman, "could I please wait for her?" The man directed her to the front room and left her there for more than three hours. The saleswoman was getting really worried, so she called out to the man in the other room and asked, "May I know where your wife is?" "She went to the cemetery," he replied. "And when is she returning?" "I don't really know," he said. "She's been there eleven years now."

Getting Older Economically

A guy is walking down the street with his friend. He says to his friend, "I'm a walking economy."

His friend replies, "How's that?"

"It's like this — my hair line is in recession, my stomach is a victim of inflation, and the combination of these factors is putting me into a deep depression."

Elderly Worries

The ninety-five year old woman at the nursing home received a visit from one of her fellow church members. "How are you feeling?" the visitor asked. "Oh," said the lady, "I'm just worried sick!" "What are you worried about, dear?" her friend asked. "You look like you're in good health. They are taking care of you, aren't they?" "Yes, they are taking very good care of me." "Are you in any pain?" she asked. "No, I have never had a pain in my life." "Well, what are you worried about?" her friend asked again. The lady leaned back in her rocking chair and slowly explained her major worry. "Every close friend I ever had has already died and gone on to heaven. I'm afraid they're all wondering where I went."

NEW GI BILL BEGAN AUGUST 1ST

August 01, 2009 Military. Com by Bryant Jordan

Many have called it the most substantial improvement to veterans' education benefits since World War II. Others see it as the nation making up for what it didn't do for those who returned with little thanks after serving in Vietnam.

But whatever the sentiment, on August 1, more than a year and a half after it was introduced in the Senate, the "Post-9/11" GI Bill went live.

Featuring a generous housing stipend for vets-turned-students, tuition payments pegged to state university rates, and \$1,000 per year for books and supplies, the new program should make college life a lot easier for most veterans. For active-duty troops - who may also use the benefit or even transfer it to a spouse - it offers uncapped tuition payments for any college or university - public or private.

But some experts wonder if the Post-9/11 GI Bill is ready for prime time. "The vets right now are in a high state of anticipation," said R.K. Williams, veterans coordinator for Boise State University and president of the National Association of Veterans Programs Administrators. "I don't want to say 'anxiety because no one knows how it is going to work.'"

While the new GI Bill is generally viewed as on the right track in terms of improving existing legislation, it isn't perfect, according to Williams and others. For example, the bill does not fund technical training or on-the-job training, and because it was designed with "bricks and mortar" schools in mind, it offers fewer benefits for those who desire online education programs.

Tom Philpott, a benefits advisor for Military.com, said the GI Bill also does not recognize National Guardsmen called up by their states as qualified for the new benefits, only those called up by the president. By contrast, the previous program, the Montgomery GI Bill and Montgomery GI Bill for Selected Reserve, is open to Guardsmen regardless of who or what activated them. "Frankly, I think there were a lot of little quirks in [the bill]," Philpott said. "It was rushed through. They were trying to get approval for a very complex program." But Philpott called the Post-9/11 GI Bill "a terrific program - a huge enhancement in veterans education benefits."

Benefits experts have also expressed concern that those eligible for the new GI Bill will opt for it without fully thinking through their choice. Once a service member signs up for the Post-9/11 bill, he or she cannot switch back to the Montgomery GI Bill.

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The Chapter will have an OPEN HOUSE ON OCTOBER 3, 2009 at the Chapter Quarters located at 5-7 Taunton Green.

The doors will open at 9:30am and remain open until 5:00pm. We hope to see as many of you as possible at this event. It is not a meeting! It is an opportunity for you to stop by and meet the officers and other members. Share your thoughts and ideas. With 600 plus members we know you have some ideas and new strategies to share.