



The Guardian

The monthly newsletter of the New Mexico Dept. of Veterans Services
June, 2022

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VA Secretary Denis McDonough to Visit New Mexico

New Mexico Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Cabinet Secretary Sonya Smith will be among the small group of officials to meet with U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Denis McDonough on his Scheduled two-day visit to New Mexico June 27-28.

Secretary Smith will join representatives from the New Mexico VA Health Care System and the Albuquerque VA Regional Office as Secretary McDonough visits several VA facilities during his visit. One of these is the Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Gallup—one of four northern New Mexico CBOCs on a list of proposed clinic closures nationwide to VA's Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) Commission.

Secretary McDonough is also scheduled to meet staff and tour the Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center in Albuquerque. Based on recommendations to the AIR Commission, PTSD treatment provided in Albuquerque may also be moved to a facility in the Phoenix, Arizona metro area.



Denis McDonough
Secretary, U.S. Dept.
of Veterans Affairs

“I am looking forward to meeting with Secretary McDonough next week when he visits our great state,” said DVS Secretary Smith. “It gives us the opportunity to have a direct conversation about our concerns with the Veterans Administration, and more specifically, its recommendation to close certain CBOCs and moving PTSD care out of state.”

VA Will Move Forward If AIR Commission Fails to Materialize

VA is still planning to reshape its real estate footprint across the country, even if a commission meant to refine these changes doesn't come into focus. According to a June 22 Federal News Network report, VA Secretary Denis McDonough told reporters he's concerned the AIR Commission, which doesn't have any U.S. senate-confirmed members yet, won't have enough time to review the agency's plan to close some medical facilities and build others.

“If the commissioners are not confirmed, then we'll continue to work this,” McDonough said.

President Joe Biden submitted eight AIR Commission nominees to the Senate in March, but the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee has not yet held a confirmation hearing for any nominee.



Sonya L. Smith
DVS Cabinet Secretary

DVS Cabinet Secretary Smith Named to VA's Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans Illnesses

New Mexico Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Cabinet Secretary Sonya Smith has been selected by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to serve on its Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses (RACGWVI).

The committee provides advice and makes recommendations to the VA secretary on proposed research studies, research plans, and research strategies relating to the health consequences of military service in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the Gulf War. This region encompasses Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.). Also included are those who served in the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, Red Sea, and airspace above the above locations. Her appointment runs until March 31, 2025.

"I am so honored and humbled to be selected by VA to serve on this committee," said Secretary Smith, who as an Air Force medical technician was stationed in Oman in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. "There is important work to be done. I am well aware that many servicemen and women who have served in this region have developed health issues—and I want to help come up with solutions to help them heal."

Since the conclusion of the Gulf War, defined by VA and the U.S. Department of Defense as the period from August 2, 1990-February 28, 1991, many veterans who served in the region have developed chronic respiratory, neuromuscular, neurological, psychological and chronic fatigue issues.

Presumptive Diseases/Illnesses Linked to Gulf War Service

If you served in the Southwest Asia theater of military operations, you could be at risk for illnesses or other conditions that VA assumes are related to service in this region. VA refers to these as presumptive diseases.

VA and other researchers continue to conduct research to investigate how service in the Gulf War is linked to illnesses Gulf War Veterans have experienced. Those who have served in the above-mentioned areas during the Gulf War period do not need to prove a connection between their military service and illnesses in order to receive VA disability compensation.

[Go to this VA link for more information about Gulf War presumptive health issues.](#)

For assistance with filing a VA claim for Gulf War presumptive health issues, please visit or contact any DVS veterans service officer listed on the back two pages of this newsletter.

DVS Presents 2022 New Mexico Women Veterans Conference

One hundred two women veterans attended the 2022 New Mexico Women Veterans Conference presented by DVS on June 11 at the Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) Workforce Training Center.

Attendees were able to learn about veterans benefits, including many specifically for women veterans, from DVS, the Albuquerque VA Health Care System (NMVAHCS), the Albuquerque VA Regional Office, and twenty other agencies that had information tables.



The message stressed by guest speakers was the need for women veterans to recognize that they are veterans, and that being a veteran doesn't apply only to those who deployed for combat, served at least 20-years, only for officers—or only for men.

“I look around the room today, and I hope you see what I see: We are not invisible,” said DVS Cabinet Secretary Sonya Smith in her welcome remarks. She is an Air Force veteran who served tours in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm as a medical technician. “I am amazed at what I see—strong women who volunteered to serve and defend our country. I see a lot of proud veterans!”



Other speakers talked about despite the gains made by women service members today, there are obstacles that many still encounter.

NMVAHCS Jurica Susan Burse Executive (*left photo*) talked about how just a decade ago, just 4% of our nation's active-duty military were women. By 2040, she said this percentage is expected to grow to 18%, and should keep growing. But she said for now, women continue to be invisible to many in the public.

“Women veterans still face misperceptions, like people assuming their non-veteran spouse is the veteran in the family, or ‘You must be the spouse’ reactions,” she said. “It’s like they can’t believe that a woman actually served in the military!”

New Mexico Air National Guard Brigadier General Michelle La Montagne, who is an assistant adjutant general, talked about always having to prove herself during her nine years on active duty with the Air Force, which she said was a lot more male-dominated when she was commissioned as a second lieutenant upon graduating from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1992.

(continued on next page)



LEFT to RIGHT: Outgoing DVS Women Veterans Program Manager Robin Wilson, New Mexico Air National Guard BG Michelle La Montagne, DVS Cabinet Secretary Sonya Smith.

“I always felt like I had to prove that I belonged with the guys,” said the highly decorated brigadier general. “Even after being recognized for my accomplishments, I still felt I had to keep proving myself.”

She completed her active service in 2001 and then joined the New Mexico National Guard while also getting a civilian job (“I was a weekend warrior.”) The Guard has been great, she said. But bringing her military experience to the regular job force was surprising.

“I thought being a woman in the civilian workforce would be easier. But that is not the case sometimes,” she said. “Behavior that serve women well in the military can put women in uncomfortable situations, because we’re conditioned to always be proving ourselves. We stand out. We’re always ‘on.’”

Outgoing DVS Women Veterans Program Manager Robin Wilson then reminded women to make sure they are not only registered for their VA benefits, but to make sure that other women veterans are aware that they too should also register.

“The official VA data says there are 16,000 women veterans in New Mexico,” said Wilson, who finished her 19-year Air Force service as a captain. “But I think this number is low. I know there are more of us out there, so I challenge you all here to go out and find these women, and reach out to them.”



LEFT PHOTO: DVS female staff attending the conference (L to R): HR Analyst Lori Gutierrez, Albuquerque VSO Dayle BadWarrior, Roswell VSO Danielle Thompson (w/”Maddox”). Pueblo/Tribal Liaison Beverly Charley, Cabinet Secretary Sonya Smith, outgoing Women Veterans Program Manager Robin Wilson, Carlsbad VSO Dagmar Youngberg (w/”Red”), and Las Cruces VSO Rosa Bycenski.



Robin Wilson
DVS Field Services
Division Director

Robin Wilson Named DVS Field Services Division Director

DVS has named Robin Wilson as its director of field services. She has been serving as the agency's women veterans program manager since coming to DVS in March of 2021.

Prior to coming to DVS, Robin was a case manager at the New Mexico Veterans Integration Center (VIC), serving the needs of homeless and justice-involved veterans, and those struggling with significant substance use.

"Robin has a passion for not only helping women veterans, but all veterans," said DVS Cabinet Secretary Sonya Smith. "I am thrilled to have her bring her drive and energy to manage our agency's 19 veterans service officers in our 15 field offices in the state."

An Air Force veteran, Robin enlisted in 1991 as a security specialist, where she was stationed at Offutt AFB in Omaha, NE, and Ramstein Air Base in southwestern Germany. She joined the Air Force reserves while attending the University of South Carolina, where she graduated with a bachelor's degree in nursing. She was then commissioned as a 1st Lieutenant as a critical care nurse and stationed at Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio, TX. Robin was also deployed to the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group at Balad Air Base in Iraq in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

The search for a new women veterans program manager is currently underway.

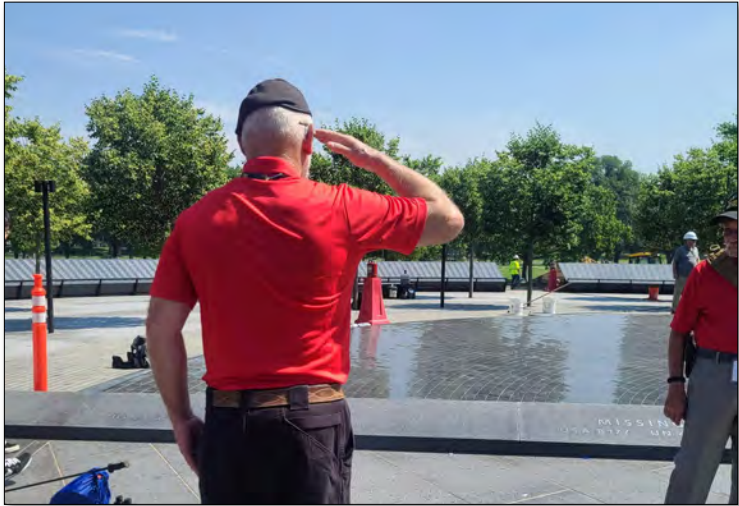
DVS Secretary Smith Among Hundreds Welcoming Home 2022 Honor Flight Veterans

DVS Cabinet Secretary Sonya Smith and Rio Rancho-based Veterans Service Officer Dustin Newsome were among the hundreds of people welcoming 25 older veterans to the Albuquerque International Sunport on June 3.

The two World War Two, 11 Korean War, and 12 Vietnam War veterans returned on the 2022 Northern New Mexico Honor Flight. The flight was organized by Honor Flight of Northern New Mexico.



The non-profit agency is part of the national Honor Flight Network that provides free two-day, all-expenses-paid visits to Washington, D.C. for veterans to visit the national memorials dedicated to their wars of service. Priority is given to veterans of World War 2, the Korean War, and terminally-ill veterans from other wars. *(more photos and video link on next page)*



Photos on this page courtesy of Honor Flight of Northern New Mexico

To watch a short video produced by DVS showing the return of the honor flight:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZ--eBTkBS0>
(Simultaneously press “ctrl” while clicking on the link to watch the video)





DVS Gallup-Based VSO Attends Zuni Veterans Memorial Grand Opening

DVS Gallup-based Veterans Service Officer John Livingston (*left photo, in dark shirt*) manned a veterans benefits outreach table at the June 10 grand opening of Zuni Pueblo's Veterans Memorial Park.

New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham (*below, upper left photo*) was a special guest speaker—thanking the sacrifice and history of service of veterans from the

pueblo. The park is off Highway 58 in Zuni and features metal shade structures, concrete walls and pathways, stone masonry art from local artists, monuments to war eras, and four flag poles.

Veterans who need assistance filing VA claims, applying for state benefits can contact John at john.livingston@state.nm.us or (505) 389-8731 for email or phone assistance. He and other DVS VSOs will also be making regular outreach visits.



Upcoming DVS Veterans Benefits Outreach Visits

The New Mexico Department of Veterans Services (DVS) has scheduled in-office veterans benefits outreaches in July at the locations listed below.

Veterans or their eligible dependents can drop by to get information about or help with filing VA claims, applying for state veterans benefits, or assistance with any other issues a veteran needs help with.

<u>Date</u>	<u>City/Venue</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Time</u>
Jul. 7	Albuquerque/Barelas Senior Center	714 7th Street SW	10am-2pm
Jul. 8	Cimarron/Cimmaron Village Hall	356 9th Street	10am-2pm
Jul. 13	Ruidoso/Ruidoso Community Center	501 Sudderth Drive	10am-3pm
Jul. 15	Socorro/Socorro Senior Center	1410 Ake Avenue	10am-2pm
Jul. 18	Albuquerque/South Valley Multipurpose Sr. Center	2008 Larrazolo Road SW	10am-2pm
Jul. 18	Roy/Harding County Community Building	557 Wagon Mound Hwy	10am-2pm
Jul. 26	Albuquerque/VA Hospital Lobby	1501 San Pedro Drive SE	10am-2pm
Jul. 27	Grants/Grants Senior Center	590 Jurassic Court	10am-2pm
Jul. 29	Rio Rancho/Loma Colorado Main Library	755 Loma Colorado Blvd. SE	10am-2pm

DVS has also scheduled two Veterans Property Tax Exemption/Waiver outreaches. DVS and county assessor staff will help veterans or unmarried widows of veterans file for the veterans property tax exemption—which is a \$4,000 reduction off the taxable value of a primary residence. Veterans rated by the VA as 100% permanent-and-total, service-connected disabled can file for the *veterans property tax waiver*, which eliminates the entire property tax bill. Unmarried widows of veterans can also apply for this waiver.

<u>Date</u>	<u>City/Venue</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Time</u>
Jul. 6	Los Lunas/Valencia County Assessor's Office	444 Luna Avenue	10am-2pm
Jul. 14	Estancia/Torrance County Assessor's Office	205 South 9th Street	10am-2pm

Proof of veteran status and NM residency required

Proof of veteran status must be provided when filing for the veterans property tax exemption or waiver—and can be done by bringing either a copy of a veteran’s DD-214 separation form, a National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Form 56-16, or a U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) Form 1867.

If filing for the property tax waiver, please bring a copy of the letter from VA declaring a 100% permanent-and-total, service-connected disability rating. Proof of residency must also be provided, and can be one by bringing either a valid New Mexico driver’s license, voter registration card, or your latest state income tax return. For further questions, please contact DVS Event Planner Joseph Dorn at josephM.dorn@state.nm.us or (505) 861-9117.

As a reminder, veterans from anywhere in the state can also contact any DVS veterans service officer with in-person office assistance...or through remote assistance by phone or email. Please go to the back of this newsletter for a listing of all VSOs.



The NM Dept. of Veteran Service Cemetery Department will be coming to Carlsbad on July 21, 2022.

NMDVS Personnel will Include:

***David Walker;** Bureau Chief of Cemetery and Memorial Program*

***Edward Mendez;** Division Director State Veterans Benefits and the Cemeteries and Memorial Programs*

***Dagmar Youngberg;** Veteran Service Officer, Eddy County*

The presentation will be at 4 PM (1600 hours) at the American Legion Post 7 on Legion Drive. This presentation will cover the following:

- **Potential Layout of the Cemetery**
- **Requisites for internment**
- **Information about job opportunities**
- **Information about when Carlsbad can anticipate groundbreaking**

This presentation will be for all Veterans and Families interested in the State Veterans Cemetery program coming to Carlsbad. Please help us ensure everyone that would like to attend knows about this.

Memorial Day Commemorated in Communities Throughout New Mexico

Memorial Day was observed on May 30 and in the preceding weekend in communities throughout New Mexico. For many, it was the first public ceremony in the two years since the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation or scaling back of public gatherings. However, there were some cancellations this year in northern New Mexico communities impacted by the Calf Canyon-Hermits Peak wildfire, which has grown to become the state's largest-ever wildfire. DVS cancelled the annual Memorial Day ceremony at its Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire due to the venue's proximity to the wildfire. (Note: As of June 24, the fire was less than 15 miles away from the Village of Angel Fire).



“The situation is still very critical in this part of northern New Mexico,” said DVS Cabinet Secretary Sonya Smith when the decision was made to cancel the May 30 ceremony five days earlier. “The safety of everyone in the region is first and foremost on the minds of everyone at the Department of Veterans Services.”

Secretary Smith was scheduled to speak at the ceremony, but instead attended the annual ceremony in Albuquerque at the New Mexico Veterans Memorial. There were also a small ceremony at the DVS-managed Fort Stanton State Veterans Cemetery. (below photos)



LEFT PHOTO: Large roadside and smaller headstone American flags were placed at the Fort Stanton State Veterans Cemetery by cemetery staff and volunteers.

RIGHT PHOTO: Cemetery visitors pause as DVS Cemeteries & Monuments Bureau Chief David Walker (2nd from left) and DVS Interment Specialist Stephen McConnell (center, at middle flagpole) place a memorial wreath at the base of the American flag.

(photos from ceremonies in other communities around the state are on the next ten pages.)

Angel Fire (Vietnam Veterans Memorial)



LEFT PHOTO: At the DVS-managed Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire, which is adjacent to the DVS-managed Angel Fire State Veterans Cemetery, cemetery staff placed American flags around the pathways to the chapel and museum. Memorial Supervisor DB Herbst run the memorial’s Honor Bell three times, and rendered a bugle rendition of *Taps* at 3p.m. to further honor service members lost while in service to our country.

RIGHT PHOTO: The Marines Motorcycle Club made its annual stop at the memorial on Saturday, May 28, during its annual ride in the Red River Memorial Day Motorcycle Rally in the town of Red River, about 30-miles north. *(Photo courtesy: Naz Castillo/Bexar Grooming Co., San Antonio, TX)*



LEFT PHOTO: KOB-TV Weatherman Steve Stucker (*standing at far right*) and his annual parade of motorcycle riders also stopped at the Memorial on May 28 as part of its annual ride to raise money for his *Beds4Kidz-Albuquerque* non-profit organization. His group purchases or receives new or gently-used beds for kids from economically-stressed families in the Albuquerque metro area.

(photos courtesy: DB Herbst/Vietnam Veterans Memorial Supervisor)

Albuquerque (New Mexico Veterans Memorial)



American Gold Star Mothers-Albuquerque Chapter President Becky Christmas (*center of photo, standing in white dress*) was the keynote speaker at the Memorial Day Ceremony at the New Mexico Veterans Memorial in Albuquerque .



Early arrivals were treated to a musical prelude of patriotic songs performed by “The Dukes of Albuquerque” conducted by Ralph Harris. (*photo courtesy: Gary Williams/Associate State Director for Community Outreach, AARP New Mexico*)



CSM Steve Overman and COL Roger Knight (both U.S.Army/retired and members of the MG Lekson Chapter of the Association of the U.S.Army) thank American Gold Star Mothers -New Mexico Chapter members for their service helping veterans. (*photo courtesy: George Cherolis*)



Attending the ceremony was 98-year old World War II Navy veteran Sally-Alice Thompson, also a co-founder of the Donald & Sally-Alice Thompson Chapter of Veterans for Peace. (*photo courtesy: Robert Anderson*)

Albuquerque (Historic Fairview Cemetery)



Also in Albuquerque, there was a ceremony at the Historic Fairview Cemetery. More than 500 veterans are believed to be buried here. The cemetery was the city's first public cemetery when it opened in the late-1880s. More than 500 veterans are believed to be buried here—many in unmarked or undecipherable gravesites. (Left photo courtesy: Former DVS Cabinet Secretary Jack Fox) (Right photo courtesy: Gail Ruben/Albuquerque Historic Fairview Cemetery)



Award-winning bugler Al Bourget rendered *Taps* (left photo), shortly before American Legion/Dept. of New Mexico Chaplain Aide Karen Street gave a closing prayer to conclude the ceremony (right photo; bowing his head in prayer behind her is VFW NM District 2 Commander Bob Deurloo.)

(photos courtesy of Gail Ruben/Albuquerque Historic Fairview Cemetery)

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Belen (Eagle Park/Veterans Memorial)



In Belen, a large crowd attended a ceremony at the Eagle Park Veterans Memorial. The Belen High School NJROTC Color Guard (*left photo*) posted the colors. Former New Mexico National Guard Adjutant General Brig. Gen. Andrew Salas served as master of ceremonies. (*photo courtesy: Frank Ortega*)

Clovis/Cannon AFB



At Cannon Air Force Base, Wing Commander Col. Terrence Taylor (*top photo*) honored fallen veterans at a ceremony, where a bugle rendition of *Taps* was rendered by USMC veteran Roman Romero. (*photos courtesy: Ben Salazar*)

Corrales (San Isidro Cemetery-May 29)



On May 29, former VFW Post 5432 Commander Seth Orell (left photo) was among a group of volunteers, along with members of the Boy Scouts of America/Girls Troop 1919 from Rio Rancho, placed flags at the gravesites of veterans buried at the San Isidro Cemetery. (photo courtesy: Terry Brown/ Commander, VFW Post 5432-Corrales)

Estancia (Estancia Memorial Cemetery)



In Estancia (Torrance County), American Legion Post 22 hosted a Memorial Day ceremony at the Estancia Memorial Cemetery. (photo courtesy: Nathan Dial)

Fort Bayard National Cemetery



Flags were placed on the gravesites at the Fort Bayard National Cemetery in advance of the Memorial Day ceremony. Members of the Marine Corps League Gaffney-Oglesby Detachment 1328 posted the colors at the May 30 ceremony. *(left & right photos courtesy: Frank Kenney)*



LEFT: Connie Shivner places a wreath on behalf of the Elks Club of Silver City. *(photo courtesy: Connie Shivner)*



RIGHT: Dr. Mary Cowan of Silver City lays a Gold Star Mothers wreath in honor of her son, Army CW3 Aaron Cowan, who lost his life on February 25, 2005, when the Apache helicopter he was piloting crashed in South Korea. The Army Ranger was on his third tour of duty in that country. *(photo courtesy: Frank Kenney)*

Hobbs (Veterans Memorial Park)



The city of Hobbs, in addition to honoring service members who lost their lives while serving our country, also marked Memorial Day by dedicating its new Veterans Memorial Park. It sits on a part of Hobbs Army Airfield, which was decommissioned in 1948. The \$1.8 million park was built through a joint collaboration between Lea County and the city. A Vietnam War-era “Huey” helicopter and an F-105 “Thunderchief” are housed at the park. Future plans call for the laying of personalized memorial bricks, and walking trails around the perimeter of the park.

Los Alamos (Guaje Pines Cemetery)



The town of Los Alamos commemorated Memorial Day with its annual ceremony at the Guaje Pines Cemetery. Local girl scouts were pressed into duty holding down the memorial wreaths in the windy weather. The Los Alamos High School NJROTC Color Guard did the honor of posting the Colors. *(photos courtesy: Jim Mariner/Past National Historian, the American Legion)*

Portales (Portales Cemetery)



LEFT PHOTO: American Legion Post 31 Vice Commander Andy Nazario gave the keynote address at a Memorial Day Ceremony presented by the post at the Portales Cemetery.

RIGHT PHOTO: The American Legion Post 31 Honor Guard raises the American flag during the Memorial Day Ceremony at the Portales Cemetery. (photos courtesy: Randy Dunson)

Questa ((Sun. May 29)



At Veterans Memorial Park in Questa, representatives from VFW Charles C. Cisneros Post 9516 from the nearby town of Cerro presented the post’s past commander, David J. Cisneros, (left photo, in light green shirt) with a certificate of appreciation for the Vietnam War veteran’s 20-year service as post commander. The presentation took place in front of the park’s memorial honoring the post’s namesake and Cisneros’ first cousin—U.S. Army PFC Charles Castulo Cisneros.

PFC Cisneros, who was born and raised in Cerro, was killed in action during the Vietnam War in Cambodia on June 22, 1970—just nine months after finishing basic training.

Red River



LEFT PHOTO: (L to R): Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association members Phillip Chavez, Josie Chaves, Maribel Eisenberg, and Robert Eisenberg were among the hundreds of riders (RIGHT PHOTO) riding in the Memorial Day Weekend Red River Memorial Day Motorcycle Rally from Albuquerque to Red River. Phillip and Robert work for the VA; Phillip at the Santa Fe Vet Center, and Robert as a counselor in Albuquerque (left photo courtesy: Phillip Chavez. Right photo courtesy: Beds4Kidz)



LEFT PHOTO: Longtime KOB-TV Weather Forecaster Steve Stucker led a group of riders from Albuquerque who were part of his annual Beds 4 Kidz fundraising effort to buy new or gently-used beds for kids from families in need in the Albuquerque metro area (photos courtesy: Beds4Kidz)

Rio Rancho (Veterans Memorial Park)



In Rio Rancho, a big crowd was on hand for the annual Memorial Day ceremony at the city’s Veterans Memorial Park. A rifle volley near the conclusion of the ceremony was rendered by member of the Marine Corps League LCpl Christopher Adlesperger Detachment 1316 Honor Guard. *(photo courtesy: State Rep. Joshua Hernandez)(R-Sandoval)*

Santa Fe National Cemetery



At the Santa Fe National Cemetery, among the large crowd attending the city’s annual Memorial Day Ceremony were:

LEFT PHOTO, from L to R: Retired New Mexico National Guard WO5 Lawrence Jiron, retired U.S. Army LTC Sam Atterbury, who also served 40 years as a VA social worker; and retired New Mexico National Guard COL Steven Garcia. *(photo courtesy: Tim Love/Albuquerque VA Regional Office Veterans Service Center Manager)*

RIGHT PHOTO, L to R: City of Santa Fe Veterans Advisory Board (SFVAB) Vice Chair Jim Williams, SFVAB Chair MAJ Dorothy Seaton (U.S. Army-retired), and SFVAB Member Anna Vigil.

Santa Fe National Cemetery (continued)



TOP LEFT & RIGHT PHOTOS: Flags were placed by volunteers and cemetery staff at many of the cemetery's gravesites.

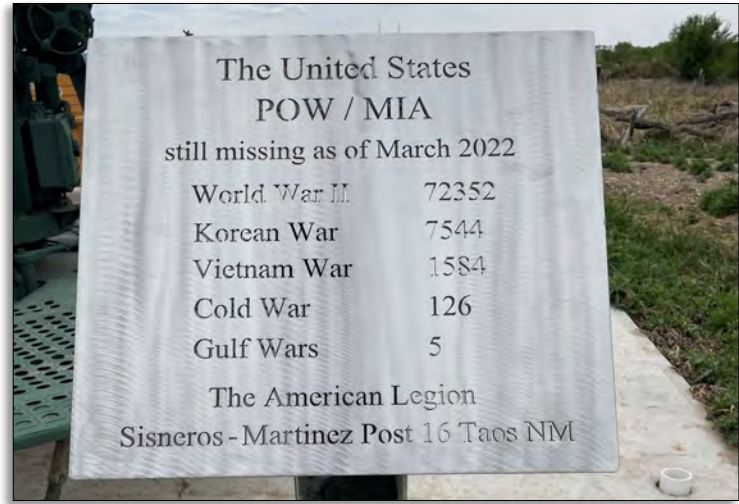


(photo courtesy: Carmela Quintana/Field Representative for U.S. Senator Ben Ray Lujan (D-New Mexico).

(TOP/BOTTOM 2 PHOTOS: The American Legion Post 12 Honor Guard posted the Colors and rendered a rifle volley photo courtesy: Gary Bland/American Legion Post 12).



Taos (Veterans Memorial Park)



At Veterans Memorial Park in Taos, American Legion Sisneros-Martinez Post 16 Commander Wayne Rivali and Sgt-at-Arms Julio Alfaro installed a plaque next to a WWII-era anti-aircraft gun in honor of Americans still listed as Missing-In-Action. *(photo courtesy: Wayne Rivali/American Legion Post 16 Commander)*

Tijeras (Garcia Park/Veterans Monument)(Sun. May 29)



Boy Scouts Troop 640 presented the Colors for the singing of the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance at the Sunday, May 29 Memorial Day Ceremony in the Village of Tijeras. *(photos courtesy: Michael Angelo Limon/Deputy Clerk, Village of Tijeras)*

Truth or Consequences (Veterans Memorial Park)



LEFT PHOTO: In Truth or Consequences, miniature flags were placed along the base of the Vietnam Veterans Wall, where a Memorial Day service was hosted by VFW Post 3317. The memorial is a half-scale replica of the national Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., which lists the names of the 58,318 Americans who lost their lives while serving in Vietnam—including 398 New Mexicans. RIGHT PHOTO: VFW Post 1389 hosted a Memorial Day Ceremony at the nearby Hot Springs Cemetery. (photos courtesy: New Mexico State Rep. Rebecca Dow/R-Grant, Hidalgo, & Sierra)

Pueblo of Zuni (Veterans Memorial Park)



At the Pueblo of Zuni, the annual Memorial Day Ceremony was once again held at the community fairgrounds. Next year, it and all other veterans ceremonies will be at the pueblo's new Veterans Memorial, which was dedicated shortly after Memorial Day. (see page 7 for the story about the memorial's dedication) Photos courtesy: Kathy Natachu/Zuni Veterans Program Manager



New Mexican Among Five Marines Killed in a California Aircraft Crash

One of five Marines who died in an aircraft training exercise in California on June 8 was a New Mexican.

Lance Corporal Evan Strickland, of Valencia County, was part of a five-man crew that perished when their MV-22 “Osprey” aircraft crashed near the Imperial County desert community of Glamis, about 50 miles east of the Arizona state line.

According to the Marine Corps, the aircraft was taking part in a routine live-fire training exercise over a gunnery range. The crash is still under investigation.

The Osprey is a tilt-rotor aircraft that has the ability rotate its two giant propellers to point upward, allowing it to take off and land like a helicopter. The aircraft can fly like an airplane once the two propeller housings, midflight, are rotated to face forward. The crew was based 115 miles to the west, at Camp Pendleton in northern San Diego County.

“The New Mexico Department of Veterans Services offers its condolences to the Strickland family and the tight-knit Valencia County community,” said DVS Cabinet Secretary Sonya Smith of the 2020 graduate of Los Lunas High School. “Those who knew Lance Corporal Strickland say he was a bright and energetic young man, with a terrific sense of humor—yet also proud to fulfill his dream of flying aboard an Osprey while serving our country as a United States Marine.”

Funeral arrangements are pending.



USMC LCpl Evan Strickland
From Valencia, NM

Veterans Community Bulletin Board

The following page(s) feature event and informational flyers provided to DVS by veterans and community service agencies. These flyers are published for the convenience of New Mexico's veteran community. Inclusion in *The Guardian* does not constitute an endorsement by DVS of the organization, content, products, or services contained therein.

DVS invites government agencies and non-profit service organizations to send flyers for publication in *The Guardian* announcing an upcoming or ongoing veteran-related event. DVS will run these flyers as a public service courtesy to the veteran community.

However:

- Flyers must have the name of a point-of-contact from the organization...along with the contact's phone number or email address. Flyers without this information will not be published.
- DVS is not responsible for the accuracy of the content, products, or services in these flyers.
- Views expressed in these flyers are the independent views of the authors/owners of the third-party entity that created the flyer—and does not necessarily reflect the views of DVS.
- To the maximum extent permitted by law, DVS expressly denies liability for any and all losses suffered by any persons or organizations who, in their independent discretion and reliance, either directly or indirectly rely on content, products, services or information offered by these independent third-party organizations.
- DVS reserves the right to edit or decline to publish any flyer.



SOLDIER SONGS *and* VOICES

FREE MUSIC LESSONS & SONGWRITING WORKSHOP

ALL VETERANS~ALL BRANCHES~ ALL ERAS~ALL LEVELS!

FREE!

**5:00PM TO 7:00PM
EVERY WEDNESDAY**

Daniel Johnsen
ssv.santafe@gmail.com
972.741.2758

The
Candyman
Strings & Things

**851 ST. MICHAELS DRIVE
IN SANTA FE**



*America's 1st National
Veteran Women In Agriculture Conference*

July 6 - 7, 2022

(Wednesday & Thursday)

9:00 am - 5:00 pm (CST)

Location: 1701 N Martin Luther King Ave.

Oklahoma City, OK 73111

Hosted at: NWIAA Headquarters

FREE Registration online at www.NWIAA.org under the events tab
Ensuring equality and inclusion for ALL women!

RESOURCES:

- USDA/FSA Farm Loans & Resources
- USDA-NRCS Program Resources to develop or enhance farm/ag. business(es)
- Veteran Resources from all over the United States
- Grants, Loans, & Additional Tangible Ag. Veteran Resources
- Hands-on Ag. Technical Services and Trainings
- Land Ownership & Retention Programs
- Mental & Physical Health Resources
- Women & Children Equality Inclusion Act
- Farm Tour(s)

If you would like to participate or be a sponsor please contact us using the information provided below:



For any questions, please contact us at (202) 643-0590 or at Womeninag@gmail.com

Any woman veteran interested in attending and needs travel assistance, please contact Dr. Tammy Gray-Steele at womeminag@gmail.com. Women can also participate virtually. For more information: nwiaa.org/veteran-conference

We invite you to an informal Open House to meet with the founders of



July 16, 2022 @ 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

VFW Post 401
2011 Girard Blvd SE,
Albuquerque, NM 87106

We are a Colorado-based 501(c)(3) Veteran & Family Resource Hub, providing a variety of services and connections to Veterans and their families. We hope to be of service to Veterans and their families in New Mexico.

Our Vision:

To help Veterans and their families find more peace in their life.

Our Mission:

Meet the needs of the Veteran Community through outreach, listening, resource vetting & referrals, and advocacy.

Qualified Listeners was founded in January 2017 by Greg Goettsch, a Navy Veteran who served three tours in Vietnam. From 1972 to 2011 he hid his Veteran status, especially being a Vietnam Veteran, because of controversy and disrespect. In 2011, Greg was invited to participate in a small lineup for the Northern Colorado Honor Flight motorcade. It triggered many deep feelings he had no idea existed. He realized that if he felt that way, many of his comrades do as well.

Soon after, he started proudly wearing apparel indicating his Veteran status. Other Veterans would approach him in public places and began talking to him about their time in the military. Some conversations would last 30 minutes or more. Many would say, "I don't know why I'm telling you this. I've never told anyone before."

That spawned the beginning of Qualified Listeners. Please come and learn more!

Jody Clair
Family Care Coordinator/Qualified Listeners
(720) 600-0860
Jody@QualifiedListeners.org





☆ **WOMEN'S VETERANS** ☆

SHOW & SHINE CAR SHOW

SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 3
8AM - 1PM



ENTRY FEE
\$25

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For information, contact Karen Woods @ 575-639-1265



DVS Field Offices in New Mexico

DVS has field offices throughout the state that are staffed with nationally-certified veterans service officers. These VSOs are military veterans themselves who are dedicated to helping their fellow veterans with filing VA claims, filing for state veterans benefits, or helping with anything else a veteran or their family needs.

Office hours are Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm, Monday-Friday (excluding holidays). Though this service is free, appointments are required and can be made by contacting the offices below.

Please note that in addition to in-office assistance, veterans from anywhere in the state can contact any DVS VSO for phone or email assistance.

Also listed below and on the following page is the contact information for the DVS women veterans program for women veterans who prefer assistance by a woman VSO, and the DVS Tribal/Pueblo Liaison for Native American veterans preferring assistance from a Native American VSO. Contact information is also listed for the Angel Fire, Fort Stanton, and Gallup State Veterans Cemeteries, and the New Mexico Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) for veterans who want to open, expand, or purchase a business—or bid on state or federal government contracts.

Alamogordo

VSO: David Henley

411 10th Street #107

(575) 937-5620

david.henley1@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Otero**, Lincoln counties

Albuquerque (NE Heights)

Jesus Palomino

5201 Eagle Rock Blvd. NE

(505) 681-6998

jesus.palomino1@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Bernalillo**, Sandoval, Socorro, Torrance, Valencia counties

Albuquerque (NE Heights)

Dayle BadWarrior

5201 Eagle Rock Blvd. NE

(505) 383-2400

dayle.badwarrior1@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Bernalillo**, Sandoval, Socorro, Torrance, Valencia counties

Albuquerque (NE Heights)

Patrick Abney

5201 Eagle Rock Blvd. NE

(505) 525-3331

patrick.abney@state.nm.us

Counties: **Bernalillo**, Sandoval, Socorro, Torrance, Valencia

Carlsbad

Dagmar Youngberg

101 N. Halagueno

(575) 988-5900

dagmar.youngberg@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Eddy**, Chaves, Lea counties

Clovis

Matt Barela

904 W. Sixth St.

(575) 825-9602

matthew.barea@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Curry**, DeBaca, Quay counties

Farmington

Please contact DVS Pueblos/Tribal liaison Beverly Charley for assistance at (575) 241-3322 or

beverly.charley@state.nm.us. Or

contact any DVS field office for help by phone or email.

Gallup

John Livingston

908 E. Buena Vista Ave/Room 1A

(505) 389-8731

john.livingston@state.nm.us

Home Region: **McKinley**, Catron, Cibola, San Juan counties

Grants

Temporarily vacant. Please contact any DVS office for phone or email assistance.

Home Region: **McKinley**, Catron, Cibola, San Juan counties

(more offices are listed on the next page)

Hobbs

Temporarily vacant. Please contact any DVS field office for assistance by phone or email.

Home Region: **Lea, Chaves, Eddy** counties

Las Cruces**Vincent Tellez**

2024 E. Griggs Ave.
(505) 216-8782

vincent.tellez@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Doña Ana, Grant, Sierra** counties

Rio Rancho**Dustin Newsom**

1500 Idalia Rd./Bldg. D, Room 2041
(505) 221-7190

dustin.newsom@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Sandoval, Bernalillo** (west side) counties

Silver City**Chris Teran**

Western New Mexico University
Juan Chacon Bldg./Room 138-A
1000 West College Ave.
(575) 313-5627

christopher.teran@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Grant, Hidalgo, Luna** counties

Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)**Rich Coffel (Director)**

5201 Eagle Rock Blvd. NE (ABQ)
(505) 220-9932

richardL.coffel@state.nm.us

Gallup State Veterans Cemetery**Gilbert Lopez (Supervisor)**

333 National Cemetery Dr.

Las Cruces**Rosa Bycenski**

2024 E. Griggs Ave.
(505) 216-8782

rosa.bycenski@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Doña Ana, Grant, Sierra** counties

Las Vegas, NM**Martín Márquez**

917 Douglas Ave.
(575) 520-5079

martinM.marquez@state.nm.us

Home Region: **San Miguel, Catron, Colfax, Guadalupe, Harding, Mora, Union**

Roswell**Danielle Thompson**

1600 SE Main St./Suite "A"
(575) 416-2284

danielle.thompson@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Chaves, Lincoln** counties

Women Veterans Program

Temporarily vacant. Please contact

DVS Field Services Division Director

Robin Wilson for assistance at

(505) 372-9106 or

robin.wilson@state.us.

Angel Fire State Veterans Cemetery**Randy Myklebust (Supervisor)**

34 Country Club Rd.
(505) 225-4341

Las Cruces**Miguel Martinez**

2024 E. Griggs Ave.
(505) 216-8782

miguel.martinez1@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Doña Ana, Grant, Sierra** counties

Las Vegas, NM**Arturo Marlow**

917 Douglas Ave.
(505) 331-8838

arturo.marlow@state.nm.us

Home Region: **San Miguel, Catron, Colfax, Guadalupe, Harding, Mora, Union**

Santa Fe**Nick McKenzie**

Bataan Memorial Bldg/1st floor
407 Galisteo St./Room 134
(505) 218-3125

nicholas.mckenzie1@state.nm.us

Home Region: **Santa Fe, Los Alamos, Rio Arriba, Taos** counties

Pueblos/Tribal Liaison**Beverly Charley**

San Juan College Veterans Center 4601
College Blvd./Room 1715-B
(575) 241-3322

beverly.charley@state.nm.us

Ft. Stanton State Veterans Cemetery**Stephen McConnell (Supervisor)**

1398 State Highway 220
(505) 383-4381