



The Guardian

The monthly newsletter of the New Mexico Dept. of Veterans' Services
November, 2023

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DVS to Commemorate Veterans Day at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire



Official VA 2023
Veterans Day Poster

The New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) will commemorate Veterans Day with a ceremony at the DVS-managed Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire on Saturday, November 11 at 11a.m.

Acting Cabinet Secretary Jamison A. Herrera is scheduled to deliver a Veterans Day address, followed by the keynote address by past-national American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. President Becky Christmas. This year's winner of the Ferrell Udell Veterans' Service Award will be presented by Vietnam Veterans of America/Northern New Mexico Chapter 996.

Musical presentations before (10:45a.m.) and after the ceremony will be provided by the award-winning Cimarron High School Concert Band.

The public is invited to come to honor and celebrate all men and women who have served our country as members of the United States military.

Other Veterans Day Ceremonies Around the State

DVS urges all New Mexicans, if they can't make it to the Angel Fire event, to attend a Veterans Day ceremony in their community. On the next page is a list of ceremonies and events provided to DVS.



Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire

Veterans Day Events in New Mexico

**based on information provided to DVS*

City	Venue	Event	Time	More Info:
Wed. (Nov. 8)				
Clovis	American Legion Post 117	open house	6-8pm	(575) 762-9166
Thu. (Nov. 9)				
Albuquerque	Sandia Labs/Schiff Auditorium	ceremony	12:30-2pm	(505) 346-3780
Clovis	American Legion Post 25	breakfast	7-11am	(575) 763-5392
Clovis	Elks Lodge #1244	open house	5-9pm	(575) 762-9598
Mora	Mora High School	reception	8am	(575) 770-2214
Mora	Mora High School	school assembly	9am	(575) 770-2214
Fri. (Nov. 10)				
Roswell	NMMI	breakfast	8am	(575) 624-8262
Roswell	Mesa Middle School	assembly	9am	(575) 627-2800
Roswell	Roswell High School	reception	12:45pm	(575) 637-3200
Roswell	Roswell High School	assembly	1:55pm	(575) 637-3200
Roswell	Goddard High School Theater	reception	1pm	(575) 627-4800
Roswell	Goddard High School Theater	assembly	1:30pm	(575) 627-4800
Sat. Nov. 11 (Veterans Day)				
Alamogordo	10th St. & Oregon Ave.	parade	10am	(575) 437-6120
Albuquerque	USS Bullhead Memorial Park	parade	9am	(505) 768-4496
Albuquerque	NM Veterans Memorial	concert	10am	(505) 768-4496
Albuquerque	NM Veterans Memorial	ceremony	11am	(505) 768-4496
Albuquerque	American Legion Post 13	NMNG 200th Signal Company Reunion	1:30pm	(505) 659-5901
Albuquerque	Clyde Hotel (downtown)	NMNG Hall of Honor Induction dinner/dance	6pm	(505) 469-9563
Angel Fire	Vietnam Veterans Memorial	DVS ceremony	11am	(575) 377-2293
Artesia	510 Main St.	pancake breakfast	8-10am	(575) 703-0841
Artesia	Baish Veterans Park	ceremony	11am	(575) 703-0841
Belen	Veterans Memorial Eagle Park	ceremony	2pm	(505) 966-2730
Carlsbad	408 N. Canyon St.	parade	10am	(575) 361-5848
Carlsbad	Veterans Memorial Park	ceremony	10:45am	(575) 361-5848
Clovis	Main Street	parade	10am	(575) 763-5044
Clovis	VFW Post 3280	parade awards	noon	(575) 763-5044
Corrales	Walmart (@Coors Bypass)	poppies fundraiser	9am-5pm	(505) 350-1641
Deming	Saddle Hawk Ranch	horse carriage rides	11am-3pm	(713) 898 7570
Española	Veterans Memorial Wall	ceremony	10:45am	(505) 903-3666
Las Cruces	Main St./Lohman Ave.	pre-parade crmony	10:30am	(715) 962-3882
Las Cruces	Main St/Lohman Ave.	parade	11am	(715) 962-3882
Portales	Veterans memorial Building	ceremony	10:30am	(575) 760-3341
Rio Rancho	Southern Blvd. & Country Club Rd	parade	10am	(505) 891-5000
Rio Rancho	Veterans Memorial Park	ceremony	11am	(505) 891-5000
Roswell	Wool Bowl	ceremony	9am	(505) 702-4370
Roswell	Wool Bowl	parade	9:30am	(505) 702-4370
Roswell	First United Methodist Church	dinner	5pm	(575) 910-4648

(Continued on next page)

City	Venue	Event	Time	More Info:
Sat. Veterans Day (Nov. 11)(Continued)				
Santa Fe	Veterans Memorial	pre-concert	10:30am	(505) 699-4087
Santa Fe	Veterans Memorial	ceremony	11am	(505) 699-4087
Santa Fe	Museum of Indian Arts & Culture	ceremony	10:30am	(505) 476-1272
Santa Rosa	David Flores Veterans Center	ceremony	11am	(575) 472-0380
TorC	State Veterans Home	parade	10am	(575) 894-4200
TorC	State Veterans Home	ceremony & BBQ	11am	(575) 894-4200



World War II Veteran Receives His Replacement Service Medals

Acting DVS Cabinet Secretary Jamison A. Herrera presented eight replacement WWII service medals to 97-year-old Army veteran Ascension J. Martinez at a presentation ceremony on October 27 in Martinez's hometown of Chimayo.

Martinez had lost track of the medals--one of which was a Bronze Star--and told his family he'd really like to see them again "before I go." (the family says

he's in good health).

Secretary Herrera, who is the deputy adjutant general of the New Mexico National Guard, was emotional when he presented the medals of front of Martinez's family and friends who had gathered at the famed Rancho de Chimayo restaurant for the ceremony.

"They're small tokens. They're trinkets. But they represent so much more...of the sacrifice, of what he chose to do," said the secretary. "His service represents the best of America...the best of New Mexico. I'm proud to be here to be able to do this for him.

Martinez served in the Pacific theater of the war—helping with the liberation of the Philippines, and in Japan immediately after its surrender in September of 1945.

The secretary thanked Martinez for paving the way for future generations of service members—including his own Army service.

"None of us would be here, without standing on the shoulders of giants...like Mr. Martinez," said Secretary Herrera. "This is very near and dear to my heart."

Martinez was then presented with a WWII Veteran baseball cap—something he had mentioned to his family that he always wanted...but never got around to getting one. DVS has produced [a short video](#) highlighting the medal presentation.



DVS Completes 1st Restoration Phase of Historic Cemetery

Phase one of the DVS cleanup of the Albuquerque Historic Fairview Cemetery is now complete, and phase two is now underway.

DVS received funding from Bernalillo County to provide oversight of a cleanup of the veterans' sections and gravesites at the now-closed cemetery, which opened in 1881 and is Albuquerque's oldest cemetery. More than 12,000 are buried at the site—

550 of whom are veterans, including some who served as far back as our nation's Civil War.

In the completed first phase of the cleanup, the first veterans' section was cleared of debris, graded, and leveled. All headstones in this section were removed, cleaned, raised, and realigned to National and State Veterans Cemetery standards. Headstones that were broken were reordered and replaced. The monument to unknown service members was also restored.



Phase two involves cleaning another area of veterans' gravesites and will include the installation of a 30-foot lighted flagpole. Roads in and around the veterans' areas will be graded and redefined.

Under the agreement with Bernalillo County, DVS will oversee the restoration of the veterans' sections. Restoration of the remainder of the cemetery is to be continued by the Fairview Historical Foundation.



The foundation holds a cleanup on the first Saturday of each month (next date: December 2). Volunteers are encouraged to bring rakes, shovels, gloves, hats, sunglasses or protective eyewear, and water...and join in this all-volunteer effort to restore the cemetery. For more information, contact Gail Rubin at (505) 363-7514 or gail@agoodgoodbye.com.

VBOC Presents the 2023 New Mexico Veterans Business Summit

The New Mexico Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC) presented the 2023 New Mexico Veterans Business Summit on October 31–November 1 in Las Cruces at the New Mexico State University Corbett Center.

The VBOC is the veterans' business development division of DVS, tasked with helping entrepreneurially minded veterans, transitioning active-duty service members, and their spouses with creating and expanding a small business.



At the free two-day conference, VBOC Director Johnny Martinez was joined by staff from other federal, state, and local small business advocates to present information about the many services, programs, and grants available in New Mexico to help not only New Mexico's entrepreneurs—but specifically, veterans and spouses...including women and service-connected disabled veterans.

VBOC Director Johnny Martinez (*top photo/center, on stage*) said veterans are well-suited to successfully operating a business once their military service is finished.

“Veterans have a set of skills that are lost among many in today’s society,” said Martinez, who is an Army veteran. “We know how to lead. We know how to listen. We know how to take action. These are all skills needed to succeed in operating your own business.”



Other organizations that presented information were the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), SBDC, APEX Accelerator, SCORE, WESST, Arrowhead Center, and the NM MBDA. State agencies/departments that also presented information were: Economic Development, Workforce Solutions, General Services, Taxation & Revenue, Regulation & Licensing, and the Secretary of State office.

SBA New Mexico District Office Director John Garcia, an Army Vietnam War veteran, said the presenting agencies said veterans have earned these benefits through their military service. He explained why the presenting partner agencies are committed to helping veterans become successful in their post-military lives.

“We’re dream-makers. Our job is to help make veteran entrepreneurs make their dreams come true,” said Garcia. “If we can help a veteran become financially successful, then there’s a better chance that everything else will take care of itself.”

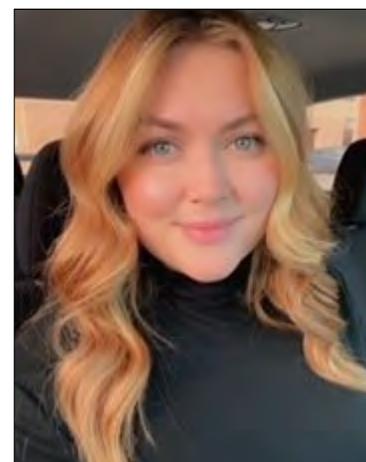
The New Mexico Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)



Johnny Martinez
VBOC Director



Austin Walker
VBOC Business Advisor



Hope Fryer
VBOC Business Ops Specialist

The New Mexico Veteran’s Business Outreach Center (VBOC) assists entrepreneurial-minded veterans, transitioning active service members, National Guard & Reserve members, and their spouses with starting or growing a small business.

It was the first state-supported program created in the nation when the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) began offering grants in 2010 for successful agency applicants to help veteran-owned businesses. The VBOC can help with everything from business planning, start-up and expansion funding, marketing, landing federal contracts, and anything else a small business needs to launch and grow.

In addition to providing free private one-on-one business counseling, the VBOC conducts numerous *Boots to Business* small-business development workshops throughout the year at New Mexico’s military bases for the benefit of transitioning active-duty service members.

The VBOC is based in the DVS Albuquerque office, in the Pinetree Business Center at 4801 Indian School Road—just off Interstate 40 and the San Mateo Boulevard exit. All services are free, but an appointment is required, and can easily be done by contacting anyone on the VBOC team:

- Director Johnny Martinez at johnny.martinez@dvs.nm.gov or (505) 220-9932
- Business Advisor Austin Walker at austin.walker@dvs.nm.gov, or (505) 469-8501
- Business Operations Specialist Hope Fryer at hope.fryer@dvs.nm.gov or (505) 250-9967



DVS Re-Opens its Downtown ABQ Field Office

DVS has re-opened its downtown Albuquerque office, located on the third floor of the Dennis Chavez Federal Building, at 500 Gold Avenue SW between 5th and 6th streets.

DVS veterans’ service officers will be there Mondays and Wednesdays from 9a.m. – 4p.m. to help veterans or their eligible dependents with filing VA claims, applying for state veterans’ benefits, or assisting with anything else a veteran needs help with. No appointment is necessary. Veterans or dependents will be assisted on a first-come, first-served basis.

The reopening of the office is the 17th DVS field office in the state—the highest number of offices in the history of the agency. For more information: dvs.info@dvs.nm.gov or (505) 383-2400.

Please bring your driver’s license or ID card, proof of residency, a copy of your DD-214 separation papers, and any letters or supporting documents from VA to facilitate an immediate claims filing.

Temporary Job Vacancy in the DVS Albuquerque Office

DVS is looking to fill a temporary job opening for an Eligibility Interviewer/Veterans’ Service Officer Assistant position in its Albuquerque office.

This is a full-time (five-days-a-week) temporary-term position that ends on June 30, 2024. The main responsibility for this VSO assistant is assisting the VSOs with helping veterans file VA claims and apply for state veterans’ benefits.



For more information about pre-requisite experience, additional responsibilities, salary, and benefits...and to apply, [click on this link](#) on the NM State Personnel Office website...and enter **10116014** in the “search jobs” line.

Applicants must go through this online state employee hiring procedure—and not through DVS. This job posting closes at 5pm on November 10.

DVS VSO Outreach Stops in November

DVS veterans' service officers are scheduled to make veterans benefits outreach stops in November 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. Please bring a copy of your DD-214, which is necessary for filing all veterans' benefits claims.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>address</u>	<u>time</u>
Nov. 8	Deming Food Bank	4045 Overhill Drive NW	10am-2pm
Nov. 15	Fort Bayard Medical Center	41 Ft. Bayard Road	1030am-noon
Nov. 16	Artesia/United Veterans Hall	402 W. Hermosa	9am-3:30pm
Nov. 22	Deming Senior Center	800 South Granite St.	10am-12:30pm
Dec. 7	Capitan Public Library	101 East 2nd St.	9:30am-3:30pm

Of course, veterans or their eligible dependents can always make an appointment throughout the year with any VSO listed on the back two pages of this newsletter for in-office or phone help.



On October 16, DVS Women Veterans Program Manager Theresa Figueroa (*left photo*) was joined by DVS Las Cruces-based Veterans' Service Officer Vince Telles (*right photo/seated at left*) and DVS Silver City-based VSO Clarissa Sierra (*right photo/standing at right*) at a veterans health and welfare outreach event at American Legion Post 10 in Las Cruces. The trio was among several local service agencies offering assistance for veterans with filing VA claims (what the DVS staffers were providing), employment assistance, healthcare and behavioral health screening, and many more services.



On October 21 in Clovis, Figueroa was joined by DVS Clovis-based VSOs Matt Barela (*right photo/on the computer*) and Ben Padilla (*in green plaid shirt*) to provide benefits filing assistance at the 2nd annual Veterans Benefits & Health Fair hosted by American Legion Post 25.

DVS will be here to help file VA claims/apply for state veterans' benefits

Santa Fe's Veterans, First Responders and Homeless Stand Down

Help Is Available To Those In Need

★ **Hosted at the FOP Lodge # 3** ★

**Please join us on
November 16th and 17th
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM**

**November 16: Law Enforcement, Fire Fighters, First Responders
Retired Veterans, Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve**

November 17: Veterans & Homeless In Need

**Services Available: Food, Clothing, Consultations, Veterans
Service Officers, Santa Fe VET Center, Medical, Dental,
City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County Services & More**

**Location: FOP Lodge #3
3300 Calle Maria Luisa (Off Airport Road)
Santa Fe, NM 87507**

**Attention Organizations - Tables are available - Offer Your Services
Contact for more Information
Kenny (505) 469-6270 | Phill (505) 988-6562**

**American Legion - Post 12 - Non-Profit 501 (c) (19), - Veterans Service Organization
Donations can be made out and mailed to:**

**American Legion - Lucero Y. Nava - Post 12
1000 Cordova Pl #906 Santa Fe, NM 87505
Attention: Stand Down**





DVS Takes Part in Veterans' Town Hall Meeting in Albuquerque

DVS Acting Cabinet Secretary Jamison Herrera (*left/photo/2nd from right*) was a panelist at a Military & Veterans' Town Hall Meeting hosted by State Rep. Meredith Dixon on October 16 in Albuquerque at the Manzano Mesa Multigenerational Center.

Secretary Herrera was joined by retired USAF Brig. Gen. Hanson Scott, Sherman McCorkle, and Paul

Cassidy, who are board members of the Kirtland AFB Partnership Committee; and Brock Wolff, CEO of the New Mexico Veterans Integration Center.

Rep. Dixon invited the panelists to talk about their organizations and their goals, and answer questions from the audience. Secretary Herrera emphasized the need for veterans to file for all benefits they're entitled to--and to keep up and update them as you get older.

"Please, take to heart. You've earned these benefits. For all you Vietnam and Korean War who think, 'If I get them, then someone else wont.' No--there's plenty for everybody," said the secretary. "Don't cheat your family out of the benefits they helped you earn. They deserve these, too."



He also strongly urged veterans to contact DVS veterans' service officers to when filing for these benefits—which he said, from personal experience, can be a cumbersome experience.

"It's tough—especially if you go it alone. It can be frustrating to get a denial letter when you felt that you gave everything that you possibly could have given," said the secretary. "We have people that are trained to get the highest possible rating that you're eligible for. This is our mission, so please give us a call. We will help you."

DVS State Benefits Division Director Edward Mendez (*above photo/at right*) also attended the town hall meeting and answered questions about state veterans' benefits.

Headline Headline



The Bernalillo County Commission has approved a recommendation by the county Arts Board to relocate a piece of art honoring local Vietnam War hero Richard Rocco to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire.

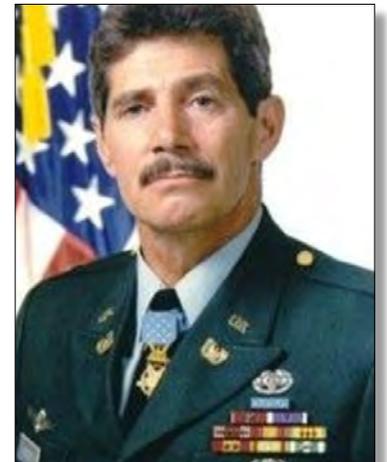
The memorial bust was dedicated in 2008 at the city's West Side Community Center to honor U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer Richard Rocco. The South Valley native was awarded the Medal of Honor--our nation's highest combat award--for saving the lives of three fellow soldiers who were with him on a helicopter that was shot down in 1970 during the Vietnam War. He had volunteered for this mission to evacuate South Vietnamese soldiers wounded in a heavy combat zone.

Despite suffering a broken wrist, hip, severe burns, and suffering from excruciating pain, Rocco made three separate trips, under heavy fire, to safely evacuate the three unconscious medical team members. He then passed out himself and was airlifted to safety and treatment.

On December 12, 1974, President Gerald Ford formally presented Rocco with the Medal of Honor during a ceremony at the White House. The co-pilot of the shot-down helicopter, Lt. Lee Caubareaux, had vigorously lobbied for Rocco to receive the award.

After leaving the military in 1978, Rocco returned to Albuquerque and became an advocate for veterans and their families. He served as commissioner of the New Mexico Veterans Commission, which was the precursor to DVS. Rocco was also instrumental in founding the New Mexico Chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America, the state veterans home in Truth or Consequences, and helping create peer counseling programs for fellow Vietnam War veterans.

Rocco returned to active duty in 1991 during the Gulf War and was stationed at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, where he trained medical personnel. He and his wife Maria then lived in Mexico and San Antonio, TX, before he passed away in 2002 from cancer.



CW2 Richard Rocco
Vietnam War MoH recipient

“Chief Warrant Officer Rocco exhibited tremendous courage and bravery in battle, and a tremendous desire after his service to help his fellow Vietnam veterans,” said DVS Acting Cabinet Secretary Jamison A. Herrera. “DVS is extremely privileged to be the new home for this artwork that honors one of New Mexico’s truly great heroes.”

DVS, which manages the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, is planning a dedication ceremony and will announce details once they have been finalized.



New Mexico National Guard

Hall of Honor

Class of 2023 Induction Ceremony

November 11

Social hour begins at 5:00 p.m. Induction ceremony begins at 6:00 p.m.
Dance to follow ceremony.

Tickets:

(Spouses pay according to their partner's rank)

O4+/E8+/CW4+ and civilians:
\$75 per plate

O2-O3/E6-E7/CW2-CW3:
\$50 per plate

All other military personnel and youth:
\$25 per plate

Open seating. Tables of 10 are available for military units at \$750 or other groups at \$1,000



RSVP Online @ nmnghoh.org

The Clyde Hotel, ABQ
Discounted room rates available on first come first served basis:



nmnghoh@gmail.com

Formal Attire

(ASUs with Bow Tie, Dress/Semi-Formal Blues, and Mess Dress)

Recap of the 2023 Honor Flight of Southern New Mexico/El Paso

Mission 16 of the Honor Flight of Southern New Mexico and El Paso, TX, returned to the El Paso International Airport on September 30.

The flight of 34 veterans—three from the Korean War, and 31 Vietnam War veterans--departed on September 28 for the annual whirlwind two-day visit to Washington, D.C. for the veterans and their chaperones to visit the national war memorials honoring their war eras.



ABOVE PHOTO: U.S. Army and Vietnam War Veteran Les Elliott of La Mesa, NM, finds a name of a fallen comrade on the Vietnam Veterans National Wall.

LEFT PHOTO: Elliott pauses for a moment with Les Prickett (*in red shirt*), chairman of the board of directors of the Honor Flight of Southern NM/El Paso.



U.S. Navy and Vietnam War veteran Santiago Ojeda of El Paso finds the name of a friend on the Wall. Standing by is his trip chaperone, Irma Olivares of Las Cruces.



U.S. Navy "Seabee" and Vietnam War veteran Ward McCain of Ruidoso found the name of a friend on the Wall.

As part of the visit to the Vietnam Memorial, a “Welcome Home” ceremony is held on a hill overlooking the memorial—to provide the welcome that many Vietnam Veterans did not get upon returning home from their service during the war.

“The visit was a cathartic experience for them,” said Honor Flight Team Leader Elaine Pickett. “I heard them say things like ‘This trip did for me in three days what 5 years of counseling couldn’t do’... ‘I feel like I’m part of the American society again’...and ‘It took over 50 years for some one to give me a hug and tell me welcome home.



Les Elliot gets a welcome home hug from his chaperone, Jovani Mirabal of Las Cruces.

The group also visited the Arlington National Cemetery in nearby Alexandria, VA. Honor flights are free, and are courtesy of the national Honor Flight program. A similar honor flight for northern New Mexico veterans made the journey earlier this spring.

The annual flight also provides closure, healing--and the welcome home that many Vietnam War veterans never got when they returned from their service in the 1960s and 70s.



During a visit to the Korean War Veterans Memorial, a group of tourists from South Korea—including a couple of South Korean veterans of that war--were elated to find an American Korean War veteran—U.S. Marine Martín Luna of El Paso. The group begged Pickett to take a picture of them with Luna.

“I was overwhelmed with emotion when I saw the Korean tourists rush with excitement towards Mr. Luna,” said Pickett. “They gathered around him in admiration and treated him the way a great American hero should be treated. It is astounding to me how the Korean people, young and old, freely and openly embrace and recognize the importance of the American veterans.”

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.

Please note:

- 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.

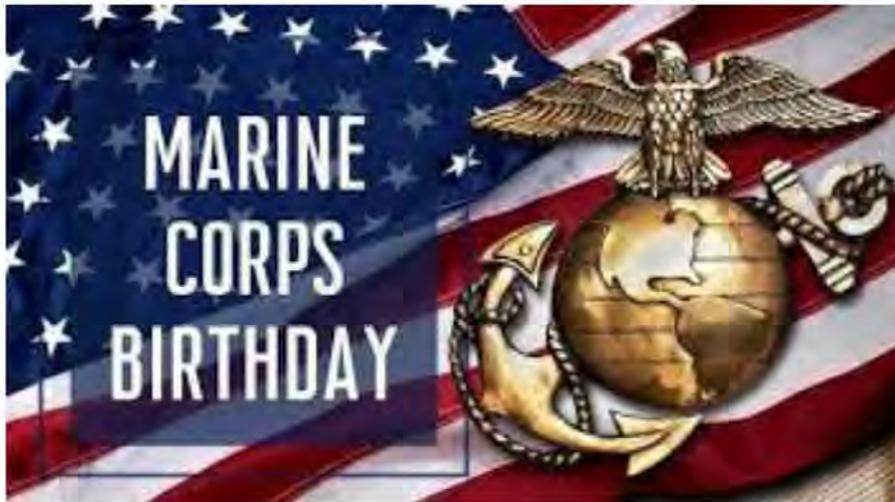


You're Invited!



248th Marine Corps Birthday Ball

Friday, November 10, 2023
Santa Ana Star Casino Hotel, 54 Jemez Canyon Dam Rd
Bernalillo, NM 87004



All Veterans, Family, and Friends are invited
to join us in
Celebrating the 248th Birthday of the
United States Marine Corps

This is a Full Traditional Marine Corps Ball
Including Formal Banquet

For more information and Ticket Prices visit website [HERE](#)

or scan the following QR code:



Click [here](#) for that website for more information and ticket prices



11am to 3pm : Free - No Cost to Veterans
 • Any donation welcome – goes to ESH nonprofit 501c3 to expand program



Where:

Equine Safe Haven at Saddle Hawk Ranch

ESH at Saddle Hawk Ranch
 4930 Franklin Rd SE
 Deming, NM

- All veterans and families are invited
- Giving veterans a day at the ranch to discover the world of horses & experience carriage driving

ESH at Saddle Hawk Ranch is a 501C3 charitable organization providing outreach to the community in life skills, leadership, and fitness with a focus on carriage driving skills for those who can no longer ride or have disabilities that would not allow them to ride otherwise.

For more information: www.equinesafehaven.com

Or contact Cori Ryniker at (713) 898-7570

A Free Webinar for Servicemembers and Veterans

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

Giving back to those who have given so much

As we approach Veterans Day, we'd like to show our appreciation and gratitude to the servicemembers and veterans you serve. We're hosting a free webinar entitled **Solving the Mystery of Credit Reports**. This webinar will provide guidance for current or former members of the military empowering them to use a solid credit standing to move strongly in the direction of their dreams.

Covering a broad range of topics from working on credit scores to detecting identity theft to fixing mistakes on credit reports and more, this presentation will help create a clearer path to greater financial security for veterans, active-duty personnel, and their families.

Join us virtually on Thursday, November 9 at 10:30 AM (PST) / 1:30 PM (EST) for Solving the Mystery of Credit Reports.

A study by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) revealed that veterans were 11% more likely to engage in poor credit habits than the general public. To register:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/225437701662814550>

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/225437701662814550>



HEALING AMERICA'S HEROES
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES
PROUDLY PRESENT:



VETERANS OUTREACH



Hobbs, NM

Join us in supporting our veterans
and first responders at the Healing
America's Heroes outreach event in
Hobbs, NM from Nov 26 - Dec 1st!



This event aims to provide crucial support for
female & male veterans suffering from PTSD
and MST through the incredible power of
recreational equine and piscatorial therapy.



5 DAYS!

NOV 26- DEC 1ST

2.5 DAY EVENTS FOR
MALE & FEMALE VETERANS



Register Online @

HEALINGAMERICASHEROES.ORG/APPLY

FOOD & ACCOMODATIONS PROVIDED





News from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

VA Sets Record for Care/Benefits Delivered

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it delivered more care and more benefits to more Veterans than ever before in its recently completed fiscal year 2023 (Oct. 1, 2022 – Sep. 30, 2023). Some of the key findings released by VA:

Providing more world-class health care to veterans: VA delivered more than 116 million health care appointments to veterans, surpassing the previous all-time record by more than 3 million appointments.

Delivering more earned benefits to veterans and survivors: VA delivered \$163 billion in earned benefits, including \$150 billion in compensation and pension benefits, to 1,535,685 veterans and survivors – **all of which are all-time records**. VA also processed 1,981,854 veteran and survivor claims, surpassing the previous all-time record by 15.9%.

Encouraging more veterans to apply for earned benefits: Thanks to the largest outreach campaign in VA history, veterans submitted 2,433,729 claims applications – an all-time record and 39% more than in 2022. Veterans also submitted 2,299,815 intents-to-file – an all-time record and 62% more than in 2022.

Supporting more veteran caregivers: VA provided services, resources, and assistance to a record 74,270 veteran family caregivers – supporting them while they take care of the veterans they love.

Supporting more veterans in crisis: The Veterans Crisis Line received 1,002,971 million calls, texts, and chat – surpassing the previous all-time record by 15.1%. VA also provided no-cost emergency health care to 33,542 Veterans in acute suicidal crises through a new program launched in January.

Providing more dental care to veterans: VA dental clinics provided 5.5 million procedures to more than 560,000 patients, surpassing the previous all-time record by 4.8%.

Providing more life insurance coverage for veterans: VA provided an all-time record \$1.5 trillion in [life insurance coverage](#) to 5.6 million policyholders. This includes new coverage awarded through [VA life](#), a new program that extended life insurance access to millions of veterans.

(continued on next page)

Screening more veterans for toxic exposures: VA screened an all-time record 4,599,009 veterans for toxic exposures, a critical step to catching and treating potentially life-threatening health conditions as early as possible.

Providing more resting places to our nation’s heroes: A record 5.4 million people — including 4.1 million Veterans — are now buried in VA national cemeteries.

Processing more veteran appeals: The Board of Veterans’ Appeals processed 103,245 Veteran appeals, an all-time record and 8.3% increase over 2022.

Many of these accomplishments for veterans have been made possible by the PACT Act – the largest expansion of VA health care and benefits in generations — which President Biden signed into law in August 2022. For more information on how the PACT Act is helping Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors, visit the [PACT Act dashboard](#).

In fiscal year 2023, VA’s Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration both grew at the fastest rates in 15 years. VHA now has more than 400,000 employees for the first time in history, and VBA now has more than 32,000 employees for the first time in history.



VA Reduces Premium Rates for its Veterans’ Mortgage Life Insurance

VA has reduced premiums for most veterans and service members insured under the [Veterans’ Mortgage Life Insurance program](#).

Through the VMLI program, [eligible](#) veterans and service members with severe disabilities can purchase up to \$200,000 in mortgage life insurance. This coverage means that if a policyholder passes away, the amount of their coverage will be used to pay down their mortgage — helping to ensure that their loved ones won’t be responsible for that cost.

Starting Oct. 1, most VMLI policyholders saw a reduction between 6% and 36% of their premiums, depending on their age. Veterans will see the reduced rates on their next billing cycle, starting in November, as payment of each VMLI premium is for the prior month.

“This coverage will now be more affordable for many of our nation’s heroes, making it easier for them to protect their homes — and their loved ones — even if they pass away,” said VA Under Secretary for Benefits Joshua Jacobs. “This is a great step forward that will mean peace of mind for many of the veterans we serve.”

While a small group of VMLI policyholders will not see a decrease in premiums under the new actuarial table, VA locked in their current premiums so they will not increase.



DVS Field Offices in New Mexico

DVS has field offices throughout the state that are staffed with nationally accredited veterans service officers. DVS VSOs are dedicated to helping veterans with filing VA claims, applying for state veterans benefits, or with helping with anything else a veteran or their family needs with.

Office hours are Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm, (excluding holidays).

Though this service is free, appointments are required and can be made by contacting the VSOs below. **Please note: VSOs can also provide help by phone or email to any veteran or eligible dependent calling or emailing from anywhere in New Mexico.**

Alamogordo/Southeast NM

David Henley

411 10th Street #107

(575) 937-5620

david.henley@dvs.nm.gov

Albuquerque Metro Area

May Chavez (ABQ metro supervisor)

Pinetree Business Park/Bldg. 2

4801 Indian School Rd. NE/2nd flr

(505) 383-2400

helen.chavez@dvs.nm.gov

Albuquerque Metro Area

Ron Saavedra

Pinetree Business Park/Bldg. 2

4801 Indian School Rd. NE/2nd flr

(505) 383-2400

ronald.saavedra@dvs.nm.gov

Albuquerque Metro Area

Daisie Couch

Pinetree Business Park/Bldg. 2

4801 Indian School Rd. NE/2nd flr

(505) 525-3331

daisie.couch@dvs.nm.gov

Albuquerque Metro Area

Temporarily vacant

Downtown Albuquerque

VSO Mon. & Wed. (9am-4pm)

Dennis Chavez Federal Bldg./

500 Gold Ave. SW/3rd floor

(walk-ins/no appointment needed)

(505) 383-2400

Belen/ABQ Metro & Central NM

Rob Miller

Belen Business Center

719 South Main. St.

(505) 537-9339

rob.miller@dvs.nm.gov

Carlsbad/Southeast NM

Dagmar Youngberg

101 N. Halagueno

(505) 537-9339

dagmar.youngberg@dvs.nm.gov

Clovis/Southeast NM

Matt Barela (SE region supervisor)

904 W. Sixth St.

(575) 825-9602

matthew.barela@dvs.nm.gov

Clovis/Southeast NM

Ben Padilla

904 W. Sixth St.

(505) 537-1445

ben.padilla@dvs.nm.gov

Farmington/Northwest NM

Robert Guinn (region supervisor)

San Juan College Vet Center/

Room 1715-B

(505) 327-2861

robert.guinn@dvs.nm.gov

Farmington/Northwest NM

Candice Pioche-Zunie

San Juan College Vet Center

Room 1715-B

(505) 916-4835

candice.pioche@dvs.nm.gov

(more offices are on the next page)



Grants/Northwest NM

April Ball
551 Washington Ave.
(505) 521-8132
april.ball@dvs.nm.gov

Hobbs/Southeast NM

Fred Solis-Littlejohn
2120 North Alto St.
(575) 241-0714
fred.solis-little@dvs.nm.gov

Las Cruces/Southwest NM

Miguel Martinez (*supervisor*)
2024 E. Griggs Ave.
(505) 216-8782
miguel.martinez@dvs.nm.gov

Las Cruces/Southwest NM

Vincent Tellez
2024 E. Griggs Ave.
(505) 216-8782
vincent.tellez@dvs.nm.gov

Las Cruces/Southwest NM

Clint Anderson
2024 E. Griggs Ave.
(505) 216-8782
clint.anderson@dvs.nm.gov

Las Vegas, NM/Northeast NM

Arturo Marlow (*supervisor*)
917 Douglas Ave.
(505) 331-8838
arturo.marlow@dvs.nm.gov

Las Vegas/Northeast NM

Jimmy Saiz
917 Douglas Ave.
(505) 520-5079
jimmy.saiz@dvs.nm.gov

Rio Rancho/Northwest NM

Dustin Newsom
Sandoval County Admin. Bldg.
1500 Idalia Rd./Bldg. D, Room 2041
(505) 221-7190
dustin.newsom@dvs.nm.gov

Roswell/Southeast NM

Danielle Thompson
1600 SE Main Street /Suite A
(575) 416-2284
danielle.thompson@dvs.nm.gov

Santa Fe/Northwest NM

Temporarily vacant

Silver City/Southwest NM

Clarissa Sierra
Western New Mexico University
Juan Chacon Bldg./Rm. 138A
1000 West College Ave.
(575) 313-5627
clarissa.sierra@dvs.nm.gov

Taos/Northwest NM

Leticia “Lety” Cano
Health & Human Service Bldg.
145 Roy Rd.
(505) 709-5263
leticia.cano@dvs.nm.gov

Women Veterans Program Pueblos/Tribal Liaison

Theresa Figueroa
Pinetree Business Park
4801 Indian School Rd. NE/2nd floor
(505) 372-9106
theresa.figueroa@dvs.nm.gov

Beverly Charley
San Juan College Veterans Center
4601 College Blvd./Room 1715-B
(575) 241-3322
beverly.charley@dvs.nm.gov