



NOVEMBER 2026

The Other Side of Thank You



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"Thank you for your service." We hear it at airports, in restaurants, and at public gatherings, especially on Veterans Day. Most people mean it sincerely, but have never stopped to consider why we're thanking someone we haven't even met.

We enjoy freedoms so thoroughly woven into everyday life that we seldom think about them. We speak our minds, choose our beliefs, disagree with our government, and make our own decisions.

Those freedoms are rooted in our nation's founding principles and have been defended across generations by Americans willing to serve.

A servicemember doesn't take an oath to defend a particular president, political party, or popular opinion. The oath is to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.

The veteran we honor may have served in peacetime or war, overseas or here at home. Some experienced combat; others performed essential duties far from the battlefield. Their obligation to the nation was the same.

That obligation often came at a personal cost. Missed birthdays, interrupted educations, postponed careers, frequent moves, and long separations were part of military life for many. Some returned to civilian life facing challenges they hadn't anticipated.

That may be why Veterans Day celebrations matter more than we sometimes realize.

The ceremonies, reunions, patriotic music, and community gatherings bring

generations of veterans together in ways few other occasions can. These celebrations may offer the heartfelt welcome some never received and, perhaps, a measure of closure.

But there's another side to Veterans Day, one that belongs to those of us who benefit from the freedoms veterans have helped defend.

Freedom carries responsibilities of its own. It asks us to understand our rights, exercise them thoughtfully, and recognize that preserving them is not solely the responsibility of those who wear a uniform.

Gratitude, too, can be expressed in more than words. Sometimes it's listening to a veteran's story. Sometimes it's helping someone navigate the challenges of civilian life. And sometimes it's simply recognizing that the person standing beside us at a Veterans Day ceremony has a history we know nothing about.

So, enjoy the celebrations this November 11. Applaud the color guard, share in the fellowship, and take pride in the occasion. But take something home from it, too.

The freedoms we exercise every day is just one of the reasons we have veterans to thank. How we use and preserve those freedoms is a way to honor them.



13th VETERANS EXPO: "MISSION EXPO"



Stand With Those Who Served: Support the Veterans Expo

Dear *ReadBack* Community,

Service creates a bond that lasts long after the uniform comes off. At Mission Veteran, we believe veterans and their families deserve a community that continues to stand beside them with opportunities, meaningful connections, and support.

Join us on March 13, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Fullenwider Auditorium at the Riverside County Fairgrounds in Indio, for our Veterans Expo.

This family-friendly event will connect veterans and their loved ones with organizations providing education, employment services, recreation, support, and care. Attendees can explore resources, connect with fellow veterans, and meet people dedicated to helping them navigate their next chapter. We'll also honor local veterans and share a free lunch as we celebrate service and community.

You can help make this day possible.

We invite our neighbors, local businesses, and community organizations to get involved through donations or volunteering. Your financial support helps Mission Veteran bring veterans and families together and connect them with valuable resources. Your time can help create a welcoming experience—from setting up and greeting attendees to helping families find their way around the event.

Whether you contribute a donation, volunteer a few hours, or invite a veteran who could benefit, your involvement matters.

Ready to help?

- **Donate:** Visit MissionVeteran.org/donations to support Mission Veteran's work.
- **Volunteer:** Email info@missionveteran.org to ask about opportunities to help.
- **Spread the word:** Share this invitation with friends, coworkers, businesses, veterans, and military families.

Together, we can turn gratitude for service into meaningful action—and remind veterans and their families that their community stands with them.

With appreciation,
Edward Robles, MBA
Mission Veteran
info@missionveteran.org

What's the VA up to?



The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is focused on record-breaking claims processing speeds, new executive orders, and benefit updates in 2026:

- **Faster Claims Processing:** The VA has processed over 3 million disability claims in FY2026, cutting the average completion time down to about 75.6 days (compared to 141.5 days in early 2025) and reducing the claims backlog by over 70%.
- **Executive Order on Accelerated Access:** Signed by President Trump in September 2026, this directive orders continuous sharing of military personnel and service treatment records from day one of enlistment, utilizing AI and updated IT contracts to shave an extra 20 to 30 days off processing.
- **Projected 2027 COLA Increase:** Based on July and August inflation data, forecasters project a 3.2% to 3.8% COLA increase for 2027, which would bring a single 100% disability rate up to an estimated \$4,088.25 per month. The official, final rate of 3.6% was released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on October 14, 2026, with the new payouts automatically taking effect on December 1, 2026.
- **VGLI Premium Holiday:** In September 2026, the VA announced a three-month premium holiday for eligible Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) policyholders running from November 2026

through January 2027 (saving an average of \$330 per veteran).

- **Healthcare & Housing Expansion:** The VA reported over 250,000 new healthcare enrollees, opened 41 new facilities, and housed tens of thousands of homeless veterans under ongoing initiatives. You can explore the full catalog of current programs in the 2026 VA Federal Benefits Guide.



WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THE YELLOW PAGES?

Whatever Happened to the Yellow Pages?

Remember the Yellow Pages? That thick telephone book that seemed to have an answer for everything? You might not have known whom to call, but at least you knew where to start if you needed a wigmaker, a marriage counselor, or a snake charmer.

Today, we're expected to find everything on the internet—even instructions for a new toaster. One model has six darkness settings and five settings for different kinds of bread. That's 30 possible combinations just to make toast! There was a time when you simply pushed down a lever, waited for the toast to pop up, and either ate it or scraped off the burnt part.

Apparently, we've made tremendous progress.

Finding toaster instructions is one thing. Finding help for ourselves or someone we love is quite another. Age has a way of creeping up on a body. Tasks, like making toast, once taken for granted can gradually become challenges, and caring for a loved one may bring an entirely new set of responsibilities. Had you visited the recent Community Resource Fair at Rancho Mirage Rehabilitation Center, you might have been surprised by the services available locally—from medical care and household assistance to caregiver support and senior living options.

Staying at Home: A Practical Option

Remaining in familiar surroundings is often the preferred choice as people grow older. Today's home care and healthcare services may make that a realistic option even when everyday activities become difficult. Nonmedical home care includes meals, housekeeping, shopping, transportation, companionship, and personal care. Medical home healthcare is different, providing skilled nursing, wound care, therapy, and other treatments.

For veterans, military retirees, and their families, Medicare, TRICARE, and TRICARE For Life may cover qualifying home healthcare services. VA healthcare may also assist eligible veterans.

When Staying at Home Is No Longer Practical

When remaining at home is no longer possible or appropriate, independent living, assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing facilities offer different levels of support. Choosing among them can be challenging, especially after an illness or hospitalization. Referral organizations help families understand their choices, compare facilities, and arrange visits. Some charge families nothing because the receiving facility pays for the referral.

Help Comes in Many Forms

Organizations represented at the Community Resource Fair illustrated the variety of assistance available in our community.

Alzheimer's Coachella Valley provides entirely free support groups, activities, and resources for people experiencing memory difficulties and their caregivers. Riverside County's In-Home Supportive Services program helps eligible residents obtain assistance to remain at home. Comfort Keepers, All For You Home Health Care, and Care Dimensions of the Desert represent various home assistance and skilled medical services. Of particular interest to military families, 1st Meridian works with TRICARE and offers home care, home health, and senior placement. Senior Living Options of the Desert helps families explore residential care choices.

These organizations are examples of available resources, not endorsements. Services and eligibility requirements vary, but each offers a starting point for learning more.

Knowing Where to Begin

There was something reassuring about the old Yellow Pages. Even when we didn't know the answer, we knew there was probably someone listed who did.

The telephone book may be gone, but fortunately, the people who can help us aren't.



THE COINS COACHELLA VALLEY VETERANS CARRY, AND THE STORIES THAT GO WITH THEM

By The AllCoin Team



Between Fields of Valor on November 7 and the Palm Springs parade on the 11th, most of the veterans in this valley will spend a few minutes being thanked in public. The other half of their record sits at home: the challenge coins from a first unit, a deployment, a commander, a ship, a retirement, or the chapter or post itself. The story behind each one is almost never written down, so when the coin passes to a son or a granddaughter, the meaning stays behind.

AllCoin is a place to write it down. A veteran, or a family member helping, photographs both sides of a coin they already own, adds a few lines about how it was earned and who gave it, and the record lives in a searchable Coin Library their family can find years from now. Uploading and sharing existing coins is free for veterans, and there is nothing to buy.

To take part, go to allcoin.braav.co and create a free account; an email address is all it takes. Once your account is set up, you can also text a photo of a coin, with your account name, to (805) 395-6805 and the AllCoin team will upload it for you. Scan the QR code to claim a digital Welcome Coin, or go to <https://www.allcoin.braav.co/claim/f5345413-32e6-4619-9ec9-517d6c38e5c2>.

Whether the coin came from DAV Chapter 78, VFW Post 3699, American Legion Post 739, or a unit half a world away, the story is worth keeping while the person who remembers it is still here to tell it.



AllCoin



Case File: THE PHANTOM TRIGGER and The Rest of the Story



It was 1942. Things pertaining to WWII were needing to be addressed for assured success for the allies. Budgets were being challenged, troops were getting tired and problems needed to be solved.

The war in the Pacific was growing hot, dark, and dangerous. And Uncle Sam's Navy had a very sensitive... very expensive problem on its hands.

You see, the military brass had spent millions of dollars planting deep-sea mines in the ocean. These were massive, black steel spheres of death, sitting silently beneath the waves, just waiting to rip the belly out of an enemy submarine.

But they weren't hitting submarines. Instead, out in the middle of nowhere... these million-dollar weapons were exploding early. Over... and over again. Detonating into the empty, bubbling froth. The high command was sweating bullets. Was it sabotage? Was it a defect? They had absolutely no idea. Meanwhile, thousands of miles away in California, a young lady was having a crisis of her own.

She was just a girl from Pasadena with

a degree in history, but she was possessed by a burning desire to do her part. So, she marched right down to the local recruitment office. She tried the Army, she tried the Navy. But both branches took one look at her... shook their heads... and turned her away.

Why? Well, let's just say she didn't quite fit the mold. She possessed certain... physical dimensions... that made it impossible for Uncle Sam to fit her into standard-issue regulations. She was just too much woman for the uniform. Six feet... two inches tall.

But she wouldn't take no for an answer. She bypassed the standard ranks and found a home in the OSS—the shadow world of wartime intelligence.

And before long, this tall, elegant creature was reassigned to the "Emergency Sea Rescue" section. They took her out of the secret file rooms... and they told her to solve the mystery of the exploding mines.

So, she rolled up her sleeves. And for months, she spent her days huddled over a laboratory bench... mixing up a storm. She wasn't building a bigger bomb. She



People who regularly attend cultural events have a physiological age that's 3 years younger than those who don't. Scientists studied English adults age 50 and older, looking at how often they went to museums, movies, concerts, or theater performances, then tracked health metrics such as blood pressure, walking speed, and cholesterol. Those who attended a cultural event at least every few months showed health benefits compared with those who didn't. These activities may strengthen social bonds and support mental health, potentially slowing aging.

There are 15.7 million military veterans in the United States. This Veterans Day (November 11), honor their service by volunteering to help vets in your community (Bonus: Acts of service can improve your mental and physical health.) To find a volunteer opportunity, visit dav.org or soldierangels.org.

Master the "Big Eight" Lifestyle Habits

The Million Veteran Program (MVP) identified eight distinct lifestyle factors that directly dictate longevity. Even adopting just a few of these habits significantly lowers mortality risk:

- **Prioritize Physical Activity:** Low physical activity is one of the most critical threats, increasing mortality risk by 30% to 45%. Veterans can leverage the nationwide VA MOVE! Lifestyle Program, which has been shown to reduce the 15-year incidence rate of Type 2 diabetes by 24%.
- **Remain Opioid-Free:** Unmanaged opioid use disorder carries a massive 30% to 45% increased risk of early death.
- **Avoid Smoking:** Smoking increases the overall death risk by 30% to 45%. Quitting at any age yields immediate cardiovascular and respiratory benefits.
- **Manage Chronic Stress:** High stress levels boost early mortality risk by 20%. Interventions like mindfulness or joining veteran support networks help mitigate this.
- **Eat a Plant-Forward Diet:** A poor diet increases death risk by 20%. Transitioning to a minimally processed, plant-forward diet supports metabolic health. For veterans struggling with metabolic issues, pilot partnerships utilizing carbohydrate-restricted therapies have yielded up to a 6.7% Type 2 diabetes remission rate within one year.
- **Prevent Binge Drinking:** Excessive alcohol consumption elevates early death risk by 20%.
- **Optimize Sleep Hygiene:** Consistently poor sleep (less than 7–8 hours or low-quality sleep) raises mortality risk by 20%.
- **Foster Positive Social Relationships:** Loneliness and poor social connections increase mortality risk by 5%. Engaging with community spaces like local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) posts or the American Legion significantly buffers this risk.

FREEBIES...NOVEMBER IS FOR VETERANS (verify all offers)

Restaurants (There may be more, check your fave.)

- Applebee's: Free full-size entrée from a special menu (dine-in) plus a \$5 bounce-back card for a future visit.
- California Pizza Kitchen: Free entrée and non-alcoholic beverage from a special menu, plus a buy-one-get-one-free coupon for a future visit.
- Denny's: Free Build Your Own Grand Slam breakfast from 5:00 a.m. to noon (dine-in).
- Texas Roadhouse: Free lunch entrée voucher distributed from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (redeemable through May 30).
- Buffalo Wild Wings: Free order of 10 boneless wings and fries (dine-in or walk-in).
- Olive Garden: Free entrée from a special restricted menu (dine-in only).
- IHOP: Free Red, White, and Blueberry pancake combo (dine-in).
- Chipotle: Buy-one-get-one (BOGO) free entrée offer during select evening hours.
- Starbucks: Free tall (12 oz) hot or iced brewed coffee.
- Krispy Kreme: Free doughnut and a small hot or iced coffee.

In-N-Out Burger offers a complimentary made-to-order meal and a special-edition decal to all U.S. veterans, active-duty military personnel, reserves, and National Guard members.

Offer Details

- **What is Included:** Any burger, fries, and beverage on the menu for free.
- **Bonus:** A special-edition Veterans Day decal.
- **Date & Time:** November 11, available during regular store hours (typically 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 a.m., depending on the location).
- **Who Qualifies:** Veterans, active-duty military, military retirees, Reserves, and National Guard members.
- **Redemption Requirements:** Present a valid military ID or other proof of service in-store or through the drive-thru.
- **Source Reference:** Confirmed via Military.com and Veteran.com

Services & Retail Discounts in November

- Great Clips: Free haircut on November 11 or a promotional card valid for a free haircut through the end of the year.
- Goodyear Auto Service: Free tire, alignment, brake, fuel system, and fluid checks with a scheduled appointment.
- Target (Target Palm Desert): 10% military discount applied via Target Circle through November 11 for verified veterans, active-duty personnel, and their families.
- Walgreens: 20% off eligible regular-price items for myWalgreens members with military proof from November 8 through November 11.

Online

- The Home Depot: Offers an everyday 10% discount both online and in-store for U.S. veterans and active-duty members verified through the Home Depot app.
- Lowe's: Provides an everyday 10% military discount online and in-store verified via ID.me.
- The Exchange (AAFES / Navy Exchange): Online and in-person shopping privileges are available year-round for eligible veterans.

FREEBIES...NOVEMBER IS FOR VETERANS (continued)

- 4Patriots: Offering a free 72-Hour Survival Food Kit online on November 11 (requires a military ID verification; a shipping fee applies).
- Target: Get 20% off two separate purchases online or in-store via Target Circle through November 11.
- Kohl's: Taking 30% off qualifying purchases in-store and online from November 10 through November 11.
- Walgreens: Enjoy 20% off eligible regular-price items online or in-store from November 8 through November 11 via myWalgreens membership.
- Rack Room Shoes: Taking 20% off your total purchase on November 11, which also extends to military dependents.

Tech, Home, & Apparel Online Specials

- Amazon: Offering dedicated 20% off selection promotions around Veterans Day.
- Under Armour: Boosting their online military discount to 40% off for veterans and military spouses around Veterans Day (up from their standard 20% year-round discount).
- DEVIL-DOG Dungarees: Offering a massive 50% off sitewide online discount from November 2 through November 11.
- Samsung: Offering up to 30% off select electronics and home tech through their online military program.
- Sleep Number: Take 20% off most Sleep Number beds and bases from November 4 through November 17.
- Ashley Furniture: Offering 10% off purchases online and at participating retail showrooms from November 4 to November 11.

As always, these are just a portion of the "freebies" offered to our service men and women and our veterans. Check rental cars, florists, recreational venues, airlines, barbers, etc. Veterans are advised to call ahead to check local vendors for their 2026 specific offers and limitations. Don't forget to thank these folks for being so generous to the veterans of the Coachella Valley.



Case File: THE PHANTOM TRIGGER & THE REST OF THE STORY

was looking for a remedy.

You see, the Navy had finally discovered what was triggering those underwater explosions. It wasn't the enemy. It was... the wildlife.

It turns out that those massive, dark, floating spheres looked an awful lot like giant toys to the most dangerous predators in the sea. Hungry, curious sharks were swimming right up to the mines... bumping them with their cold, wet noses... and kaboom.

So, our six-foot-two researcher went to work. Day and night, she experimented with different ingredients. She whipped up more than a hundred different concoctions... until finally... she struck gold. A highly specific mixture of copper acetate... and black dye. When exposed to water, it emitted a foul, unmistakable stench. To a human, it smelled like nothing at all. But to a shark... it smelled exactly like a rotting, dead carcass of its own kind. And if there is one thing a live shark cannot stand... it is the stench of a dead one. The military pressed this black mixture into little, disk-shaped cakes.

And that is where our tall volunteer solved two massive problems at once. First, the Navy took that exact same chemical cake substance and used it to coat the underwater mines. The sharks took one sniff of the explosives, turned tail, and swam the other way—saving the military's million-dollar defense system.

But she didn't stop there. She had those same protective cakes strapped to the life vests of pilots and sailors. If you were a

downed American boy floating helpless in the Pacific, you just dipped the cake in the water... and the man-eaters wouldn't touch you. She had saved the fleet... and countless American lives... with a recipe.

Later, her secret work took her far from home. To Ceylon. To China. She was sitting at the nerve center of the war, handling top-secret, encrypted spy cables. And it was there, in the sweltering heat of the Asian theater, that she met a handsome diplomat named Paul. They fell in love. They married. And when the global conflict finally ended... Paul was stationed in Paris.

And it was only then... living in France at thirty-seven years old... that this woman who had spent the war "cooking up" a way to repel the monsters of the deep... finally decided to take a cooking class for the dinner table.

She took that exact same tireless, experimental work ethic she used for the spy rings... and applied it to the kitchen.

Because that tall, patriotic girl who taught the United States Navy how to outsmart the sharks...
...was none other...
...than Julia Child.



Veterans Participation Requested

Laura Gutierrez from the Cathedral City Senior Center is hosting its first Veterans Day event and is seeking volunteer veterans who would be interested in visiting the center on a scheduled day in October to record a brief video—approximately two to five minutes—sharing their stories of service, courage, sacrifice, and life experience.

All participating veterans will be asked the same questions and given time to respond. The recordings will be combined and shown during the November 9 event, honoring local veterans and veterans everywhere. The more veterans who participate, the more stories can be shared and celebrated!!

Additional event details will follow for the actual day of the event, again November 9, 2026. Attendance will be by RSVP and limited to the first 60 veterans who register. The tentative planned menu includes pasta, salad, bread, desert, wine and tea. Veterans who participate in the recordings will receive a “Thank You” gift at the day of the event. Veterans who RSVP for dinner but do not participate in the recordings will receive a small token of appreciation for attending and their service.

Although funding is limited, the Senior Center is doing its best to sincerely honor and show appreciation for our veterans. This appears to indicate that it will be a wonderful event.

Please help us spread the word by sharing this information with members of the community. We would greatly appreciate your assistance.

Veterans who are interested should email their name to Laura at Laura@cathedralcenter.org. She will contact participants once the recording dates and times have been finalized.



COLA NEWS

LOCKED AND LOADED AT 3.6%

The 2027 COLA is the largest annual increase for Social Security and SSI recipients in four years. The adjustment factors in federal inflation metrics recorded by the Department of Labor in July, August, and September.

In 2023, a whopping 8.7 percent COLA for Social Security recipients went into effect due to surging inflation amid the COVID-19 pandemic. A year before that, a 5.9 percent COLA was imposed under similar pretexts.

Social Security Administration
Dear Colleague,

Today, we announced that monthly Social Security benefits and Supplemental Security Income payments for 76 million Americans will increase by 3.6 percent in 2027.

Visit our blog for details about the COLA and other important updates. Individuals who create a my Social Security account can access their personal COLA online up to three weeks earlier than by mail if they sign up for digital notices by November 18, 2026.

Please share this information with your members, colleagues, affiliates, and other interested parties. Thank you for your continued partnership.

Sincerely,

Jack Burns
Public Affairs

Social Security Administration



"Hi" Notes

Culture & Stereotypes: As outlined in the PsychArmor 15 Things Veterans Want You to Know, not all service members are "soldiers" (only Army personnel are soldiers), not everyone served in the infantry, and the vast majority of veterans do not have PTSD or dangerous invisible wounds.

"Go
to medical."

In the military, people often hide injuries to stay deployable. In the civilian world, documentation is everything. Get your VA claims and health taken care of early—you earned it.

SOME NOTES FROM NOTABLES

- 
- "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." — Mahatma Gandhi
 - "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." — Winston Churchill
 - "Purpose is not defined by what you achieve for yourself, but by what you leave behind for others." — Unknown
 - "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" — Martin Luther King Jr.
 - "No one has ever become poor by giving." — Anne Frank
 - "The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away." — Pablo Picasso
 - "Service is the rent we pay for the room we occupy on this earth." — Shirley Chisholm
 - "What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal." — Albert Pike
 - "True nobility is not about being better than anyone else; it's about using whatever strengths you have to lift others up." — Unknown

BITS AND PIECES

Travel pay: apply now on your phone
Easily manage travel reimbursements
with the VA: Health and Benefits app

Did you know it's easier than ever to get reimbursed for travel to your VA appointments? With the VA: Health and Benefits mobile app, you can submit mileage-only travel claims directly from your smartphone or mobile device. Find out if you're eligible for travel reimbursement and how to get started.

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/ss20251031-travel-pay-apply-phone>



The Main Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) at Twentynine Palms hands out free, limited-edition commemorative challenge coins for veterans on Veterans Day.



Through a recent listening session and mapping exercise, you told us clearly where the greatest needs are in our Valley. Six priorities rose to the top. SunLine is committed to keeping this conversation going and to working alongside you to explore how we can partner on each of these six priorities. As a CTSA, our role is to bring partners together and build on the services you already provide to the community.

1. Getting to medical care, including specialty and cancer care, trips between communities, and regional service to Loma Linda.
2. Rides for veterans, such as a direct connection from Veterans Village to the VA clinic in Palm Desert.
3. More wheelchair-accessible vehicles and drivers to meet growing demand.
4. Service for rural and unincorporated communities, from North Shore and Sky Valley to Thousand Palms, Indio Hills and Chiriaco Summit.
5. Longer service hours, including evenings, weekends and holidays.
6. Affordable rides and the funding to support them, along with help for providers in finding and writing grants.



"THE PLACE WHERE HONOR LIVES"

For decades, Vietnam combat veteran Wayne Crowder dedicated his life to protecting his country and serving his fellow veterans. After his military service, Wayne saw a desperate need in his local community. Rather than standing by, he took action:

- **Serving Our Veterans At Home (SOVAH):** In 2008, Wayne co-founded SOVAH, a dedicated grassroots nonprofit organization that has helped countless homeless and at-risk veterans get back on their feet.
- **Polk County Battle Buddies:** Recognizing the unseen emotional wounds of war, Wayne launched peer-to-peer counseling networks to ensure returning soldiers never felt abandoned or alone.

A New Battle: Dementia and Isolation

Today, Wayne is fighting a different kind of battle. He is currently navigating dementia in the memory care unit at the Edward C. Allworth Oregon Veterans' Home in Lebanon, Oregon.

While he receives outstanding care, memory loss and the isolation of a clinical environment can be incredibly lonely. His family and fellow advocates have given explicit permission to share his story in hopes of flooding his mailbox with love, gratitude, and recognition.

How You Can Help This Week

We are asking every reader of our newsletter to take 5 minutes to write a letter, card, or note of thanks to Wayne. Let's make sure he knows that the community he spent his life serving has not forgotten him.

Mailing Instructions

Please address your envelopes exactly as formatted below to ensure they reach his memory care floor:

Wayne Crowder

The Oregon Veterans' Home

600 North 5th Street

Lebanon, OR 97355

Attn: Delta 3 (Memory Care)

What to Write:

- **Keep it positive and bright:** Thank him for his service in Vietnam and his incredible work with homeless veterans through SOVAH.
- **Include visuals:** Colorful postcards, cards made by children, or bright patriotic artwork are highly encouraged, as visual stimulation is wonderful for memory care residents.
- **Keep it simple:** You don't need to write a novel—even a simple "Thinking of you and thanking you for a lifetime of service" makes a profound impact. Thank you for helping us honor a man who spent his life honoring others! Please share this campaign page with friends, civic groups, or church circles.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November

1 - Daylight Savings Time ends. Time to Fall back one hour.
3 - Election Day. Fly your flag and get out and vote.
3 to 6 - CalVet Leadership Summit. San Diego. summit@calvet.ca.gov See attached flyer.
3 - Monthly meeting of Chapter 78 of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV). 5PM. Denny's at 42445 Washington, Palm Desert. 360-820-5992.
3 - Monthly meeting of VFW Post 3699. 6:30PM. American Legion Hall, 44200 Sungold, Indio. Lenny at 760-668-5988.
4 - Monthly meeting of American Legion Post 739. 6:30PM. American Legion Hall, 44200 Sungold, Indio. Steve at 760-969-0035.
7 - San Bernardino Veterans Day Parade and Salute to Veterans. Go to the city of San Bernardino webpage to learn more.
7 - 21st Annual Fields of Valor Ceremony. City Hall, Cathedral City. 68700 Avenida Lalo Guerrero. 9AM to 4PM. Morning program at 9AM. Afternoon program 12 to 4PM. Lots to see and do. Free Admission. Volunteers needed to be a part of this tribute to Heroes! Week-long celebration. 760-799-0916. Check ahead to find out final details. See attached flyer.
7 - 30th Anniversary Air Fair. Dedication of America's First Publicly Displayed F/A-18 Super Hornet and Veterans Day Celebration. Palm Springs Air Museum. 1PM. Special Evening Program at 6PM. palmsspringsairmuseum.org or 760-482-1836.
7 - 14th Annual Military Ball. 5PM. The Stable at UC Riverside. Sponsored by the UCR Veterans Resource Center. tamarat@ucr.edu See attached flyer.
10 - U.S. Marine Corps (1775) Birthday. Fly your flag.
10 - McCallum Theatre presents "Veterans Rock". Special Veteran's Day Eve event. 5PM Pre-show Festivities and 7PM Show. Free for veterans with a valid military ID (must get tickets in advance of show ... number of seats limited). Extra tickets \$15. Get your tickets at the box office (M-F Noon to 5PM). Box Office 760-340-2787. McCallum Theatre, Palm Desert. See attached flyer.
11 - Veteran's Day. Lots of great activities/events throughout the area. Go on-line and check for those in your area. Free meals at a variety of local eateries. Fly your flag and get out and celebrate.

11 - Veterans Recognition Ceremony. 9AM. La Quinta City Hall Courtyard. www.laquinta.gov/veterans
11 - Salute to Service. Annual Veterans Day Celebration at the General Patton Memorial Museum. Chiriaco Summit. 10AM with ceremony at 11AM. Free. 760-507-4143 or info@generalpattonmuseum.com See attached flyer.
11 - Pass Area Veterans Day Parade. Downtown City of Beaumont. 10AM with ceremony and luncheon to follow. 951-769-8524. See attached flyer.
11 - 18th Annual Riverside Veterans Parade & Expo. Parade starts at 10AM on Market Street. riversideveteransparade@gmail.com See attached flyer.
11 - 29th Annual Palm Springs Parade and Concert: Honoring all who served. Starting at 3:30PM in Downtown Palm Springs. 760-323-8272 or www.psveteransday.com See attached flyer.
11 - MOAA Veterans Day Dinner, Auction and Dance. Trilogy HOA Clubhouse. 5PM. Terri Heer at heercom@aol.com for additional details.
12 - VillageFest: Letters to all who served. 6PM to 10PM. Downtown Palm Springs. 760-323-8272 or www.psveteransday.com See attached flyer.
13 - Dinner and Patriotic Concert for all who served and their families. Dinner: 5PM and Concert: 6PM. Palm Springs Downtown Park at 230 Museum Way. 760-323-8272 or psveteransday.com See attached flyer.
14 - Annual Riverside Salute to Veterans Parade. Downtown Riverside. Starts at 10AM with plenty of activities to follow (through 2PM). Riversideveteransparade.org See attached flyer.
14 - Mission 91 - The Bombing Raid on Stuttgart, Germany. Ken Tuvman. Palm Springs Air Museum. 1PM. Palmsspringsairmuseum.org or 760-482-1836.
19 - Veterans Services Zoom. Third Thursday of each month. 9AM. Call/connect with veterans services providers and reps of local legislators from Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. All welcome. Connect with Anita Worthen at abird82@aol.com in advance to learn more detail and how to get connected.
19 - MOAA General Membership Meeting/lunch. Palm Desert Resort Country Club, Palm Desert. 11:30AM. Terrie Heer at heercom@aol.com

21 - 14th Annual Props and Hops Craft Beer Festival (requires separate ticket). Palm Springs Air Museum. 1PM to 5PM. Palmsspringsairmuseum.org or 760-482-1836.
25 - Deadline for input to the December VEAP ReadBack
26 - Thanksgiving





Donations Needed!

MILITARY CARE PACKAGES

Some Items Currently Needed:

- Beef Jerky/Protein Bars
- Coffee/Powdered Drink Mix
- Canned meat
- Candy/Chewing Gum
- Trail Mix/Fruit Snacks
- Chapstick/Wet Wipes
- Deodorant (Men/Women)
- Travel-Size Q-Tips
- Shower gel/Shampoo
- Letters of Support

For a full list visit of drop off locations please visit
www.milvet.org/military-care-packages

For a list of special requests visit www.milvet.org/requests



*Looking to make a tax-deductible donation? Scan the QR code to
donate by credit, debit, Paypal or Venmo*



www.milvet.org/military-care-packages

(951) 902-9681



HONORING OUR VETERANS

THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

FREE RIDES ALL
MONTH LONG



ON ROUTES 1-9
& 14

Please show a valid form of Veteran identification or proof of military service when boarding to ride for free.





VOLUNTEER NOW

The USO at the Palm Springs Airport need volunteers at the front desk to check-in guests or canteen to serve simple sandwiches & restock the shelves. The 4 (day) or 3 (evening) hour shifts are from 6 am until 9 pm daily including all holidays. Volunteer for one or two shifts a week and seasonal residents are encouraged to apply. To learn more or apply, please visit <https://volunteers.uso.org>



INLAND EMPIRE WOMEN VETERANS COLLABORATIVE



All Women Veterans and
Those Who Help Women Veterans
are Welcome!

Join the Zoom Meeting
4th Friday of each month
9:00am-10:00am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83676028752?pwd=b2Y3azZoRjU5ZVUvd25zZEJCS0hzZz09>

Meeting ID: 8367602 8752; Password: 844068

Mission: To increase awareness of the unique needs of women veterans

Vision: A caring community that embraces our women veterans and provide access to services

Values: We Community and Collaboration; Advocacy and Awareness; Resiliency and Respect; Empowerment

Save the Date



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

LEADERSHIP SUMMIT★2026

November 3-6, 2026 | San Diego, CA

SAVE THE NEW DATES!



**THE 2026 CALVET LEADERSHIP SUMMIT RETURNS TO
SAN DIEGO!**

*** TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2026 - FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2026**

*** AT THE WESTIN SAN DIEGO GASLAMP QUARTER
WHERE LEADERS FROM ACROSS CALIFORNIA'S VETERAN
COMMUNITY
CONNECT, COLLABORATE, AND MOVE OUR MISSION FORWARD.**

**OFFICIAL INVITATIONS AND REGISTRATION DETAILS COMING
SOON.**

Questions?

For additional information and questions,
please contact the Leadership Summit committee

Email: summit@calvet.ca.gov

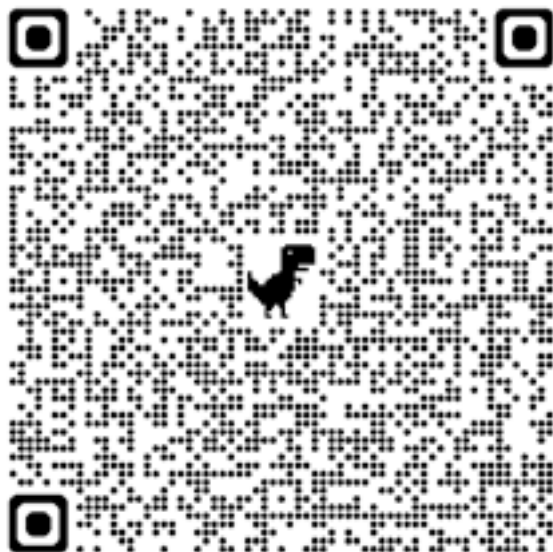
LA QUINTA HIGH SCHOOL INVITES YOU TO

FEED THE HEROES

Annual Veterans & Active-Duty Public Servants Luncheon



*Join La Quinta High School students and staff for a special luncheon
honoring our veterans and active-duty public servants.*





*The UCR
Veterans
Resource
Center
Invites you...*



14th Annual Military Ball



PURCHASE TICKETS BY CLICKING THIS LINK
OR SCAN QR CODE

Saturday, November 7th
Cocktail Hour 5pm
6pm-10pm
The Stable @ UC Riverside

Formal Attire or Military Dress & Ceremony Medals Encouraged

Door Prizes & Free Parking

Tickets: \$30 Guests & \$25 UCR Students



Email tamarat@ucr.edu for questions.

Supported By:



BLEED 0.125"

TRIM 8.5" X 11"

300 DPI PRINT PROOF — GUIDES OUTSIDE ARTWORK



**Cathedral City
Evening Rotary Club**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
BE PART OF THIS MEANINGFUL
TRIBUTE TO OUR HEROES.
CALL 760-799-0916

★ 21ST ANNUAL ★ FIELDS OF VALOR

A LIVING TRIBUTE TO THE HEROES
WHO DEFENDED OUR FREEDOM



HONORING OUR VETERANS ★ CELEBRATING AMERICA'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY



INSTALLING OVER 3,000 FLAGS
A SEA OF GRATITUDE



MORNING & AFTERNOON CEREMONY
HONOR. REMEMBER. NEVER FORGET.



LIVE MILITARY BAND
PATRIOT MUSIC AND LIVE BANDS



21 GUN SALUTE
MILITARY FLYOVER



FAMILY ACTIVITIES
FUN FOR ALL AGES



COMMUNITY INFO BOOTHS
CONNECT. LEARN. SUPPORT.



MILITARY VEHICLES
SEE OUR HEROES UP CLOSE

★ **FREE ADMISSION** • *Fun for the Whole Family*



★ **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2026** ★
9 AM – 4 PM **FREE ADMISSION!**

★ MORNING CEREMONY 9 AM ★ AFTERNOON PROGRAM • 12-4 PM ★



DOWNTOWN CITY HALL

68700 AVENIDA LALO GUERRERO
CATHEDRAL CITY, CA 92234

SPONSORED BY



BURTEC
WASTE INDUSTRIES, INC.



PNC



ONE NATION. ONE COMMUNITY. ONE PURPOSE.
THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SERVE.





Veterans

Dinner Celebration

Monday, 9 November 2026
2:00pm



Delicious
Dinner



Veteran Recognition
Awards



Community
Resources



Voices of Valor
Veterans' Stories

★ **Special Guest** ★

*** Limited to 50 Veterans * RSVP required ***
Please register at the Front Desk 760-321-1548

Veterans Day, Wednesday, November 11, 2026, honors the courage, selflessness, and sacrifice of all U.S. military veterans who have defended this nation's freedom. We honor your service today and every day.



Welbe Health



VETPHOENIX



CATHEDRAL CITY
SENIORCENTER
El Centro de Personas Mayores

McCALLUM THEATRE
PRESENTS
**VETERANS
ROCK**
A VETERANS DAY EVE CELEBRATION
STARRING
CLASSIC ROCK SUPERGROUP
THE HIT MEN
★ PERFORMING MUSIC FROM THEIR LEGACY ★

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
The Who
Steely Dan
Journey
Styx
JON BON JOVI
PAUL MCCARTNEY AND WINGS
Todd Rundgren
ELTON JOHN
GRAND FUNK
Ain't No Sunshine
3 Dog
Cheap
Hall
The Doobie

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2026
5:00PM Pre-Show Festivities | 7:00PM Show

 In partnership with
PALM DESERT



CITY OF BEAUMONT

VETERANS DAY PARADE & CEREMONY

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2022

Downtown Beaumont

PARADE - 10:00 a.m.

Begins at Beaumont Avenue & 12th Street and ends
at the Beaumont Civic Center.

CEREMONY - 11:00 a.m.

Beaumont Civic Center, 550 E. 6th Street



Beaumont Parks and Recreation

(951) 769-8524 | parks@beaumontca.gov
www.BeaumontCa.gov

Presented By:



**PARKS AND
RECREATION**
CITY OF BEAUMONT

CARS, GUITARS -and- HANDLEBARS

A VETERAN'S DAY EVENT

DATE: NOVEMBER 11, 2026
TIME: 12-4 PM

LOCATION: MARCH AIR RESERVE BASE
COMMISSARY,
15150 6th STREET, RIVERSIDE, CA 92518



LIVE MUSIC



PINUP CONTEST



FOOD TRUCKS



BEER TENT



BUSINESS EXPO

CARSGUITARSANDHANDLEBARS.COM



PROCEEDS BENEFIT U.S. VETS INLAND EMPIRE



A patriotic poster for Veterans Day. The background is a dramatic sky with clouds. A large American flag waves across the top left. Two fighter jets fly in the upper right. In the foreground, a modern tank and a vintage military jeep are shown. A banner with a bowl of chili is positioned above the vehicles.

VETERANS DAY

A SALUTE TO SERVICE

PRESENTATION OF

THE GENERAL PATTON MEMORIAL MUSEUM AWARD &
THE FOUNDERS AWARD

PLUS

CHILI COOK-OFF!

NOVEMBER 11, 2026

ALL DAY EVENT • PROGRAM BEGINS AT 11 AM

GENERAL PATTON MEMORIAL MUSEUM
CHIRIACO SUMMIT, CA

FREE EVENT

CONTACT: 760-507-4143 • INFO@GENERALPATTONMUSEUM.COM



PALM SPRINGS

VETERANS DAY CELEBRATIONS

DUTY ★ HONOR ★ COUNTRY

29th Annual Palm Springs Parade & Concert: "Honoring All Who Served"

Wednesday, November 11, 2026 | Starting at 3:30 PM
Downtown Palm Springs

VillageFest: Letters to All Who Served

Thursday, November 12, 2026 | 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM
Downtown Palm Springs

Dinner & Patriotic Concert For All Who Served & Their Families

Friday, November 13, 2026 | Dinner 5:00 PM | Concert 6:00 PM
Downtown Park: 230 Museum Way

INTEGRITY ★ LIBERTY ★ UNITY



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION
760.323.8272 | WWW.PSVETERANSDAY.COM



Seniors & Veterans Community Resource Fair

DATE:

Saturday,
November 14, 2026

TIME:

10AM - 12PM

LOCATION:

Thousand Palms
Community Center
31-189 Robert Rd.
Thousand Palms, CA



FREE PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Free Pancakes & Juice sponsored by Denny's
Beginning at 9AM, while supplies last

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Community Resource Booths
- Veteran Support Services
- Raffle Prizes
- Info for Veterans, Active-Duty & Families

SPECIAL INVITATION

We proudly invite all veterans, active-duty
service members, families, and the
community to attend.

INTERESTED IN BEING A VENDOR?

email: avelasquez@drd.us.com

IN COLLABORATION WITH:



18th Annual

Riverside Veterans Parade & Expo



Saturday, November 14th, 2026

Come Celebrate our Veterans and Active Duty Military!

There will be **Marching Bands, Military Vehicles, Floats, Classic Cars, our local heroes in the Police and Fire Department, JROTC groups, Dancers, Bag Pipers, and more**



Parade starts at 10 a.m., heading down Market St. from Magnolia. Find a great spot along Market Street to view the Parade, then head to the Parade Expo on Main St. and 11th St. The Expo will have music, food, and booths for Veterans services, as well as many great Riverside businesses and organizations.

Join us before the parade for a pancake breakfast served by the Scouts from Cahuilla Lodge 127 in the RCC lower parking lot from 7 to 9 a.m.

To learn more, to register as a unit in the parade, or register for the Expo, or to support the Parade, email us at riversideveteransparade@gmail.com

Visit our website at
riversideveteransparade.org



**US.VETS
LOS ANGELES**

SPACE KINETIC

PEOPLE / SERVICE / SOLUTIONS

**— VETERAN
CAREER
INFORMATIONAL**

EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES WITH
SPACE KINETIC

Join us for a virtual informational session and learn how you can bring your skills, experience and leadership to a mission-driven aerospace company.

*From
Mission Ready
to Career Ready.*



DATE
Monday, November 16th, 2026



TIME
10AM - 11:30AM



LOCATION
Virtual (Online)
Link will be provided upon registration.

**AT THIS INFORMATIONAL,
YOU'LL LEARN:**



About Space Kinetic and their mission



In-demand roles and career pathways



What they look for in candidates



Training and development opportunities



How to apply and next steps



★ **VETERANS ONLY** ★

This is a great opportunity to learn more and take the next step toward a rewarding career with a company making an impact in aerospace and national security.

DStreets@usvets.org or 213/434-2164

**CHECK OUT
THEIR OPEN
JOBS HERE:**



**REGISTER
FOR THE
EVENT:**



VETERANS PROGRAMS



MISSION VETERAN GUITAR PROGRAM

Veterans from all branches of service are invited to learn, engage, and build support systems that help manage service-related challenges. In our first year more than 20 veterans graduated from the program, completing over 100 hours of lessons, jam sessions, and continued education. Participants learn the fundamentals of music theory, rhythm, strumming, patterns, and scales.

Indio - Gymnastics and Performing Arts Center

AGES: 10 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER

FEES: FREE

9/14 - 11/30 M 5 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

VETERANS BREAKFAST

We will celebrate all Veterans in the community by hosting a memorable time in the park. Families can enjoy a variety of activities including face painting, crafts, pancakes with toppings, and flag placement throughout the lawn.

Indio - Indio Hills Community Center

AGES: All Ages

FEES: Free

11/14 Sa 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

VETERANS RUCK WALKS

Come out and participate in our Veterans Buck Walks! Participants will carry weighted backpacks (rucks) over a designated distance, symbolizing the physical and mental challenges faced by service members. Whether you're a veteran, active-duty military, first responder, family member, or friend, all are welcome.

Indio - Rotary Park at North Jackson Park

AGES: All Ages

Fees: Free

11/14 Sa 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Information: MyRecreationDistrict.com



SAVE THE DATE

DECEMBER 4TH FROM 4 TO 6:30 PM

**HELP US GET SOLDIERS HOME FOR THE
HOLIDAYS AND SAVE THEM UP TO \$500 IN
GROUND TRANSPORTATION COSTS. OUR
FALL FUNDRAISER WILL BE HOSTED IN PALM
SPRING. JOIN US FOR FOOD, BEVERAGES
AND TO MEET OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM.**

SUGGESTED \$50 DONATION.

LEARN MORE AT WWW.29-PSP.ORG/EVENTS

Bill Huntington VFW & Auxiliaries
Free **HOLIDAY LUNCHEON**
for
Active Duty Troops & Veterans
...and Families!
Saturday, Dec. 12th
12 Noon to 3 PM
Prize Drawings!
Jumper for Kids!
Music by DJ Devil Dog!



VFW Post 3699

American Legion Post 739, 44200 Sun Gold St., Indio 92201

Please bring a \$20 gift card or pkg. of white t-shirts for a hospitalized veteran at the Loma Linda VA

RSVP your attendance by Dec. 1st to: Mary Ryser (760) 289-8320 • vfw3699@live.com

RSVP BY
DEC. 1

