



District 17 Communicator

Volume 4 – Issue 4

OCTOBER 2022

Commander's Corner – Commander Steven Hunter

Department Fall Conference

The Department's Fall Conference later this month (21st-23rd) in Williamsburg is an opportunity to learn more about the Legion at the Department level. If you have never attended a Fall or Spring Conference, this could be a good time to go for the first time. Williamsburg is also an interesting town to visit and explore, particularly if you are interested in history. It may be too late to reserve a room in the convention hotel, but suggest you try. Here are the links to the hotel and the Department's website.

Conference Registration Form: [Registration-Form-Aug-22-as-of-16-Aug-22-1](#)

The hotel booking link is at the bottom of the registration form.

17th District Fall Conference

On the following weekend, the 17th District will hold its Fall Conference at Post 177 (Fairfax) on Sunday the 30th beginning at 1:00 pm preceded by an Executive session at 12:30 pm. The Chief of Staff for Arlington National Cemetery will be a guest speaker. If you have any ideas on future guest speakers for our District Conferences or Conventions let me know. I will also lay out my plan for a District database for Post/District reports, past issues of the Communicator, Post/District By-Laws, and other documents that are not sensitive or personal in nature. Access to this database will be available to all Post Commanders/Adjutants and District Officers.

I encourage all Posts to document their community/Post activities and Veteran outreach

each month and to send our Adjutant/Communicate newsletter editor a paragraph or so, and pictures if appropriate, for future District newsletters.

New Home for Post 139

Post 139 Arlington will be moving into its new home in January of 2023. It will be a fantastic new facility in the heart of Arlington for Legionnaires. The Post entered a partnership with the Arlington County's Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH) to transform their land into a 160-unit apartment building specifically for lower income residents to include 80 units with a veteran preference. This win-win project provides much needed affordable housing in Arlington while at the same time giving the Post a new 6,000-square-foot home to be proud of. Post 139's former building was more than 60+ year old, in extremely poor condition, and cost prohibitive to repair. Thus, after eight years of coordinating, planning, and construction the dream of many is now nearly complete.

Here is the YouTube video posted to the National Legion website of the building's dedication with Commander Romano.

<https://www.legion.org/homelessveterans/256978/new-home-va-post-139-and-new-homes-risk-veterans>

To learn more about APAH and Terwilliger Place, see this website:

<https://apah.org/communities/terwilliger-place/>

Post 139 is planning to hold their new home dedication in January (DTD). After building dedication ceremony Bob Romano took Legionnaires and DAR members on a tour of the Post's new home. There is significant work yet to

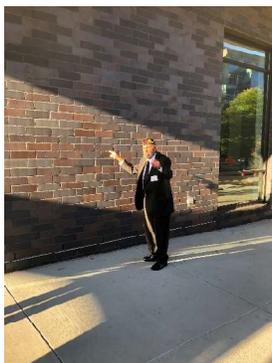
be completed in the next three months, but the outside private courtyard is completed. The Post has 20 dedicated parking spaces underground with a direct and private elevator access.



Terwilliger Place - Post 139 will occupy the ground level space on the southwest corner of the building, behind the U.S. flag.



Commander Romano with a member of the Daughters of American Revolution who donated to benches for the Post's courtyard.



Commander Romano showing where the large American Legion emblem will be mounted on the side of the building.

Adjutant's Corner

We are stuck in 7th place in the Department Membership Race this week.

This week's Post's rating are:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Post 123 – 85.71% | 8. Post 139 - 59.12% |
| 2. Post 24 – 70.74% | 9. Post 85 – 58.70% |
| 3. Post 184 – 65.14% | 10. Post 177 – 58.25% |
| 4. Post 176 – 64.43% | 11. Post 1775 – 56.52% |
| 5. Post 270 - 59.89% | 12. Post 130 – 57.40% |
| 6. Post 1995 – 59.88% | 13. Post 180 – 49.32% |
| 7. Post 162 – 59.45% | 14. Post 44 – 40.38% |

Keep reaching out with calls, writing, messages to our members and remind them how important their renew means to your Post and The American Legion.

Also, keep pushing Paid Up for Life memberships. I've been pushing this hard for the last several years and Post 24 now has 180 PUFLs!

On Sunday, 9 October, we will have our District Adjutant's get together at Fairfax Post 177 at noon. (If you arrive early, they have a great Sunday breakfast beginning at 0930. It is a great meal for only \$10.) This will be a chance for new Adjutants to get an understanding of what their job consists of and how important their position is to their post. I have been the Adjutant at Post 24 for 32 years and there are several other longtime Adjutants in the District who can pass along ideas to the new Adjutants as well.

I sent to all Commanders and Adjutants an Introduction to My Legion that National sent out recently. Please review.

Jim Glassman
District Adjutant/Membership Chairman

Legislation Chairman – Bill Aramony

The American Legion's "Buddy Check" program has been a great tool for our membership, and we were proud to endorse legislation that expands this program to VA. This legislation has since been included in a comprehensive package that includes dozens of bipartisan mental healthcare provisions that The American Legion supports - now we need your help to call on the Senate to pass the bill.

[Join Our Action Campaign: Write Your Senators Now!](#)

The STRONG Veterans Act ([Support The Resiliency of Our Nation's Great Veterans Act](#)) calls on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to designate a "National Buddy Check Week." It is modeled after The American Legion's successful [Buddy Check program](#), which nearly 4,000 local posts a year have used to help veterans in need since 2019. It also includes dozens of provisions that come from standalone pieces of legislation The American Legion supports.

A Buddy Check Week designation is vital because it will be a concentrated effort, with the support of VA, to improve mental health outreach. That, of course, also ties in to the Legion's "[Be the One](#)" campaign to reduce the rate of veteran suicide.

The legislation promises to bring additional improvements to the mental health care of our nation's veterans. Those include:

- Funding research on veteran's mental health and treatment.
- Making the Peer Specialist Support program permanent.
- Increasing full-time staffing at VA Vet Centers and expanding eligibility for treatment.
- Expanding existing scholarship and loan programs for students and mental health providers.

In June, the U.S. House of Representatives approved the measure in a bipartisan voice vote. It now awaits action in the Senate. With only a few months left in the 117th session of Congress, we cannot afford to let this opportunity to improve mental health care for veteran's lapse. You can help prevent this from happening by

urging your Senators to support H.R.6411 - the STRONG Veterans Act. It takes just a few moments by [visiting this link](#).

The American Legion proudly supports this legislation and asks that you call on your Senators to pass H.R. 6411 today!

CHAPLAINS CORNER - Chaplain McComb

Blessings to the Legion Family, veterans, and our military. Sharing a couple of topics with you this month. May the Lord bless you and protect you. May the Lord smile on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord show you his favor and give you peace.

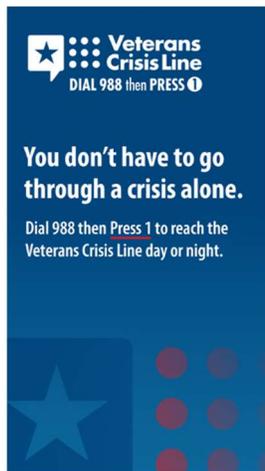
TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS (TAPS)

- TAPS offers immediate and long-term emotional help, hope and healing to all those grieving the loss of a military loved one, regardless of their relationship to the deceased or the circumstances of the death.
- TAPS welcome you to their special family. TAPS pledges to provide compassionate care and a place you can find understanding and hope though connecting with other who have experienced the death of a loved one serving in our nation's Armed Forces.
- Examples of TAPS support programs.
 - Events for Adults—Seminars, Retreats, One-Day Gatherings, Sports and Entertainment Events, and Health & Wellness Opportunities.
 - Good Grief Camps for children and teens.
 - Connections to community-based care. Casework assistance.
 - Emergency financial assistance.
 - National Military Mentor Program supporting young survivors.
- TAPS is available to you 24/7 though their **National Military Survivor Hotline at 800.959.TAPS(8277)**. If you need to speak to someone concerning an urgent matter or just need a listening ear, please contact TAPS at 800.959.8277 or info@taps.org.

3033 Wilson Blvd, Third Floor, Arlington
VA 22201.

VETERANS CRISIS LINE

- No Veteran should go through a crisis alone. Save the new Veterans Crisis Line number—**Dial 988 then Press 1**—in your phone in case you or a Veteran loved one needs support.
- Learn more at VeteransCrisisLine.net. You can still call the original Veterans Crisis Line number—1-800-273-8255 and Press 1—to reach responders.



"There's a new, easy-to-remember way to reach the Veterans Crisis Line—**Dial 988 then Press 1**. Millions of Veterans have called when they needed crisis support. We're here if you need us.

For more information, visit VeteransCrisisLine.net. You can still call the original Veterans Crisis Line number—**1-800-273-8255 and Press 1**—to reach responders."

For God and Country,

Paul McComb
District 17 Chaplain
pmccomb98@gmail.com

What's Going on at your Post
(Thank you to the Posts that submitted their input!!!!)

Alexandria Post 24 – Commander Mixon

SEPTEMBER

American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial Cleaning – On Sat, Sep 3rd, **Bill Aramony, Marcus Lindsey**, and others—along with Legionnaires from other area Posts—cleaned the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial in DC. Thanks to **Bill** for organizing, and everyone who participated!



Patriot Day Weekend Service Project – On Fri, Sep 9th, several members supported a Patriot Day weekend service project cleaning veterans' tombstones at Alexandria National Cemetery. Participants included **Mona Espinosa, Henry Dorton, Elaine Bower, Jerry Krueger, Kevin & Luisa Headtke**, and members from other Veterans Service Organizations. District 17 Chaplain **Paul McComb** and his wife also joined in on this effort. A big thank you to **Mona**, our 3rd Vice Commander, for organizing Post 24's involvement in this important project!



Patriot Day – On Sun, Sep 11th, I joined with Adjutant Jim Glassman to sign and disseminate a Patriot Day proclamation; and it was posted on the Post 24 Facebook page and read aloud at the September general membership meeting. The proclamation concluded with these words: “Post 24 will never forget all those, to include first responders, military personnel, veterans, volunteers, and ordinary citizens, who came together in a common cause on that infamous day and after to selflessly serve the interests of our Nation and fellow countrymen, earning each of them the title of American Patriot.”

Firefighter of the Year Award Ceremony – On Mon, Sep 12th, **Donna Reuss** joined me at the Fort Belvoir Davison Army Airfield’s Fire Station to present the Post 24 Firefighter of the Year award to Firefighter Kyle Dean. At that award ceremony, it was gratifying to meet so many professionals dedicated to public safety. Post 24 takes great pride in honoring and recognizing outstanding public safety officers serving our communities.



Acknowledging National POW/MIA Recognition Day – At our general membership meeting on Wed, Sep 14th, Sergeant-at-Arms **Jim McDermott** conducted a special POW/MIA Remembrance ceremony acknowledging September’s National POW/MIA Recognition Day. I thank **Jim** for the dignity and solemnity he infused into that ceremony.

The American Legion Medal of Merit Award Ceremony – At our general membership meeting on Wed, Sep 14th, I recognized **Donna Reuss**, our 2nd Vice Commander & Chairperson for Homeland Security Support Program, by presenting her The American Legion Medal of Merit for recent lifesaving actions she took for one of her neighbors. Donna continues to be a rock star for Post 24 and her community!



100 Miles for Hope Participation Recognition – After our general membership meeting on Wed, Sep 14th, several Post 24 members who participated in this year’s “100 Miles for Hope” initiative posed for a photo donned with their challenge T-shirts. Participants captured in the photo included **Keith Kettell, Michelle Suberly, Donna Reuss, Mona Espinosa**, and I. Proceeds from this initiative supported The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation.



Half-Way to Saint Patrick's Day Activities – On Sat, Sep 17th, Post 24 celebrated the City's Half-Way to Saint Patrick's Day program. Activities included staffing a Post 24 information table at the Waterfront Park, followed by a party in the Clubroom. As a bonus, the Gadsby's Tavern Museum opened their doors and treated members to walk-through tours of their historic facilities. A big thank you to all who supported and participated in these special activities. And a BIG SHOUT OUT to our 1st Vice Commander & Clubroom Manager **Scott Allen** and his team for planning and organizing that day's successful activities at the Waterfront Park and Clubroom.



OCTOBER

What's coming in October? – On Sat, Oct 1st, in the early morning volunteers from Post 24 will help clean the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial in D.C. Here are some other important dates in October to remember: Mon, Oct 10th is Columbus Day and Yorktown Victory Day; Sat, Oct 15th our Post 24 will celebrate

Octoberfest; Thu, Oct 13th is U.S. Navy's birthday; and Mon, Oct 31st is Halloween. By the way, several Post 24 members will be attending the Department of Virginia Fall Conference in Williamsburg from 21-23 Oct. Hope to see many of you there!

Falls Church Post 130 – Commander Bob Simpson

SUNDAY - 1:00PM TO 9:00PM
 MONDAY - THURSDAY - 2:00PM TO 10:00PM
 FRIDAY & SATURDAY - 2:00PM TO 12:00AM

Annual 1st Friday of the Month 8 ball Tournament starts at 7:00pm house rules.
 Registration Fee \$10:00
 Good luck to all.

On October 8th, join Post 130 for Oktoberfest. Open to the public from 6 pm to 10 pm. Entertainment, food, raffles and 50/50.

Join up on November 12 for our annual Turkey Bowl, 6 pm.

On November 14th, join us for Charity Poker, 6 pm – 9 pm.

The **DMV hours** for October are

October 12th – 14th
 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
 Closed for lunch from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM

October 17th – 20th
 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
 Closed for lunch from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM

Contact us to receive by email the monthly DMV Connect Legion dates.

Location
 Falls Church Post 130
 400 N Oak Street
 Falls Church, VA 22046

Arlington Post 139 – Commander Romano

Post 139 / Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing had their ribbon cutting ceremony for the veteran housing/ affordable housing project

on September 23. The Post 139 estimated opening will be in January 2023. In attendance from District 17 were District Commander Steve Hunter and Legionnaire Glenn Yarborough. Also in attendance was the Secretary of Veterans Affairs the Honorable Denis McDonough.

The new Post 139 will have offices for George Mason Law School and the Department of Virginia Veterans Affairs located in the facility to offer free advice to all veterans.

Lorton Post 162 – Commander Anthony Rizzo

American Legion Post 162 in Lorton conducted a Grand Re-Opening on Saturday, September 17th. Just over 200 people throughout the day came to participate and enjoy the festivities!! We greatly appreciate the support from other local posts!! We also wanted to thank the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 162, the Auxiliary Unit 162, and the Riders Chapter 162 for all the amazing support and hard work in making this event top notch!! And thank you to the Jerry Wade Band for the excellent entertainment!!

We had a great visit from Dan Stark, the Mount Vernon District Superintendent!

If you haven't been here lately, please stop by and say Hi!!



Dan Stark and Commander Rizzo



Springfield Post 176 – Commander Kevin Gaddis

Congratulations to Post 176 First Vice Commander Dennis Madtes for being inducted into ANAVICUS during the 103 American Legion National Convention held this year in Milwaukee. ANAVICUS (Army, Navy, and Air Force Veterans in Canada United States) it is a unit of ANAVETS. ANAVETS is the Canadian veterans' organization founded in 1840 which is Canada's fraternal veterans' organization similar to our American Legion/VFW. The United States charter was presented in 1953 during The American Legion's national convention in St. Louis where the first ANAVICUS meeting was held. There are only approximately 2000

members in ANAVICUS, and all are American Legion past National Commanders and other distinguished Legionnaires. ANAVICUS membership is by invitation only, and new members are inducted twice a year at national convention and the Washington Conference. This prestigious induction is not just a personal honor for Dennis, it is an honor for Post 176 and the 17th District.

Congratulations to Paul Kaepfel as well, who was also recognized at the National Convention in Milwaukee. Paul received First Place Publications Award for American Legion Posts with over 750 members by the American Legion Media Alliance 2022 Annual Contest. Paul received this prestigious award for his efforts with the Post 176 postscripts.

Thursday, September 8, 2022, marked the 10th Anniversary of Post 176 Legion Riders. The Riders have unselfishly supported Post 176 and the 17th District in too many events and causes to mention here. The Riders are comprised of both Legionnaires and SAL members. Moreover, the Post 176 Legion Riders are some of Post 176's most prolific volunteers.

Post 176 held a 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony on Sunday, September 11, 2022. This event was a joint event by Post 176 and the Springfield VFW Post 7327. Moreover, the Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 353 attended, some of whom were recognized for being in the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Virginia Department of Veterans Services Commissioner Daniel Gade, PhD was the keynote speaker. The ceremony was well attended. Seventeenth District Commander Steve Hunter also attended. During this Remembrance Ceremony, three custom-made tables were unveiled and donated to Post 176. Each custom-made table is dedicated to the veterans of the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Vietnam. The tables are now in the Post 176 Social Quarters. Post 176 Legionnaire Pat Peterson ordered and donated the tables to the Post. Pat is also a Vietnam War Veteran. Thank you Pat.

Post 176 Sons of the American Legion Squadron held their 7th Annual Pig Roast on Saturday, September 17, 2022. Over 200 Legionnaires and community members attended. Great job SALs! Post 176 2nd Vice Commander Randy Wheeler is working diligently with five local high schools to solicit candidates for Post 176's oratorical contest. More to come on this.

Wayne M. Kidwell Post 184 – Commander Womak

Post 184 Membership met for its monthly meeting and continued planning efforts for the Town of Herndon's Veterans Day Ceremony. Post 184 is proud to announce the guest speaker for this year's Veterans Day Ceremony – Commissioner Daniel Gade. LTC (Ret) Daniel Gade served more than 25 years in the Army. He was wounded in action twice in Iraq. He earned his PhD from the University of Georgia. Currently, he serves as the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Veteran Services which is the Commonwealth's department that serves the Veterans of Virginia.

Dorie Miller Post 194 – Commander Dwanda Mintz

~~Hello Autumn - A fallen *Leaf* is nothing *More* than a summers wave *Goodbye*~~

All Posts – Legionnaires & Auxiliary - are 'Cordially Invited' to our namesake'

Dorie 'Doris' Miller's Recognition Ceremony @ Terwilliger Place, 3445 Washington Blvd, Arlington, VA 22201. October 12th, 7:00 PM. RSVP by phone 571-508-8282 or email - dmpa194.arlingtonva@gmail.com

A Resolution was drafted & submitted to Joseph A. Simonelli, Jr. - for a proclamation before Arlington County Board to declare October 12th Doris 'Dorie' Miller Day.

Our early fall & late summer activities:

The Post/Auxiliary continues to partner with Hoffman-Boston Elementary School.

We donated \$900 worth of 'Back-To-School' & recreational supplies.

Thank You - Leroy Nance, Della Lockett, & Betty Harderman for delivering the supplies to the school.

The Auxiliary sponsored a fundraising trip on September 14th

It was a wonderful bus trip to see, 'David' the live bible story, at Sight & Sound Theater in Lancaster, PA; everyone had a wonderful time & can't wait for the next trip!

The Post/Auxiliary had an indoor booth at the Arlington County Fair, to engage with county residents/visitors about our post/mission & recruit new members.

The feedback was very positive & we're committed to this annual event – can't wait to 2023 – we're planning to have a 'Fish Fry Booth'!

~~Our new endeavor wouldn't have been possible without our members participation & commitment - Thank You - James Williams (the organizer), Marge Strother (the supervisor), Della Lockett, Shirley Gaines, Roger Caesar, Leslie Gaines, Grady Roach, Betty Harderman, Tamitha Davis-Rama, Kenneth Powell, Ellsworth Miles, Beatrice Vaughn, & Pat Hennighan; special thanks to LaTanya Rowe for updating our Facebook Page with events & developing our QR code & sign to display at the fair~~



Upcoming Events:

Our comrades are looking forward to the Department Fall Conference 2022.

Please Join Us @

The Post/Auxiliary Fall Fundraiser 'CABARET'

American Legion Post 176, 6520 Amherst Ave,
Springfield, VA 22150

Donations - \$30.00

POC for tickets & information:

Della Lockett, 703-573-1854 / Buddy Rowe,
301-459-5456

Ellsworth Miles, 703-820-2805 / Ron White,
703-609-9881

Prayers for our sick/shut-in:

"It is my sad duty to report that 'Comrade Thomas Feazell' has been called from our midst & gone to report to the Commander in Chief'; he was a dutiful & faithful member for over 22 years. Please keep his beloved family & friends in your prayers.

He was laid to rest & the post honored him on September 28th at Quantico National Cemetery.

Our Post is committed to the well-being of our members –

We stay connected with ‘Home Visits’ ‘Buddy Checks’ & ‘Zoom Meetings’

FYI - for Veterans in need of Housing

Terwilliger Place - 3445 Washington Blvd
Arlington, VA 22201.

There are 42 units still available with veteran preference.

~Goodbye *September*, Hello *October* ~

Legion Auxiliary – President Karen Donais

The American Legion Auxiliary is moving full speed ahead as we position our District for a productive year. The Department Fall Conference is October 21st & 22nd, with the District Fall School of Instruction to be held the following week on Sunday, Oct. 30th.

The Department Fall Conference, held in Williamsburg, is the opportunity for the Chairs at the Department level to introduce their programs, while the District Chairs will compliment and assist with implementing those programs at the Fall School of Instruction. The District program will begin at 1:00PM at Post 177 in Fairfax. ALL members are welcome and encouraged to attend both events. EACH unit should have at least one member attend the meetings.

We have an opportunity to help homeless veterans. Please bring sweats to the District meeting to support our Northern Zone Vice-President’s project, “Sweats for Vets.” Or, consider mailing a check to Department or bringing gift cards to our meeting for Winterhaven at the VA Medical Center.

Kudos to Unit 85 for being the first unit to send a monthly report (now having sent two!) Unit 1995 has also sent two reports! Reports can be mailed, emailed, or even just take a photograph of your report and send by text! Your unit needs to send nine monthly reports in order to qualify for the Meritorious Citation!

Thank you to Unit 176 for sharing their photos of their September 11th Remembrance Ceremony. Prior to the service, the unit distributed poppies. This was definitely a special way to honor the sacrifices of others. Please follow their lead and share how your unit is providing service to others. We all will benefit from seeing what your unit accomplishes!

Sons of The American Legion – Tyler Vanice

I would like to encourage all Squadrons to submit write ups for this monthly newsletter. Many squadrons hold programs and fundraisers, and it would be fantastic to promote your hard work!

I know Squadron 176 had held their 7th Annual Pig Roast on September 17th. About 120 people had come for the fundraiser. As the Adjutant for the squadron, thank you for all the support!

This month, the Fall Conference will be held in Williamsburg from October 21-23, 2022. You can get the registration form by visiting the Detachment Website, www.vasons.org, and checking down the page under “What’s New!” Please have a person attend from your squadron to represent and to vote!

As usual, please push membership since a few squadrons have not turned in any membership yet.

SCAM

Be aware and report genetic test and fraudulent billing scams.

The VA Office of Inspector General asks you to report potential scams involving genetic tests not ordered by VA clinicians or medically necessary.

Veterans should report...

- offers of free or low-cost genetic testing from solicitors claiming VA affiliation.
- genetic or other test kits by mail not prescribed by an assigned VA physician.
- requests for personal, medical, and financial information for testing.
- explanation of benefits letters indicating VA was billed for testing not received; and
- offers of incentives or kickbacks for participating in genetic testing or convincing their VA or community providers to authorize it.

Bottom Line: Veterans' genetic testing should result from a finding of need by their physicians.

Click here to view a prior fraud alert on genetic testing scams affecting Medicare and its beneficiaries.

explanation of benefits indicating services were received, when they

For billing questions, contact the Veterans Health Administration Office of Integrated Veteran Care customer service call center at (877) 881-7618.

Submit a complaint.

800-488-8244

VA Is Billed for Care Veterans Did Not Receive.

The VA Office of Inspector General asks you to be aware that VA may be billed for unreceived home healthcare or other veteran services as part of a fraud scheme.

Know the signs...

- The explanations of benefits sent to veterans or bills include services the veteran did not receive,
- by a different or unknown care provider, or
- with the incorrect dates (sometimes the duration extends 24 hours or when the veteran was unavailable or even deceased).

Also, be aware of unsolicited offers to veterans for healthcare services, particularly when promised an incentive (kickback) for acceptance. These are often followed by a bill or