



VETERANS CHRONICLE



FRIDAY, March 15, 2019

SUPPORT AGENCIES HELP CREATE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Navy veteran. Cancer survivor. Sexual trauma survivor. Homeless veteran.

All of these words identify life experiences for Franklin, but they do not define him. What best defines Franklin is fighter and survivor.

Franklin suffered frequent abuse as a child. Abuse continued when he joined the Navy, where he suffered military sexual trauma that led to post-traumatic stress disorder.

His service in Vietnam, like many other men and women, changed Franklin. When he came home, he turned to alcohol and heroin to numb the pain and memories. Over the course of years, Franklin overdosed many times. One overdose put him into a coma for a month. For many years, he was just fighting to stay alive until the next day.

Franklin has a traumatic brain injury and several mental health diagnoses that limit his ability to interact



with large groups of people. He has led a fairly solitary life, save the companionship of his service dog Onyx.

As Franklin battled his private enemies with drugs and alcohol, he also was diagnosed with cancer, which almost took his life. But, Franklin will proudly tell you he won that battle. He is a cancer survivor.

Franklin moved to Spokane because he was fleeing an abusive relationship. He did not know anyone, so he stayed at House of Charity. Catholic Charities referred Franklin to Goodwill’s Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program. He needed housing, medical care, mental health services and financial help. SSVF was able to help Franklin access all the help he needed.

While SSVF helped Franklin look for permanent housing, its staff set him up in transitional housing, and he soon found a permanent place to live. With the help of his SSVF case manager, Franklin’s health stabilized through medical and mental health services with the VA

Medical Center.

Goodwill staff helped Franklin apply to have his service-connected disability pay increased. His application was approved. The increase in income has allowed Franklin to take over the lease on his apartment and become fully independent. With his health and housing stable, Franklin has been able to do more than just survive. He is thriving, and making friends, along with his service dog Onyx.

“Through this journey, I have never given up or lost hope,” Franklin says. He attributes his success to his resiliency, and the help he has received from agencies like Goodwill.

“Does this sound like someone you know?” Contact Goodwill Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Washington or Idaho. Call 509-828-2449 and “Ask for Help.”

ARMY VETERAN GETS HELP FROM VA, NONPROFIT AFTER HARD TIMES

By Jake Smith
VantagePoint Contributor

When his mother died, Craig Mitchell found that crystal meth paired well with his grief.

A sequence of hardships stacked up against Mitchell, 58, nearly a decade ago: a leg injury worsened diabetic symptoms causing him to drop out of college; his mother’s death created a void in his life; he faced eviction notices; and he was convicted of drug possession charges. He hit rock bottom.

Mitchell, an Army veteran who served at Fort Benning from 1978 to 1981, accepted a plea bargain and eventually took jail time until entering rehab and support housing.

He was reintroduced to hope through transitional housing programs offered by VA and by Pioneer Human Services, a Washington State non-profit that provides treatment, supportive housing and employment programs to justice-involved individuals across the state.

“Sometimes it takes people to live for a while to see what’s coming their way. My role ain’t over,” he said.

From November 2016 to May 2018, he lived and healed in The Carlyle, a historic building in Spokane, where Pioneer Human Services support staff are on-site 24/7. The team there recently helped him move into his own home, further developing his self-



sufficiency.

“I was there medically. I wasn’t there mentally,” he said. “That might not be a success story to you all, but it’s a success story to me. Look where I’m at. I had been out on the streets for almost three years.”

He said he’s grateful for the help he was provided, after reflecting on time spent in the streets.

“The streets is eating from hand to mouth. The streets is not having no place to go,” Mitchell said. “The streets is being there and trying to decide what you’re going to do and you can either go the wrong way or you can go the right way. You decide which way you want to go.”

Mitchell made his decision. He sought help where it was offered. He said in moving to The Carlyle, a group of caring individuals took him in and provided him a family in an unfamiliar place.

“I just want to thank the ladies because when I came in there I was more vulnerable than I had ever been in my life. I couldn’t take care of myself,” Mitchell said. “They looked out for me in a lot of ways.”

Diabetic pains wracked his leg, so the caretakers got him an electric wheelchair. His neighbors spurned him with racial epithets, so the caretakers listened when he was angry. He wanted to rebuild his life on his own,

so the caretakers helped him move into an apartment a few weeks ago.

“I had no family here. I don’t know nobody here. It was the ladies that really kept me,” he said. “I learned a lot from them and I respect them. I like them. I’ll never forget them for the rest of my life.”

His next step is to try to reconnect with his daughter after years of not talking. Although he said he paid child support, they became disconnected.

“We stopped talking as she grew up. I left. I couldn’t stay there in Seattle and go through no emotional roller coasters,” he said. “It was, as my mother [once] said, time for me to move on.”

He has hope he may reconnect with his daughter soon though.

“I’ve had a couple people, mainly my brother, check in on things for me, so we’ll see,” Mitchell said. “I’m not there no more, [but] I try to be.”

Originally published on Vantage Point, the official blog of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

HEY, VETERAN FAMILIES DID YOU KNOW

Agent Orange survivor benefits are available for spouses and children?

If your veteran died without a claim or passed away from a disease that was added to the list of Agent Orange-related diseases after their death, you may be eligible for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC), which provides lifetime tax-free income to survivors of veterans who had service-related disabilities or diseases.

National Veterans Legal Services Program estimates that tens of thousands of survivors are unaware that they are eligible for these benefits. Some survivor benefits may be higher depending if a veteran needed caregiver assistance with everyday activities, like bathing and dressing.

Does this sound like someone you know? Share this information with them and have them contact a Veteran Services Office (see “How Can I Get Help? on page 3).

WHAT IS THE AGENT ORANGE REGISTRY HEALTH EXAM?

By Roy Nix
Lead Environmental Registry Clinician
Compensation and Pension Examiner

I’ve worked at the Spokane VA for 18 years. Prior to working at this VA I served approximately 10 years in the U.S. Army as a medic and LPN. I have worked for eight years in the Compensation and Pension department at the VA and have performed both disability medical examinations and environmental registry examinations.

The Agent Orange Registry exam is a great program that we have been actively doing for all Vietnam veterans who request one. The exam takes approximately one hour, plus time for labs and x-rays, done free of charge at our VA facility.

The exam gives me an opportunity to discuss your medical history and complete a physical exam. I review the exam findings and I advise you on any of your medical issues that may be presumptively

related to Agent Orange exposure. I also discuss the process of filing a claim, if a claim for compensation is warranted.

A comprehensive list of presumptive Agent Orange related conditions are published online at www.publichealth.VA.gov. If you are diagnosed with one of these conditions, monthly compensation as well as access to health care can be available.

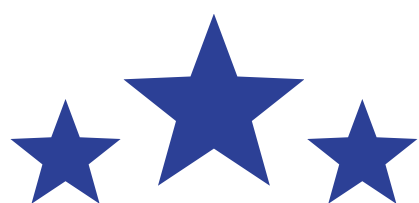
This study will continue to occur routinely through the Compensation and Pension department at the Mann-Grandstaff Veterans Hospital. Please contact Environmental Health Coordinator Stacie Woody at (509) 434-7544 to schedule your Registry exam.



- Surprisingly affordable options for veterans and eligible family members.
- Full-time undergraduate day program
 - Evening undergraduate programs for working veterans
 - More than 20 graduate programs

whitworth.edu/veterans





When you list your home for sale, accept the loan type offered to those who protect the land under it.

We believe in VA loans.



DISABLED VETERAN GETS FUNDING FEE BACK

By Chad Thomas
Prime Lending

My client, Eric W., found a home that he wanted to purchase last September. Unfortunately, the VA had not yet made a final decision regarding his service-related disability rating.

Veterans with a service-connected disability have their funding fees on VA loans waived, but because Eric's case had not been finalized, he would be charged a 2.15 percent funding fee on his loan. It was almost \$5,300 that would be added to the amount he borrowed to purchase his home.

Rather than missing out on the home he loved and waiting for his VA rating, I assured Eric that if the VA subsequently determined that he had a service-related disability,

we could have the funding fee credited back to his loan. He decided to move forward and we closed on his purchase in October 2018.

On Dec. 3, the VA made the final ruling on his status and confirmed his service-related disability. After this documentation is submitted to Eric's loan servicer and to VA, the borrower will receive a \$5,300 credit toward the principal balance of his loan.

Note: A veteran must have applied for a VA disability rating prior to loan closing to be eligible for a refund.



MANAGE YOUR HEALTH WITH MY HEALTHVET



My HealtheVet is the VA's personal health record. It was designed for use by veterans, service members, their dependents and caregivers.

When you register on My HealtheVet, you gain access to tools that can help you track and monitor your health.

As a registered user, you can build your own personal health record that you manage and

control yourself. Veterans can use MyHealtheVet to refill prescriptions, find providers, schedule appointments and more.

If you want help signing up, contact your Veteran Service Officer or one of the groups listed in the "How Can I get Help" section of this publication. Visit www.myhealth.va.gov/ to learn more about the resources available.

LIGHTBENDERS INSTITUTE OF PHOTOGRAPHY ACCEPTING STUDENT APPLICATIONS



LightBenders Institute of Photography is currently accepting student applications for its 2019 season. In its third year of operation, LightBenders is an alternative therapy program that uses photography as a creative approach for veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma and depression.

During the free 8-week program, students are issued professional-level cameras and lenses, and receive both classroom and field training from photography instructors who are veterans themselves. The course is offered at two locations: the Vet Center in Spokane Valley and VAMC Spokane.

The program begins in April. Email LightBenders.va@gmail.com to apply.

WE SELL BEAUTIFUL KITCHEN CABINETS and COUNTERTOPS



ZIGGY'S HAS A GREAT CABINET INSTALLATION TEAM!
LET US QUOTE YOU AN INSTALLED PRICE OF YOUR CABINET JOB!



SPOKANE, WA. (509) 467-4958
SPOKANE VALLEY, WA. (509) 922-1800
HAYDEN, ID. (208) 772-9511
POST FALLS, ID. (208) 777-1955

www.ziggys.com

HEY, VETERANS DID YOU KNOW

You can get a veteran designation on your driver license or ID card?

To update your license, bring your DD Form 214 showing "honorable" or "general under honorable conditions" status to a driver licensing office. In Washington, there is no charge if you are only changing your veteran status. In Idaho, it is free at renewal and \$15 at any other time.

Having this designation on your license will allow you prove your veteran status without a DD 214, which makes it easy to get many of the great discounts available for veterans.



We Thank You For Your Service!

Mention this ad, show us your military ID, and you will receive a **complimentary maintenance package** with the purchase of any new or used vehicle.

2019 Ford Escape SE 4x4

6 Speed Automatic, Keyless Entry, FordPass Connect, Fog Lamps, Auto Headlamps, much more.



1FMCU9GD8KUA26724
Stock # 1800925

WAS \$28,995 | NOW ONLY \$24,999

After \$1246 Wendle discount and \$2250 Factory Rebate. Active Duty, Reservists, Recent Veterans, and Retirees may qualify for an additional \$500 Ford Military Appreciation Rebate.
\$500 Ford Trade In Assist

9000 N. DIVISION ST. @ THE "Y" 509.468.9000 WWW.WENDLE.COM

MANY VETERANS UNAWARE OF AGENT ORANGE BENEFITS

By David Frank AARP

Many Vietnam veterans and their survivors may be missing out on substantial payments they are entitled to receive as a result of exposure to Agent Orange.

Though most veterans are aware of the toxic nature of Agent Orange, an herbicide used to clear foliage in Vietnam, not everyone has learned that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has expanded a list of diseases that make it easier to qualify for benefits.

Until the 1990s, the government recognized only one ailment – a skin condition called chloracne – as being linked to Agent Orange. But over the years, the VA list of medical conditions associated with Agent Orange has grown to more than a dozen, including some that are much more prevalent.

“There are still thousands of vets who don’t realize their disease is on the list,” said Bart Stichman, executive director of the National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP), a nonprofit that helps veterans, survivors and active duty personnel pursue service-related benefits.

The diseases now on the VA’s Agent Orange list include ischemic heart disease; lung and trachea cancers; prostate cancer; multiple myeloma; Hodgkin’s disease; non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma; Parkinson’s Disease; type 2 diabetes; peripheral neuropathy; AL amyloidosis; chronic B-cell leukemia; chloracne; early-onset peripheral neuropathy; porphyria cutanea tarda; and soft tissue sarcomas. (More are under consideration.)

Once a disease is added, it is easier to get disability compensation for it because the VA presumes the disease is a result of exposure to Agent Orange for veterans who served in Vietnam or its inland waterways between 1962 and 1975.

The same applies to veterans who served in or near the Korean demilitarized zone between 1968 and 1971. Also, recent court cases may add the “Blue Water Navy” to the list of qualified veterans.

These veterans don’t need to prove that they were exposed to Agent Orange to qualify for benefits related to ailments on the list.

For veterans who qualify for disability payments and survivors who qualify for death payments, the benefits can mean tens of thousands of dollars in annual income.

When veterans don’t apply for disability benefits based on conditions recently added to the VA’s Agent Orange list, they can miss out on sizable payments.

A Marine Corps veteran with a partial 30 percent disability was recently moved to 100 percent when ischemic heart disease was added to the list and he had heart surgery. His monthly disability income went from \$400 per month to \$3,100 per month.

That extra compensation was life changing.

Remember, no one is going to call you on the phone and ask you if something has changed. You need to take action!

Because disability claims can be complicated, Linda Schwartz of Vietnam Veterans of America says it’s vital for veterans and survivors to use an accredited veteran service officer when filing such claims.

“They can’t do this by themselves,” said Schwartz.

Veterans and survivors can get help from their Regional Veteran Service Office (see page 3).

The VA also offers eligible veterans a free Agent Orange Registry health exam. Contact your regional Veteran Service Office or the VA Medical Center for information and scheduling.

If this sounds like someone you know, show them this article. Help them get hope and help.

Adapted with permission from an article originally published on aarp.org.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



VeteransHelpNet is a volunteer veteran support organization that serves veterans of North Idaho and Eastern Washington. Our mission is to increase awareness of little – known or forgotten benefits and services available to area veterans and their families. One of our projects is to share information about these resources monthly in Veterans Chronicle.

We need volunteers to help us gather and edit these stories, and to help us communicate with the hundreds of veteran service organization across the area. If you would like more information about how you can help or questions about VeteransHelpNet, contact Don Walker at (509) 655-9266 or don@Vethelpnet.com.

VeteransHelpNet partners with The Spokesman-Review to publish Veterans Chronicle on the third Friday of every month to increase awareness about veteran issues and help veterans find hope and help.

If you would like to share a veteran story or a “Did You Know” fact about resources for veterans, please contact info@VeteransHelpNet.com or visit www.VeteransHelpNet.com. For advertising information, please contact (509) 459-5095 or advertising@spokesman.com.

HEY, VETERANS DID YOU KNOW

Afghanistan and Iraq veterans with long-term health problems due to exposure can apply for disability services?

Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq may have been exposed to a range of environmental and chemical hazards that carried potential health risks. Exposures recognized by the VA include but are not limited to:

- Depleted Uranium (damaged kidney function)
- Noise (permanent hearing loss or tinnitus)
- Infectious diseases (including malaria, West Nile virus and others)
- Burn pits (respiratory, cardiovascular and gastrointestinal issues)
- Occupational hazards (skin, nose and eye irritations; respiratory diseases, and poisoning)
- Traumatic brain injuries (anxiety, depression, headaches and memory loss)

Disability services are available for veterans with conditions that include but are not limited to:

- Mental health issues (PTSD, depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and psychosis)
- Gulf War syndrome (Chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia and functional gastrointestinal disorders)
- Orthopedic injuries (neck, spine, back, hips and knees)
- Amputations
- Ischemic heart disease

We hope that an understanding and awareness of these disabilities will lead veterans to seek help and to gain better understanding of what veterans may face in post-service life.

If this sounds like you or someone you know, see “How Can I Get Help?” on page 3 to find resources to get help. Information is always available online at VA.gov or by contacting a Veteran Service Officer.

You can't predict the future, so plan for it.

SPOKANE - NORTH

 Chris Bernardi AAMS® Financial Advisor 111 W. North River Dr., Suite 201 509-279-2574	 Cooper Helm Financial Advisor 201 W North River Dr., Suite 440 509-455-3004	 Josh Clements-Sampson CFP®, AAMS® Financial Advisor 1212 N Washington, Ste 130 509-325-6376	 Curtis Spores Financial Advisor 1212 N Washington, Ste 130 509-325-6376	 Steve Wright Financial Advisor 4407 N Division St. Suite 502, 509-413-2514	 Stacie Duenich AAMS® Financial Advisor 5515 N. Alberta 509-326-5740	 Abbie MacRae Financial Advisor 5515 N. Alberta 509-326-5740	 Tom Hunt AAMS® Financial Advisor 12310 N. ST. RT 395 Suite 103A 509-467-2454	 Tim Zacharias AAMS® Financial Advisor 7407 N. Division St., Suite E 509-468-5290	 Jessica Ekstrom AAMS® Financial Advisor 2603 W. Wellesley Ave 509-328-2115	 Joel Mitchell CFP®, AAMS® Financial Advisor 624 W. Hastings Rd, Suite 13 509-466-0239	 Jon Shroyer AAMS® Financial Advisor 9029 N. Indian Trail 509-468-3737	 Michelle Courson Financial Advisor 9029 N. Indian Trail 509-468-3737	 Kevin Lake AAMS® Financial Advisor 9708 N. Nevada St. Ste 003 509-468-2150
---	--	---	--	---	---	--	--	--	--	---	---	---	--

SPOKANE - VALLEY

 Morgan Hyslop Financial Advisor 15404 E Springfield Ave. Suite L100 509-927-1180	 Dennis Tomlinson Financial Advisor 505 N. Argonne Rd, Suite A104 509-926-5378	 Scott Brockway Financial Advisor 708 N. Argonne Suite 3 509-926-9807	 David Lambo Financial Advisor 12623 E Sprague Ave. Suite 1 509-927-1655	 Scott Murock CFP®, ChFC®, CLU® Financial Advisor 12121 E. Broadway, Bldg 6, Suite 101 509-921-0985	 Casey Getty AAMS® Financial Advisor 112 N. University Suite 100 A 509-922-6047
---	--	---	--	--	--

OUTLYING AREAS

 Sue Poe, CFP® Financial Advisor 126 S. Main St. Colville, WA 509-684-6649	 Ryan Moore Financial Advisor 830 S Main, Suite A Deer Park 509-276-2974	 Tyrone Barbery Financial Advisor 12611 W. Sunset Hwy., Suite A, Airway Heights 509-244-9737	 Justin Ashley CFP®, AAMS® Financial Advisor 321 S. Beech St. Ste I Moses Lake, WA 509-765-2566	 James Shank Financial Advisor 2219 W. Broadway, Suite C Moses Lake, WA 509-765-4464	 Greg Bloom Financial Advisor 1260 SE Bishop Blvd. Suite C Pullman, WA 509-332-1564	 Chris Grover AAMS® Financial Advisor 1835 First St., Cheney, WA 509-235-4920
--	--	--	--	--	---	--

SPOKANE - VALLEY

 Gordon Jones Financial Advisor 11707 E. Sprague Ave., Suite 103 509-927-8033	 Catherine Dixon Financial Advisor 11707 E Sprague Ave., Suite 103 509-917-8033	 Carla E. Brooks AAMS® Financial Advisor 2901 N Argonne Suite 1-B 509-924-0581	 Roger Morgan Financial Advisor 2901 N. Argonne Suite 1-B 509-924-0581	 Joshua Simmons Financial Advisor 16114 E. Indiana Ave. Suite 110 509-926-5723	 Eric Conway Financial Advisor 13221 E 32nd St. Suite 4 509-928-2175
---	---	---	--	--	--

LIBERTY LAKE

 Scott Draper AAMS® Financial Advisor 23403 E. Mission Suite 101, Liberty Lake 509-892-5811	 Scott Hoagburg Financial Advisor 23403 E Mission, Suite 101, Liberty Lake 509-892-5811
--	---

IDAHO

 Jesse Applehans AAMS® Financial Advisor 1875 N Lakewood Dr Ste 202 Coeur D'Alene, ID 208-676-9450	 Carolyn S Hicklin Financial Advisor 212 Rodeo Dr, Ste 810 – Moscow, ID 208-883-4460
---	--

SOUTH HILL

 Casey Clabby Financial Advisor 2020 E. 29th Ave. Suite 105 509-624-6067	 Steve Wilkins Financial Advisor 3022 E. 57th Ave. Suite 15 509-535-4501	 Dave Bingham AAMS® Financial Advisor 5915 S. Regal St., Suite 207 509-241-3164	 Matthew DelRiccio Financial Advisor 2822 S. Grand Blvd 509-838-2408
--	--	--	--

Call, visit or check out our website today.
www.edwardjones.com
Financial Advisors of Eastern Washington & Northern Idaho

Edward Jones®
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING
Member SIPC