**MARCH 2020** 

# VETERANS' CHRONICLE



Veterans Chronicle presents ...

# VAMC RESOURCES FOR HEALTH CARE

Near the end of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln prioritized the health care of military veterans with the authorization of the first-ever national soldiers' and sailors' asylum to provide medical and convalescent care. The first National Home, now VA's oldest hospital, opened near Augusta, Maine, on Nov. 1, 1866. It provided medical care and long-term housing for thousands of Civil War veterans.

Since then, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) – the largest of three administrations that comprise the VA – has grown into one of the largest health care systems in the world. Today, the VA health care system consists of 1,600 health care facilities, including 144 VA Medical Centers and 1,232 outpatient sites of care.

Over 30,000 veterans are served locally by the staff of Spokane's Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center and its clinics throughout the Inland Northwest. In this issue, we are pleased to share information about the resources available to help veterans heal and thrive.

#### **Coming next month**

April's issue will focus on "How and Where Can I Find Help?" This will be a "must-save" edition, as it will highlight the many and varied locations and services available to veterans and their families.

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### Sobriety Support Group for Combat Veterans

Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Spokane Vet Center 13109 E. Mirabeau Prkwy., Spokane Valley

Facilitated by Curley Lawson, LICSW, this weekly sobriety support group works to gradually weaken alcohol, drug, and substance associations, halt the cycle of addiction, and allow time for new associations to form as one experiences life without addictive chemicals. As one continues to make peace with the facts regarding his or her arrested addiction – that is, as one continues to recognize alcohol and drug as nonoption - one comes to prefer a sober life; one longs to preserve it, to respect the arrested addiction and to protect the new sober life. Remember: sobriety is a journey, not a destination. Combat veterans of all eras

and military sexual trauma survivors are eligible to attend upon completion of an intake assessment. Contact Andrea at (509) 893-4752 to make an intake appointment; DD214 required.

#### **Coffee and Comradery**

Wednesday, 8-8:45 a.m.
Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical
Center, 2nd Floor, Room C223
Meet fellow veterans for a free
cup of coffee and get some
information about VA services.
No appointment necessary.
Call Kari Tabino at (509)
434-7657 with questions.

#### Vietnam Era Veterans Celebration

Saturday, March 21, 2-4 p.m. Running W Therapeutic Riding Center, 6147 W. Harvest Ave., Rathdrum

Honor and thank the U.S. military personnel who served from Nov. 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975. Vietnam veterans will be honored at a patriotic ceremony at 2:30 p.m. Hosted by Don and Cyndie Wiltsie, this event is free and open to the public. All ages are invited to enjoy the horses, games and entertainment. Visit www. runningwranch.net for more information. To become an event sponsor, contact Barb Nelson at (208) 931-1661 or idahobarb208@gmail.com.

#### Family & Friends CPR and "Stop the Bleed" Class

March 24, 3:30-5:30 p.m.
Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical
Center, 2nd Floor, Room C223
Learn basic CPR skills, choking
relief for adults and infants,
AED operation, and basic
bleeding control. This is not a
certification course and no
CPR cards will be given. Free
for veterans, their family
members, caregivers, or
friends (children over 12 years
old please).

Space is limited. Call Kari Tabino at (509) 434-7657 to register.











Spokane County Regional Veterans Services is a Regional Strategic Partnership with Spokane County and the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, leading innovation in Rural Veterans Services by providing comprehensive veterans services in the inland northwest in a state of the art veteran-centric facility supported by web based case conferencing and referral services through WA Serves, Unite Us. We are located at 1117 N. Evergreen Rd., Suite 2, Spokane Valley, WA 99216.

We look forward to serving you!

https://www.spokanecounty.org/VeteranServices





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#### **Veterans Chronicle**

A SUPPLEMENT TO THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

#### **Veterans Help Net**

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

To share a veteran story or information about resources for veterans, please contact info@veteranshelpnet.com or visit www.VeteransHelpNet.com.

For advertising information, please contact advertising@spokesman.com or (509) 459-5095.

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## About Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center

Mann-Grandstaff VA
Medical Center in
Spokane, Wash., is
dedicated to providing
quality health care
services to veterans. In
carrying out this
mission, MGVAMC
focuses on providing
primary and secondary
care, with emphasis on
preventive health and
chronic disease
management.

MGVAMC operates 36 hospital beds and 34 rehabilitation-oriented nursing home beds. A mobile clinic outfitted with two exam rooms provides selected primary care services to veterans living in remote areas outside of the metropolitan Spokane area.

MGVAMC is responsible for coordinating access to the full health care benefits package for enrolled veterans. To this end, MGVAMC coordinates referrals to the VA Puget Sound Health Care System and VAMC Portland for tertiary care, as well as utilizing community health care resources. Sharing agreements exist with the 92nd Medical Group at Fairchild Air Force Base, Indian Health Services for Native Americans, and the Idaho and Washington State Departments of Veterans Affairs for the care of state home residents in Lewiston, Idaho, and Spokane.



IANN-GRANDSTAFF VA MEDICAL CENTER

The Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center in northwest Spokane sits on some of the property that was once Baxter General Hospital, built and used during World War II, then torn down and sold off. The VA hospital was built there shortly after WWII. Baxter covered all the land that includes Albi Stadium and parking lot, Dwight Merkel Sports Complex and a small Navy station.

The Spokane VA Medical Center was renamed to Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center in 2013, in honor of two Medal of Honor recipients: Private First Class Joe E. Mann of nearby Reardan, who died during combat in WWII; and Platoon Sgt. Bruce A. Grandstaff of Spokane, who also gave the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the Vietnam War.

Mann-Grandstaff VAMC and its clinics serve more than 30,000 veterans annually throughout Central and Eastern Washington, North Idaho and Northwest Montana. The medical center also provides administrative support to the Veterans Outreach Center in Spokane at 13109 E. Mirabeau Parkway, Spokane Valley. For more information, visit spokane.va.gov or call (509) 434-7000.

## **HOW CAN I GET HELP?**

Every county and state has a Veteran Affairs office to answer questions about benefits and provide assistance. There are also other useful resources for veterans in the Inland Northwest.



#### GO ONLINE

#### VA.gov

The Department of Veterans Affairs website has resources on every topic relevant to veterans.

#### VA.gov/welcome-kit

The VA Welcome Guide covers all types of benefits and services available for veterans, new recruits, active service members and their families.

#### DAV9.com

Based in Post Falls, Disabled American Veterans Chapter 9 Fort Sherman shares links and information to both local and national help organizations for veterans.

#### Explore.VA.gov/benefitsnaviaator

**GI Bill benefits?** 

ask these four questions:

4. Will I have to pay out-of-state tuition?

Explore VA benefits and discover which ones you and your family may be eligible to receive.



#### IN PERSON **Spokane County Regional** Veteran Service

1117 N. Evergreen Rd., Spokane Valley, WA (509) 477-3690

Apply for emergency services, or have any benefits or service questions answered by 5 **Veteran Service Officers** (VSO) and staff.

#### North Idaho Veteran Services and Benefits Office

120 E. Railroad Ave., Post Falls, ID (208) 446-1092

Meet with a VSO or staff for help with VA benefits enrollment, claims or other veteran needs.

#### **Goodwill Support** Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

130 E. Third Ave., Spokane, WA (509) 828-2449 SSVF helps homeless

veterans and their families find housing and connects veterans with other support organizations.

ey Veterans DID-YOU-KNOW?

Before you decide where to go to school or what program is right for you,

For help in finding answers to these questions, contact a Veteran Service Officer ("How Can

Which four questions to ask before using your

1. Does this school or program have dedicated staff for veteran affairs? 2. How much of my tuition and fees will my Post-9/11 GI Bill cover? 3. Does the school or program have a Yellow Ribbon Program?



#### BY PHONE **Spokane County Regional** Veteran Service (509) 477-3690

North Idaho Veteran Services and Benefits Office (208) 446-1092

Veteran Crisis Line 1 (800) 273-8255, press 1

**North Idaho Crisis** (208) 625-4884

#### Washington or Idaho

Dial "2-1-1" for health and human resources referrals.

#### **Healthcare for Homeless Veterans HCHV**

In Person or Phone 504 E. Second Ave.. Spokane, WA Phone: (509) 435-2019 Provides healthcare and outreach for housing, job opportunities and counseling.

#### **WE BELIEVE IN VA FINANCING**



The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers home loans to active military members, reservists, and retirees, as a benefit of service in our nations' Armed Forces.

Many service members are not aware this earned benefit is available to them; many sellers are not aware of the advantages to VA loans in the transaction process.

We encourage all Spokane realtors - to become familiar with this loan type so that we can all join in saying "We believe in VA financing!"

Visit www.spokaneopen.com to view VA qualified homes in your preferred area

**BRIGHTON COURT ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY** 



1 855 232-2777 CEDACASINUCCM : 4 E 3 Worley, Idal hi 25 miles south of Coeur d'Alene

> **Assisted Living Community** 1308 North Vercler Road

Spokane Valley, WA 99216



ly keeping a resident company in

I Get Help?" on above) or contact your potential school or program to see if they have an office dedicated to serving veteran students. An assisted living community

Whe

their

# Hey veterans, did you know ...?

# ... Emergency medical care does not require prior notification?

If you receive your medical care from the VA, veterans who need emergency care should immediately seek care at the nearest medical facility. A medical emergency is an injury, illness or symptom that you believe is life threatening. If you believe your life or health is in danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away. Veterans do not need to check with VA before calling for an ambulance or going to an emergency department. Veterans should promptly notify VA after receiving emergency care. Notification should be made within 72 hours. This allows VA to assist in coordinating necessary care or transfer, and helps to ensure that the administrative and clinical requirements for VA to pay for the care are met. Visit www.va.gov/ **communitycare/** for details.

## ... Urgent care is now a supplemental benefit?

If you receive your medical care from the VA, urgent care is now a supplemental benefit for eligible veterans through the MISSION Act, which expands same-day services in primary care and mental health. Urgent care is for minor injuries and illnesses that require immediate attention, but are not life-threatening. Urgent care should not replace the important relationship that you have with your VA health care team.

When using the urgent care benefit, it is important to visit an urgent care location in your community that is within the newly established VA contracted network. Approved Network Urgent Care locations can be found at



COLIN MULVANY/THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

In honor of last Veterans Day, Jordan Jaquish with the Downtown Spokane Partnership installs an American flag on a light pole on Main Avenue on Nov. 6, 2019. Jordan and his coworker Troy Baumgartener, placed 26 U.S. flags along Main Avenue, and Lincoln and Post Streets in downtown Spokane.

vaurgentcarelocator.triwest.com/Locator/Care.

If the urgent care provider gives you a prescription, you can fill a 14-day supply at the VA or a pharmacy within the VA network. If you fill an urgent care prescription outside of the VA network, you will be required to pay for the prescription and then file a claim for reimbursement at your local VA.

If you have difficulty receiving care at an urgent care network location,

call 866-620-2071.

#### ... The VA has resources to help veterans experiencing homelessness?

The VA is helping communities help end veteran homelessness by providing outreach tools to help at-risk veterans find permanent, affordable housing. If you know a veteran who is unhoused or is at imminent risk of becoming homeless, refer them to Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center (4815 N. Assembly St. Spokane; (509) 434-7000), where homeless coordinators are ready to help. Veterans and their families can also **call 1-877-4AID-VET** to connect with VA services.

## Health Care for Homeless Veterans in effect

New rules allow VA to find more permanent housing options through assistance program

By Robert A. McDonald

FORMER SECRETARY OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

To achieve our goal of ending veteran homelessness, the VA is seizing every opportunity to move homeless veterans into permanent housing as quickly as possible. One of those ways was to change a procedural hurdle that was limiting our ability to provide housing assistance through our contract housing providers.

Under the rules governing VA's Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) program, we could only enroll veterans who were diagnosed with a serious mental illness or substance use disorder into this program, which was designed specifically to provide bridge housing and other vital supportive services to homeless veterans.

It was frustrating to encounter veterans living on the street who were obviously appropriate for HCHV, but not be able put them into housing because they were not diagnosed with a mental illness or substance use disorder.

I'm pleased to say that Congress agreed with us and gave us the authority to make this program available to all veterans who qualify for VA health care.

The new rules allow VA staff to act faster to get more veterans into bridge housing and on their way to a permanent home.

For one veteran in Albany, New York, this newly granted flexibility was a godsend. The 48-year-old was healthy and working, but was evicted from his apartment, because he didn't earn enough to afford his rent.



 ${\bf COLIN~MULVANY}/{\rm THE~SPOKESMAN-REVIEW}$ 

After a ribbon-cutting ceremony, Shannon Dunkin, Health Care for Homeless Veterans coordinator, on right, gives former Spokane Mayor David Condon and Director of Veterans Services Cathrene "Cat" Nichols a tour of the then-new Health Care for Homeless Veterans building on May 14, 2018.

Operating under the new rules, the VA team in Albany was able to secure the veteran bridge housing through HCHV until more affordable housing could be found. Soon enough, a unit became available and after a brief stop in the HCHV program, the veteran moved into a new home and is currently thriving in his career.

Other veterans have benefited since the rule change and we expect to be able to help thousands more veterans in similar situations. In fact, we estimate the rule change to expand HCHV services to roughly 2,300 additional veterans per year, allowing us to provide approximately 18,000 veterans with safe and stable housing under this program.

In addition to expanding HCHV services to more veterans, the new rules amend VA's definition of homelessness so it more closely aligns to the one used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This will make it clear that VA can serve a broader category of veterans who are at risk of homelessness.

Finally, the rules bring VA regulations in line with what we know is a pressing need by stating that VA can provide case management services to Veterans through the HCHV program.

We welcome any tool that helps us get a veteran off the street and into permanent housing, because that's how we're going to end homelessness among veterans — one home at a time.

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

Affairs, at www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage.

#### For help

If you know a veteran who is homeless or is at imminent risk of becoming homeless, refer them to Mann-Grandstaff VAMC, where homeless coordinators are ready to help. Visit www.spokane.va.gov or call (509) 434-7000 to get started. Veterans and their families can also call 1-877-4AID-VET to get connected to VA services.

# VA LAUNCHPAD FOR VETERANS: ONE PLACE, MANY HEALTH APPS

Getting enough sleep, exercise, eating well, managing your appointments and medications are all key to staying healthy. A healthy lifestyle can seem like a lot of work. That's why VA offers My HealtheVet as well as mobile apps like VA Video Connect, MOVE! Coach, and VA Online Scheduling; and now VA Launchpad for Veterans can help you manage it all. With VA Launchpad, you can reach these apps and many more, all in one place.

#### VA Launchpad organizes VA mobile apps into five categories:

MANAGE MY HEALTH: APPS that help you take an active role in your health care.

**COMMUNICATE WITH MY CARE TEAM:** Apps for connecting with your VA care team.

SHARE MY VITAL HEALTH INFORMATION WITH MY CARE TEAM: Apps that track

and share information with your health care team.

**IMPROVE MY MENTAL HEALTH:** Apps that help with specific conditions related to mental health.

**IMPROVE MY LIFE:** Apps to help you lose weight, quit smoking, and more.

Some of the mobile apps available on VA Launchpad do not need you to sign in to access them. But, others such as REVAMP, Annie, and Mobile Kidney, will require a secure sign in.

New VA mobile apps will also automatically appear in VA Launchpad as they become available.

With dozens of VA apps available, it can be tricky to find the one you need. So, VA Launchpad offers you a variety of apps in one convenient spot.

"VA has numerous apps in their mobile app store intended to help veterans take charge of their health. With dozens of VA apps available, however, it can be tricky to find the one that veterans really want or need. To



VA Launchpad, shown on screen, organizes VA mobile apps into five categories.

"By downloading VA Launchpad for Veterans, you can easily open this one app to find VA's entire library of apps that have been developed specifically for veterans. It's all right there, at your fingertips."

#### Kathleen Frisbee, Ph.D.

Executive director of Connected Health, VA Office of Connected Care

make it easier for our veterans to find the perfect app, VA developed the VA Launchpad app," said Kathleen Frisbee, Ph.D., executive director of Connected Health, VA Office of Connected Care. "By downloading VA Launchpad for Veterans, you can easily open this one app to find VA's entire library of apps that have been

developed specifically for veterans. It's all right there, at your fingertips."

Discover the VA mobile apps that can help you by downloading VA Launchpad today. It's available for free on iTunes or Google Play.

If you are interested in taking an active role in your health care, you can also upgrade your My HealtheVet account to Premium. This will allow you to use online features, such as VA Prescription Refill, Secure Messaging, and VA Appointments (sign in required).



Spokane, Wash. / Coeur d'Alene, Idaho Friday, March 20, 2020

#### VETERANS CHRONICLE



The MMU VA Health Care Team, left to right, Bob Sonderman, veteran, MMU Operator; Lena Young, veteran, Social Worker; Jayne Shoda, ARNP; Kaitlyn Liss, MSA; and Mark Sheldon, veteran, RN, stand outside the medical center.

# VA in the Community

#### Mobile Medical Unit

The Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center's Mobile Medical Unit assists veterans with their health care needs, enrollment, and much more when they visit locations in Eastern Washington and North Idaho. Veterans who are interested in learning more about VA health care or want to meet the team, just look for the mobile clinic! The MMU regularly visits Moses Lake and Pullman.

Wash., and Moscow and Osburn, Idaho, as well as Stand Downs and other special events. For more information and a detailed schedule, call (509) 991-1356.

#### **CdA VA Clinic**

This Community Based Outreach Center (CBOC) offers the following services: Primary Care, Blood Draw, Addiction Counseling, Substance Abuse Treatment Program, Combat Related Post

**Traumatic Stress** Counseling, Military Sexual Trauma Counseling, Psychiatry, Social Work, Metabolic Clinic covering diabetes and lipid management, Nutrition for diabetics and lipid management, Depression Counseling, and Patient Orientation every Thursday morning.

**Hours:** 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Location: 915 W. Emma Ave., Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814-2531

Contact: (208) 665-1700



The Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, clinic of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

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#### Introducing Luke, Resident Ambassador.

Luke lives at Brighton Court Assisted Living and Memory Care. He is a friendly and lovable Golden Lab.

You can always find him welcoming our new residents to his community. When he's not around he is probably keeping a resident company in their apartment.

For more information about Brighton Court or to schedule a tour and meet Luke please call 509.926.4533.

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ne happy you're finally home; I've been waiting for you!

PS: I hope you brought me a treat!



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#### **VA PHYSICIAN PROFILE**

# DR. RICHARD 'RICK' PARRY, PHYSIATRIST

By Bret Bowers

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, MANN-GRANDSTAFF VAMC

With his Patch Adams-like smile and enthusiasm for medicine and patient care, it's inspiring to see VA Physiatrist Dr. Richard "Rick" Parry balance the complex demands of patient care for America's military veterans while maintaining a positive outlook on life.

A graduate of Brigham Young University, University of Utah and University of Washington School of Medicine, Dr. Parry discovered his passion early in his career.

"When I first experienced physical medicine and rehabilitation at Harborview Medical Center (Seattle), I found my calling," Dr. Parry explained.

"My first rehab patient was a man who was recovering from burns on 70% of his body, and while he needed careful medical support he was equally empowered by encouragement and support from a large team of experienced multidisciplinary professionals. Being a part of that team changed me, and so much of my work now is helping veterans connect with all the different support they need to heal."

With iPad in hand, Dr. Parry is constantly on-the-go at Spokane's Mann-Grandstaff VAMC campus, while charting, placing orders, communicating, and providing constant assistance.

"It's a tremendous privilege to have veterans trust me with the challenges related to injuries and diseases that affect their function and quality of life. Working at the VAMC in Spokane is exciting ... at its heart, VA is constantly trying to make a great difference for the men and women who served."



COURTESY PHOTOS

With his "helping hands and healing heart," Dr. Parry is often at his patients' bedside or engaged with fellow VA providers and nurses discussing the best care options to present to their patients.

Dr. Parry is often found with the VAMC's award-winning Community Living Center (CLC) team, where he and members of the team are focused on providing outstanding patient care.

"I enjoy helping veterans identify their goals and what is most important to them.
Working with the therapy,

nursing, and psychology teams to help veterans return home with their family, or to end their life with comfort and care is an incredible privilege," said Dr. Parry.

Dr. Parry's dedication to patients and support of co-workers was recognized by VA leadership, including Secretary Robert Wilkie, at a 2018 ceremony in Spokane. He has also been profiled by the Spokane County Medical Society in a cover story for the organization's newsletter magazine.

Dr. Parry and his wife Kristi



Rick Parry with a copy of Spokane County Medical Society's newsletter.

Far left: Dr.

Above: Dr. Parry and his wife, Kristi, dance together at a recent holiday party.

have four children, including two that have special needs. They don't let anything slow them down, often sharing fun pictures of family outings and adventures.

His ability to put others at ease also helps with VA's goal of recruiting the future doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and medical technicians of tomorrow.

"We always need more teachers and teams willing to make room for learners, and more and more services are helping," Dr. Parry said. "With two strong medical schools (WSU School of Medicine and the UW-Gonzaga consortium for medical school students), the demand has never been greater to train new health care workers."

Whether encountering challenges or successes, Dr. Parry exudes friendliness and empathy, leading many to say Dr. Parry is a community asset and treasure.

"To paraphrase the wife of one of the veterans with ALS that I serve," Dr. Parry said, "I may not get everything right, but I want to be the world's best 'try-er."

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#### VETERANS CHRONICLE

# Veteran equine therapy at Blue Moon Mending

#### No skills necessary for connection-based healing practice

Blue Moon Mending is offering an intro to veteran equine-assisted learning and therapy program through a VA

Blue Moon Mending provides services to individual veterans in groups of six to eight people for eight weeks. The sessions will occur on Tuesday afternoons in Colbert, with a new group rotating through every nine to 10 weeks; Thursday sessions are also available in Coeur d'Alene. The groups can consist of individuals, a couple, or a veteran family.

All services utilize the Eagala

model, an equine-assisted model of learning where horses and people interact. It is not a skills-based program; there is no riding or horsemanship. Instead, people are asked to identify problems they wish to work through using the space and horses to help them. It is amazing how horses can teach us to connect to our healing and problem-solving skills within.

Eagala-certified individuals are present to help facilitate the process of understanding. The team interacts with each other and participants to develop understanding of each session

sessions.

Grant funding has specific requirements that includes an assessment of the mental health and daily functionality of each participant prior to sessions and after the completion of the session series. The program is a designated military service under the Eagala organization. Both Helena Rouhe and Cris Pemberton have received individualized training to work with military, both active and

If you are interested, please contact Helena Rouhe at hlrouhe@gmail.com or Cris and patterns and themes across Pemberton at (509) 220-2800.



Blue Moon Mending, in Colbert and Coeur d'Alene, is offering an introduction to veteran equine-assisted learning and therapy programs through a VA grant.



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Scott Hoagburg Financial Advisor 23403 F Mission Suite 101 Liberty Lake 509-892-5811



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