

THE ROGUE REPORT



NCOA®

September 2020

Desk of Our Chairman

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September is National Suicide Prevention Month and with the veteran suicide rate on or near an all-time high, it has never been more important for each of you to reach out to your buddies and do buddy checks to make sure that your buddy will be there tomorrow.

My fellow Non Commissioned Officer Association (NCOA) members, I recently watched an NCOA Zoom call that resonated with me in a personal way. One of the participants was Marine veteran SSGT Tim Jenson, who I served in Iraq at the same time I was there. He is a generation younger than me, but he triggered some factors that I think we often dismiss because they may be too obvious, or because we have become so focused on COVID-19 that we have just forgotten.

A common denominator with the vast majority of men and women who have and are serving in the armed forces is patriotism. World events like 9/11 brought out a huge surge in joining the military because the very fiber of our nation was violently attacked. The heroism and sacrifice of those first responders rushing into the twin towers and the Pentagon knowing that they were putting themselves

in danger to save total strangers no matter what their political, racial, sexual or religious affiliation made us all proud to be Americans. Those actions also resonate with those of us who serve in the military. For a some time, our nation was in shock. Differences no longer mattered. Our entire nation mobilized to send help through agencies like the American Red Cross. Americans of all ages, races, sexes and socio-economic and political backgrounds came together.

Today we find ourselves in another kind of crisis, one that is invisible, but just as deadly as that attack on the twin towers and the Pentagon. As a nation, we have eliminated slavery, elevated women to an equal status with the right to vote and have worked to address and eliminate many other social injustices. This work is not complete as there is still much to do. One point SSGT Jensen mentioned about his tour in Iraq that is one that demonstrates the concepts of freedom and patriotism the best of all was watching the Iraqi people were willing to risk their very lives to have an opportunity to vote. They stood in lines longer than anything you could imagine in this country to vote and have their finger imprinted with the purple ink showing that they had cast a ballot. What makes that impressive is that there were forces trying to stop the voting and they openly attacked and killed Iraqi citizens standing in line and yet the Iraqi's were not going to give up their opportunity to vote, no matter what.

NCOA members, no matter where you live, take the opportunity to lead within your community and show that patriotism and civic responsibility are not dead in this country. While we are not a perfect nation, we are by far the best option on earth and if we come together like a nation after 9/11 and address our problems, we can work together to make America even better. Use the leadership you were developed while serving in the military to make a difference in your community.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, either contact headquarters or contact me at chairman@ncoausa.org and I can assure you that your leadership will take note.

Strength in Unity & Leadership by Example,

Terry M. Haines
Chairman, Rogue Chapter & International Board of Directors
MCPO (SCW), United States Navy, Retired



"I hope you live a life you are proud of. If you find that you are not, I hope you have the strength to start all over again."
 —F. Scott Fitzgerald

Important Dates in September

- Sept. 7 – Labor Day
- Sept. 11 – Patriot Day
- Sept. 17 – Constitution Day
- Sept. 18 – Air Force B-Day,
National
POW/MIA
Recognition Day
- Sept. 27 – Gold Star Mother
Day

Upcoming Events

- Sept. 6-12 – National
Suicide Prevention Week
- Oct. 1-22 – Veteran

WARRIOR'S PIPELINE

Updates for Veterans and Service Members

Articles from VA.gov/opa/pressrel

Digital COVID-19 screening for Vets, employees, aids in low infection rate

The VA announced the use of digital screening at VA health care facilities and increased telehealth has enabled the department to dramatically increase the rate of COVID-19 testing for Veterans and employees. The Veterans Health Administration's COVID-19 employee infection rate is less than 1% of its workforce – much lower than other health care systems. Employees

testing positive for coronavirus could be due to exposure in the community and not related to any potential workplace exposure. Veterans can request a COVID-19 test by sending a secure message to their provider via My HealthVet, scheduling an appointment online or calling their provider by phone. Veterans must be enrolled in VA health care to receive a COVID-19 test

through VA. There is no copay. Results typically take two to four days and the medical provider will contact the Veteran with results. Veterans who test positive should monitor their symptoms, stay in touch with their medical provider and avoid contact with anyone else.

The **NCOA Rogue Chapter Scholarship Fund** is one of the newest and most important benefits within the Chapter.

Established in 2019, its sole purpose is to help dependents of NCOA members continue their education beyond high school.

Consider donating by visiting www.ncoarogue.org/donate

All donations received are used for scholarships and grants. No administrative or overhead expenses are deducted from the donations received.

Your donation will help enable the NCOA Rogue Chapter Scholarship Fund continue to be a valuable resource for NCOA members and their dependents!

VA decreases mail processing time for claims intake

The VA announced the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has improved procedures by incorporating an artificial intelligence (AI) solution to reduce the time it takes to process in-coming mail from 10 days to just one day.

The software reads the mail document contents and automatically routes it to VA employees working the next step of the claims process; which means faster processing of the information Veterans send

to VBA in support of their claims.

“Moving past manual mail processes to automation puts the emphasis on Veterans,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “This new capability allows VA to process Veterans’ claims quickly and efficiently.”

On average VBA receives more than 550,000 pieces of mail per month related to benefits and services. The volume of mail comes from submissions by

Veterans, surviving spouses, service agencies, attorneys and claims agents. This mail is often the starting point to initiate a claim or provide supportive documentation for potential benefits and services they may be eligible for; in addition to general inquires.

VA rolls out new patient-appointment tool, as part of electronic health record modernization transformation

The VA launched a new appointment scheduling tool Aug. 21 at the VA Central Ohio Healthcare System to make medical visits more efficient for care providers and Veterans. A critical component of VA's Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) effort, the Centralized Scheduling Solution (CSS) will be implemented at all VA health facilities to expedite patient-care coordination throughout the department.

VA's current scheduling solutions require VA staff to log in to multiple software applications to coordinate calendars, clinicians, rooms and equipment. This process requires time-intensive manual data entry and workarounds to finalize appointments. CSS will address these challenges by providing an “all-in-one” appointment management solution that offers scheduling by resource (e.g., clinician, room, equipment), simple color-coded time slots and a single view for coordinating schedules across multiple locations.

Upon full implementation at all sites, the new EHR will unify all VA health care facilities into one system linked with DOD. This modernization effort will create a comprehensive health record to provide seamless care for service members and Veterans. Visit VA's EHRM program and CSS for more information.



Prevention Corner: Tips and Tactics to Avoid Scams

Here are some tips to help you avoid common post-disaster scams:

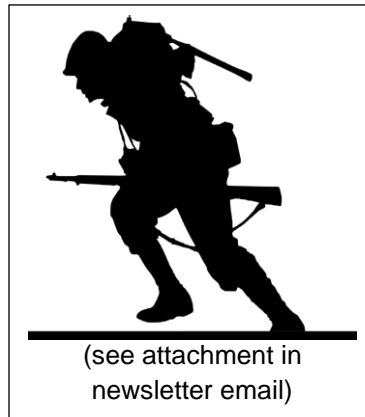
- **Be skeptical of anyone promising immediate clean-up and debris removal.** Some may quote outrageous prices, demand payment up-front, or lack the skills needed.
- **Check them out.** Before you pay, ask for IDs, licenses, and proof of insurance. Don't believe any promises that aren't in writing.
- **Never pay by wire transfer, gift card, or in cash.** And never make the final payment until the work is done and you're satisfied.
- **Guard your personal information.** Only scammers will say they're an official and then demand money or your credit card, bank account, or Social Security number.
- **Know that FEMA doesn't charge application fees.** If someone wants money to help you qualify for FEMA funds, that's probably a scam.
- **Be wise to rental listing scams.** Steer clear of people who tell you to wire money or ask for security deposits or rent before you've met or signed a lease.
- **Spot disaster-related charity scams.** Scammers will often try to make a quick profit from the misfortune of others. Check out the FTC's advice on donating wisely and avoiding charity scams.

Thought to Consider:

Voting is a civic responsibility: As men and women who fought for the freedoms that this country offers, it is our civic duty to register to vote and then come election day, to get out and vote. I encourage all of you to focus on November 3rd with laser focus. There are real challenges facing this nation. Don't let the values that reach down into the fiber of who you are be swept away by indifference. Stand up for what you believe and vote. There is an old saying, "if you don't vote, don't complain!"

Reading of the Month

“Avoid the Snares of Groupthink: The Command-and-Control Strategy” by Robert Greene (pp.168-195 of pdf).



Do you have an interesting military story or joke? Consider sharing it in writing (in 150-250 words) for possible publication in our next newsletter. Send your text and/or picture (keep it rated PG-13) to rogue.newsletter@gmail.com



MEET YOUR ROGUE CHAPTER BOARD

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“Strength in Unity!”



NCOA Creed

“It is with the conception and full understanding that many things of great need and importance can be accomplished in unity and cooperation. Thus, do the members of the Non-commissioned Officers Association of the United States of America agree to join their efforts and strength to work together for the well-being of the individual, the group, and for the greatest benefit of our beloved nation.”



(Chairman Terry Haines swears in our new Rogue Chapter Trustee, Army Veteran Rachael Watters)

Terry Haines, Chairman: Terry enlisted in the US Navy for active duty between 1971-1977, honorably discharging as an E5. He then served in the US Naval Reserves between 1982-2006, retiring as a Master Chief Petty Officer (E-9), and he deployed twice for Iraqi Freedom between 2002-2003 and 2005-2006.

Ron Kohl, Treasurer/Trustee: Ron served in both the Air Force as a Tech Sergeant, and the Army as a Staff Sergeant before he retired. He also served in law enforcement and is committed to helping locals avoid fraud and scams.

Bud Cordes, Knight Advisor: Bud Cordes was a USAF Tech Sergeant who retired after 20 years of service in 1978. He served in Vietnam between 1968-1969.

Bill Parks, Trustee: Bill spent 3 years active and deployed on two, 9-month, west Pac Cruises while aboard the USS Enterprise. He then served 21 years in the Naval Reserve with NMCB-18, achieving 1st Class Petty Officer (E-6), acting as the NMCB-18 Battalion Career Counselor for his last 6 years.

Stephen Bobian, Trustee: Stephen served in the United States Coast Guard from 2006 to 2014 and honorably discharged as an E-5 Boatswains Mate. He then went on to earn his Captain's license at the Maritime Program and was stationed at Motor Lifeboat Station Quillayute River, WA, Training Center Yorktown, VA, Aids To Navigation Astoria, OR and the United States Coast Guard Cutter Hickory, which is a 225' Buoy Tender out of Homer, AK.

Rachael Watters, Trustee: Rachael is a proud Veteran of the U.S. Army who achieved the rank of E-5 before ETS. Serving from 2001-2006 she deployed twice with the 101st ABN Division in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

NCOA MEMBERSHIP

Membership is the lifeblood of the Association!

Today the NCOA remains a vital fraternal, benevolent non-profit organization and acts as a conduit between the military and civilian communities in local areas and promotes positive community relations. The Association is proud of its efforts in three primary areas: Legislative Representation; Social and Fraternal Programs; and Member Benefits in the area of specialized services and discount programs. NCOA has much to offer its members and you too can join our numbers. Membership in NCOA is open to all, however, you must meet certain criteria to be a voting member of the Association, but this does not prevent you from being an Associate member and supporting our organization and reaping the benefits of being a member.

If you are already a member, please promote this fantastic and beneficial membership to fellow service members and Veterans looking for a supportive military community. If they are interested or have questions have them contact us or visit www.ncoa.org/membership.