

January flew by and February is here. Our days are getting longer, hopefully a little warmer with hints of spring to come. Thank you all for taking time to jump onto the January Zoom. Its always good to hear what others are doing and it is so very heartwarming to hear stories of one act of kindness blossoming into other acts of kindness.

In this issue you will see information on the Military and Veteran Caregiver Network as well as Be the One. It is very likely that you, or someone you know, is a caregiver to a veteran or to a military member. Our support of caregivers is vital.

It is also important to build and maintain connections. These connections help provide that strong network of support to help those in need, or even if you are feeling a little burnt out and need some support yourself.

If you haven't already, I encourage you to sign up for one of the Be the One Trainings offered by The American Legion and Columbia University. The webinars are free to join and offer invaluable training for dealing with veterans in crisis. You can learn more about these trainings by jumping onto The American Legion's Facebook page.



Dates to Remember:

- ♥ 2/2—Groundhog Day
- ♥ 2/3—Four Chaplains Day
- ♥ 2/4—USO Birthday
- ♥ 2/19-2/15—National Salute to Veteran Patients
- ♥ 2/14—Valentines Day
- ♥ 2/19—Coast Guard Reserve Birthday



ALA Challenge Deck! Do you have yours? For a \$35 donation, you will receive a deck of cards. Each card has a challenge that you, or your unit, can take. Once you complete the challenge, be sure to record it so you can **REPORT** it.

Of course you can always contact me if you have questions or concerns. My contact information is below:

Tammy Harris
PO Box 634
Green River WY 82935
307-389-2705
tjharris@wyoming.com

Monthly Message from:

National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Chair, Coral May Grout



February, 2025

My thanks to everyone across our land for the amazing things you are doing for veterans! Don't forget to share what you are doing on social media, through your local media sources, verbally with friends and family, and wherever you have chance to share. The ALA is an outstanding Organization. None of us does the volunteer work we do for publicity, but by not "tooting our horns", we lose possible members. People within our communities know there is an American Legion/Auxiliary/SAL/Riders group, but many don't realize how valuable we are to our communities.

This all leads to reporting. Very soon, your annual reports will be due. I'm asking every Department chair to please have a conversation with someone in every Unit to ensure your get a report this year. Congress reads our National Reports, but with less than 50% reporting, they don't see the entire picture of what we do.

Valentine's Day is this month! Remember our Veterans with a card, visit, or flowers. Send those cards and letters to our enlisted. They appreciate it so much!

Coral

Military and Veteran Caregiver Network

Are you a caregiver to a veteran? Do you know someone who is? Chances are you can say yes to one or both of these questions. Being a caregiver is a big job and recognizing PNP Kathy Daudistel's focus was on recognizing and supporting our veteran caregivers. Our caregivers need support, but where can they turn to when they need that support? There are a variety of resources out there, from your VA's to other community based programs, such as the American Red Cross' Military and Veteran Caregiver Network (MVCN).

The mission of the MVCN is to provide our military and veteran caregivers of all eras with peer support to reduce isolation and increase connection, engagement, knowledge, skills and hope. The MVCN offers a variety of programs to further its mission, including online peer support communities, a peer mentor support program and both online and community based peer support groups.

You can sign up to receive a weekly 10-15 minute wellness opportunity delivered to your inbox through the online calendar. These weekly practices are designed to teach mindfulness skills geared to enhance your whole health and decrease stress. You can also sign up to join various caregiver groups.

The MVCN also provides links to other resources such as food, housing, health and a myriad of other categories through its resource library. Simply enter the topic you are looking for help or support on and your zip code to see links the various resources available either online or in your area.

This network offers a wide range of resources and support to help our military, veterans and those who are caregivers across all ages, eras and geographic locations.

For more information on the MVCN go to www.redcross.org/get-help/military-families, or google Military Veteran Caregiver Network.

Be the One Mission
Julie Smith Southern Division VA&R Chair
February Divisional Bulletin

“Be the One” continues to be our Legion Family’s Mission. The mission began in 2023-2024, when National President Lisa Williamson, National Commander Daniel Seehafer, and National Detachment Commander of the SAL Donald “JR” Hall Jr. instituted the “Be the One.” The goal has been to save lives and eliminate the stigma related to mental health treatment. Suicide is a hard topic for many of us to talk about. We must get over our fear or feeling of being uncomfortable talking about suicide and focus on saving a life. There are between 17 and 22 veteran deaths by suicide daily. Be the one to ask a veteran: how are you doing? Be the one to listen to when they need to talk. Be the one to get them the resources and the help they need. The window between the act and deciding to end one’s life is short. Be aware and ready to help.

Resources Available

S.A.V.E Training through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

https://www.mirecc.va.gov/suicideprevention/Education/education_index.asp#prevention

S is signs that indicate a veteran may be thinking about suicide.

A is for asking the most critical question: Are you thinking of killing yourself?

V is for validating the veteran’s experience.

E is to encourage treatment and expedite getting help.

The American Legion Website has resources available. The American Legion has partnered with Columbia University to provide training in interacting with and responding to veterans in crisis. Several free online classes are available each month

: <https://www.legion.org/advocacy/be-the-one/be-the-one-resources-and-media>

The ALA Academy has a course: “Be the One”: How Auxiliary Members Can Help.

<https://member.legion-aux.org/member/online-training>

Veterans Crisis Line 24/7 support Dial 988, then press 1

Wear your Be the One shirt on the first day of each month.

Will you Be The One?

