



MAY 2025  
Volume 1, Issue 11

# Hanscom AFB Military Retiree Activities Office (RAO) Newsletter

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE: by 1Lt Kevin Keegan, USAF**

Memorial Day Weekend is a time to remember and honor those who have fallen in service to our country.

Here are five facts about Memorial Day:

**[Memorial Day was originally called Decoration Day. Opens in new tab](#)**

This name was chosen because on this day, people would decorate the graves of fallen Civil War soldiers with flowers and flags.

**[The holiday was officially declared a federal holiday in 1971. Opens in new tab](#)**

Prior to that, it was a state holiday, and its date of observance was not fixed on the last Monday of May until 1968.

**[Memorial Day is not a "happy" holiday. .Opens in new tab](#)**

It is a day of remembrance and solemn reflection, a time to honor and remember those who have died in service to the United States.

**[The National Moment of Remembrance](#) takes place at 3 p.m. local time. Opens in new tab**

This is a moment of silence to remember those who have died in service.

**[The red poppy](#) is a symbol of remembrance. Opens in new tab**

The red poppy was popularized as a symbol of remembrance following the publication of the poem "[In Flanders Fields](#)" during World War I.

# Financial help for veterans and family members

Source: [Financial help for veterans and family members | Mass.gov](#)

Submitted by: Kevin Keegan, USAF, Veteran

## The Executive Office of Veterans Services offers financial help to eligible veterans and family members.

The Executive Office of Veterans Services offers a benefit to veterans with little income, called Chapter 115 benefits, which can help pay for daily living expenses, medical costs, housing, and other necessities. The Executive Office of Veterans Services also offers an annuity to certain disabled veterans, parents of a deceased veteran, and the unmarried spouses of deceased veterans.

Financial help for veterans and eligible dependents in Massachusetts:

### Chapter 115 Benefits

The Executive Office of Veterans Services offers a benefit to veterans with little income, called Chapter 115 benefits, which can help pay for daily living expenses, medical costs, housing, and other necessities. Veterans can connect with their local Veteran Service Officer to apply. [Learn more and how to apply here.](#)

### Annuity Payments:

The annuity payments offers an annuity to certain disabled veterans, parents of deceased veterans, and unmarried spouses of deceased veterans living in Massachusetts. As part of the HERO Act, the annuity will be increasing from \$2,000 to \$2,500 over 2 years. Veterans will receive a payment of \$1,250 in February of 2025. Starting in August of 2025, veterans will receive one annuity check per year of \$2,500. . [Learn more and apply here.](#)

Find help outside of Massachusetts:

Massachusetts Veterans benefits are for residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

If a veteran lives outside of Massachusetts, they may be eligible for benefits in their state of residence. Every state has an office or department of veterans' services. This office can provide information about veterans' benefits offered by that state. [Find a list of state offices/departments of veterans' services here.](#)

Additional Resources:

- [Other State Departments of Veterans Services](#)

Financial help for Vets Page 2
Thoughts Page 3
Woman's Monument Dedication Page 4
What is CHAMPVA, VA Health Games Page 5
Real ID, Best Discounts, Army 250 Anniversary Page 6
Get new ID ASAP Page 7
TAPS & Vet Benefits Newsletter Page 8
Women's Network Pages 9-11
Hanscom Activities Page 12

# THOUGHTS

Source: Wenham Mass Veterans Committee  
Submitted by: Dean Pederson, CAPTAIN USN (Ret)

For 250 years we the people of the United States of America have been working at becoming “a more perfect union.” It has been a demanding, challenging, and worthwhile venture. Amid the battles and skirmishes, the divisiveness and deprivation, The Bill of Rights and The Constitution was written by “the founding fathers.” The words in these two documents provided a compass for this fledgling nation to follow and embody. Compared to the longevity of empires and nations that preceded the USA, we are young.

For all of us who wore and continue to wear the uniform of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps, this is our 250th birthday year as well: June 14; Army birthday, October 13; Navy birthday, November 10; Marine Corps birthday. Within a few years of being commissioned, each branch created a motto or “words of purpose.” For the Army it is, “THIS WE WILL DEFEND.” For the Navy it is “ALWAYS COURAGEOUS and COUNTRY BEFORE SELF.” For the Marine Corps it is “ALWAYS FAITHFUL.” These mottos, while forged in the heat of the revolution and sewn onto the service flags, were etched into the lives of the people of this new nation.

On this year of the 250th anniversary I invite you to re-read The Bill of Rights, The Constitution, and the service mottos. While these words are woven into the ethos of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps, they transcend each branch by asking questions such as: What does it mean to defend something/someone? What is courage? What does it mean to affirm country before self? What does it mean to be faithful? Our quest to “become a more perfect union” persists. We are a work in progress.

June 21 @ Gloucester. Mass. Stage Fort Park. Re-enactment of The Battle of Bunker Hill  
0800-1000 British Fleet at Half Moon Beach  
1000-1100 Milita prepares for the battle.  
1300-1400 The battle begins.  
Additional info found @ <https://WWW.BattleofBunkerHill250.com>

# Women's Military Service Monument Dedication

Submitted by Col. Christine Gryglik USAF (Ret)

PLEASE JOIN US FOR  
*the*  
DEDICATION CEREMONY FOR THE

## WOMEN IN MILITARY SERVICE MEMORIAL

THURSDAY

1 PM

12

2025

JUNE

NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE VETERANS CEMETERY

110 DANIEL WEBSTER HIGHWAY  
BOSCAWEN, NH 03303

*Light snacks and beverages will be served*



WE WILL CELEBRATE THE  
COURAGE, SACRIFICE, AND  
CONTRIBUTIONS OF NEW  
HAMPSHIRE WOMEN IN THE  
MILITARY WITH THE UNVEILING  
OF THIS MEANINGFUL TRIBUTE



# CHAMPVA: How does it work?

Source: <https://news.va.gov/139919/receive-champva-benefits-other-health-insurance/>

Submitted by: Kevin Keegan, USAF, Veteran

If you are a [Civilian Health and Medical Program of VA \(CHAMPVA\)](#) beneficiary—meaning you're the spouse, widow(er) or child of an eligible Veteran—and you also have other health insurance, you might wonder: How do they work together?

Here's what you need to know to get the most from your coverage.

## Can I use CHAMPVA if I have other health insurance?

Yes, you can have both CHAMPVA and other health insurance. Here's how it works:

1. Your provider bills your other health insurance first.
2. Once they get the Explanation of Benefits (EOB), they send it and the bill to CHAMPVA. CHAMPVA can help cover what's left, like deductibles, co-pays and co-insurance, up to the allowable amount.

Helpful tip: Most providers handle the CHAMPVA part for you. But if your provider does not, just ask for a copy of the claim and EOB from your other health insurance so you can send it directly to CHAMPVA yourself.

# VA HEALTH & FITNESS GAMES

Submitted by: Kevin Keegan, USAF, Veteran



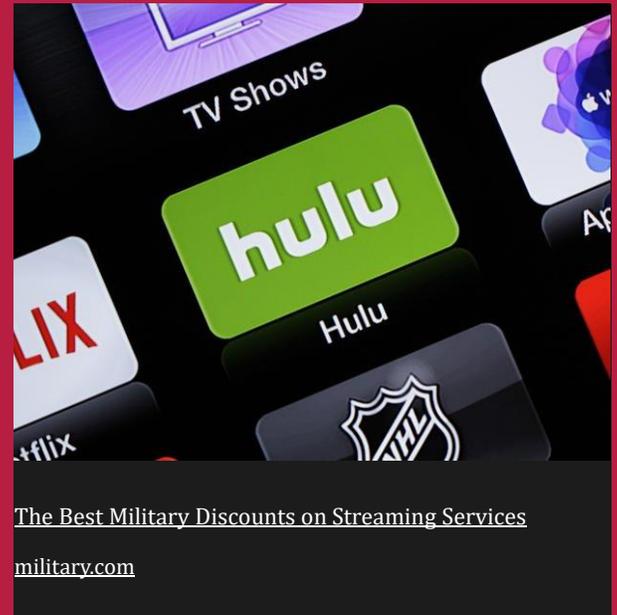
[Up your health and fitness game with VA health apps - VA News](#)

[news.va.gov](https://news.va.gov)

The following 3 articles were submitted  
by: Kevin Keegan, USAF (Veteran)

[As REAL ID Enforcement Approaches, TSA Says Military IDs Still Valid for Domestic Airline Travel](#)  
[military.com](#)

**The Best Military Discounts including Veterans on Streaming Services**



## Countdown to the Army's 250th birthday



[Army prepares to celebrate its 250th birthday on June 14, 2025 | Article | The United States Army](#)

# RETIREE ACTION NEEDED! NEW ID CARDS BEING ISSUED FOR MILITARY RETIREES AND DEPENDENTS!

Source: 111th Attack Wing Retiree Activities Office, Newsletter Vol 10, Issue #1 Winter 2025  
Submitted by: Capt Dean Mottard, USMC (RET)

Time to start planning, the Defense Department began issuing Next Generation Uniformed Services Identification Cards on July 31, 2020; the complete transition to the new ID card, is targeted for January 2026. At that time, legacy USID card will no longer work or be accepted.

111<sup>TH</sup> ATTACK WING RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE  
Newsletter Vol. 10 Issue #1 Winter 2025

Graphic for Next Generation Uniform Services ID card change over



**IF YOU HAVE AN OLD ONE, GET A NEW ID ASAP!**

In the meantime, the current cards will continue to work. Beginning in 2026, the legacy Uniformed Services Identification (USID) card will no longer be accepted for access to benefits, privileges, or DoD bases.

According to the DoD Common Access Card website, USID cards are issued to retired military and Reserve members, dependent family members of uniformed Service members, and other eligible individuals in accordance with DoD policy.

In the wake of the Real ID Act, the DoD also terminated the civilian retiree ID card in August 2023, stating that civilian retirees were to present their retirement documents to enroll a Real ID act-compliant driver's license as an alternate to the DoD civilian retiree ID card.

Eligible members still using a legacy USID card are encouraged to make appointments with their local DoD ID card facility as soon as possible to avoid any access issues in the future. Military retirees and dependents can find more information, to include locations and phone numbers, and book appointments online by visiting <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco/>.



Source: <https://www.taps.org>  
Submitted by: Capt Dean Mottard, USMC (RET)

Welcome Spring! Flowers are in full bloom, trees are growing, and TAPS is going all-in for events, programming and hope and healing wrapped up into a nice bow!

Please check the information out in the newsletter for Survivors and Supporters alike. <https://www.taps.org> "Carry The Load", the nationwide efforts to show remembrance for the sacrifice and love for families and friends!

I would encourage all to look and see if something is being offered in your area, and if not, call TAPS. We are partnering for local events and would love to support alongside you for all Survivors.



May is [Mental Health](#) Awareness Month. VA has a variety of mental health resources, information, treatment options and more—all accessible to Veterans, their supporters and the general public. A [mobile application](#) has also been developed which allows you to take a variety of mental health assessments from the comfort and convenience of home.

For more Veterans Benefits in this newsletter go to: [Veterans Benefits Newsletter | May 2025](#)

# WOMEN VETERANS NETWORK

Submitted by Col. Christine Gryglik USAF (Ret)

Source: [Woman Veteran Network](#)

Date: May 7, 2025 at 10:35:10 AM EDT

Subject: **WVN May 2025 Newsletter**



[Women Veterans Network](#)

May 2025 Newsletter



## In the News

### WVAC Releases First-Ever Report

The [Advisory Committee on Women Veterans \(WVAC\)](#) has released its [inaugural report](#)—and it's packed with insights and recommendations that reflect the real voices of women veterans across Massachusetts.

This [report](#) is the result of a year-long effort that included **nine listening sessions**, a **statewide survey**, and collaboration with veterans, advocates, and service organizations. It includes:

- ✓ First-hand insights from women veterans
- ✓ Key challenges and policy recommendations

- ✓ Roadmap to improve outreach, wellness, legal support, and access to benefits

Email [wvac@mass.gov](mailto:wvac@mass.gov) if you're interested in hosting a Women Veterans Report Briefing Session.

## Military Calendar, Heritage Months & Holidays

May 12 - 17: [Armed Forces Week](#)

May 13: [Children of Fallen Patriots Day](#)

May 17: [Armed Forces Day](#)

May 26: [Memorial Day](#)

June: [PTSD Awareness Month](#)

June 6: [D-Day](#)



### A Message From WVN Director Jessica Frost



May honors our service members with national **Military Appreciation Month**. **Memorial Day** honors all those who died in service to our country while **Military Appreciation Day** celebrates the support and sacrifices made by loved ones of a service member. **Armed Forces Day** recognizes the unification of all military branches under the Department of Defense.

This month also celebrates **Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage, Haitian American Heritage** and **Jewish American Heritage Month**. Trailblazers such as Hazel Ying Lee and Maggie Gee served as pilots during WWII in the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) program.



Susan Ahn Cuddy became the first female gunnery officer during WWII.

A native of Haiti, Captain Muriana Jeanniton served as a Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner with the U.S. Army Reserve, working in suicide prevention of service members. Captain Alix Idrache serves as a pilot and future operations planner with the 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment, Joint Task Force Bravo, stationed in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Bernice Sains Freid, Bebe Koch and Miriam "Mimi" Miller served in the Navy WAVES during World War II while Miranda Bloch was one of the first Jewish women in the Marines. Years later, Cindy Gats served in the Marines during Operation Desert Storm. Amy Sheridan is the first Jewish woman to become an aviator in the U.S. Armed Services and Shoshana Chatfield is the first Jewish woman to lead the Naval War College.



May is **Mental Health Awareness Month**. While it can often be difficult to prioritize our own mental health, many resources for health, mental health and wellbeing are available.

If you or a loved one need help, reach out to the WVN or EOVS' SAVE Team at (617) 210-5743, visit [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov), or connect with one of the organizations listed below.

**[Veterans Crisis Line](#)**

Dial 988 and press #1. You do not have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect.

**[Women Veterans Call Center](#)**

(855) 829-6636

**[Massachusetts Behavioral Health 24/7 Help Line](#)**

Call or text (833) 773-2445

**Veterans Services and WVN-Sponsored Events**

# HANSCOM AFB ACTIVITIES

Source: [Hanscom AFB | 66th Force Support Squadron](#)

**Summer Bash**  
Fri, June 13  
3:30pm  
Base Chapel  
**FREE BBQ**  
(while supplies last)

**FREE COMMUNITY EVENT**

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT,  
CARNIVAL GAMES & RIDES,  
BOUNCE HOUSES, MINI GOLF,  
MINI TRAIN RIDES, ITALIAN ICE,  
VENDOR MARKET AND MORE!

**Close out the evening  
with Fireworks!**



# RETIREE ACTIVITIES OFFICE



The Retiree Activities Office at Hanscom provides information, services and programs to military retirees -- all ranks, all services. The RAO mission is to: act as an interface between the active duty and retired communities; keep retirees updated on various matters; provide information and services as necessary or appropriate; and to represent retired members at the base and Air Force level. The RAO also provides whatever assistance is requested by the Installation Commander in achieving the base mission.

## NEWS AND INFORMATION

The Hanscom Retiree Activities Office is open Monday thru Thursday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. except for federal holidays. Some holidays include additional pre and/or post days identified as AFMC Family Days. Hanscom Retiree Activities Office: 781-225-1310

Please email your questions to [RAO.Hanscom.AFB@gmail.com](mailto:RAO.Hanscom.AFB@gmail.com).

## OFFICE INFORMATION

### ***Mailing Address:***

Retiree Activities Office  
66ABG/CVR  
Brown Bldg #1305  
20 Schilling Circle  
Hanscom Air Force Base, MA 01731  
(1st floor inside the PASS & ID office)

Director: 1/Lt Kevin Keegan USAF, Veteran  
Deputy Director: Capt. Dean Mottard USMC (RET)  
Editor: Col Michael Therrien USAF (RET)  
Researcher: 1/Lt Kevin Keegan USAF

### **Humor in Uniform**

Source: [105 Military Jokes That'll Put You on the Front Lines of Laughter](#) Reader's Digest website

- **Why did the optometrist set his clock to military time?** To see 20:20.
- **Why didn't the officer respond when asked how he got his start in the military?** It was private.
- **Did you hear about the accident on base?** A tank ran over a box of popcorn and killed two kernels.
- **What happened to the soldier who tried to be a stand-up comedian?** He bombed.

**Notice of Disclaimer:** This newsletter is a RAO publication for retirees, annuitants and surviving spouses. Content is not to be construed as the official view or endorsement by the RAO, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense or the U.S. Air Force.

# RETIREE FREQUENTLY USED PHONE NUMBERS AND WEBSITES

## Hanscom AFB

Exchange	781-862-0580
Medical Clinic	781-225-6789
<b>Commissary</b>	<b>781-430-1900 NEW NUMBER!!</b>
Casualty Representative	781-225-2755/2765
Credit Union	781-274-6335
Legal Office	781-225-1410
Hanscom Inn/Lodging	PERMANENTLY CLOSED

## Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)

Phone Customer Service 800-321-1080 M-F 0800-1700 ET

Web Site: <https://dfas.mil/retiredmilitary>

Recommend using first for researching information

MyPay: <https://mypay.dfas.mil>

Establishing your account

Did you not get your I099R?

Call DFAS customer service then press 1 twice

OR

Visit the finance office at Hanscom AFB (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Brown Building)

## Identification Cards

Hanscom AFB Office

781-225-1320 (may not be the closest to you)

<https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idco>

Find the nearest ID card office to make appointments

USCG Retirees: USCG Pay & Personnel Center at 1-785-339-3770

## VA

Phone Customer Service

800-698-2411 (24/7)

<https://va.gov>

Recommend using first for researching information

## TRICARE

Tricare for Life (generally age 65 and over): <https://tricare.mil/tfl>

Tricare (generally under age 65): <https://tricare.mil>

## TRICARE EAST

800-444-5445

# RETIREE FREQUENTLY USED VA WEBSITES

## Helpful Websites

<a href="http://www.VA.gov">VA Home Page</a>	www.VA.gov
<a href="http://www.choose.va.gov">Benefits and Services Overview</a>	www.choose.va.gov
<a href="http://www.cem.va.gov">Burial and Memorial Benefits</a>	www.cem.va.gov
<a href="http://www.caregiver.va.gov">Caregiver Support</a>	www.caregiver.va.gov
<a href="http://www.va.gov/communitycare/programs/dependents/champva/">CHAMPVA</a>	www.va.gov/communitycare/programs/dependents/champva/
<a href="http://www.va.gov/communitycare/">Community Care</a>	www.va.gov/communitycare/
<a href="http://www.va.gov/dental/">Dental Care</a>	www.va.gov/dental/
<a href="http://www.va.gov/claim-or-appeal-status/">Disability Claims and Appeals</a>	www.va.gov/claim-or-appeal-status/
<a href="http://www.va.gov/education/">Education Benefits</a>	www.va.gov/education/
<a href="http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures">Environmental Exposures</a>	www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures
<a href="http://www.va.gov/vadodhealth/frcp.asp">Federal Recovery Consultant Office</a>	www.va.gov/vadodhealth/frcp.asp
<a href="http://www.va.gov/geriatrics">Geriatrics and Extended Care</a>	www.va.gov/geriatrics
<a href="http://www.va.gov/health-care/">Health Care Eligibility</a>	www.va.gov/health-care/
<a href="http://www.va.gov/homeless">Homeless Veterans</a>	www.va.gov/homeless
<a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans">Home Loan Guaranty</a>	www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans
<a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance">Life Insurance</a>	www.benefits.va.gov/insurance
<a href="http://www.cem.va.gov/pmc.asp">Memorial Certificate Program</a>	www.cem.va.gov/pmc.asp
<a href="http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov">Mental Health</a>	www.mentalhealth.va.gov
<a href="http://www.myhealth.va.gov">My HealtheVet</a>	www.myhealth.va.gov
<a href="http://www.nrd.gov">National Resource Directory</a>	www.nrd.gov
<a href="http://www.VA.gov/PACT">PACT Act</a>	www.VA.gov/PACT
<a href="http://www.va.gov/post911veterans">Post 9/11 Veterans</a>	www.va.gov/post911veterans
<a href="http://www.va.gov/post911veterans">Returning Service Members</a>	www.va.gov/post911veterans
<a href="http://www.archives.gov/personnel-records-center/military-personnel">Service Records</a>	www.archives.gov/personnel-records-center/military-personnel
<a href="http://www.va.gov/statedva.htm">State Departments of Veterans Affairs</a>	www.va.gov/statedva.htm
<a href="http://www.va.gov/welcome-kit/">Welcome Kit</a>	www.va.gov/welcome-kit/
<a href="http://www.womenshealth.va.gov">Women Veterans</a>	www.womenshealth.va.gov
<a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/persona/veteran-women.asp">www.benefits.va.gov/persona/veteran-women.asp</a>	
<a href="http://www.va.gov/womenvet">www.va.gov/womenvet</a>	
<a href="http://www.va.gov/vaforms">VA Forms</a>	www.va.gov/vaforms
<a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/transition/solid-start.asp">VA Solid Start</a>	www.benefits.va.gov/transition/solid-start.asp
<a href="http://www.vetcenter.va.gov">VA Vet Centers</a>	www.vetcenter.va.gov
<a href="http://www.va.gov/careers-employment/vocational-rehabilitation/">Veteran Readiness and Employment</a>	www.va.gov/careers-employment/vocational-rehabilitation/
<a href="http://www.veteranscrisisline.net">Veterans Crisis Line</a>	www.veteranscrisisline.net

## **RETIREE FREQUENTLY USED VA NUMBERS**

**Veterans Crisis Line: (800) 273-TALK (8255)**  
**TBI Helpline (traumatic brain injury): (888) VET-1TBI (888-838-1824)**  
**VA Healthcare Boston: (800) 865-3384 (follow the prompts)**  
**Veterans Crisis Line: (800)-273-8255 (Press 1)**  
**VA Benefits: (800) 827-1000 For information about: Education, Home Loan, Disability, Medical Care, Burial, Life Insurance and Sexual Trauma**  
**VA Caregiver Support Line: (855) 260-3274 (are you caring for a veteran at home?)**  
**VA Life Insurance: (800) 669-8477**  
**VA Education (GI Bill): (888) 442-4551**  
**VA Health Care Benefits: (877) 222-8387**  
**VA Income Verification and Means Testing: (800) 929-8387**  
**VA Mammography Helpline: (888) 492-7844**  
**VA Gulf War/Agent Orange Helpline: (800) 749-8387**  
**VA Status of Headstones and Markers: (800)-697-6947**  
**VA Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD): (800) 829-4833**  
**Social Security: (800) 772-1213**  
**Medicare: (800) 638-6833**  
**The White House: (202) 456-1414**  
**Unites States Senate: (202) 224-3121**  
**United States Congress: (202) 225-3121**  
**Small Business Administration: (800) 827-5722**  
**I.R.S.: (800)-829-1040**