

We Honor Veterans Newsletter



March 2020 Edition

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day 2020

Gilchrist's Third Annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration

Gilchrist's third annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration is a day to honor and thank the men and women in our community who served during the Vietnam War. This Welcome Home celebration honors the veterans in our care as well as all of the veterans and their loved ones in our community. This celebration is one of the many ways Gilchrist recognizes the unique needs of veterans and thanks them for their sacrifice and service to our state and our country.

The Welcome Home event is scheduled for Sunday, March 22, 2020. The event will again be held at Martin's West, 6817 Dogwood Road, Windsor Mill, MD 21244. The times are as follows:

- Doors open: 12:00pm
- Brunch served: 12:00pm – 1:00pm
- Resource Fair: 12:00pm – 1:00pm
- Program: 1:00pm – 2:30pm
- Resource Fair: 2:30pm – 3:30pm

[Register Now](#)

While there is no cost to register and attend, space is limited so that we ask that you let us know if you register and then are unable to attend. We want to accommodate as many Vietnam Veterans as possible, so please take that into consideration when including family members in your registration.

We are proud to honor those who have served in the United States Armed Forces. We look forward to seeing you at the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration.

Salute to Service Tribute (SST)

The Salute to Service Tribute (or Pinning) is conducted by a dedicated team of Gilchrist staff and volunteers to honor veterans in our care. The SST is conducted in homes, residential communities, and Gilchrist Centers. The tribute is a meaningful and heartfelt ceremony that may include giving a veteran a certificate of appreciation, a We Honor Veterans pin, a thank you card from a student, a handmade patriotic quilt, and music from a particular branch of the service. Whenever possible, military veterans are present in uniform to assist with or conduct the ceremony. Gilchrist staff and volunteers conduct several hundred of these tributes each year. Pictured below is a SST for Marine Veteran Ernest Carrington.



The Parachute Rigger

Bob Pruitt entered the Army in 1957. After boot camp, Bob joined the 82nd Airborne where he became a parachute rigger. Bob not only learned to pack parachutes, he learned to clean, inspect, and store them as well. Bob says “I jumped about 30 times – both day and night. One time my main parachute did not open and I had to pull my reserve chute.” Bob left the Army in 1963.

Bob here (on the right) is talking with Vietnam Veteran and Gilchrist Volunteer Mike Lachance at a recent Vet Café. About 10 veterans attended the Vet Café held at Oak Crest. The group of veterans enjoyed donuts and coffee as they talked about their experiences in the military, including WWII, Korea and Vietnam.



D-Day and the YMS 347

Marvin Solomon entered the Navy in 1942. After attending the University of Notre Dame and Columbia, Marvin was commissioned as an officer. While he served on five ships, the most memorable was being on the YMS 347 (a mine sweeper) on D-Day. At the age of 99, Marvin vividly remembers locating and detonating mines – trying to stay ahead of the ships, including the LSIs (Landing Ship Infantry) transporting British Commonwealth and Allied troops. Marvin said that more than 5,000 ships supported the D-Day invasion. Marvin talks about several ships near the YMS 347 exploding and his crew rescuing the injured as well as the bodies of those who were killed. Marvin left the Navy in 1953.

Marvin (seen below) recently attended a Vet Café held at North Oaks Senior Living Community. **The veterans talked about their military service during WWII and Korea. There were 12 veterans in the room – and three of them were there on D-Day.**



Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act

Beginning January 1, 2020, the Department of Veterans Affairs, in accordance with The Blue Water Navy (BWN) Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019 ([PL 116-23](#)), extended the presumption of herbicide exposure, such as Agent Orange, to Veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975. The Department of Veterans Affairs has started processing claims for veterans who served on Navy vessels off the shores of Vietnam. Veterans do not have to prove that they served the 12 nautical miles offshore of the Republic of Vietnam, the Veterans Benefits Administration will take care of this when the Veteran files benefits claims.

If you were denied a claim, you must refile, because the law requires claimants to receive back pay based on the date you filed the original claim.

If you are a surviving spouse, child, or parent of a service member who died in the line of duty, or the survivor of a Veteran who died from a service-related injury or illness, **you may be able to get a tax-free monetary benefit** called VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). If you were denied your Blue Water Navy Veteran's service-connected disability claim in the past, you may be eligible for DIC benefits based on the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019.

<https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/blue-water-navy.asp>

If you live in Maryland and have questions about this or any other VA Compensation or Pension questions, please contact the [MDVA Service and Benefits](#) office at 1-800-446-4926.

Veteran in Crisis? Concerned about a Veteran?

Did you know that VA offers same day services in primary care and mental health at 172 VA Medical Centers across the country? No matter what you may be experiencing, there is support for getting your life on a better track. Many, many Veterans have found

the strength to reach out and make the connection. To find the Veteran resources most helpful for you, click on the [Make the Connection Resource Locator](#) link below, fill in your ZIP code or state, and then check the boxes to indicate the programs or topics you are interested in learning more about. [Make the Connection Resource Locator](#)

You can also contact the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) or call 1-800-273-8255.

Home-based Primary Care for Veterans

Home-based Primary Care is health care services provided to Veterans in their home. A VA physician supervises the health care team who provides the services. **Home-based Primary Care is for Veterans who have complex health care needs for whom routine clinic-based care is not effective.**

The program is for Veterans who need team based in-home support for ongoing diseases and illnesses that affect their health and daily activities. Veterans usually have difficulty making and keeping clinic visits because of the severity of their illness and are often home bound, but that is not required.

This program is also for Veterans who are isolated, or their caregiver is experiencing burden. Home-based Primary Care can be used in combination with other home and community based services. For more information, go to:

https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/pages/Home_Based_Primary_Care.asp

Access Granted

Starting Jan. 1, 2020, the Department of Defense is expanding access to a number of base commissary stores, exchange services, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) retail facilities for veterans and caregivers. Read more at: <https://www.dav.org/learn-more/news/2020/access-granted/>

Download this document to answer all of your questions:

<download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Factsheets/expanding-access-fact-sheet.pdf>

Uniform Smiles

A new drill instructor at Fort Jackson, S.C., was to escort recruits to the mess hall. After everyone had made it through the chow line, he sat them down and told them "There are three rules in this mess hall:

- Shut up!
- Eat up!
- Get up!"

Checking to see that he had everyone's attention, he asked, "What is the first rule?" Much to the amusement of the other drill instructors, 60 privates yelled in unison, "Shut up, Drill Sergeant!"

Looking For a Few Good Volunteers

Would you like to be a Gilchrist volunteer? We are always looking for volunteers – especially those who have military experience. Our military veteran volunteers are involved in Salute to Service Tributes for veterans under hospice care, visiting public schools to talk about military service, meeting with veterans to talk about their military service, supporting our annual Welcome Home event for Vietnam Veterans, and many other activities.

If you would like to learn how to become a volunteer, contact Gilchrist at

wehonorveterans@gilchristcares.org.

We Want Your Input

If you have suggestions for content you would like to see in future issues of the Gilchrist We Honor Veterans Newsletter, please contact us at wehonorveterans@gilchristcares.org.

The logo for Gilchrist features the word "gilchrist" in a bold, green, lowercase sans-serif font. A single green leaf icon is positioned above the letter "i".

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