



VETERANS FOR PEACE
HUMBOLDT BAY
CHAPTER 56

THE FOGHORN

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2014

“Cutting Through the Fog of War”

Military Women: We Got Fired for Being Raped

By Tony Kovaleski, Liz Wagner and Felipe Escamilla

Military women across the country are responding to an NBC Bay Area investigation highlighting the alleged sexual assault and subsequent termination of a former member of the California National Guard. They say Master Sergeant Jessica Brown, a former airman in the 129th Rescue Wing out of Moffett Field, is not alone. They contacted the Investigative Unit to tell their own stories of how they were raped and then forced out of the careers they loved, and to renew their call for greater accountability in the National Guard.

“I was one of many that had a career ended shortly because I simply reported a sexual assault,” Jennifer Norris said.

Norris retired as a technical sergeant from the United States Air Force in 2010 and also served in the Maine and Massachusetts National Guards. Norris testified before Congress that during her military career, she was sexually assaulted four times between 1996 and 1998. She says after she finally reported the attacks to her supervisor, she faced retaliation.

“I went back and was blown away at how much disdain and hatred I faced as a result of standing up for what was right and protecting other women,” Norris said. “That right in and of itself was the biggest betrayal I ever experienced in my life....When you have zero support and you are alone, it will push you to the place Jessica Brown has been. I have been there.”

In 2012, Brown told us about her memories of retaliation after she reported a sexual assault during a training mission in 2007.

“Leadership has been told and they don’t do anything about it,” she said. “They throw it under the rug.”

The California National Guard says it investigated Brown’s allegation of sexual assault but her claims were never substantiated. The conflict did not go away and in 2013 Brown says the retaliation she faced after reporting the sexual assault became so unbearable, she tried to end her own life. Hours after that attempt, the Guard confirmed, it hired a courier to serve termination papers to Brown in the hospital.

“My heart broke when I saw her story because I have been pushed to that point,” Norris said of Brown. “I have ended up in the hospital wanting to die based on how these folks treated me.”

Norris was medically retired from the Air Force for post-traumatic stress disorder due to the military sexual trauma. She said she took multiple prescription medications to help her feel less angry, depressed and anxious and that she came close to ending her life.

“I wanted to die because I basically feel I got fired for being raped,” Norris said.

Kate Weber, a retired Army veteran from Sonoma County and Panayiota Bertzikis, a retired Coast Guard veteran currently living in Phoenix also told the Investigative Unit about their experiences in the military. Weber says she was raped in Germany in 1993 when she was a new recruit. Bertzikis says she was raped in 2006 by a fellow shipmate in Burlington, Vermont. Both say they had their careers cut short after reporting their experiences to their supervisors.

“We have been there,” Weber said referring to Brown’s situation. “We have been pushed to the brink of death and it’s not her fault.”

Weber, Norris and Bertzikis work for the Military Rape Crisis Center, an organization that advocates for victims of military sexual trauma. Bertzikis started the organization from her barracks in 2007 several months after she was raped. She estimates that 1,900 military veterans and active duty personnel contact the organization yearly to report instances of sexual trauma.

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“We definitely see a lot [from] the National Guard,” Bertzikis said. “The problem we are seeing in the National Guard is the lack of support within the command.”

Military sexual trauma has received a flurry of attention in recent years from members of Congress, such as Rep. Jackie Speier. In April, she reintroduced the Sexual Assault Oversight and Prevention (STOP) Act, which would take investigation of sexual assaults out of the hands of the military and place jurisdiction in an outside, independent entity.

According to Department of Defense reports, an estimated 26,000 military personnel experienced instances of unwanted sexual contact in 2012.

In an email to the Investigative Unit, a spokesperson for the Department of Defense wrote “the leadership of this department has no higher priority than the safety and welfare of our men and women in uniform...” and that since May, the DOD has directed 21 initiatives to enhance commander accountability, ensure appropriate command climate, improve victim support and enhance safety.

The department’s preliminary data shows that it has received 5,400 reports of sexual assault in fiscal year 2013, which is a 60 percent increase from the previous fiscal year. The department says the increase in reports indicates a growing level of confidence in its response system.

The NBC Bay Area Investigative Unit contacted the DOD for comments on our latest investigation but a spokesperson said that it does not comment on pending legislation.

In a recent interview, Brown said she is now improving and that if her message is resonating with victims, then speaking out was worth it. Since her suicide attempt last spring, the California Guard terminated Brown from her fulltime status, and she no longer serves as a member of the reserve.

When asked how she reacts to the push to make the military more accountable when it comes to sexual assault, Brown said, “I think it’s phenomenal because there is very little accountability.”

She also said she advocates for civilian prosecution of military sex crimes.

“We need extra eyes,” she said. “We need someone who is not going to be part of the chain of command.”

Advocates say that in many cases, federal legislation addressing the reporting and prosecution of sexual crimes does not apply to state military departments.

“A lot of people just assume that because the National Guard is part of the Department of Defense, they automatically have to adhere to the laws of the DOD,” Norris said. “Well they don’t, because they are a state entity.”

Lawmakers in Iowa are now addressing the issue. In January, state senator Steve Sodders introduced a bill requiring commanders in the Iowa National Guard to report incidents of sexual assault outside the chain of command to civilian authorities.

“The goal of the legislation is to have better reporting of sexual assault to law enforcement, but also for the legislature to understand how often this is happening so we have better track of it,” Sodders said.

Currently, California has no similar law.

“I would like to California and other states following Iowa’s footsteps,” Bertzikis said. “The whole system needs to change; the whole National Guard.”

A member of the 129th Rescue Wing who is familiar with Brown’s situation—and who also asked to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation—echoed that sentiment.

“The current sexual assault reporting system has failed many very successful career women and there needs to be a change,” the source said.

Calls to the California National Guard requesting an interview on the latest developments have not been returned.

JOHN MALLOY SAYING GOODBYE

John Mulloy has decided that he wants to leave Arcata and return to Bisbee, Arizona, a place in which he had lived and loved in days gone by.

John visited Bisbee during the summer and reacquainted himself with many old friends and was quickly readopted to this small Arizona community.

We in VFP56 will miss John’s tireless commitment to our organization and his skillful facilitation of our monthly meetings.

John’s departure will necessitate changing our monthly meeting place. We will be meeting at the Unitarian Fellowship Church at 24 Fellowship Way just off the Jacoby Creek Road in Bayside. Meetings will begin at 7:00, first Thursdays of each month.



JOURNEY TO FOREVER

By John Mulloy
Episode IX

A ROMANTIC JOURNEY:
QUEBEC, NEW BRUNSWICK,
And NOVA SCOTIA

Not all journeys have to provide life – IMPACTING or truth – REVEALING results. Some travels are mellow meanderings that create comfort for the soul and generate harmonious vibrations of gentleness. In the summer of '73, my then love and I took such a route, covering a couple thousand miles through eastern Canada.

Our transportation mode was composed of walking and hitch-hiking. We camped most of the time, living simply. Every five days or so, we'd rent a room and treat ourselves. Traveling in this manner certainly brings one into direct contact with nature and the citizenry. Going at such a slow motion pace can lead to a steadiness of mind, body, and spirit, that keeps you very much in the NOW.

This nook of the world offered great serenity, with the word 'bucolic' being very apt. In the middle of the St. Lawrence River, near Quebec City, lies a large island (15 square miles), Orleans, that is purely strawberry farms. It was harvest time and we wallowed in berries until we were satiated. Since ocean, lakes, rivers, and streams dominate the geography of this end of Canada, we were usually able to buy fresh catch from fishermen when they tied up at piers.

Farm families often had stone ovens by the roadside, baking fresh bread. Friendly folks abounded. If you put out calm, friendly energy, its almost always returned. Everyone likes and needs to be treated as a worthy being. We build up each other's self esteem; kindness is reciprocated. The massive array of warm hues from the blue and green color spectrum (reflecting all the water and surrounding vegetation) adds powerfully to the almost 'cuddly' nature of the voyage through these provinces.

The whole background scenario of this adventure is one of romance. Not just the attraction between lovers; rather, the very classical concept, that the living of life itself can be a romantic journey of the SOUL through the MAZE of LIFE.

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PASSENGER TRAIN MAGIC

Trains have always fascinated me. As a child, freight trains spurred my imagination. Where were they heading? What were they carrying? As an adult, my travel mode love affair is with

long distance passenger trains. There were far more routes in the past; track mileage is but a fraction of what it was a century ago. Amtrak is doing its best to maintain railroad traditions. Spacious seating cars, high-rise observation decks, a dining car, and a large lounge car (the most important societal binding agent on the train) make the journey's hospitable environment.

Spaciousness and the ability to go from car to car open up movement and comradery. The lounge car, with its low tables, cushy seats, drinks, and snacks creates an atmosphere for card playing, scenery conversation, and general social interchange. All of this takes place in an aura of conviviality that is generated and incubated by the journey as conceptual whole, the train as a travel mode, and sincere and able staff.

Deeper discussions evolve as social barriers come down and psyches relax. Knowledge is shared, ideas and conjecturing abound, and kernels of wisdom are found. During the night, the 'clickity – clack' of train wheels is a lullaby of rest. In the space of a day or two, a micro society had sprouted, flourished and become a memory.

Following are three short vignettes from my train travels; scenarios that may be of interest.

* * * *

NORMAN ROCKWELL AMERICANA: The SOLDIER

During a January, 1966, train journey, from D.C. to California. I had a profound experience that I've pondered for half a century. As we pulled to a stop in the farming state of Iowa, right in front of my face, through the windows, was a scene out of Norman Rockwell's artistry: parents and son saying their "love you" and "goodbye"

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Next VFP56 meeting will be held
on Thursday, October 2nd at
7:00 PM.
Meeting will be held in Unitarian
Fellowship at 24 Fellowship Way
Bayside, Jacoby Ck. Rd. Veter-
ans and non-veterans are more
than welcome to come and help us
dialogue about what we together
can do to bring about peace in this
complex world.



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whisperings. The son wore a brand new U.S. Army winter uniform, with newly stitched private's insignia. Heading west, a fresh young soldier bearing the crossed rifles of the infantry on his lapels, he was a sure bet for deployment to Vietnam. The conductor shouts, "ALL ABOARD!!" The young man hugs mom and dad, and then bounds for the train.

He finds a seat across from me. We quickly form a friendship for the duration of the journey. We were all over the train, 'goofing off', as twenty year old young men do. We pulled pranks on each other, and seemed to always be in either playful motion or earnest talk. He is sincere, honest, a great guy. After a wonderful crossing of western America, we shake hands firmly and express "good luck" to one another. Being too youthful, we fail to exchange addresses. I never see him again.

Over the years, I think of him often. He served as an emotional 'touchstone' during my years of experience with the Vietnam War. Did he survive? Is he now an old farmer, with grandkids? Physical wounds and/or psychological trauma? Or, worse yet, did he come home in a casket, to eternally grieving parents? I think about them too. In a sense, he has served as my 'unknown soldier'.

I always wish his spirit the best karma and vibrations. May we provide a soft landing for all veterans. The wonderful, coddling nature of the train journey allowed our characters to interact and create the bond for me, and the concern for his SOUL.

* * * *

The CONDUCTOR

June of 1975 found me heading, via AMTRAK, from Sacramento, California to Denver, Colorado. Shortly after my boarding, we began the long climb into the Sierra Mountains. I was in the last car, enjoying the company of several folks seated nearby. One of the two young conductors approached and indicated that I should follow him. We traversed all five seating cars, two sleeping cars with high-rise observation decks, lounge, dining car, crew quarters, and finally came to the main baggage car. We were surrounded by piles of luggage and sacks of U.S. mail.

I thought that the personal guided tour was wonderful, but it was just the entry route of a complete Magical Mystery Tour. The conductor slid open a large side door, revealing the beauty of the Feather River Canyon; high, rugged, remote. Then, with a big grin, he fired up a fat JOINT. We passed it back and forth as we watched the awesome panorama of nature roll by. What a rush!! Sitting on the floor of the baggage car, getting high with the conductor, while viewing one

of Earth's beautiful settings. I knew that I was having an un-repeatable experience that would be archived in my mental storage and imprinted on my SOUL.

After awhile, he said that he had to get ready for the next stop. We shook hands and he guided me back through the crew quarters; then, I was off on my own. I glided through the cars, with a big grin on my face. Magic had just happened. I was even more enthralled with train travel than before. This mode of 'clickity - clack' languid movement was perfect for the slow motion sequence that had just occurred. I felt truly blessed for the experience. "Man, that joint got me ripped", I chortled to myself.

* * * *

The HUMAN COMEDY

Coming into the final stretch of a long ride up the west coast of Mexico, my friend and I felt relaxed. Our 'no amenities, two seating cars' train pulled into a small station late at night, in the Sonoran Desert. Here, the cars would split up, with a second locomotive coming into the picture. One car would proceed to Nogales (Arizona border, our goal), the other to Mexicali (California border); two very divergent endings.

The conductor disappeared, not to be seen again. Confusion amongst the passengers appeared and quickly spread. There was no reserved seating and no one had a clear idea of which car was going where. No officials were available to guide. The two of us, with packs, stood on the back platform of the lead car. We could hear the locomotive revving up. We had to decide our move, so we made a mental coin flip, and stepped back to the second car. At that moment, the two cars disengaged and we watched the lead car disappear into the black void of the night. All the passengers were apprehensive.

While a second locomotive was being hooked up, a new conductor showed up and announced that Nogales was the next stop. "Whew!" Fate was on our side. But, about half of the passengers were in the wrong car; ditto for the other one. The train bureaucracy, with no apologies, had to recall the other locomotive, thus sending people to their correct destinations. "Go with the flow", is the mantra for most planetary travel. Be prepared for all eventualities. I'll never forget watching the first car fade into the darkness. Surreal.

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'HEALING'
PLANET;
ENGAGING
With
NATURE

It cannot be stated enough that our planet is both 'drop dead' gorgeous and rich with resources beyond imagination. Human beings must become dedicated caretakers of this vibrant planetary world. We live on a celestial orb which exudes healing consciousness. The relationship is circular; healing the Earth and all of its life and contents must become our heritage and our legacy. Thus far, we have been primarily 'users'. Our greatest madness had been to attempt 'control' over Nature, rather than seeking a role that allows our species to be an equal in the ecosystems of Earth.

Aside from the resources of water, atmosphere, soil, minerals, herbs, etc. that Mother Nature provides, nurtures and protects, the planet is a setting of extensive mystique and beauty. Mountains, forests, canyons, rock formations, grasslands, beaches, deserts, lakes, rivers, oceans, wildlife habitats; all is varied and beautiful to behold. We must stop forever our exploitation of the planet. We must change our ways, becoming co-operative, rather than commandeering. We should protect and restore ecosystems. If we do, the healing of Earth and humans will be mutual.

Direct engagement with Nature is the most reliable bonding agent. I encourage each of us to seek out and explore some of Earth's physical jewels. You don't have to go extreme. Skiing to the South Pole or climbing Mount Everest are not required. Being a witness or sightseer is acceptable, but physical interaction will increase your intrinsic learning experience.

You'll sense Earth's symbiotic relationship with all life associated with the planet. A strong interaction with physical scenarios will strengthen your body and sharpen your senses. Your mind will be stimulated and new knowledge will flow toward you. Your level of consciousness will expand, enhancing the broadening of your SOUL, in both depth and intuition. The mysterious Planet Earth and the knowledge quest of the human come together in a natural reciprocity of healing.

* * * *

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH;
TOUCHING the SKY

Set in a very remote section of Colorado's Rocky Mountain National Park, is a series of deeply forested high ridges and

folds known as the Mummy Range. Very few backpackers get in there, so it's quite pristine. For spectacular effect, the best way to approach this region is from the southeast, using two of the Rockies' highest peaks (Hagues and Epsilon, each almost 14,000 feet) as a guide. The two peaks frame a wondrous entryway to the Mummy Range. I would come to see that entry as a powerful connection between Earth and Universe.

With a trail that begins at 7,500 feet, you face a steady uphill climb, with many switchbacks to test your resolve. A small tent, sleeping bag, simple cook stove, and food are a must. Keep your load at a minimalist level. Good hiking boots and extra socks are necessary. Your body heat will build as you climb, but temperatures at night will DROP, so pack a good cold weather coat. There is plenty of wondrous water along the way.

That first day, you'll cover about eight miles and rise to a little over 11,000 feet. Pace yourself; no 'Gung-Ho' stuff. Stop, rest and take in the scenery. It's a joyful journey. A stream rambles downhill through the narrow valley that is channeling you upward. Listen to the babbling water as it rolls over rocks. No need to rush. Check out the two ridges that are running parallel with your trail, on either side. They are your guide.

At the end of your hike is small, cold Lawn Lake, the source for the stream you've been following. This might be the best water you'll ever drink. The lakeside is your campsite and also the top of the tree line. Rises in elevation from this point are amidst tundra and rocks. You'll notice that the ridges lead to the spiraling peaks behind the lake. The peaks are joined by a 'saddle' with two pommels (the peaks). The saddle rises steeply, about 700 – 800 feet, above the lake. It's not a ridge up there, but a flat plateau. You'll sense that you're in an open bowl, with the lake as the centerpiece. Gaze at the saddle and peaks; prepare to reach for the magic.

Camping at the lake for a day is a beautiful reality. The two peaks will rivet your attention. There will be an understanding of why these mountains are called the Rockies. After a days rest, you'll head for the base of the saddle. It's a testing climb. Remember, the higher elevation brings more oxygen deprivation. This is not a race. Most of the climb can be accomplished by switch backing. The final stage is a

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tough 'hump', on all 'fours', arms pulling and legs pushing.

Just as you think it's getting harder, the tune changes. There is a sudden turn from UP,UP,UP to FLAT. And now you're standing on the plateau, a bush and treeless expanse, ¾ of a mile or so to the other side. Take a long break, lungs and heart resting, then head to the middle of the saddle. At a certain point, you can stand more or less exactly between the two overwhelming peaks as they touch the sky. It is a powerful surge that rolls through your SOUL as you feel their immense power and universal connection to the limitless 'beyond'. Look ahead and behind. All you can see are two flat horizon lines. You are so high up and so deep into the plateau that all behind and ahead of the saddle is unseeable. The geometric angles cut it all out of our view.

I was filled with wonderful awe. You certainly feel the physical strength of our Earth, along with the reaching for the sky, on a magic carpet (the tundra) that seems as if it could take off at any time. The two horizon lines represented on one level that the ascent was 'past' and the 'future' was as yet unknowable. This was NOW, the epitome of the concept of 'Be Here Now'. The travails of civilization were not on this page of life's journey. The biblical sense of Creation crept into my consciousness. You could go metaphoric so easily. The stage was unrepeatable, yet permanent at this spot. The peaks grew more in stature as I stood between them. One expects to receive knowledge. NOAH! MOSES! LISTEN! If this experience doesn't bond you with your planetary home, what can?

I spread out my sleeping bag. In a crystal clear atmosphere, I could see millions of stars and galaxies. At one point, a jetliner passed overhead at 25,000 feet, its lights flashing red, yellow, and green. What would a human, of just a century ago, think of that? How could he/she relate to a giant bird with lights? It is a U.F.O. storyline, but it seemed appropriate in the NOW of the magic carpet. My mind drifted off into space, literally and figuratively.

Take the journey to this natural cathedral, its twin spires reaching toward the heavens. Your SOUL will be appreciative. So will Mother Nature.

Afghanistan War Turns Eleven: Is It Still Worth The Cost?

By Michael McConnell

CHICAGO - As Sunday's 11th anniversary of the Afghanistan war approaches, more people in Illinois and around the nation are questioning whether it's really worth the cost. According to the latest polls, 60 percent of Americans want to bring the troops home as soon as possible.

Michael McConnell, Great Lakes regional program director for the American Friends Service Committee, wants the war to end. He points to a study from the Political Economic Research Institute that found military spending creates far fewer jobs than investments in education and other programs.

"The money we're spending on bombs and tanks and the military is money that we're not spending on infrastructure in the United States, or alternative energy."

McConnell says the war in Afghanistan has cost more than \$500 billion, and the lives of more than 2000 American troops as well as thousands of Afghan civilian lives.

Alejandro Villatoro, a Chicago veteran, was sent to Afghanistan as part of the President's "surge" of additional troops. He says he was told they were there to win the hearts and minds of the people, but feels it didn't work out that way. He's particularly concerned about the attacks by allies that Americans are supposed to be training, and the accidental killings of civilians.

"We're causing more damage than doing good. It's just a huge loss on both sides. So, it is time to withdraw and really start taking care of our troops."

Villatoro says he lost a friend in Iraq and has many others who were injured in the conflict in Afghanistan. He says he considers himself patriotic, but is opposed to the war in Afghanistan.

McConnell says those who want to control the U.S. budget deficit need to consider the reason for a huge portion of the deficit.

"Both the Iraq war and the Afghanistan war have been credit-card wars. Every year Congress swipes its credit card, and the U.S. taxpayer is billions of dollars in debt."

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the two wars together have cost nearly \$1.5 trillion, \$127 billion this year alone.

President Obama is promising to end the war in 2014. Some want to end it earlier, including some former strong supporters of the war from both political parties. Others argue that leaving now would empower the Taliban.

McConnell says he's convinced that drone strikes and civilian casualties will never win Afghan hearts and minds.



VA Touts Progress on Suicides; Data Tell Another Story

By Dennis Wagner,

Victoria Yett discusses the details of the suicide of her husband, Robert Yett, of the U.S. Navy, who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, as he waited for his appointment for PTSD with the Phoenix VA. The Arizona Republic

Seven years ago, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs rejected allegations by media outlets and watchdog organizations that America faced a suicide epidemic among former military personnel.

The VA claimed just 790 veterans under department care had taken their own lives that year. Yet, by reviewing available public records since 2005, CBS News uncovered 6,256 suicides.

As VA officials publicly disputed the network's data, Dr. Ira Katz, the top mental-health officer, was sending internal e-mails titled "Not for the CBS Interview Request."

"Shh!" Katz wrote in one message. "Our suicide prevention coordinators are identifying about 1,000 suicide attempts per month among veterans we see in our medical facilities."

When the e-mails were disclosed, confirming the CBS findings, some members of Congress called for Katz's resignation or termination.

An official Veterans Affairs statement to The Republic supplemented that point: "Getting help from VA does make a positive difference, and treatment does work. VA's basic strategy for suicide prevention requires ready access to high quality mental health ... services supplemented by programs designed to help individuals and families engage in care."

A fact sheet published by the VA's Suicide Prevention Program in 2012 reported 18 veteran suicides daily, while a "Suicide Data Report" issued by the same program in the same year put the number at 22. In 2013, the VA and Defense Department published a clinical-practice guide saying 18 to 22 die daily.

But other evidence hints at the magnitude of the crisis. As of June 2012, the national VA Suicide Prevention Line was getting roughly 17,000 calls per month — up more than 17 percent from 2009. Four out of five were veterans seeking help, nearly one-third of them contemplating suicide.

The B+ grade from Katz also seems to clash with criticism from Congress, watchdog organizations and whistle-blowers who say VA mental-health programs are beleaguered by delays in care, dishonest record-keeping and staffing shortages.

Recent investigations by the VA offices of inspector general and special counsel exposed a nationwide patchwork of mismanage-

ment and treatment breakdowns:

- In Georgia last year, the inspector general said 16 veterans who were sidetracked in the appointment system had attempted suicide while awaiting mental-health care.

- In St. Louis, Chief of Psychiatry Dr. Jose Mathews discovered that doctors on his staff were seeing just six veterans a day — spending only 3½ hours in patient contact per shift. Mathews testified in a House hearing that veterans became so frustrated with VA mental-health care they quit after one or two visits. When Mathews tried to enact reforms, he was investigated, bullied and removed from his job.

- At the VA hospital in Brockton, Mass., an Office of Special Counsel report said one patient went eight years without a psychiatric evaluation and another went seven years without a single note in his chart.

In 2012, according to an inspector general's report, seven of 10 VA mental-health workers said they were short-staffed. The problem: low pay, undesirable work conditions and a national shortage of mental-health professionals.

At the same time, veterans report abysmal satisfaction rates. When the American Legion surveyed members recently, 59 percent said they felt "no improvement" or were "feeling worse" after going to the VA for treatment of traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder. Thirty percent terminated treatment early.

A survey by the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Association released last month says more than half the respondents have a mental-health injury and 31 percent have considered taking their own lives. Nearly half said the VA is doing a "bad job" with mental-health services, and two-thirds indicated scheduling "challenges."

Such findings seemingly conflict with the VA's own survey last year, which said mental-health patients "strongly agree" they receive timely, effective and respectful care.

A March poll by the Washington Post and Kaiser Family Foundation found that more than half of post-9/11 vets know a service member or veteran who committed suicide or attempted to do so.

Suicides also have been prominent in the nearly \$200 million worth of wrongful-death settlements paid by the VA during the past decade. One case documented by the Center for Investigative Reporting involved a Marine veteran who hanged himself with a garden hose after being turned away from a VA psychiatric-care clinic. Another was filed by a widow whose veteran husband shot himself after a disability claim for PTSD was turned down.





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Chapter 56**

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LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

If you would like to submit an article, opinion, comment or response to anything you have read which might interest the members of VFP-56, please e-mail it to turtldncr@aol.com, in word format, or mail to Jim Sorter at 1762 Buttermilk Lane, Arcata, CA 95521. Submissions will be included on a first come basis until the newsletter is full. Late arriving submissions will be archived for future issues.

Our Own Mashaw McGuinnis

If you are wondering what Mashaw has been up to in the recent past, wonder no more. Our own VFP56 member Mashaw McGuinnis has been busy writing articles for the nationally know magazine Good Housekeeping. The October 2014 issue of Good Housekeeping has a great article, written by Mashaw, describing her obsession with TV game shows of the past. In particular was her interest in the show Pyramid. The article describes her appearance on the show, with TV personality Betty White as her partner, as they go on to win the ultimate prize.

The article offers great and witty insights into Mashaw's preadulthood years, her relationship with her mother and the formation of her love for writing.

*Stop by the store and pick up the October 2014 issue of Good Housekeeping. I guarantee you won't be disappointed. Also link to the article at:
<http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/family/blogs-books/betty-white-pyramid-game-show>*

Veterans For Peace
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