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# WE HONOR VETERANS

AN NHPCO NEWSLETTER FOR  
WE HONOR VETERANS

## VET-TO-VET CAFÉ GIVES VETERANS A PLACE TO SOCIALIZE AND SHARE STORIES

By Katherine Kemp, Veterans Services Manager, NHPCO

We Honor Veterans partners know the importance of community involvement, and there is no shortage of creative ways to serve patients through hosting events. I was thrilled to receive an invitation to Level 5 Pilot Program Partner Beacon Hospice, an Amedisys Company in Hyannis, Massachusetts. Each month, Cynthia Robotham and Judy Hunter coordinate a Vet-to-Vet Café as a way for Veterans to get together and socialize. I was fortunate enough to attend a café in August and experience the comradery and effect that a simple gathering over coffee can have. Cindy and Judy explained that it is open to everyone and the invitation is sent with no expectations – Veterans can share stories, mingle with each other or just sit back and listen while enjoying a baked good. Some are hesitant, but soon find comfort in a much-needed outlet and often return as they are able.



*The Vet-to-Vet Café allows Veterans to share stories and socialize.*

*Katherine Kemp (center) pictured with Beacon Hospice, an Amedisys Company's Cynthia Robotham and Judy Hunter.*

I made my way around the room, greeting Veterans, thanking them for their service, and attending to the pressing matter of refilling empty cups and the need for another pastry. At one point the distinct call of a South Boston accent came across the room, "She came all the way from D.C., she better give us a speech!" After my impromptu address, I refilled his diet ginger ale and sat

down to hear more from the lively Air Force Veteran. He veered the conversation away from his time in the service and began to tell me about the days of Reagan, and I

asked about his time spent now with other Veterans and if he enjoys coming to socialize. He got quiet for a second and lowered his head, then shared how much he appreciates being able to gather with others and be recognized for his service.

"But," he continued, "...the real heroes are with us in spirit. The real heroes didn't come back but know that they never leave our thoughts. And even greater than those who served are the women who were here taking care of everything when we were gone. The greatest hero in my eyes is my mom."

What Cindy and Judy do as dedicated We Honor Veterans partners is because of their loving dedication and will to serve. When discussing these cafés one thing kept coming up: the simplicity. These are not big, fancy, expensive events. While they do take a bit of coordinating with others in the community, just providing a space with some drinks and a snack is more than enough. It's about creating an opportunity for those who want to share and letting those who may not be ready know that it's available.

Cindy and Judy were kind enough to provide an outline for planning your very own Vet-to-Vet Café and will go into further detail on our next Partner Networking Call on September 26. Register for the call [here](#) and find the guide on the WHV Event Planning page under [Partner Resources](#).

The National Hospice and Palliative Care

# NHPCO WELCOMES ROBERT WILKIE AS SECRETARY OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Organization (NHPCO) congratulates Robert Wilkie on his Senate confirmation as United States Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Secretary Wilkie's confirmation took place in July.

NHPCO looks forward to introducing Secretary Wilkie to the innovative We Honor Veterans program and working collaboratively with the Secretary and his staff to ensure that all Veterans have access to person-centered, family-oriented, interdisciplinary care – and that they are recognized and honored for their service to our nation, particularly at the end of life.

In his previous position as the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Secretary Wilkie served as the principal advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense for Total Force Management; among the many responsibilities was the quality of life for military families. The hospice and palliative care community share a similar focus of ensuring the highest quality of life for people under their care. This is at the heart of We Honor Veterans.

## SEASONS HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE PATIENT MAKES A SPECIAL TRIP TO D.C.

By Beth A. Bogan, Volunteer Services Coordinator, Seasons Hospice & Palliative Care

In June, Seasons Hospice & Palliative Care patient and Veteran Stephen Nee made a very special trip from Dallas to D.C.

*Stephen is proud of the service he provided as a U.S. Marine. With over 20 years in the military, Stephen spent time in Japan, Korea, and Vietnam both serving and recruiting. Stephen loves to talk about his adventures and experiences, and share his knowledge.*

*In June, Stephen had the opportunity to take part in Honor Flight #38 out of Love Field, which is a special flight dedicated to taking U.S. Military Veterans to visit the war memorials in Washington, D.C. Stephen recounted that the flight was wonderful, and there were many other Veterans with him. Stephen said that the Vietnam Memorial brought many emotions as he found the names of friends and those he recruited on the memorial's wall.*

*Stephen received a special certificate at the Honor Flight Banquet for his service, which he proudly displays in his room. He hoped others would continue to have the opportunity to take the flight that he felt honored him so.*

**Beth A. Bogan**  
Seasons Hospice  
& Palliative Care



*Stephen Nee is pictured with his sons, Steve and John, in front of the Washington Monument.*

## DATES TO REMEMBER

Mark Your Calendars for our next WHV Partner Networking Call, September 26 from 2-3:30 pm (EST). Register [here](#)! In honor of Suicide Prevention and Awareness month, we will be hosting another free webinar *Special Considerations in Veteran Suicide Prevention: End-of-Life* on September 25 at 3pm (EST) Register [here](#).

Sept. 26th from  
2:00 - 3:30 pm EST

Sept. 25th at  
3:00 pm EST

## RECURSOS EN ESPAÑOL

Many of our partner resources used to honor Veterans are now available in Spanish and can be found under WHV Partner Resources here: [www.wehonorveterans.org/recursos-en-espa%C3%B1ol](http://www.wehonorveterans.org/recursos-en-espa%C3%B1ol).

## WELCOME TO THE NEW & IMPROVED WE HONOR VETERANS WEBSITE

In an effort to streamline the process of submitting activities for our WHV partners, the WHV team is happy to announce that we have made updates that now allow you to be automatically approved! This means that immediately after you submit your activity report you will get a response that you have either been approved and can begin your next level activities, or we may need a bit more information. We're hoping this new feature will make things more efficient for our partners and save them time wondering if they submitted correctly. To earn your stars, submit your activities here: [www.wehonorveterans.org/hospice-partners](http://www.wehonorveterans.org/hospice-partners).

## WEBINARS ON DEMAND

Did you miss the recent webinars *Soul Injury* or *Vietnam Veterans: Untold Stories at the End of Life* with Deborah Grassman? A recording is available for free on-demand viewing as well as handouts. Interested in *Soul Injury Leadership Training* to expand your awareness and provide you with the skills and tools to present in your community or at your organization? Go to [www.opuspeace.org](http://www.opuspeace.org) to learn more.

Are you new to the program or just need a refresher on the program with helpful tips and resource updates? *We Honor Veterans 101* gives a program overview, showing you how to navigate the website and submit your activities, and answers frequently asked partner questions.

All webinar recordings and resources can be found under Education Offerings here: [www.wehonorveterans.org/webinars](http://www.wehonorveterans.org/webinars).

## WE HONOR VETERANS AT IDC

Planning on attending IDC or still on the fence about registering? Based on feedback from last year's successful WHV event and panel discussion highlighting community activities and the power of HVPs, there will be a Veteran-focused session and a WHV Happy Hour. We will host a free event for all attendees to meet with Veterans Organizations, enjoy refreshments, and have opportunities to interact with partners in a speed dating-style Q&A session.

Register here: [www.nhpco.org/2018-idc-rates-and-registration-information](http://www.nhpco.org/2018-idc-rates-and-registration-information)



## 2018 INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE

NEW ORLEANS, LA

EDUCATION PROGRAMS & PRECONFERENCE SEMINARS - NOVEMBER 3-4, 2018  
MAIN CONFERENCE - NOVEMBER 5-7, 2018  
HYATT REGENCY NEW ORLEANS - NEW ORLEANS, LA

# WE HONOR VETERANS PARTNERS IN ACTION!



U.S. Army Sgt. David Barris (seated) surrounded by his family and members of his hospice care team.

## MJHS SURPRISES PATIENT WITH SPECIAL GIFT AND HONOR

By Audrey Waters, MJHS Health System

U.S. Army Sgt. David Barris proudly served in the Korean War and still tears up when he hears the National Anthem. As a teenager in his native Puerto Rico, Mr. Barris sold candy in movie theatres. Ever the patriot and with his mother's blessing, he enlisted in the Army. After being honorably discharged from the military in 1952, someone stole his dog tags and, although devastated, Mr. Barris moved forward and spent the next 38 years working for ADP Security Systems.

Recently, the sergeant's family, members of his hospice care team (including his nurse, social worker and chaplain), and a retired U.S. Marine and the director of constituent services from New York Congressman Adriano Espaillat's office, gathered to honor the sergeant and surprise him with new dog tags and a proclamation. Although now barely able to speak, Mr. Barris' smile and tears of joy said everything that hospice represents.

## NEW WE HONOR VETERANS ITEMS TO SUPPORT VETERANS AND PROMOTE YOUR PARTNERSHIP



### WE HONOR VETERANS DECAL

Use these WHV decals anywhere.

Show your Veteran support by displaying these on patient windows, doors, in your office or on your car. Perfect for most flat surfaces and can be easily removed, these 6 x 2 inch decals with clear backing are also great for giveaways.



### WE HONOR VETERANS CERTIFICATE FOLDER

This golden embossed We Honor Veterans certificate holder adds an elegant touch to your Veterans recognition certificates. The navy folders fit 8 x 10 and 8.5 x 11 paper and are perfect for presenting and displaying certificates for Veterans in your care.

Visit [NHPCO's Marketplace](#) for pricing information.

FIND US ON TWITTER!



@WeHonorVeterans

## EARN YOUR STARS

Already a We Honor Veterans partner program? We know that your organization is committed to providing Veteran-centric care to the Veteran patients you serve each and every day. If your program is ready to move up through the levels to increase your ability to serve your Veteran patients, [contact us](#) today. You can learn about the different [We Honor Veteran partner levels here](#).

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Are you part of a non-hospice organization that would like to join the mission to provide support for Veterans in your community? [Contact us to learn how you can become a Community Partner](#).

## SPONSORSHIPS

Interested in learning how you can support the We Honor Veterans program beyond becoming a partner? Individuals or organizations interested in sponsorship opportunities can contact [veterans@nhpco.org](mailto:veterans@nhpco.org).



WE HONOR VETERANS  
*Sponsor*