



A program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
veterans@nhpco.org | wehonorveterans.org

We Honor Veterans Newsletter

Fall 2023

FEATURED PARTNER STORY

Remembering a Hero: WWII Veteran Ted Szczepanski Passes Away at 105

Submitted by [Emmanuel Hospice](#) in Grand Rapids, MI - Level III WHV Partner.

In a tale of resilience and strength, a community bids farewell to a true American hero, Ted Szczepanski, a Grand Rapids native and World War II Veteran who passed away at the age of 105. His journey, filled with bravery, love, and an unwavering spirit, has left an indelible mark on the hearts of all who knew him.

Ted dedicated himself to a life of service. Born and raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan, he answered the call of duty during World War II, where he served in the 95th Division Infantry. Ted's dedication to his country took him through harrowing experiences, including a period as a prisoner of war for six months. His service to the nation exemplified the sacrifices made by the greatest generation, and it forged in him a strength that would carry him through many more battles in life.

Ted's story garnered public attention in May 2020 when he faced a unique battle – COVID-19, not once, but twice. His resilience in overcoming this modern-day adversary was a testament to his enduring spirit. It was a reminder that the courage he displayed in the face of WWII's challenges continued to shine brightly in his later years.

Ted's legacy extends far beyond his service record and his triumph over illness. He was known as a man of conviction who lived a life defined by honor and integrity. His story is a reminder of the values that have always made our nation strong: sacrifice, commitment, and love for family and country.

As we remember Ted Szczepanski, we are reminded of the sacrifices and the enduring spirit of the World War II generation. Their stories serve as a source of inspiration for us all, a reminder that we can overcome any challenge when we face it with courage and determination.

TV 8 in Grand Rapids highlighted his life story on a recent broadcast: [WWII veteran from Grand Rapids dies at 105 | WOODTV.com](#).



NEWS FROM WHV

Veterans Day - November 11

World War I, known at the time as “The Great War,” officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919 in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918 is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of the day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: a celebration to honor America’s Veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

Veterans Day social media graphics can be accessed [here](#).

WHV EVENTS

Quality of Hospice Care for Veterans in VA Nursing Homes and VA-Paid Community Nursing Homes

October 17 from 3-4:30 p.m. ET

Join the Dr. Melissa Wachterman from the VA for an informative webinar during which attendees will:

- Appreciate that the nursing home setting is a critical venue for death in U.S.;
- Understand how family-reported quality of end-of-life care is much better when Veterans receive hospice in VA nursing homes than in community nursing homes;
- Appreciate potential contributors to these quality disparities;
- Be able to brainstorm ways we can improve hospice care in community nursing homes nationally.

Dr. Wachterman is a practicing palliative care physician at VA Boston Healthcare System. She is a member of the Veterans Experience Center (VEC) Analytics team and has led a number of projects aimed at improving the quality of hospice and palliative care delivered to Veterans with serious illness.

For CEs, register through the following access links: [Non-VA employees](#) | [VA employees](#). To attend without CEs, [register here](#).

Accreditations: ACCME, ACCME-NP, ANCC, APA, ASWB, JAIPCE, NYSED-P, NYSED-SW

Questions on CEs? Please contact the VHA TRAIN Help Desk by email at VHATRAIN@va.gov.

Dare to Forgive with Deborah Grassman and Opus Peace

November 8 and 15 from 2-3:30 p.m. ET

Withhold forgiveness and you cut yourself off from a compelling force in the soul that seeks it. If someone is unable to achieve forgiveness, they might arrive at the end of life filled with bitterness, a venom that complicates peaceful dying.

You won't want to miss the two-part, newly-released film, Dare to Forgive. Stephanie Turner (Kansas City Hospice) and Ralph Ozmun (Smoky Mountain Hospice) join Deborah Grassman to provide forgiveness concepts in Part I on November 8, and in Part II on November 15, attendees will view nine short film clips and engage in panel discussion of how forgiveness can be applied in various situations. 1.5 CEs will be provided to nurses, social workers, and counselors.

This program is Approved by the National Association of Social Workers (Approval # 886856325-1777) for 1.5 continuing education contact hours. The following states do not accept National CE Approval Programs: New Jersey (Applications may be filed with the NASW New Jersey Chapter); New York (Applications may be filed with the NASW New York State Chapter); West Virginia. Opus Peace provides CEs for nurses. Westcare provides CEs for counselors.

[Register for Part 1](#) - November 8, 2-3:30 p.m. ET

[Register for Part 2](#) - November 15 2-3:30 p.m. ET

WHV Office Hours!

Join the We Honor Veterans' team for [upcoming Office Hours](#): September 28, October 3, October 26, November 7, and December 5. WHV participants of all levels are welcome to bring questions regarding level reports, website support, and more. Sign up today via our [Events Calendar!](#)

Upcoming Webinars and Office Hours

Want to ensure you never miss another WHV event again? Bookmark our [Events Calendar](#) to register for upcoming webinars and learn about community partner events.

MORE PARTNER NEWS

PsychArmor Launches "Caring for Veterans Through the End-of-Life" Series

Born from a heartfelt collaboration between [In Their Honor](#), founded by Dr. Qwynn A. Galloway-Salazar (contributor to WHV Women Veterans resource page) and the renowned PsychArmor Institute, this three-part series embodies shared wisdom and empathy set to redefine end-of-life care. Course one of the series is dedicated to fostering compassionate communities for Veterans' end-of-life care. Later this year, courses two and three will be released. Course two is designed for caregivers and loved ones, and course three is tailored to healthcare providers. [Access the series and many other resources.](#)

Tidewell Hospice Pays Tribute to First Responders: Colonel Mark Tillman

On September 13, 2023, Tidewell Hospice and the Tidewell Foundation welcomed Colonel Mark Tillman for a remarkable community event. Colonel Tillman shared his powerful story of piloting Air Force One on 9/11 and the experience that followed, drawing nearly 1,000 attendees.

This free event celebrated the Tidewell HONORS program, which honors our nation's outstanding responders and service members. It also unveiled the new Empath Tribute program, dedicated to honoring the dedication of First Responders. Colonel Tillman's account of his role on 9/11 reminded us of the resilience of a nation and the importance of unity.



Do you have a photo or story to share?

We want YOU to [send us any highlights](#) of your WHV program, events, or volunteer and patient stories with us. If you need assistance, please contact us at veterans@nhpco.org and we can help with edits and publishing.

NHPCO UPDATES AND EVENTS

Hospice Action Network (HAN) MyHospice Ambassadors Program

Applications are now open for the MyHospice Ambassador program! The MyHospice Ambassador program is a volunteer program for advocates who are interested in more active engagement in policy and advocacy. Ambassadors play a very important role in advancing our policy priorities by building relationships with legislative offices, educating fellow hospice and palliative care advocates, and mobilizing our advocacy efforts within their communities and networks. Ambassadors have one formal policy and advocacy meeting per month, as well as an optional monthly mentorship meeting to network with other ambassadors from across the country. Outside of meetings, HAN provides support and guidance to Ambassadors in their advocacy activities, including legislative outreach and facility visits. Ambassadors are vital to the success of our annual Hill Day visits in DC. Currently, we are particularly interested in candidates from IL, LA, OH, OR, WI, and WV—but candidates from all states are welcome! Please contact Stephanie Marburger, Manager of Grassroots Advocacy, at smarburger@nhpco.org if you are interested.

Press Room and Alerts

- [Talking Points for the Calendar Year \(CY\) 2024 Home Health Proposed Rule \(CMS-1780-P\) – Hospice Components](#)
- [NHPCO Commemorates Former President Jimmy Carter Reaching Six-Month Milestone on Hospice](#)

Upcoming Events

- September 21: Project ECHO – [Supporting Hispanic Patients at the End of Life](#)
- September 27: MyNHPCO Chat – [Volunteer Management – Quarterly Chat](#)
- September 28: MyNHPCO [Spiritual Caregiver Community Peer-Led Support Group](#)
- September 28: Project ECHO – [Supporting Patients Experiencing Housing Insecurity and/or Disabilities at the End of Life](#)
- October 2 - 4: [2023 NHPCO Annual Leadership Conference](#)

VA Support Resources

VA Crisis Line: 988 Select 1 if a Veteran | VA Caregiver Support Line: 855-260-3274 | VA Health Benefits Line: 877-222-8387 | [Find VA Locations](#)

If you need help finding the right contact to connect with VA telehealth resources, please contact veterans@nhpco.org.



We Honor Veterans

1713 King Street, Alexandria VA 22314

If you prefer not to receive any e-mails from NHPCO, please [unsubscribe here](#) or you may adjust your [email preferences here](#).