

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION of AMERICA
New Hampshire Chapter Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
8 September 2022

Call to Order: President Jim Lefebvre called the meeting to order at 1830 hours. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Roby Day and recited by those assembled followed by the invocation delivered by Gary Lovgren.

Attending: Breuder, Burdett, Burdo, R. Day, S. Day, DuVall, Goff, Hulsey, Ikstrums, Kyle, LeFebvre, Lovgren, Luti, McLean, Miller, Sevigny, Terhune, J. Wright. A quorum of members was present.

President's Opening Remarks: President LeFebvre stated that due to an unfortunate administrative glitch, our submission was never received at National for last year, therefore, we will get no award. Jim will attempt to talk to Erin Stone and see if she can give an idea of where we would have placed if the package had been submitted on time. We also have our new MOAA banner, and the Secretary has it. If someone takes it, we need a chain-of-custody to insure it's not lost. We are still in need of a formal US flag. Jim mentioned that some members contacted him to let him know they wouldn't be able to attend. This is appreciated and helps to determine whether we will have a quorum. Jim then brought everyone's attention to two handouts on the table: one is a Ken Lull "after action" report received that afternoon which was not transmitted previously with the document Jim sent out several days ago regarding the clambake issues. Members were asked to review both documents prior to a discussion later in the meeting. Jim also produced a proposed schedule of meetings and luncheons for the rest of this year and into 2023. The commander of the USS Constitution has re-confirmed her attendance at the annual meeting at Nashua CC this November. Sharon Day suggested that someone contact the Manchester Union Leader to see if a reporter could cover this event. Jim asked that someone in the Manchester area make this contact (this was accomplished by the recording secretary on 14 Sep 22). She will not be bringing her husband and confirmed her meal choice. The transition of the editorship of the Granite Slate is in progress from Cynthia LeFebvre to Drew Breuder. Roby Day will be presenting the annual budget for approval later tonight in preparation for the annual meeting and Sharon Day will be providing the slate of proposed new directors.

Immediate Past President Remarks: Bob Jaffin was absent due to working a late shift and there were no comments.

Vice President Remarks: Larry mentioned that there is a new requirement to replace all existing retired ID cards within the next four years to meet upcoming TSA requirements. Jim mentioned that on the way to this meeting, they stopped at the state NG offices to get new ID cards, but didn't have an appointment, so they were unable to be served. There was a consensus that this is a general requirement for the RAPIDS system, and you should ensure that the offices are open before you attempt to renew your ID card. Portsmouth NSY apparently claims it will not even be ready to issue the new cards for at least a year. Bill Luti believed that if your current ID card said "Indefinite", it wasn't required to get a new one. Retired members can keep their existing ID cards if they realize that in the future it will not meet TSA requirements.

Finally, Sharon introduced Lt. Col. Diane Hulseby who is a nominee for the BOD at the November meeting.

Secretary's Report: Michael said that we did have a quorum and he did not receive any comments or corrections to the July minutes (15 pages). A motion to accept those minutes was made, seconded, and approved by those present.

Bookkeeper's Report: Roby received no questions regarding the August's financial report.

Trustee of the Trust Fund: Drew stated that all gains from July were lost in August. The markets remain volatile.

The president wished to briefly welcome Tom Kyle and his wife, as they have not attended the BOD for a while. Tom said that they had also renewed their ID cards at Pease ANGB and were told that DOD has made this requirement "mandatory", so there still seems to be some confusion on the status of this change due to requirements for TSA scanning of the cards in the future.

The meeting was temporarily adjourned for dinner from 1850-1920 hours.

DISCUSSION OF CLAMBAKE TALKING POINTS PAPER, TRAILER, AND ALLIED ISSUES: The President had previously sent out a document (**clambake decision paper**) but on the afternoon of today's meeting received a second document from Ken Lull (**clambake decision paper**) dealing with the issues of safety, cost, equipment placement, etc. Drew suggested that we take some time to break down all the factors and do a cost/benefit analysis before making any significant decisions. Michael McLean was under the impression that equipment was being replenished over the years and was surprised that so much equipment needed to be updated/replaced. Apparently, that was not the case as there have been no listed expenditures in the budget for those items. There was some question as to whether all the listed items required replacement. Jennifer raised the point about cost of the clambake and declining attendance and needing to look at why we're holding this event in the first place. Are we trying to attract younger members/families at a reasonable cost? We need to look at "why" people are not attending the function. Tom Kyle stated that maybe the time has come to look at an alternative to the clambake such as a three-year rotating schedule of alternative events such as one year an informal event, another year a lake Winnepesaukee cruise, and the third year a scenic railroad trip. Another suggestion was converting to a catered clambake, but the costs might run \$60-\$70/head which would probably be cost prohibitive. Based on the current cost of \$25/person plus in-kind donations of supplies, we only cleared about \$235 this year. Remove the in-kind donations, and the clambake barely breaks even. To remain solvent under current conditions, next year's price would need to increase to \$30-\$35/person. Supply costs for food may also increase significantly next year. Ken had a good working relationship with these suppliers that the new clambake director might not have. Other considerations are the age of the clambake master (should be younger) and additional physical help to keep all the activities going (cooking, cleanup, serving, etc.). Larry suggested changing the venue like the US Army Association golf tournament and steak back and have attendees cook their own steak. While stationed in New Orleans they had events where the cooked items were spread out on long tables, and you picked what you wanted. Peter had previously sent out information on his

research for catered meals with costs ranging from \$60-\$70 for a seafood dinner. Peter then stated that this clambake is our chapter's signature event, and we should be careful about considering other options. Even at \$35/person this is still a good deal. Larry agreed that we still need a cost/benefit analysis and there is some concern about the need to liability insurance and how that might impact total costs. We also have no line item for a trailer and its maintenance in our annual budget. Roby stated that when we bought the trailer, we really didn't fully understand all the associated costs in terms of liability, maintenance, storage, general insurance, certificate of title, etc. In NH, you can't use a PO box for a vehicle registration, so the trailer is using Roby home address on the registration certificate, and he is uncomfortable about this due to liability issues. So, although the registration says that MOAA-NH owns the trailer, it's still Roby name/signature on the document. Sharon mentioned that younger families might also need a different menu to accommodate younger children (hamburgers/hot dogs) if we are really trying to attract this population. Jim again circled back to the cost/benefit analysis from his experience with town budgets. We need to know where all the funds are coming from and going. We still need to determine what equipment needs replacement. The last significant expenditures were around the time Ken Lull took over a clambake director, so that's several years ago (e.g., propane tanks to replace expired ones). Gary mentioned that the garbage cans and propane burners probably don't need replacement. Tom Goff wanted to focus on the reason(s) we're doing this in the first place. Is it a recruiting tool, a family fun event, or something else? Maybe we should be focusing first on why we are having this event in the first place. Jennifer asked how many new members have we obtained from the clambake function over the last several years? Michael said we had one this year, but maybe only 4-5 new members over the last five years. So clearly this is not a major reason for the event. A question was raised to see if we should do a survey of the membership to see what they would be interested in if not the clambake. Roger agreed that deciding on a goal is a good point, and what are our reasons for discussing this topic now? He suggested that the BOD form a small sub-committee to explore the cost/benefits as well as the purpose of the event. Is insurance a "show stopper"? Roby again raised the question of who will be in-charge of the clambake, especially someone with a passion for it? We do have a deadline in mid-October to move the trailer off Ken's property. Peter has already offered to have it moved to his property (this was completed on Sunday, 11 September). Gary said that to address Tom's point about the goal of the function is. The clambake is for our membership & its guests. Recruiting was not a primary purpose in the past. Politics was an ancillary factor because large numbers of people attended, and this attracted the politicians. Gary and Michael mentioned that the average age of our current membership is 76. Gary also said that this is our signature event and we had to turn down attendance from nearby chapters because we didn't have the capacity to handle a larger turnout. We probably should open the event to these other chapters to help this event, but this won't help increase our chapter membership. Jim suggested we try to come up with a specific objective(s) for the clambake and this will probably require the work of a small group to do a complete analysis of the clambake and its purpose. Tony said a sub-committee should be given 3-4 specific objectives and let the sub-committee determine how they will be achieved. Judy Terhune again emphasized that we still need younger members to help get the final work done. Joe Daly was a suggestion and has worked on the clambake before, but members were unsure if he would be willing to take over from Ken Lull. Jim Spotts would also be willing to help, but not assume full responsibility. Discussion suggested we have a primary and assistant bake master. Tom Goff again suggested we appoint a sub-committee rather than solve this issue tonight on our own. We need a focus on the purpose of the event and recruiting should be an

integral part of that planning. Peter again stated we need to work smarter, not harder. So, Tony and Peter developed a motion to set-up a five-member committee to: (a) do a cost/benefit analysis of the clambake, (b) develop a list of reasons for having the clambake, and (c) consider the opportunities to lobby our Congressionals for issues of our concern. The BOD would like a report available by the next BOD meeting. Upon discussion, Tony suggested the BOD should develop at least three objectives and give that to the committee. Basically, the clambake is a social, political, and recruiting event. These would be the three objectives. The discussion again came back to overall per person cost versus being able to attract the younger members/families. After some additional discussion, the motion was called and approved by all present. Committee members include Goff (chair), Miller, Terhune, Burdette, and Sevigny. A report will be expected by the beginning of January 2023.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: The President presented a paper with a **list of proposed meeting dates and events for the rest of 2022 and into November 2023**. Michael still can conduct a Zoom meeting for the 8 December agenda focusing on the upcoming Granite State awards. Ray D'Amante and Peter have discussed a potential candidate for this award already. The Red Blazer has not been involved in discussions regarding next years planned meetings. It is anticipated that they will probably be willing to continuing to support us, but this needs to be confirmed. Jim will take on that coordination. An alternate suggestion for a late-afternoon lunch/brunch meeting at the Concord T-Bones was suggested by Jennifer. Jim will also research this option. Jennifer mentioned that they are very veteran friendly and recently sent out an email that the room is free and has the necessary capacity. If this pans out, we might be able to do this once or twice a year particularly in the winter/early spring meetings. It appeared that all the present attendees would be able to attend such a meeting. Gary Lovgren has agreed to run the luncheon in North Conway. Gary mentioned that the Portsmouth Country Club is no longer available for the Granite State award luncheon, so Gary will check out alternative venues. The Plymouth luncheon will again be at the Common Man. Gerry Boyle ran this last year and Jim will check with him to see if he will run it again. North Conway meeting is set for next year. Lobster bake is now pending. The September luncheon is tentatively in the Concord/Sunapee area with the annual meeting again at the Nashua Country Club. There were no apparent conflicts noted and the motion to approve the proposed meeting schedule was seconded and approved by all present.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Government Relations: Peter said the next SVAC meeting will be in October. Most of the political lobbying occurred at the August clambake. He also mentioned that members should be checking on their RMD (required minimum distributions) for investments and advised he would be willing to discuss this with anyone, if desired, after the meeting. He also said he has ended his 29-year career with Merrill-Lynch.

Personal Affairs/Recruiting: Jim will take over these responsibilities as he has dealt with this topic while he was on active duty and as a contractor at Walter-Reed Army MC.

Membership: Michael reported that we had one new member, zero deceased members, no dropped members for a current total of 563 current members. Twenty-six members have not paid their 2022-chapter dues.

Recruiting: We are still looking for someone to take over this position. Tom Goff wished to talk to Jim off-line about this position. Michael sent out four recruiting letters with zero responses.

Programs: Jim will discuss with Gerry Boyle what was discussed this evening.

Website: There still hasn't been much activity on the webpage. There were 6 hits in July, and 11 hits in August. Michael is still looking for relief as webmaster.

Travel Program: Tony said we recently completed our fifth and final group travel trip for 2022 and that was to Big Sky in Montana which is a new tour from Collette. There are now five tours available for 2023. There were six travelers for 2022. We've received one check so far and another check should be coming by the end of September or early October. Collette travel manager has suggested we reduce the number of our trips in the future due to lack of participation and consider planning our trips through the national organization. Tony opposes this as it would significantly affect our commission. We will continue our current offerings but also expand the Rural-Connect program where any family member or friend provided by Collette using our Rural-Connect number and we will still receive our commission.

Scholarship Loan Program: There was no discussion of this program.

Granite State Warriors Award: See earlier discussion.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Nominations – Directors: Sharon has previously sent out an email with the proposed nominations for the November meeting. Diane Halsey was again introduced. A motion to approve the BOD nominations was made and approved by all present.

Nominations – Officers: See above comments.

Granite Slate Newsletter: Drew is taking over this position from Cynthia.

Web Communications: Jennifer reported that we are alive and well on Instagram and Facebook. She asked that members "like" us on either site. If you have anything you would like posted, please contact her.

SUD/JMTF Committee: There has been no meetings for the SUD/JMTF for almost a year. The state Governor's Commission has decided to abolish the seven existing task forces and replace them with four smaller sub-committees. This was implemented at the 26 Aug 22 Governor's meeting, so this task force is no more. This item should be removed from future agendas.

Blast Email: Michael commented about the number of members (76) who have refused to get emails, including several board members.

LIAISONS

ESGR: Boss lifts are still underway. Some Blackhawk flights are occurring both this month and in October.

Transition Assistance: Jim states he has dealt with four people this year. He also mentioned that Michael had sent out the list of required reports for the annual report. Submissions should be made ASAP unless the data needed won't be available until the end of September.

Manchester VAMC: Bernie sent out an email this afternoon about current planned activities (**see attachments**) and information on the **PACT act flyer**. Times/dates of the drive-through influenza shots are expected soon.

Martin's Point Liaison: No report.

Auxiliary: Gwen sent an email stating that she recorded four deaths and sent out one condolence letter. She also made two telephone calls to find out how the surviving spouse is doing. Lt. Col Michael W. Balok was not home so she left a message. Mrs. Phyllis Crosby's, of New Castle, telephone has been disconnected.

Final Comments: Sharon mentioned that we have not done a 50/50 raffle in a while. She suggested we have one at the annual meeting. Larry raised the question of whether this can be done legally or not. Jim said we should work with Warren Coulter on the raffle. Finally, Michael mentioned that we needed to vote on the proposed annual budget. There were no questions about the budget except for Larry asking about the line item for the clambake trailer. Peter asked to call the question and a motion was made, seconded, and approved by all those present.

Next Board Meeting: The meeting adjourned at 2023 hours. The next meeting will be on 5 November 2022.

Respectfully submitted

Michael A. McLean
CDR, USN (Ret.)
Secretary
New Hampshire Chapter

Attachments: (1) MOAA-NH Bake Discussion Paper - September 2022
(2) Clambake Decision paper
(3) 2023 Proposed Dates for BOD Meetings and Luncheons
(4) Manchester VAMC Report
(5) PACT-Act-1-Page-Summary and FAQ

MOAA-NH CLAMBAKE DISCUSSION PAPER

The MOAA-NH clambake is single most “chapter manpower” intensive social event (annual meeting excluded) that the chapter conducts yearly. Since its inception in the mid to later 1980s, attendance at this event has come close to 500 persons, with this year’s attendance (including SME chapter, national MOAA and shipyard personnel) around 200. During the same period, MOAA-NH membership has fallen from around 1,100 to 562. Those two sets of numbers speak for themselves. Our collective failure to recruit members to somewhat offset the decline in total membership, and the increase in the median age of our membership are clearly major contributing factors to the attendance decline.

The recent resignation of Kenneth Lull as chapter “bake master” has raised significant concerns about the future viability of the bake, at least as we currently conduct it. I wish to thank Ken for his willingness to share his concerns with me over the course of several phone calls. I also appreciate Gary Terhune’s written comments regarding the situation, given his long tenure as “administration OIC”.

Specific concerns regarding the role of bake master are listed below:

- (1) Age and Physical condition: Muscling the equipment, water loaded pots, and the like require someone (or a team) who is significantly younger than our chapter’s median age.
- (2) Duration of time in the “slot”. Given the length of the project, there have been relatively few bake masters – Phil Johnson, Jeff Olsen and Ken Lull have done the job since the 1990s. Optimally, a single person (or 2-person team) serving as Bake master should be willing and able to do 4-6 years in the position.
- (3) Continuation or new establishment of inexpensive sources for Lobster, Steak, clam chowder, and the rest of the fixings is an essential element of the position.
- (4) While not directly associated with the bake master position, given the fact that this year’s event (continuing a trend) had decreasing revenues, and barely broke even fiscally, combined with the impact of higher inflation, it is my considered opinion that the cost of this event in the future should be raised to at least 30-35 dollars per person.
- (5) Control of the MOAA-NH trailer, licensing and insuring the trailer should be resident with the Bake Master if at all feasible. Currently, the trailer is registered by Roby Day, and physically on Ken Lull’s property (see discussion of MOAA-NH trailer and allied issues below).
- (6) Consideration of a succession plan for the bake master or the bake master team is essential for future event stability.

Administration OIC – The administrative portion of this project has been highly successful for the last 12 years. My personal thanks to Gary Terhune for his continued willingness to keep the administrative details away from the Bake Master, allowing that individual to concentrate on “food operations.” The myriad of administrative details

associated with this event warrants continuation of our current process. Given the aging of the chapter, associated health concerns, and other issues, it seems appropriate to establish an understudy to pick up the tricks of the trade, while providing help to the admin OIC. I would recommend that the understudy be someone close to the shipyard and be willing and able to stay with the project at least 5-7 years.

MOAA trailer, Liability and Allied concerns: Moving the pots, heating units and other materials associated with the bake led the chapter to purchase a trailer in the past. Because of NH licensing requirements, the trailer is registered by Roby Day, and he wishes to be relieved of this responsibility. The trailer is physically stored on Ken Lull's property, and he also wishes this to end. We cannot register the trailer under a MOAA umbrella, as the state does not allow vehicles of any sort to be registered using a PO Box. The trailer will require new tires and axle maintenance soon.

Issues to consider regarding the trailer:

- (1) Optimally, the trailer should be registered under the Bake masters name and stored on his property. If that cannot be done, we have checked with the shipyard and we can store the trailer there, for a quarterly fee of \$75.00. Pete Burdett has also stated that he could store the trailer at his home.
- (2) If we keep it, vehicle maintenance must be accomplished on the trailer. Cost yet unknown.
- (3) If we elect to go another direction on the bake in the future, we have a current offer from Ken Lull to pay the chapter \$2,000 to take it off our hands. Offer expires in mid-October.
- (4) Insurance of the trailer is still an issue; Roby Day has been working on this concern.

Options for BOD consideration: There are unlimited variants of each of the options presented below. For the purposes of discussion, I am presenting two ways to proceed for the BOD's consideration and possible adoption.

- (1) Continuation of the current process. To do this, we must acknowledge that the price per person will have to increase, if the bake is to stay solvent. A new bake master or team to deal with food operations and procurement must be in place. The trailer will require new tires and maintenance, as well as movement and long-term storage in a new location.
- (2) Transition to a different concept of the event – perhaps another luncheon option at a Portsmouth area restaurant, with a follow-on special event, such as a cruise around Portsmouth harbor, or attending a college sporting event as a group.

DISCUSSION AND ATTEMPT TO ARRIVE AT A BOD DECISION

James R. LeFebvre
President, MOAA-NH

Clambake Decision Paper

Jim, as we discussed on the phone and you captured extremely well in your Decision Paper (DP), the event currently places an extreme burden on 2 people. Primarily the Clam Meister and secondly the Clambake Admin OIC, in this case Gary. While you captured most of the issues in your DP I will go ahead and list the major issues from my foxhole after 7 seven years of experience.

- 1) It approximately 35-40 hours of work for the Clam Meister including multiple trips to BJs, Saunders, and the butcher.
- 2) Inventory takes 2 to 4 hours every year
- 3) Cleanup takes 4 to 6 hours post event (that's a 1 man show)
- 4) Clambake master must have a reliable truck to haul trailer and hundreds of pounds of produce, then lobsters/mussels. (produce needs storage for 24 hours prior to clam bake)
- 5) Clam Meister must put \$3500 to \$4000 dollars on a personal Credit Card until the day of the event. This results in interest fees and a massive fiscal layout for at least 1 billing cycle. Recommend that the Clam Meister have a Debit of CC issued by MOAA to lay out these expenditures. Perhaps with a \$5000 limit in a 30-day period.
- 6) Need a place to STORE the trailer. Its approximately 15 feet long and is 3500 Gross as I recall. A POINT OF ORDER-I AM NOT OFFERING \$2000.00 FOR THE TRAILER...my buddy Fred Blocher who has volunteered to help the last 5 years is making the offer.
- 7) SAFETY SAFETY SAFETY..on the cooking line and during actually lobster cook. The trashcans are over 100 pounds fully loaded and SCALDING hot. I say a prayer EVERY bake that we do not have a catastrophic injury or failure. Many of the garbage cans need to be replaced. I think 3 or 4 years is max to ensure structural integrity.
- 8) Equipment- the burners must be replaced. We need at least 10 NEW burners. The ones we are using are decades old and the risk of fire, or explosion is real. RETAIL on new burners is \$60-\$80.00 per for an expenditure of approximately \$600.00 for next year.
- 9) Let's do some MATH

Let's say our numbers were 200 exactly this year.

$200/600 = 33\%$ that's not bad **BUT** how many members out of 600 ACTUALLY participated in the event. Most of those people represent guests and NOT actual MOAA members. As of 8-6-22 based upon Roby's headcount and excel spreadsheet we had 69 actual members that signed up, the rest are guests. If we add even 10 more as late attendees the ACTUAL math is 80 out of 600. $80/600 = 13\%$

ONLY 13 to 15% of our membership participates. .The question begs answering:

IS THE JUICE WORTH THE QUEEZE???? GIVEN ALL THE RISK FACTORS AND THE SINGLE POINT OF FAILURE....IE. THE CLAM MEISTERS TRUCK THAT THANK GOD DIDN'T BREAK DOWN OR GET INTO AN ACCIDENT FOR THE LAST 7 YEARS...KNOCK ON WOOD?

ALL THE BEST IN THE FUTURE, and Jim..you are doing a fantastic job!!!! I pray you can save a sinking ship.

PROPOSED EVENTS AND BOD MEETING DATES DECEMBER 2022- NOVEMBER 2023

Reference: Events Director (Gerry Boyle) input via E-mail September 6, 2022. This proposal presumes that we will continue to use the Red Blazer for face-to-face meetings and conduct several Zoom meetings of the BOD during the year.

Month/Date	Event	Location	Speaker/Other information
12/8/22	BOD	Zoom	Focus: Granite State Award
1/12/23	BOD	Red Blazer	Focus: Granite State Award
1/21/23	Luncheon	Portsmouth Area	Granite State AWD Luncheon
3/9/23	BOD	Red Blazer	Focus: April Luncheon
4/15/23	Luncheon	Plymouth CM	April Luncheon – Taxes
5/11/23	BOD	Zoom	Focus: June Luncheon
6/8/23	BOD	Red Blazer	Focus: Lobster Bake
6/17/23	Luncheon	North Conway	Northern Luncheon
7/13/23	BOD	Red Blazer	Focus: Lobster Bake
8/5/23	Bake	PNSY	Bake
9/14/23	BOD	Zoom	Focus: September Luncheon
9/30/23	Luncheon	Concord/Sunapee	Luncheon
10/12/23	BOD	Red Blazer	Focus: Annual MTG/Lunch
11/4/23	MTG	Nashua CC	Annual MTG/Luncheon

Coordination with Red Blazer must be done, as is also the case with all tentative luncheon sites.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim LeFebvre
Cc: personal files
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Subject: Manchester VAMC Report Sep 8 2023
Date: Thursday, September 8, 2022 at 2:52:01 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Bernard Satterfield
To: James LeFebvre, WAYNE BALCOM, 'Gerard Boyle', Andrew Breuder, pete burdett, Tony Burdo, Geoff Corson, Warren Coulter, Raymond D'Amante, Sharon and Roby Day, Gwendolen Y Devoe, Joe DiChiaro, Bill DuVall, Ric Erickson, Tom Goff, Janis ikstrums, Bob Jaffin, Thomas Kyle, Gary Lovgren, William Luti, Michael A. McLean, Laurance Miller, Roger Sevigny, Gary Terhune, Jennifer Wright
CC: Ken Lull
Category: MOAA
Attachments: PACT-Act-1-Page-Summary and FAQ.pdf

Events at Manchester VAMC and the passing of the PACT Act.

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Bernie

Laconia Area Veterans Town Hall

When: Wed. Sep 14, 2022, 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm ET

Where: American Legion Post 1

849 North Main Street

Laconia, NH

Bring your DD 214 discharge papers and medical records

New Patient Orientation

Learn about the VA Medical Center in a virtual event

When: Wed Sept. 21, 2022, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. ET

Where: This is an online event.

Drive-through flu clinic

When: Thu. Oct 6, 2022, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm ET

Where: [Manchester VA Medical Center](#)

Behind the building

Veterans Free Farmer's Market

The Manchester VAMC will be holding the last Veterans Free Farmer's Market on Thursday, September 15th starting at 11AM and will end when the produce and vegetables are all gone. This will take place right outside of Eagle (Main) Entrance.

The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022 passed in the Senate on 2 August 2022, with an overwhelming majority vote of 86 to 11. Please see the one-page fact sheet provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in the attachment.



PACT ACT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



The PACT Act is a new law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances. This law helps us provide generations of Veterans—and their survivors—with the care and benefits they’ve earned and deserve.

The Act **(1)** expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and Post-9/11 era, and **(2)** expands eligibility for benefits for Veterans exposed to toxic substances.

What new or expanded presumptions will the Act create and when will they be in effect?

VETERANS AND SURVIVORS CAN FILE CLAIMS FOR ALL CONDITIONS OUTLINED IN THE PACT ACT IMMEDIATELY.

For Gulf War and post 9-11 Veterans, that includes:

Brain cancer, Glioblastoma, Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type, Gastrointestinal cancer of any type, Head cancer of any type, Lymphoma of any type, Lymphatic cancer of any type, Neck cancer, Pancreatic cancer, Reproductive cancer of any type, Kidney cancer, Melanoma, Asthma (diagnosed after service), Chronic rhinitis, Chronic sinusitis, Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis,

Emphysema, Granulomatous disease, Interstitial lung disease (ILD), Pleuritis, Pulmonary fibrosis, Sarcoidosis, Chronic bronchitis, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

For Vietnam Veterans and other Veterans exposed to tactical herbicides, that includes two Agent Orange presumptive conditions:

Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS), High blood pressure (hypertension).

How can Veterans apply for VA health care?

Apply **online** at [VA.gov/health-care/apply/application/introduction](https://www.va.gov/health-care/apply/application/introduction).

Call our toll-free hotline at 877-222-8387, M-F, 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. ET.

Mail a completed, signed Application for Health Benefits (VA Form 10-10EZ).

Bring a completed, signed VA Form 10-10EZ with you to your [nearest medical center or clinic](#) or get help through your [state’s Department of Veterans Affairs Service Officer](#).

Get help filing your claim by working with an [accredited representative](#).

What are the PACT Act key components?



The Act **expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic-exposures** and Veterans of the Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and Post-9/11 era.



VA **will improve the decision-making process** for determining what medical conditions will be considered for presumptive status.



Every enrolled Veteran will **receive an initial toxic exposure screening** and a follow-up screening every five years. Veterans who are not enrolled, but who are eligible to enroll, will have an opportunity to enroll and receive the screening.



VA health care staff and claims processors will receive **toxic exposure-related education and training**.



The Act requires **research studies** on mortality of Veterans who served in Southwest Asia during the Gulf War, Post-9/11 Veteran health trends, and Veteran cancer rates.



The Act will help VA **build a stronger, more skilled workforce** to meet the growing demand for benefits and services.



The Act authorizes **31 new medical facilities** across the country, providing greater access to VA health care.

How can a Veteran file a claim?



Veterans who would like to file a claim must complete [VA Form 21-526EZ](#) to apply for benefits and submit any supportive evidence.



To learn about standard VA disability claims, supplemental claims, secondary claims, and more visit: [VA.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/when-to-file](https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/when-to-file).

If a Veteran was previously denied a claim, what can they do?

VA will contact Veterans when a presumption of service connection is established or changed. However, **Veterans previously denied a toxic-exposure related claim** are encouraged to file a supplemental claim. Once a supplemental claim is received, VA will review the claim under the new law.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

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