

Women Veterans Informer

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Nevada Department of Veterans Services
Wishes all of you a Happy New Year!

Wreaths Across America

NDVS would like to thank all of you, who have donated, supported and volunteered for this year's "Wreaths Across America" ceremony. We appreciate your time and efforts in supporting America's Heroes and their family and friends.

The "Wreaths Across America" program, which honors veterans in all 50 states and at overseas national cemeteries, had more than enough holiday wreaths for the second consecutive year for veterans at the Fernley cemetery. Prior to the family and volunteers placing wreaths, Narrator Joe Gale, a member of the veterans' coalition talked about veterans and how they unselfishly served their country. He said the men and women who served in the military ensured their fellow American were kept safe from terrorism, hate and injustice. He said the wreaths honor all who wore the uniform.

Last year at the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Boulder City, she said about 800 wreaths were purchased, but this year, 2,000 wreaths were ordered, a sign of increased community support.

"My staff did not expect this would grow as much as it did," said Kat Miller, director the Nevada Department of Veteran Services. "This is one of the few state cemeteries that has covered every grave (with a wreath)."

Sgt. First Class Mayra Serrano of the Nevada Army National Guard and five other guardsmen volunteered to help family members place wreaths. She was pleased to see how the community cared about "Wreaths across America" and the participation displayed by the people who attended the ceremony.

"It's also important that our generation of the military sees the history here and walks around," Serrano added.

While the guardsmen attended their first ceremony, Joshua Bowen from Naval Air Station Fallon and about 30 sailors volunteered. This marks Bowen's third year in attending the ceremony. Many of the sailors are from aviation ordnance or the medical clinic. "This is a good event to help connect families," Bowen said.
-NevadaAppeal: <http://bit.ly/1O7X3at>



Sgt. First Class Mayra Serrano of the Nevada Army National Guard salutes after placing a wreath at the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Fernley as part of the Wreaths Across America program.
Photo courtesy of www.NevadaAppeal.com



Pentagon Names 1st Female Commandant of West Point's Cadets

By Associated Press - December 15, 2015

WEST POINT, N.Y. -- A veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will be the first female commandant of cadets at the U.S. Military Academy, one of West Point's top positions.

The academy announced Tuesday that Brig. Gen. Diana M. Holland will be the 76th commandant of the Corps of Cadets. Under West Point's superintendent, she'll oversee discipline and training for the academy's approximately 4,200 cadets.

Holland will replace Maj. Gen. John C. Thomson III, who has been named commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas.

Holland, a 1990 West Point graduate, currently serves as a deputy commanding general with the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum in northern New York. She'll start her new job on Jan. 5.

The first female cadets graduated from the academy in 1980.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Osama Ayyad

Vermont Soldier Is First Woman to Graduate as a Combat Engineer

By Wilson Ring, Associated Press - December 7, 2015

COLCHESTER, Vt. -- A few days after two women became the first female soldiers to pass the Army's grueling Ranger School, a college junior in Vermont became a military pathfinder in her own right. And at first, she didn't even know it.

With no fanfare, Vermont National Guard Specialist Skylar Anderson became the first woman certified as a combat engineer -- a battlefield job that, like many others, was once held exclusively by men.

"I knew I was going to be one of the first, but I didn't know I was going to be THE first," said Anderson, a University of Vermont student.

Anderson, 20, said it was a "big eye-opener" when her instructors told her that she was the first woman to complete the course allowing her to work alongside combat troops to solve battlefield challenges as varied -- and dangerous -- as clearing minefields, building bridges under fire or destroying structures to block the enemy's advance.

Such an opportunity comes with responsibility, Anderson said. "It's time to step up and not hide in the shadows," she said.

The combat engineer school opened up to women on Aug. 1, said Command Sgt. Major Alan Grinsteiner, the commandant of the 164th Regional Training Institute run by the North Dakota Guard. While Anderson didn't know she was the first woman to attend, the instructors did -- though they told none of the trainees until the 16-day course was almost over.

"She's a tremendous soldier," Grinsteiner said of Anderson. "She came up here, she did what she was supposed to, she passed every test, she was not granted any specialties, she did exactly what all her male counterparts did."



In this Dec. 3, 2015, photo, Vermont National Guard Specialist Skylar Anderson, the first female in the Army to qualify as a combat engineer, poses at Camp Johnson in Colchester, Vermont. Wilson Ring/AP

Roberta "Bobi" Pike-Oates, Women Veterans Advisory Committee

By Heidi Kyser - November 20, 2015



(Photo: Lucky Wenzel)

Bobi Oates didn't want to be an airplane mechanic; she wanted to be a cop. And she was ... sort of. After getting an associate's degree in criminal justice, she landed a job as deputy sheriff for a small county in Vermont, where she was raised. This was the '70s, when, to get to the big leagues of policing, women had to meet the same requirements as men.

"At 5-feet, 3-inches, that just wasn't going to happen for me," Oates says today.

So she took a friend's advice to get the same kind of challenge and see the world by joining the U.S. Air Force. She enlisted just as the Air Force was expanding its opportunities for women, Oates says, and based on her aptitude, they persuaded her to take one of the jobs available to the gentler sex: aircraft mechanic.

Lugging around heavy toolboxes and airplane parts and spending some 12-hour days on her feet took their toll on Oates. But where she was short on brawn, she had grit in spades. She recalls a

flight chief telling her he didn't need female staff sergeants on his flight line, so she moved over to job control and continued to climb through the ranks.

"I didn't think I'd make it four years," Oates says today. "I made it 23."

In 1999, she retired as a senior master sergeant. At the pinnacle of her distinguished career, she was one of the four people chosen to establish the 11th Reconnaissance Squadron of unmanned aerial vehicles at Creech Air Force Base. Oates is Nevada's Veteran of the Month for December.

Today, her mission involves a different type of maintenance: fixing the relationship between the U.S. military and its former female members. Nearly 10 years ago, she began volunteering with Women Veterans of Nevada; now she's on the executive board and the ceremonial team that conducts weekly funerals at Boulder Cemetery for veterans who've died homeless or in the absence of loved ones.

"It's a way to make sure no vet passes without being honored and remembered," Oates says.

Based on that service, in the summer of 2014 Governor Brian Sandoval appointed her to the five-member Nevada Women Veterans Advisory Committee, a statewide group charged with identifying female veterans and advocating on their behalf. As the only member of the group in Southern Nevada, Oates represents the bulk of the state's population.

The new advisory committee faces enormous obstacles. Out of 21,000-plus female vets in the state, Veterans Services has located only 2,500. This matters, Oates says, because women are missing out on valuable benefits, such as education and health care.

For example, she says, "A lot of female vets are of child-bearing age, so they need access to obstetrics." One of the committee's recommendations that has already been implemented is the hiring of a full-time OB-Gyn at the Nevada Veterans Medical Center.

But a lot of work remains. The committee wants job and benefit applications changed to ask, "Have you ever served in the U.S. military?" rather than the current, "Are you a U.S. military veteran?" because women don't self-identify as vets. In June, the committee gave the governor a long list of recommendations for better communications, promotions and technology to spread the word about available benefits and services, and then keep track of those who respond.

"Women have served," Oates says. "And they've all been volunteers, because women have never been drafted. Sometimes, we weren't even wanted, but we've always been there."

"Now," she adds, "they need to know the state and country they served are there for them."



Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announces all military occupational specialties and units are open to women

Department of Defense - December 3, 2015



Women In Military Service For America Memorial Foundation, Inc.

Dept 560 • Washington, DC 20042-0560

703-533-1155 • 800-222-2294 • FAX 703-931-4208

hq@womensmemorial.org

www.womensmemorial.org • www.womensmemorialstore.com

December 4, 2015

We were especially gratified to learn, after three years of extensive study and review, that Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter has decided to open all military occupational specialties and units to women.

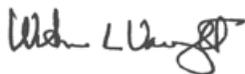
It is an historic and courageous move that will finally let commanders use the talents and skills of the entire unit to accomplish the mission; the services recruit the best qualified regardless of gender; and America field the best military for the nation's defense. Many of us for years have stressed the need to establish realistic standards based on real job requirements and not to dismiss the valuable talents of an individual because she was a woman. Hats off to Secretary Carter but more importantly an enormous vote of confidence, praise and gratitude to the women, officers and enlisted, who stood the test, met the grade and brought about this momentous change for today's servicewomen and for future generations of women.

When I joined the Air Force in 1957, less than 1 percent of the force were women. The highest grade we could achieve was O-5; we didn't get the same benefits as men; we couldn't serve aboard combat aircraft or ships; if we got pregnant we were discharged; we were limited primarily to the medical and administrative fields; we weren't trained to use a weapon, even when I deployed to Vietnam; and the list goes on. Thousands of us served with distinction, commitment and courage because, despite the inequities, we just wanted to serve—we wanted to do something important for our country and to make a difference. So we give thanks, too, to the some 3 million women who paved the way, put cracks in the glass ceiling, pushed open doors and had the tenacity to not give up.

By law, the services have to wait 30 days before Secretary Carter's decision will take affect. The military services and the Special Operations Command during that time will be providing updated implementation plans to proceed with the integration process. For the past 15 or so years, we've observed—many of us first-hand—the remarkable men and women of America's military successfully adapt to an ever-changing world. I have complete confidence that the full integration of women will be no different.

To read Secretary Carter's address use this link: <http://1.usa.gov/22eLFQj>

Sincerely,



Brig. Gen. Wilma L. Vaught, USAF (Ret.)

President, Women's Memorial Foundation

"To succeed in our mission of national defense, we cannot afford to cut ourselves off from half the country's talents and skills," Carter said in a press conference at the Pentagon. "We have to take full advantage of every individual who can meet our standards. The services will have 30 days to open all military occupational specialties, and to provide updated integration plans."

Martha Settle Putney was one of the first Black women to join the Women's Army Corps



Photo supplied by Wikipedia

Martha Settle Putney was one of the first Black women to join the Women's Army Corps during World War II. After the ending of the war, Putney became a historian and author who notably focused on the contributions of African-Americans in the military.

Putney was born Martha Settle on November 9, 1916 in Norristown, Pa. After working as a political campaigner as a young girl, she won a scholarship to Howard University from the candidate she helped get elected. Putney was a focused student, earning her bachelor's degree in history in 1939 and a master's in the same discipline the following year.

While she originally wanted to become a teacher, Putney couldn't find employment because of her race. Instead, she took a job with the federal government's War Manpower Commission. Putney toiled in the lowly job for some years before hearing about the opportunity to join the Corps in 1943.

In an interview, Putney said she chose to join the Corps as it offered her an opportunity to become a commissioned officer. She was one of 40 Black women personally selected by Mary McLeod Bethune for the position.

While in the Corps, Putney dealt with various instances of racism, including a time when German prisoners of war were allowed into the Fort Des Moines officers club and Blacks were barred despite their rank.

Veterans Village in Las Vegas builds homes for heroes



Photo supplied by Veterans Village

Housing for our heroes with respect and dignity!! A home for United States Veterans for under \$10,000??

The future of emergency and transitional housing for our United States Veterans at Veterans Village, Las Vegas, Nevada. With breakthrough in technology utilizing 100% recycled Ocean containers and off the shelf components to create affordable, well designed and efficient housing called Veterans Village Instant Built House.

A housing unit made from a standardized, Recycled ISO shipping container. The recycled housing units can be rapidly transported anywhere in the country via railroad "piggy-back" trains, semi, or jumbo air cargo transports for immediate occupancy for affordable housing that provides stability and support for our homeless,

displaced and disadvantaged United States Veterans to successfully transition back into civilian life. Building materials for the prototype were funded by a grant received from the Home Depot Foundation who continues to support Veterans Village, Our United States Veterans and others in need across the country.

This fast construction, economically sound environmentally friendly options aims to create a comprehensive housing solution to meet the need for affordable housing that provides stability and support for our veterans to successfully transition back into civilian life.

Veterans Village Instant Built House, The future of affordable housing is on its way!
See more at: <http://veteransvillagelasvegas.org/>

Career Corner



**University of Nevada at Las Vegas: UNLV
Semi-Annual Veterans & Spouse Career Fair**

Friday, January 15, 2016
11:30 AM to 3:00 PM (PST)
4505 S Maryland Pkwy, Las Vegas, NV 89154
Located in the UNLV Student Ballroom.

Employment Workshops
The Big Virtual - Q4! Veteran Career Fair



Wednesday, January, 20th 2016.

Join us for The Big Virtual Q4! Wednesday, January 20th, 2016.

Participate from 11 AM - 3 PM Eastern time in this online recruiting event if you have served, or are currently serving, in the U.S. military.

The virtual career fair is for anyone seeking nationwide opportunities and is for all ranks and branches of service including active duty, Reserve,

National Guard and individuals with a Security Clearance (including non military).

Job seekers have the opportunity to communicate with organizations that are actively searching for military experienced candidates. The conversations will be one-on-one "instant message" like chat sessions (learn more) which give the job seeker and the recruiter time to determine a potential fit for the organizations' requirements.

For a list of America's most Veteran friendly employers :
<https://militaryfriendly.com/2016employers/>

Are you still looking for a job? Have you tried Nevada JobConnect?

Veterans receive priority so visit a Career Center near you. Career Centers are user-friendly facilities located throughout the state that provide businesses and job seekers with personalized attention and a variety of valuable services, including job listings, job placement, work registration, labor market information, career information and guidance, assessment, information about education and training opportunities, unemployment insurance information, information on filing for unemployment insurance, resume preparation, referrals to other partner agency services, and more.

Northern & Central Nevada

CARSON CITY
1929 North Carson St.
Carson City, NV 89701
P: 775.684.0400

ELKO
172 Sixth Street
Elko, NV 89801
P: 775.753.1900

ELY
1500 Avenue F, Suite 1
Ely, NV 89301
P: 775.289.1616

FALLON
121 Industrial Way
Fallon, NV 89406
P: 775.423.5115

RENO
Reno Town Mall
4001 South Virginia St.
Reno, NV 89502
P: 775.284.9600

SPARKS
2281 Pyramid Way
Sparks, NV 89431-2119
P: 775.284.9520

WINNEMUCCA
475 West Haskell Street, #1
Winnemucca, NV 89445
P: 775.623.6520

Southern Nevada

HENDERSON
4500 E. Sunset Rd, Ste. 40
Henderson, NV 89014
P: 702.486.0300
F: 702.486.0328

LAS VEGAS
3405 South Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas, NV 89169
P: 702.486.0100
F: 702.486.0118

NORTH LAS VEGAS
2827 Las Vegas Boulevard No.
Las, NV 89030
P: 702.486.0200



Resources for Veterans



The City of Reno is proud to offer our disabled veterans weekly fitness classes in our facility weight room. Classes will cover orientation to equipment, assessment of fitness level, proper technique to develop strength, endurance and flexibility, and discussion of fitness goals. Upon completion of all four classes, participants will be eligible for a FREE all inclusive facility membership good for one year. Please come prepared to workout during the first class session. This program is made possible through a grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs for the Grants for Adaptive Sports Programs for Disabled Veterans and Disabled Members of the Armed Forces.

New sessions start the beginning of each month.

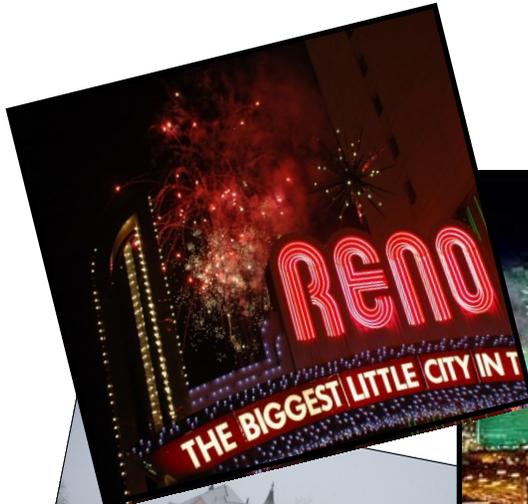
For more information about the program and how to register, call April Wolfe at 775-333-7765 or wolfea@reno.gov

*Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center
1301 Valley Road Reno, NV 89512*

New Year's in Nevada

Nevada is the place to be this New Years with parties, countdowns, champagne toasts, plenty of celebratory party hats and favors and fireworks shows at midnight!

Get your New Year's Passes online today!



For Northern Nevadans & Guests

<http://newtoreno.com/new-years-eve-reno-lake-tahoe.htm>

For Southern Nevadans & Guests :

<https://www.eventbrite.com/d/nv--las-vegas/new-years-events/>



New Year's 5K Run/Walk

Churchill County Parks & Recreation invite you to join in the New Year's 5K Fun Run/Walk. The 5K will begin at Veteran's Park, 55 W. Williams Ave. (behind City Hall).

The entry fee is \$15 per individual with event T-shirt and \$50 for family of 4 event T-shirts. T-shirt guaranteed if registered before the shirt deadline on the registration form. This year we will have our dog category for \$3 per dog (Tennis ball and treat included).

Check-in and pre-registration will start at 9:00am, with the race beginning at 10:00am (sharp).

The post race awards ceremony will be held at the Elks Club, which includes breakfast for only \$5 and raffle. Parks & Recreation are now taking registration, 325 Sheckler Road.

Entry Fee: Pre-Registration: \$15 per person, \$50 for a family of 4. Day of race costs: \$20 individual, \$60 for families.

Date: January 1, 2016 - Time: 9am check-in / 10am Race Starts

For Details: <http://bit.ly/IQD1IdG>



Veterans & Children with Autism *FREE* Enchanted Forest Reiki, Spiritual Items n' More



Friday, January 15, 2016
10:30 AM to 5:30 PM (PST)
800 North Rainbow Blvd. #100
Las Vegas NV 89107
(702) 948 - 4999
<http://bit.ly/ImwQnse>

VFW

The 2016 VFW MID-WINTER CONFERENCE

January 16, 2016

Ely, NV

Due date for meal order is January 1, 2016.

VFW STATE CONVENTION

June 9-12-2016

Hosted by Post #10047

North Las Vegas, NV

For Registration, Hotels, Meals, Convention Book, etc.: <http://vfwnv.org/>



Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Benefits for American Heroes Foundation, Inc. is a Florida based 501c3 non-profit charitable organization funded by the general public and various organizations.

This Foundation is designed to provide a meaningful impact on the lives of members of the armed services and their families.

We exist to provide essential information and education to our Veterans -- our American Heroes.

For details visit: <http://beamericanhero.org/wordpress/>



Wreaths Across America

Their mission is to, Remember, Honor, and Teach. WAA coordinates wreath laying ceremonies in Northern and Southern Nevada. They also organize of events including international veteran's tributes and ceremonies.

The program is dependent on the generosity and donations made by individual wreaths sponsors, corporate and volunteer donors.

To Donate or to Learn More visit: <http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/>

Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery
14 Veterans Way Fernley, NV 89408

Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery
1900 Buchanan Boulevard, Boulder City, NV 89005



To connect with Nevada Department Veterans Services:

 Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NevadaWomenVeterans>

 Twitter: https://twitter.com/NDVS_WVC

 Google+: <http://tinyurl.com/NDVSpge>

 Website: <http://www.veterans.nv.gov/>

 Instagram: [ndvs.wvc](https://www.instagram.com/ndvs.wvc)

 Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/NVWVC/>

 Email: stevensn@veterans.nv.gov

For Help:

Nevada Department of Veterans Services

1(866) 630-VETS

1(866) 630-8387

Department of Veterans Affairs

1(800) 827-1000

VA Suicide Prevention Hotline

1(800) 273-TALK

1(800) 273-8255



Necole Stevens
Women Veterans
Program Coordinator
Nevada Department
of Veterans Services

**Southern Nevada
Healthcare System
North Las Vegas
VA Medical Center**

**6900 N Pecos Rd
North Las Vegas,
Nevada 89086**

**Phone: 702.791.9000
ext 15518**

**E-mail:
stevensn@veterans.nv.gov**

Nevada Department of
Veteran Services General
Information (866) 630-8387
Visit www.veterans.nv.gov
for information concerning:
Nevada State
Veterans Home
Southern and Northern
Nevada Veteran
Memorial Cemeteries
Veterans Rural Outreach
"ROVER" Calendar



**"Serving America's
Heroes"**

Honoring Women Veterans

At the Nevada Department of Veterans Services, we're committed to delivering quality services to all Nevada veterans, and these pages will educate you – a woman veteran who proudly defended our freedom – about benefits and resources.



Women have served the cause of freedom in every war and every generation since the Revolution. Those we honor number some 1.8 million, including nearly 24,000 women veterans currently residing in Nevada. Today, more than 25 percent of our military strength worldwide is women, and women serve in almost every capacity in the armed forces, including in combat zones on land, at sea and in the skies. More than 177,000 women from across the country have served as fighter pilots, medics, military police and in other roles since the start of the Global War on Terror.

It's all too common for women veterans to pack away their uniforms and memories upon return to civilian life, never to discuss their experiences again. Many women who honorably served don't even realize they're veterans – or realize their eligibility for benefits. Through these pages, we acknowledge your service and offer several resources to help you understand your status and what it means. By working together, we will achieve success in establishing a network to further communication and women veterans outreach.

Vision

Nevadans across the state understand and celebrate the legacy of America's servicewomen and **all** Nevada women veterans understand and have access to benefits to which they are eligible.

Mission

To provide women veteran benefit and activity information; resolve women veteran problems or refer veterans to NDVS service officers and other beneficial service providers for assistance; and to develop programs and activities that ensure Nevada women veterans understand, and are able to obtain, any aid or benefit to which they may be eligible.

Nominate a Woman Vet for Veteran of the Month

To read the Veteran of the Month Guidelines
and access submission forms please go to:

<http://www.veterans.nv.gov/page/veteran-of-the-month-program>

Submit Pictures and Articles

To submit articles and pictures for publication in the
Women Veterans Informer please email the Women Veterans Coordinator at:

StevensN@veterans.nv.gov