



APRIL-JUNE 2021 NEWSLETTER

OUR MISSION

Easton Veterans' Services is here to inform and assist Easton veterans and their families in the navigation of applicable local, state, and federal benefits.

OUR STAFF

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VA Work Study



This year, much like last year, we will not be having our traditional Memorial Day Parade, but will host a small, socially distant ceremony that will be aired on ECAT and shared on social media.

Please join us in honoring our service men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country. In remembering these heroes, let us not forget our Gold Star family members who, have also sacrificed so much.

For them, Memorial Day is more than just once a year, it is every day. The services we provide in our community is what makes all the difference to these folks who have sacrificed so much. The more we can support and care for those returning home, the better tribute we pay to those who have given their lives in exchange for our freedom.

The Town of Easton recognizes this tremendous sacrifice and honors its sons and daughters who have not returned. Around town, you may find various street signs and corners dedicated to these heroes. If you visit our monuments and parks, you will notice the names of hundreds who have also sacrificed.

Honoring their legacy, we provide opportunities to connect our younger generation to these men and women by hosting events and encouraging residents of all ages to visit these beautiful monuments regularly.

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PICTURED ABOVE

'A Time To Honor'

This book has been generously provided, free of charge, from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services. Please call us today to reserve your copy, you've earned it. On behalf of the Town of Easton, we thank our Vietnam veterans and their families for their selfless service and sacrifice to our country. WELCOME HOME!



15 Barrows Street, Easton, MA 02356



(508) 230-0690



cahonen@easton.ma.us



Mon-Fri 8am-4pm

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UPDATES FOR YOUR HEALTH AND WELLNESS



Mindfulness Strategies for Healthy Living By Ekaterina A. Davis, LCSW, NBC-HWC - Aurora, CO VAMC

Strategy #1: Be Present Being in the present moment means that you are aware or mindful of what is happening in and around you from moment to moment. Start to pay attention to your thoughts. Don't try to change your thoughts or cling to them. Instead, observe your thoughts and allow them to pass by, just like a cloud on a warm sunny day might pass by.

Strategy #2: Practice Breathing Exercises and/or Meditation You can download one of VA's many free mental health mobile applications for on-demand support or daily practice reminders. One application designed to help build resilience, manage

stress and increase well-being during the crisis is COVID Coach. COVID Coach is for everyone, including Veterans and Servicemembers, to support self-care and overall mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. Features include: Education about coping during the pandemic; tools for self-care; exercises for emotional well-being; trackers to check your mood and measure your growth toward personal goals; and graphs to visualize your progress over time. The application is free and secure.

Strategy #3: Fill Your Cup "Fill your cup" is a reminder to practice self-care and to understand why self-care is so important. To fill your cup means to refill your mental, physical and emotional energy. "Filling your cup" is like recharging your battery. A car cannot run when the battery has no energy. People cannot be their best when their personal resources are exhausted. Start filling your cup today by creating a pause in your daily life. Schedule alone time and do something that will make you feel good.

VETERANS

Are you Isolating?
Irritable?
Drinking more?



We can help.
Spring Session March 29-June 14



www.pathtohealingma.org
508-219-2904
Easton, MA

Free for All Service Members & Veterans

Path To Healing Inc: Path to Healing fosters a supportive environment for Veterans and Service Members to harness their strength and courage to heal and thrive, improving personal sense of self-satisfaction and interactions within their families and communities. Please call 508-219-2904 for more information on how to enroll.



THE EASTON FOOD PANTRY

Since 1978, The Easton Food Pantry has been dedicated to providing food to our neighbors in times of need. The Easton Food Pantry is located at 136 Elm Street, North Easton. Distribution hours are on Mondays 12pm-3:30pm. If you are in need or interested in volunteering, *please call 508-230-0670.*

Are you missing out on benefits?
Make an appointment today!

YOUR BENEFITS: ARE YOU USING THEM?

ANNUITY FOR MA VETERANS AND FAMILIES

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts provided an annuity to 100% service connected disabled veterans, or to the parents, and or un-remarried spouses (Gold Star) of men and women who gave their lives in the service of their country during wartime. To apply, contact your VSO or visit mass.gov/veterans

BONUSES

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides a one-time Welcome Home bonus to eligible veterans who served during wartime from World War II through OPERATIONS Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. Call 617.210.5927 for the Persian Gulf War Bonus. For all other bonuses, contact the Office of the State Treasurer 617.367.3900, ext. 543, or for OEF/OIF ext. 539

MOTOR VEHICLE BENEFITS

The Registry of Motor Vehicles now offers the option of having a "Veteran" designation added to licenses upon renewal. The RMV also pro-vides a variety of veterans' license plates and a registration exemption for certain veteran. Call 617.351.9222 or see massrmv.com. Certain disabled veterans and former POWs are eligible for motor vehicle sales and excise tax exemptions. Contact the Dept. of Revenue at 617.887.6367.

THE EASTON VETERANS DISCRETIONARY FUND is used to sustain daily living for Easton veterans. If you would like to donate or are in need of assistance, please contact the VSO.

DISABILITY COMPENSATION

Federal disability compensation is one of the most common benefits provided by the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (VA). For additional information visit the Compensation and Pension Benefits section of the VA website at: www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/.

Soldiers' Homes

The Soldiers' Homes in Chelsea 617.884.5660 and Holyoke 413.532.9475 provides a variety of services to veterans, such as acute hospital, domiciliary, and long-term care; physical and occupational therapy and more.

VET CENTERS

Vet Centers provide readjustment counseling, outreach, and referral services to veterans and their families in a relaxed, community based setting. Vet Centers also provide counseling for military sexual trauma and bereavement to parents, siblings, and spouses. Locations include Boston, Brockton, Hyannis, Lowell, New Bedford, Springfield, and Worcester. For more information visit: www.vetcenter.va.gov

SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides service for veterans in crisis. Call 1.800.273.8255 and press 1 to be connected immediately to VA suicide prevention and mental health professionals. Visit www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

MASSACHUSETTS SAVE PROGRAM

Statewide Advocacy for Veterans' Empowerment (SAVE) program that assists veterans in need of referral services and seeks to prevent suicide and advocate on behalf of Massachusetts' veterans. Toll-free 1.888.844.2838, save@state.ma.us

HOME BASE PROGRAM

Home Base Program is a partnership between the Red Sox Foundation and Mass General Hospital that offers OEF/ OIF veterans & their families diagnostic assessments, treatment & referral services To learn more about the program call 617.724.5202 or homebaseprogram@partnership.org

BURIAL AND MEMORIAL BENEFITS

Most veterans are entitled to state and federal burial benefits and other memorial services. To locate the burial site of a veteran use the VA National Gravesite Locator at http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL_v1.

VA OPERATED CEMETERIES

Massachusetts National Cemetery
Bourne, MA 508.563.7113
Woodland Cemetery Soldiers' Lot
Harvard St., Ayer, MA 01432

GRAVE MARKERS AND HEADSTONES

The VA will provide markers or headstones for eligible veterans buried in private cemeteries at no cost to the veteran or his or her family.

CHAPTER 115 BENEFITS

Chapter 115 provides a needs based means tested program of financial and medical assistance for indigent veterans and their dependents. Qualifying veterans and their dependents receive necessary financial assistance for food, shelter, clothing, housing supplies and medical care. These benefits are available for dependents of deceased veterans as well.

Education Benefits

A variety of programs available ranging from MA Veterans Tuition Waiver to GI Bill (Forever GI Bill), Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation, and Ch. 35 (Dependents of 100% disabled Veterans).

STANDING NOTICES

CH. 115 BENEFITS FOR VETERANS AND SURVIVING SPOUSES

You may be eligible for Ch. 115 benefits if you are a veteran or surviving spouse of a veteran with a single income below \$2,081/month and assets below \$5k or if you are a married veteran with income below \$2,818 and assets below \$9,800. Ask your VSO for more details if you may be close to these amounts. This benefit may help with monthly medical and dental costs as well as a monetary benefit to help cover costs necessary to daily living.

THE EASTON VETERANS DISCRETIONARY FUND

accepts donations and provides assistance and gift cards to Easton veterans in need for items and services needed to sustain daily living. If you, or someone you know, are in need please contact: Cory Ahonen, VSO, to find out more about this fund. 508-230-0690.

VA Boston COVID-19 Vaccinations:

VA Boston Healthcare System is now offering COVID-19 Vaccinations to all veterans regardless of age and enrollment in the VA. If you would like to receive a vaccine, please Call 877-222-8387 to find out if you and your spouse or caregiver are eligible.



SNAP (FOOD ASSISTANCE)

Please call the MA Department of Transitional Assistance at 877-382-2363 and ask to learn more about what type of assistance may be available for you.

MEMORIES...MEMORIES...MEMORIES

Easton Veterans' Services is offering an opportunity for veterans to preserve a cherished memory in print. Stan Siegel, U.S. Army veteran of The Korean War Era, will transform your words and pictures into your own personal or family memoir. Stan is a former Executive Director of The East Norwalk Association Library and now lives in Easton. To begin your journey backward stop by the Easton Veterans' Services office to get your guide to help you start your story in words and pictures. This service is free to anyone who may be interested. Please call 508-230-0690 for more information.



MILITARY HONORS AT FUNERAL

The Department of Defense "Honoring Those Who Served" program provides dignified military funeral honors to veterans. To arrange military funeral honors, contact your local funeral home.

DEATH PENSION

The VA provides pensions to low-income surviving spouses and unmarried children of deceased veterans with wartime service.

REPLACEMENT MEDALS, AWARDS, AND DECORATIONS

Veterans and their families may obtain replacements for lost medals or other decorations awarded to the veteran. Requests can be submitted online at www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/.

EDUCATION BENEFITS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Many State and Federal programs are

VA BOSTON COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE

TARGET GROUP (Veterans enrolled at VA Boston)	PROJECTED DATE (Dates may change depending on vaccine availability)
Residents Community Caregivers High risk dialysis, transplant Living situations	
Veterans age 85+	
Veterans age 75+	March 2021
Veterans age 65+	April 2021
Veterans age 50+	May 2021
Veterans aged 50 and younger	June 2021

- VA Boston is following national guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and VA which is different from the pace of any state.
- We will offer a vaccine to ALL Veterans who receive care at VA Boston.
- **Veterans MUST BE enrolled in VA Healthcare to receive the vaccine.**
- Service-Connected Disability Rating is not a factor in vaccination eligibility.
- The vaccine is voluntary.
- The first inpatient Veterans and staff were vaccinated on December 21, 2020.
- Vaccinations began for outpatients on January 5, 2021.
- We're administering both the Moderna COVID-19 and Janssen COVID-19 vaccines.
- The Moderna COVID-19 requires a second shot 28 days after the first – we must administer both shots.
- The Janssen COVID-19 vaccine only requires one shot.
- Veterans will be offered a vaccine based on clinical need and vaccine inventory.
- Enrolled Veterans can call 857-203-3519 to schedule an appointment.
- Drop-in clinics will be announced on VA Boston's social media pages - VA Boston Healthcare System on Facebook and VA Boston HIC on Twitter.

For More Information: www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/
Become a Patient: www.boston.va.gov/patients/eligibility.asp



WWII VET SPENDS COVID TIME WEAVING 400 HATS FOR SALVATION ARMY



CHAMPLIN, Minn. — As a COVID winter transitions back toward spring, Tom Cornish patiently plows ahead. “I know all about snow,” the 96-year-old WWII veteran says. “I used to plow for the city of Bloomington.” These days, Tom has traded a city

truck for a hook and loom. While COVID-19 locked down his senior living complex, Tom completed 400 weaved hats he donated to the Salvation Army. “If someone needs something, give it to them,” the prolific volunteer says. “Volunteering does something to a person. You're working for others.” Tom works his hook and loom from an easy chair in his modest apartment at Champlin Shores. He sets a goal of completing one hat a day, but often finishes two and sometimes even three. “There's people here that want me to sell them, but I won't,” he says. “I give them to the Salvation Army.” Dan Furry, communications director for the Salvation Army Northern Division, says Tom's dedication stands out among the agencies many volunteers.



After Lorraine's passing, Tom married Marvel and, together, they also volunteered. “This is how he got to be 96 years old, because he's helping everybody else,” Jerry Cornish, Tom's son, says. “Everybody's more important than he is, in his mind,” Jerry says. Not content with his own 400 donated hats, Tom has trained others at Champlin Shores to start weaving. “That one woman, she made more than 35 hats,” he says proudly. At times Tom pauses from his weaving to read from the bible that sits on a stand next to his chair. The book's messages are woven with the wool into Tom's hats. “I feel like I'm working for the Lord and that's a good feeling,” he says. Tom Cornish: there for his country at 18, and still not putting a cap on his service. “Got to stay ahead of the Army,” .

YOUR LOCAL VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

ROLL CALL

VFW Post 2547

Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm

American Legion Post 7

Meets on the 4th Tuesday of every month.

Dinner at 6pm, meeting 7-8pm

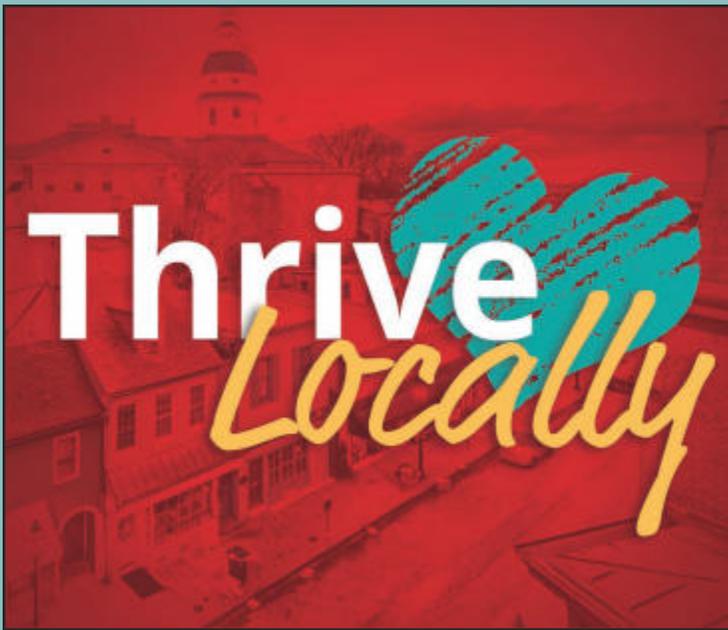
Where:

148 Allen Road, N. Easton

Note: Meeting status has been affected by COVID-19. Please be aware that meetings are subject to change during this time.



Please note that The Easton Reveille is intended for informational purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement by any federal, state, or local government agency. Easton Veterans' Services has compiled this information from a variety of sources



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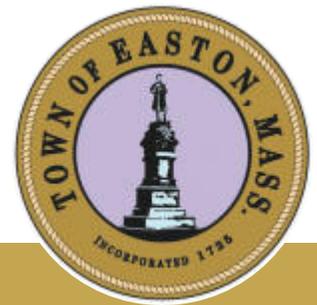


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We're on the Web! Visit us at:

http://easton.ma.us/departments/veterans_service/index.php

FRONT AND CENTER



In this edition of the Reveille, we would like to call Army Veteran, Antal (Tony) Basa, Jr. Who joined the US Army right out of Highschool on June 17, 1981. While in the service Tony started out in Communications as an O5B Voice Radio Operator and served at Ft. Rucker, AL with Range Control. Then his world travels started, first to 2nd Infantry Division in Korea where he served with 1/38th Infantry, Tony was on the DMZ when President Reagan visited. Tony and his family moved to Easton in June 2010 and his son Anthony followed in his father's footsteps and entered the Massachusetts National Guard to use the educational opportunities they offer. Anthony is currently with the 181st Engineer

Company (v), 101st Engineer Battalion, as an Electrician. Anthony is also a member of the Massachusetts Honor Guard. Antal Basa continues to serve his community as a member of the Easton Commission on Disabilities. This is where he advises and assists town officials and employees in ensuring compliance with state and federal laws and regulations that affect people with disabilities

If you know someone who you would like included in our 'Front and Center' section, please let the VSO know!



EASTON VETERANS DISCRETIONARY FUND

The Veterans Discretionary Fund is reserved for the purchase or reimbursement of expenses required to sustain daily living for any veteran who is a resident of Easton, MA. If you would like to donate please contact us at 508-230-0690 x3.

Please send thoughts, suggestions, and ideas to:
Cahonen@easton.ma.us
or call 508-230-0690 x3