

ASK AND ACCEPT HELP

“Addiction is a life or death disease, and is not a joke.” U.S. Army and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Veteran Willard “Billy” Whitton first came to VA Butler Healthcare in December 2014 with “a broken heart, battered soul, bullet in his arm, PTSD, depression, and a severe case of drug and alcohol addiction.”

Billy is currently residing at VA Butler’s Domiciliary (Dom), a residential facility on VA Butler’s main campus for eligible Veterans who are dealing with issues such as homelessness, mental health, substance abuse and unemployment. While at the Domiciliary, Billy also actively participates in the “Veteran X” Recovery Group, Compensated Work Therapy (CWT), and After-care groups.

“The most challenging part for me was the very beginning of my recovery. It was so hard for me to tell my life story to Ms.



Cannon, my awesome case manager. I already was beat and broken. It hurt to just simply tell her of my mostly self-inflicted sufferings. By the look in her eyes though, it looked as if it hurt her just as bad as it hurt me. My realization of this justified to me that the nightmare was over and the help I needed, and truly deep down desired, was here. I could breathe a sigh of relief because I found my way before death found me.”

Now closing in on his six-month stay at the Dom, Billy says his experience here has been “nothing short of a blessing.” Moving forward in his recovery, Billy’s future plans include the Transitional Residence (TR) program, continuation in the CWT program, and pursuing a degree in social work this fall at Butler Community College.

Billy wants other Veterans to take advantage of the resources available to them at VA Butler Healthcare. “That’s what they’re [VA Butler] there for. If you don’t know, don’t be afraid to ask. Don’t be afraid to be honest to yourself or others. Everyone I have met or worked with here genuinely and sincerely wants to help Veterans, but you can’t get help if you don’t ask or accept it.”

Ask for help today. Contact VA Butler’s Center for Behavioral Health at 800-362-8262, ext. 5039.

“My experience at the Dom has been nothing short of a blessing.” —Billy Whitton, U.S. Army Veteran

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY...JUNE

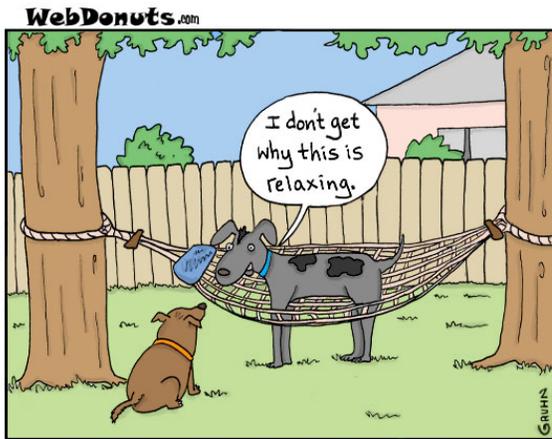
- 1 Baseball helmets are worn for the first time [*Be safe!*] (1938)
- 5 The first sustained flight occurs as a hot-air balloon is launched in France (1783)
- 14 Warren G. Harding becomes the first U.S. president to be heard on radio. The event was the dedication of the Francis Scott Key memorial at Fort McHenry (1922)
- 15 An order to establish a military burial ground is signed by Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton. The location later became known as Arlington National Cemetery (1864)
- 21 The Battle of Okinawa ends [*70th Anniversary*] (1945)
- 25 The Korean War begins [*65th Anniversary—Thank You Korean War Veterans!*] (1950)
- 27 *National HIV Testing Day* is first observed to support and promote the importance of HIV testing (1995)



RETURNING SERVICE MEMBERS, THANK YOU!

Save the date for the annual Welcome Home Event on July 18, 2015

VA Butler’s Welcome Home Event for returning service members will be at the VFW and Rodfathers Car Cruise on the VA Butler campus on Saturday, July 18, from noon to 4pm. For more information, visit www.butler.va.gov/services/returning.



TIPS FOR A STRESS-FREE SUMMER!

Get active, get enough sleep, and have fun! Try summer activities like swimming, biking, or even beach volleyball to stay fit and stress-free. Also, make sure you are getting enough rest. Don't let the appeal of late summer nights stand in the way of a full cycle of sleep—seven and a half to nine hours each night. And of course, make time for summer fun! Plan regular, enjoyable activities and see if this reduces your stress. For more tips to stay stress-free, visit www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Manage_Stress.asp

PTSD HELP: WITH YOU WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST



June is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Awareness Month and June 27 is National PTSD Awareness Day. Together with professional medical treatment, the PTSD Coach App provides resources Veterans can trust. If you have, or think you might have PTSD, this app is for you. Family and friends also can learn about PTSD and coping from this app.

Among the PTSD Coach App features are:

- Reliable information about PTSD and treatments that work.
- Tools for screening and tracking your symptoms.
- Convenient, easy-to-use skills training to help you handle stress symptoms.
- Direct links to support and help.
- Always with you when you need it.

PTSD Coach has been downloaded more than 100,000 times and in 74 countries around the world. Learn more at www.ptsd.va.gov.

HEALTH CARE WHEN AND WHERE YOU WANT IT

40 Mile Driving Distance Measure

A previously determined Veterans Choice Program eligibility based on place of residence using a straight-line measure of distance. VA is now using a driving distance measure. What does this mean? Under the new distance calculation, a Veteran who lives 40 miles or less from the nearest VA medical facility, measured using a straight-line distance, but who needs to physically drive more than 40 miles to get there is eligible for the Choice Program. Under the previous straight-line distance calculation, this Veteran would not have been eligible for the Program unless he or she was required to wait for an appointment longer than 30 days from his or her preferred date or the date determined to be medically necessary by his or her physician.

For more information, visit www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/ or call 866-606-8198.

We want to hear from you! Email amanda.kurtz2@va.gov to share your story with us!

EVENTS

Behavioral Health Council Meeting

9) Tuesday, June 9 • 10am
VA Butler Healthcare, Room 218WS

Helping a Family Member Who Has PTSD—Information Session

Wednesday, June 17 • 5pm-7pm
VA Butler Healthcare, Room 403C

17) For more information, call 724-282-5603 or (724) 285-2501

Sun Safety & Cancer Prevention Event

19) Friday, June 19 • 10am-2pm
Outside Lawn, Primary Care Entrance

PTSD Awareness Day Information Table

25) Thursday, June 25 • 9am-3pm
Primary Care Waiting Area



800.362.8262
724.287.4781

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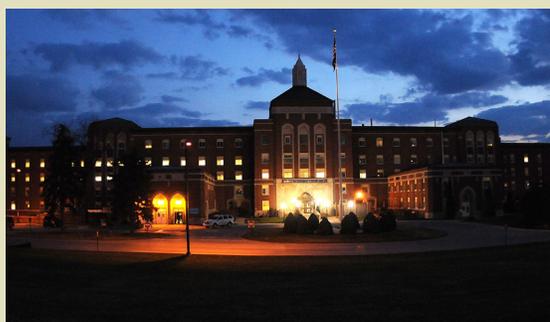
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