

SHARE THE BURDEN

Ben Knight served in the U.S. Army from 2003-2009, including three deployments in Iraq. He currently resides at VA Butler's Domiciliary where he participates in treatment for Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

PTSD can occur after someone goes through a traumatic event like combat, assault, or disaster. Strong emotions caused by the event can cause changes in the brain that may result in PTSD. "It has been extremely hard for me, just making myself try and open up. I felt weak, ashamed,

and alone—but, the reality was the complete opposite," Ben shared about his overall experience with PTSD treatment at VA Butler. "Forming a bond with others like me and not feeling alone has been the most helpful."

VA Butler has many treatment options available that can help Veterans. Treatment may include: psycho-education classes, building coping skills, individual and group therapies, medication, and/or evidence-

based treatments. "Reaching out can bring on a myriad of negative feelings, but I have found an exceptionally rich fellowship with other Veterans, and a caring staff to help guide me and share the burden I have been carrying," said Ben.

In addition to PTSD-specific programs and services, Ben also has been involved with other recovery groups at VA Butler such as the new Mindfulness Group and "Veteran X."

"My favorite part about the groups I



have attended is when someone shares a belief or experience that others and myself would never have had the courage to share on our own. The camaraderie that follows is a domino effect – warriors reluctantly release their fears and feelings, and it leaves me teary-eyed

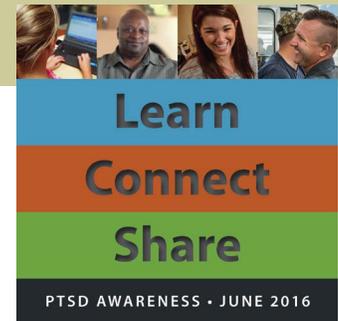
with goosebumps."

You are not alone. Treatment and support are available at VA Butler Healthcare. To learn more about PTSD and PTSD treatment, please call VA Butler's Center for Behavioral Health at 800.362.8262, ext. 5039.

“Forming a bond with others like me and not feeling alone has been the most helpful.” – Ben Knight, U.S. Army Veteran

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY...MAY

- 1 Henry J. Heimlich publishes his informal findings for a better way to rescue a choking victim in an essay he wrote for *Emergency Medicine*, is now universally known as the "Heimlich Maneuver" (1974)
- 3 U.S. President Woodrow Wilson signs the National Defense Act expanding the size and scope of the National Guard (1916)
- 6 More than 160,000 Allied troops land along a 50-mile stretch of heavily-fortified French coastline to fight Nazi Germany on the beaches of Normandy, France (D-Day) (1944)
- 14 The U.S. Army is established (1775)
- 14 John Adams introduces a resolution before Congress mandating a United States flag [This anniversary is celebrated each year in the U.S. as Flag Day] (1777)



IT'S PTSD AWARENESS MONTH

Take the mystery out of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Learn what it is, who it affects, and how treatment can help. Visit www.ptsd.va.gov for more information, and to see a list of ways to help raise PTSD awareness.

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED

Do you have a little extra time on your hands this summer? Do you know someone else who does? How about taking that time to do something worthwhile and help a Veteran access his/her VA health care? VA Butler Healthcare is looking for volunteer drivers for the DAV/Volunteer Transportation Program. Find out how you can help by contacting VA Butler's Voluntary Services Coordinator, Paula McCarl, at 724.285.2575 or by email at Paula.Mccarl@va.gov.

SAVE THE DATE—MENTAL HEALTH CREATIVE ARTS EVENT

VA Butler Healthcare is hosting the fourth annual Mental Health Creative Arts Event to help Veterans work toward mental health recovery on Tuesday, July 19, from 11am-1:30pm. Veterans are invited to display their artistic talents – paintings, drawings, sculptures, music, and more. All are invited to join us during lunch, and vote for their favorite artist! Three top winners will receive awards. Questions? Call 724.996.2032.

FITNESS CLASSES ARE BACK IN THE NEWLY RE-OPENED AUDITORIUM

VA Butler's auditorium officially reopened in May – and VA Butler's free weekly fitness classes have resumed in that location from 4:30 to 5:30pm Monday through Friday.

Classes currently offered include:

- Monday and Wednesday: PE Plus (Cardio)
- Tuesday: Kickboxing
- Thursday: Cardio Kickboxing
- Friday: Yoga

Get in shape for summer now – for free!

Veterans must pre-register before attending classes. Please contact VA Butler's Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Program Manager at 800.362.8262, ext. 2292.

We are encouraging every Veteran to get tested for HIV at least once.

Scan this QR code to visit www.hiv.va.gov



TAKE THE TEST.
TAKE CONTROL!

HIV TESTING DAY | JUNE 27

JUNE 27 IS NATIONAL HIV TESTING DAY

A person with HIV could show no symptoms for years, but could still pass the virus on to others. Talk to your provider about taking the HIV test. Like many other diseases, it is better to diagnose and treat HIV early rather than late. The earlier HIV is detected, the sooner a person can receive treatment and begin taking steps to remain healthy for years to come.

Learn more about the benefits of getting tested for HIV and why knowing your HIV status can save your life at www.hiv.va.gov/patient/index.asp.



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

EVENTS

- 11 **Helping Family Members Understand PTSD**
Wednesday, June 1 • 5-7pm
VA Butler Healthcare Auditorium
- 14 **Behavioral Health Council Meeting**
Tuesday, June 14 • 10am
VA Butler Healthcare, Room 218WS
- 24 **Sun Safety & Cancer Prevention Event**
(and Blood Drive 9am-1pm)
Friday, June 24 • 10am-2pm
Outside Lawn, Primary Care Main Entrance
- 30 **PTSD Awareness Day Information Table**
Thursday, June 30 • 9am-3pm
Primary Care Waiting Area



325 new castle road . butler pa 16001

800.362.8262
724.287.4781

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