

FRONT & CENTER

Providing News to Our Veterans

March 2013



ANYTHING ACTIVE

The “Mission Redefined” campaign, a joint effort by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and U.S. Paralympics, encourages Veterans and members of the Armed Forces with

physical disabilities to get involved in sports to help open doors to new activities and keep them moving forward. U.S. Army Veteran Rocco Pepe IV is doing just that!

Rocco was in the Warrior Transition Battalion prior to being medically discharged for injuries sustained while serving in Iraq, including permanent nerve damage in his back and a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). The Battalion helped him transition home and into the VA. “I knew to go to VA Butler Healthcare, and I had all my paperwork set up

so my treatment could continue seamlessly.”

Rocco recently began physical therapy for his back, and continues treatment for TBI and mild PTSD at VA Butler. “They [the VA] will take care of you in your transition. They have so many programs to help soldiers – any problems you may have, they’re able to help.”

In addition to transitioning his care, Rocco also transitioned his active lifestyle. While in the Warrior Transition Battalion, he was in charge of the Adaptive Sports Program, including

the Shooting and Archery Program. He has continued his interest in adaptive sports and is currently training in swimming with hopes of making the U.S. Army Team for the Warrior Games.

It’s not just sports for Rocco though; he is also involved in a variety of activities and organizations – anything active! “I really do not do well with crowds, but these things help me, and I know they can help other Veterans too. Just getting out and doing something, like sports, takes your mind off anything. I try not to let my

injuries get me down, and that’s why I love getting out and experiencing everything!”

Disabled Veterans are encouraged to review the many sports opportunities available by reaching out to their VA health care team and checking out this website: www.va.gov/adaptivesports/. Veterans also have the opportunity to participate in annual, national Veteran adaptive sports programs such as the Wheelchair Games and TEE Tournament. ★

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Rocco Pepe IV, U.S. Army Veteran

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY...MARCH

- 3** President Herbert Hoover signs a bill that makes Francis Scott Key’s *Star Spangled Banner* the national anthem (1931)
- 7** The Army Distinguished Service Medal is authorized (1918)
- 15** The U.S. Air Force unveils the first self-guided missile (1955)
- 16** The 15,000-ton battleship *Pennsylvania* is launched at Newport News, VA (1913)
- 22** The Tuskegee Airmen, the first African-American military aviators in the U.S. armed forces, are activated (1941)
- 29** Coca-Cola goes on sale for the first time at a drugstore in Atlanta. Its inventor, Dr. John Pemberton, claims it can cure anything from hysteria to the common cold (1886)



MARCH 19, 2013 MARKS THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEGINNING OF OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

VA provides five years of cost-free health care to OEF/OIF/OND Veterans for any injury or illness associated with their service. Get the care you have earned by contacting VA Butler Healthcare’s OEF/OIF/OND Coordinator at 800.362.8262, ext. 2493 or visiting www.oefoif.va.gov.



NEW CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAMS

VA Butler Healthcare's Caregiver Support Program offers a variety of support services, including three new programs: *REACH VA Dementia*, *Building Better Caregivers*, and *Spouse Telephone Support*.

- *REACH VA Dementia* is an award-winning telephone program to assist caregivers whose Veterans have Alzheimer's/Dementia. It focuses on safety, caregiver health and well-being, and patient behavior management.
- *Building Better Caregivers* is a six-week online workshop for caregivers of Veterans and Veterans who serve as caregivers to someone with dementia, memory problems, PTSD, or any other serious injury or illness. Caregivers participate through interactive, online discussion boards.
- *Spouse Telephone Support* is a telephone-based group for spouses/significant others of OIF/OEF/OND Veterans who are at least one month post-deployment and receive VA services. Topics such as problem-solving, communication, relationship-building, and mental health and psychological conditions/behaviors will be covered.



For more information about these new Caregiver programs, or if you are interested in participating, please contact VA Butler Healthcare's Caregiver Support Coordinator Karen Gliebe at 724.285.2492. ★

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



PROJECT HEALING WATERS

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc. is dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active military service personnel and Veterans through fly fishing and fly tying education and outings. The local Trout Unlimited (TU) Chapter, the Arrowhead Chapter, has been visiting once a month to tie fishing flies with Veterans in VA Butler's Community Living Center (CLC). The plan is to later take a fishing trip and use the flies the Veterans tied. ★

NATIONAL SLEEP AWARENESS WEEK IS MARCH 3-10, 2013

It's all too easy to skimp on getting a good night's sleep while we try to get through our daily to-do lists, but a lack of sleep may cause health and healing problems. Not getting enough rest has been related to difficulties focusing and maintaining attention, as well as both physical and mental health issues. Chronic sleep deprivation may even raise the risk of health issues such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, and may lengthen your natural healing process.

Are you getting enough sleep? VA Butler Healthcare offers a bi-monthly healthy sleep group that focuses on evaluation and treatment of behavioral and lifestyle factors that can cause poor sleep quality or duration. If you are interested in participating, talk to your health care team today. ★

EVENTS

- 7 **March Podcast • Vocational Rehabilitation**
Thursday, Mar. 7 • 12-12:30pm
Log on to chat link:
www.talkshoe.com/tc/85029
- 12 **Behavioral Health Council Meeting**
Tuesday, Mar. 12 • 10am
VA Butler Healthcare, Room 218SW
- 26 **Diabetes Alert Day**
Tuesday, Mar. 26 • 9am-3pm
VA Butler Primary Care Waiting Area



800.362.8262
724.287.4781



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