

FRONT & CENTER

Providing News to Our Veterans

May 2011



TRUST

Alcohol was a part of Veteran Ken Newton's life. Ken went for years with undiagnosed and untreated mental health issues. After staying in the Domiciliary and being seen by VA Butler Healthcare's Behavioral Health team, Ken's recovery came together.

Ken first came to the Domiciliary at VA Butler in 2005. When he arrived, he was wearing someone else's clothes; he'd spent ten years in a trailer with black garbage bags in the windows. "This place [VA Butler] saved my life. And the people put up with me! My anxiety was through the roof!"

Ken had untreated anxiety, fear, and depression. "It was easy for me to say I had a drug/alcohol problem, but I didn't want to hear I had a mental health issue."

Mental health is just as important as physical

health, and VA Butler can help. Some of the most common issues we treat include depression, substance abuse, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As for Ken, he continues to come to VA Butler for mental health help. "Being here really changed things for me. I've stayed sober ever since, and it's been four years now."

We are here for you too. We provide consultation, evaluation, and treatment for a variety of issues that can impact your life. Treatments include medication management and individual, group,

and couples therapy. "I always thought recovery was an event, but it's not. It's a process that takes time. It's a drive-thru world we live in, but it's not a drive-thru VA," Ken said. "Trust that the VA is here to help."

Ken was in the U.S. Air Force from 1973-1977 where he was a general's driver at Fort Meade, MD and also served a year in Thailand. Ken is the chairman of the VA Butler Veterans Mental Health Advocacy Group and is active in the AA recovery community and his church ministry. ★

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Ken Newton

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY...MAY

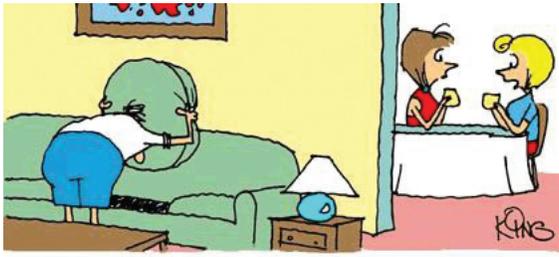
- 5 Decoration Day is first observed in the U.S., with the tradition of decorating soldiers' graves from the Civil War. The date was later moved to the last Monday in May (better known as Memorial Day) and included all Americans who have died in military service for the United States of America. (1865)
- 7 Official end of the Vietnam War (1975)
- 14 Women's Army Auxiliary Corps is established (1942)
- 21 The American Red Cross is founded by Clara Barton (1881)
- 30 The Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. is dedicated (1922)



May is National Mental Health Month and VA Butler Healthcare wants you to know you are not alone.

Mental Health is how we think, feel, and behave. Just like physical health, mental health is important at every stage of life and is essential to overall health. VA Butler offers a wide range of mental health services. For more information call us at 800.362.8262, ext. 5039 or 724.477.5039. We are here for you; you are not alone.





"The doctor said he needed more activity. So I hide his T.V. remote three time a week."

May is National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. Talk to VA Butler's *MOVE!* Team about getting fit this month! 800.362.8262, ext. 5504.

A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

May is Better Sleep Month and a good time to examine your sleep habits. A good night's sleep is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. It affects all aspects of your day – from how you feel, to your relationships, productivity, and ultimately, your quality of life. The National Institute of Health (NIH) suggests that most average adults need about 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night.

Nearly everyone has occasional sleepless nights. Statistics say 95 percent of Americans have difficulty sleeping at some time in their lives, but if you have trouble sleeping on a regular basis, talk to your VA Primary Care Provider. We offer a weekly sleep clinic on Mondays from 9 a.m.–10 a.m. Let us help you get the good night's sleep you need and deserve!

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

MAY IS...MELANOMA/SKIN CANCER DETECTION AND PREVENTION MONTH

Routine exams of the skin increase the chance of finding skin cancer early and treating it successfully. VA Butler Healthcare offers a Telederm program that allows Veterans to meet with a dermatologist via secure video at VA Outpatient Clinics. The process includes taking a digital picture and uploading it to a consult that is then sent to the dermatology clinic at VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System. A dermatologist looks at the picture and recommends treatment and/or follow-up. Veterans interested in the Telederm program can talk with their Primary Care Team or call VA Butler's Telehealth Coordinator at 724.477.5037.

Did you know?

Skin cancer affects one in five Americans, and more than one million new cases are diagnosed each year. Of these cases, more than 108,230 are melanoma, a cancer that will claim 8,110 lives this year. Avoid the risk of skin cancer by practicing these safe sun exposure tips:

1. Use sunscreen with sun protective factor (SPF) 15 or higher
2. Wear clothing to protect exposed skin and a hat to shade the face, head, ears, and neck
3. Avoid overexposure to the sun; seek shade (especially during midday hours)



Specialty Care Clinic Nurses Mary Spencer and Emily Konar take skin images and process them to the dermatologist via secure video Internet.

EVENTS

5 **May Podcast • Healthcare for Homeless Veterans**
Thursday, May 5 • 12-12:30 pm
Chat link: talkshoe.com/tc/85029
or Call in: 724.444.7444 (Call ID: 85029)

29 **Memorial Day Ceremonies**
Sunday, May 29 • 7 pm
Monday, May 30 • 9 am
VA Butler Healthcare Auditorium



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