

VETERANS FOR CHRIST, INC.
P.O. BOX 362234
DECAUUR, GA. 30036



January 31, 2015

My fellow veterans, grace and peace to you and your family.

The Veterans for Christ (VFC) have an exciting year planned to support other veterans less fortunate than ourselves. We are kicking off the New Year with a fund raiser to benefit our Gerald Prince Memorial Scholarship. We are looking for a corporate sponsor.

On May 24, prior to Memorial Day, the VFC we will be laying a reef at the Decatur Military Monument.

We will also raffle a Laptop which will be awarded at our September 19, 2015, 7th Anniversary Luncheon.

On November 7, we will have a Veterans Day and Men's Breakfast at a VFC Member Atlanta church. This will be a program with a High School ROTC honor guard performing the flag ceremony and each branch of service recognized.

We will be collecting food in November to be donated to the Atlanta Women and Children's Shelter as we have done in past years. We are asking that you contact any VFC member if you would like to contribute to the project

In December we will be collecting toys for children of incarcerated veterans to be donated at Christmas to these needy children. We are asking that you contact any VFC member if you would like to contribute to the project

Later this year, we will be also volunteering our support to the Veterans Affairs Advisory Board of DeKalb County and DAV Chapter 91 to help fulfill their mission.

Guilty plea in scam that left World War II veteran homeless in South Phila

Ray White, a 90-year-old World War II veteran, was left homeless after befriending a con man who systematically scammed him out of his South Philadelphia house, vintage Bentley and Cadillac, and everything else he valued



Melvin McIlwaine pleaded guilty. (6ABC)

On Tuesday, 61-year-old Melvin Mcllwaine pleaded guilty to cheating White of his worldly possessions, clearing the way for the retiree who served in the Battle of the Bulge to put his life back together.

The guilty plea came at "the eleventh hour," just as jury selection was about to begin for Mcllwaine's criminal fraud trial, said Assistant District Attorney Deborah Cooper Nixon.

Mcllwaine was able to delay his trial by complaining about illnesses that Nixon said were just a continuation of his deceptions. This was Mcllwaine's last opportunity to plead guilty.

"When it was time to face the music, there was nobody to con except the judge and jury," Nixon said. "He wasn't prepared to do that."

Michael Huff, Mcllwaine's attorney, could not be reached for comment.

White was unable to attend court Tuesday, but he plans to be at Mcllwaine's sentencing, set for Feb. 6, Nixon said.

Mcllwaine, also of South Philadelphia, faces a maximum of 62 years in prison. He pleaded guilty to one count of dealing in proceeds of illegal activities, three counts of theft by deception, and three counts of theft by unlawful taking.

White served as a first lieutenant with the Ninth Air Force and carried paratroopers to the Battle of the Bulge. After the war, he became a stockbroker and lived at the Dorchester on Rittenhouse Square for 25 years. He later moved to a house he bought in the 1200 block of South Juniper Street, where he lived alone.

As a result of Mcllwaine's pleading guilty, White will get back his 1964 silver Bentley and gold 1969 Cadillac convertible, which have been in police custody pending the outcome of the case.

The house, however, is tied up in litigation because it is now owned by a real estate investment company.

The scam started in 2012 when Mcllwaine befriended the then-88-year-old White after noticing the mint-condition luxury cars parked outside his house, Nixon said.

Mcllwaine first duped White into turning over the titles of the cars, and then selling the house, playing on fears that the cars could be stolen and that his neighborhood was unsafe, Nixon said.

Mcllwaine was supposed to arrange for White to move back into the Dorchester, Nixon said.

Instead, Mcllwaine left the aging veteran homeless.

White committed himself to the VA Medical Center in West Philadelphia after a nervous breakdown, according to court records, then went to police.

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Veteran suicide tracking faulted

Government report says VA data is being incorrectly reported

By [Ashly McGlone](#) 5:54 P.M. DEC. 31, 2014

The Department of Veterans Affairs is incorrectly reporting suicide data and poorly tracks and

cares for vets at risk of suicide who are prescribed antidepressants, [a new report](#) by the U.S. Government Accountability Office suggests.

A yearlong audit discovered multiple instances where agency protocols for treatment of veteran depression were broken, and patient and suicide data was flawed, the Dec. 12 report states.

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Ten percent of those who received veteran health care in the past five years were diagnosed with major depressive disorder, or more than 532,000 veterans. Nearly all of them were prescribed antidepressants, but policies for follow-up care were rarely followed in the cases sampled, the audit states.

Independent government reviewers inspected 30 medical files for veterans prescribed antidepressants following a major depression diagnosis at six VA medical centers in New York, Florida, Iowa, Pennsylvania, Arizona and Nevada spanning fiscal years 2009 through 2013.

Twenty-six of those veterans weren't assessed after four to six weeks as specified in the VA's clinical practice guidelines, and 10 veterans did not receive follow-up care within the time frame recommended, the audit found.

Eleven of the 30 cases had coding discrepancies, suggesting, "VA's data may understate the prevalence" of major depression "among veterans being treated through VA, to the extent that such discrepancies may permeate VA's data."

The report also said the VA lacked a system-wide process for tracking compliance with agency protocols for antidepressant treatment.

The accuracy of veteran suicide data used for prevention work was also problematic.

"The demographic and clinical data that VA collects on veteran suicides were not always complete, accurate or consistent," the report states.

Forty out of 63 Behavioral Health Autopsy Program reports had incomplete data, six had incorrect dates of death and nine reported an incorrect number of outpatient mental health visits in the last 30 days, reviewers found.

The errors were attributed to different interpretations of the guidance given for filling out the forms, and the situation was "further exacerbated" because the forms "are generally not reviewed at any level within the Department."

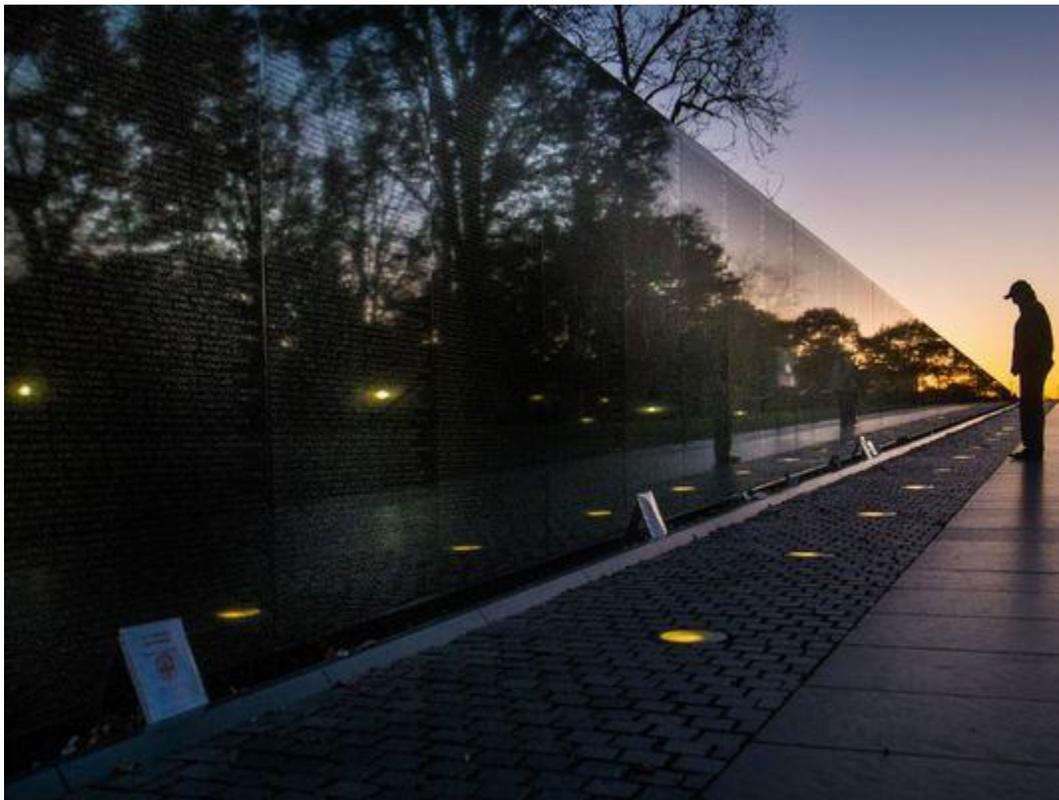
“Lack of complete, accurate, and consistent data and poor oversight can inhibit VA’s ability to identify, evaluate and improve ways to better inform its suicide prevention efforts,” the office wrote.

In 2013, Veterans Affairs officials estimated 1.5 million veterans required mental health care, including treatment for major depression, the report states. The agency provides mental health services to veterans at its 150 medical centers across the country.

A 24-hour confidential Veteran’s Crisis Line first established in 2007 for veterans, their families and friends fielded about 287,000 calls, 54,800 online chats, and 11,300 text messages in fiscal year 2013, the report says.

In an Oct. 21 letter to the Government Accountability Office, Veterans Affairs concurred with all six recommended actions for improvement, including analysis of its coding methods, evaluation of the risk of antidepressant treatments that deviate from set policies, and new systems to review the accuracy of suicide data entries

Veterans can apply to upgrade discharge for PTSD



(Photo: AP)

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A special web page has been launched to assist veterans seeking to upgrade punitive discharges related to behavior problems caused by post-traumatic stress.

The web page provides information and applications to seek an upgrade to discharge from service. The page can be found at <http://arba.army.pentagon.mil/adrb-ptsd.cfm>.

It follows a recent directive to the Army's Review Boards Agency to give liberal consideration to requests for discharge upgrades from veterans who say they were kicked out of service because of problems related to PTSD.

Thousands of Vietnam-era soldiers may have been given punitive discharges because they suffered from PTSD before it was recognized as a debilitating medical condition, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel acknowledged in September. .

The ARBA is the Army's highest level of administrative review for personnel actions taken by lower level organizations, and is comprised of several boards for considering the claims of soldiers and former soldiers who appeal unfavorable information in their personnel records.

Discharge upgrades are important because they are linked to benefits available through Veterans Affairs, such as treating PTSD-related symptoms, according to information provided by the Army.

The Army could not provide an estimate of how many applications it will receive as a result of the outreach campaign.

However, a class action suit brought by veterans groups, including the Vietnam Veterans of America, estimates that one third of the 250,000 other-than-honorable discharges issued to Vietnam-era veterans may have been PTSD-related.

Veterans who previously were denied an upgrade can re-apply under the new guidance, and the Army Board for Correction of Military Records will consider the application a new case, according to the Army.

The new guidance only applies to veterans who received "other than honorable" discharges. It does not apply to veterans who received less than honorable or dishonorable discharges because of serious infractions.

Components of the Review Boards Agency include the Army Board for Correction of Military Records, the Army Discharge Review Board and the Army Grade Determination Review Board

You can sign up online to become an associate member for those that would like to support the VFC and our mission. The annual associate membership of \$100.00 can be used as a tax

deduction for supporters. This can be paid on line through our PayPal web site account. You will get a free VFC T-shirt with your associate membership.

All Honorably Discharged Veterans are welcome to come and observe the VFC and ask questions you need answered. If we don't know the answer we know someone that does. Please browse our web site. There are tabs with information on many subjects of interest. We have the News Letter for your branch of service and links to Social Security and many other links with an abundance of information.

Our next Monthly meeting will be Tuesday Feb 17, 2015 @ 6:30 PM at the Clark Harrison Building 1st Fl. 330 W, Ponce De Leon Ave, Decatur, GA. 30030. Our will be for approximately one hour and a half unless otherwise advertised. We will be respectful of your time.

Thank you for your interest in the VFC. We look forward to communicating and fellowshiping with you soon.

"Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, being men of courage, be strong." 1Cor 16:13

Sincerely

William A. Harris, Jr.

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