

MARCH/APRIL 2015



# VETERANS BENEFITS & BEYOND

## VA Appoints New Members to Advise on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses.

**T**he Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is announcing the appointment of new members to the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses. VA will appoint Stephen L. Hauser, MD as committee chair for a term through September, 2016. Dr. Hauser is the Robert A. Fishman Distinguished Professor and Chair of the Department of Neurology at the University of California, San Francisco. A neuroimmunologist, Dr. Hauser's research has advanced the understanding of the genetic basis, immune mechanisms and treatment of multiple sclerosis. Additional appointees include Ronnie D. Horner, PhD, who is a Professor of Epidemiology in the Department of Health Services Policy and Management at the Arnold School of Public Health, University of South Carolina; Frances E. Perez-Wilhite, a former US Army Officer who served as a Lieutenant in Desert Shield in 1990; and Scott S. Young, MD, a former Navy flight surgeon during the Gulf War, who currently heads Kaiser Permanente's Care Management Institute, an organization dedicated to creating and supporting high quality care delivery programs. These new members will serve terms through September 2017.

"VA is incredibly excited about the fresh perspective these new members will bring to the RAC, and we will continue to invest in research to understand and treat Gulf War Veterans' illnesses," said Secretary McDonald.

VA will also begin a study to examine brain cancer in Gulf War

Veterans. The formation of the study was prompted by a discussion between VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald and members of the RAC. The members expressed concerns over the possible association between exposure to chemical nerve agents and brain cancer in Gulf War Veterans.

"Formation of this workgroup of VA subject matter experts to study research literature on the incidence of brain cancer in Gulf War Veterans is the latest VA effort on their behalf," said Secretary McDonald. Some Veterans may have been exposed to chemical weapon agents during the demolition of the munitions depot in Khamisiyah, Iraq, in March 1991 after the Gulf War ceasefire. VA expects to complete the brain cancer study by the spring.

The RAC was established by section 104 of Public Law 105-368 to provide advice to VA on proposed research studies, research plans or research strategies relating to the health consequences of military service in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the 1990-1991 Gulf War (Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm). The Committee periodically releases reports that summarize and make recommendations regarding research on the health of Gulf War Veterans.

More information about the Khamisiyah munitions depot can be found at [www.gulflink.osd.mil/library/kham\\_info.jsp](http://www.gulflink.osd.mil/library/kham_info.jsp), and more information about RAC is available at [www.va.gov/RAC-GWVI/](http://www.va.gov/RAC-GWVI/).

(Source: <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2669>)

INSIDE

### ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR 2015

National Veterans Wheelchair Games

### VA AND U.S. TENNIS ASSOCIATION FORM

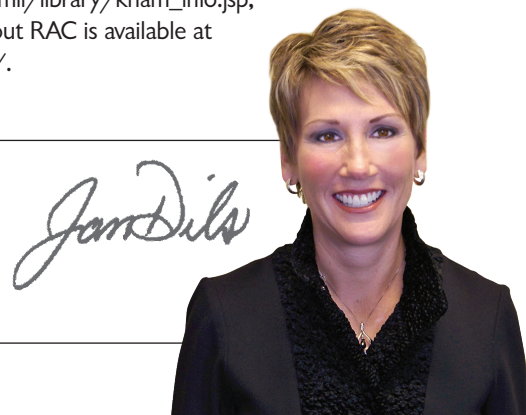
Partnership to Make Tennis More Accessible

### OFFICE INBOX

Office News And Events

### WHAT'S COOKING!

Crazy Cake !



# JAN'S LETTER

When those first green leaves appear on the trees, I always feel a renewed sense of energy and excitement for things to come. And this year is no exception! Like the rest of my team, I am excited to spend the coming months helping more of the brave men and women who have fought for our freedom. I can't say enough about the incredible Veterans that we are fortunate enough to meet every day. Many of those we work with are Veterans of the Gulf War, so I was particularly pleased to hear about new research being done on Gulf War Veterans' illnesses. Be sure to read the article we have included for more information on this important topic.

After "hibernating" all winter, this is also the season to think about getting back into shape. The link between exercise and better health is undeniable, so we have included two articles that I hope will inspire you to get moving this spring! Of course, all that hard

work requires the right fuel, so we've included an absolutely delicious recipe from one of our team members that's sure to get you and your family going!

I hope you will enjoy this edition of our newsletter especially for our Veterans, and I want to remind you to let us know if there are any topics you'd like for us to cover in the coming months. We're always happy to hear from you!

I hope your springtime is filled with exciting new beginnings, and that you take every opportunity to get outside and enjoy the sunshine!

*Sincerely,  
Jan Dils*



JAN DILS brings her expertise to issues that affect you and millions of other Americans every day. Her knowledge across vital areas – including Veterans' benefits, disability benefits and related appeals and claims – and a practice that focuses on the people, ensures you get answers and the right results.

## VA and U.S. Tennis Association Foundation Form Partnership to Make Tennis More Accessible to Veterans.

**T**he Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is partnering with the U.S. Tennis Association (USTA) Foundation, Inc., to make exercise more readily available to VA patients. The VA/USTA Foundation partnership will facilitate the formation of tennis clinics at VA medical facilities, link VA medical facilities with community resources and provide consulting and design services for VA facilities interested in upgrading or building tennis courts.

"Exercise and physical activity is an important component of health and wellness and has been shown to provide numerous physical and mental health benefits," said Interim Under Secretary for Health Carolyn M. Clancy, MD. "We are very excited to be partnering with the USTA Foundation to improve Veterans' physical fitness and ultimately their overall health and well-being."

The USTA Foundation will support VA in the form of coaching, instruction, equipment or use of courts or other technical assistance to sustain a tennis clinic, along with the recently developed "Warrior Tennis Curriculum," an electronic manual that provides rehabilitation therapists guidance through text, pictures and videos on how to use tennis as a therapeutic option to help Veterans stay fit and active.

"The USTA Foundation is honored to partner with the Department of Veteran Affairs in helping to enhance and improve the rehabilitation

needs of our country's Veterans through tennis," said Dan Faber, Executive Director, USTA Foundation. "We are committed to providing the tools needed for VA facilities around the country to incorporate tennis into their existing rehabilitation programs. Together, we are striving to provide an opportunity for our Veterans to stay active and fit in tribute to their sacrifice and bravery."

With more than eight million Veterans enrolled, VA operates the largest integrated health care delivery system in the United States. The USTA Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the US Tennis Association.



**"We are committed to providing the tools needed for VA facilities around the country to incorporate tennis into their existing rehabilitation programs"**

– DAN FABER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
USTA FOUNDATION



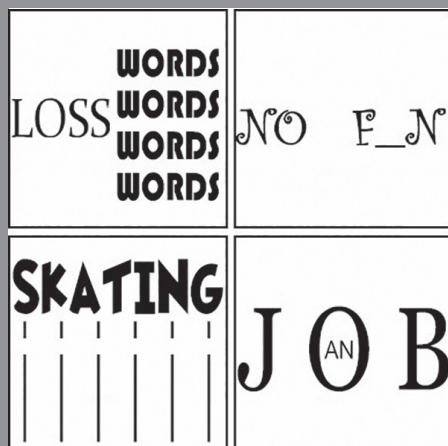


## IT'S TIME TO...

- ...Order more cookies. **March 15th is the birthday of Girl Scouting.**
- ...Wear something green or find yourself "in a pinch". **March 17th is St. Patrick's Day.**
- ...Celebrate celery? Cheer for cheese? **March 26th is Make Your Own Holiday Day.**
- ...Remember that "apple a day".  
**March 30th is Doctor's Day.**
- ...Pull off your best prank ever!  
**April 1st is April Fool's Day.**
- ...Reflect on the true meaning of the holiday.  
**April 5th is Easter Sunday.**
- ...Make it to the post office in time!  
**April 15th is Tax Day.**
- ...Plant a tree. **April 22nd is Earth Day**

## BRAIN GAME

A wuzzle is a saying/phrase that is made up of a display of words, in an interesting way. The object is to try to figure out the well-known saying, person, place, or thing that each wuzzle is meant to represent.



ANSWERS: 1. Loss for Words 2. No Fun Without U 3. Skating on Thin Ice 4. An Inside Job

## OFFICE INBOX

STAY PLUGGED INTO THE PRACTICE

*Want the scoop on what's new with our business and the team? You can find it right here, so stay plugged into the practice.*

**And the Apple Goes To...** Jan Dils Team member Cheryl Wingrove had the honor of presenting 2014's last Golden Apple Award, for the month of December, to **Mr. Jordan Brown**, a fourth grade teacher at Neale Elementary School. Sponsored by Jan Dils, Attorney's at Law, the Golden Apple Award recognizes one area teacher per month for their outstanding contributions in the classroom. "Dedication" is just one of the words a co-worker used to describe Mr. Brown in his nomination form. He always finds a way to make his classroom fun, and strives to make a positive impression upon each student.

In an interview after receiving the reward, Brown said that the students are the reasons for his motivation. "Their smiling faces. Any time they come in and smile and say, 'hey Mr. Brown', it's a special thing. Their excitement keeps me excited about teaching."

This is the fourth year Mr. Brown has taught in the Wood County School District. He is also a coach for the 9th grade boys' basketball team at Parkersburg High School.

In January, personal attention and compassion for each student earned a teacher from Wood County Christian School the first Jan Dils Golden Apple Award of the new year. The school erupted in cheers as **Ginger Postlewait** was presented with the award by the Jan Dils team. Ms. Postlewait said, "I was just shocked, I really was. I had no idea that I would have been picked for this."

Parents say she is always providing feedback and understanding to each situation. Ms. Postlewait says her love for the job comes from the desire to work hard, and to help each child reach their own individual success. "I do try to help the students achieve at the level they are," Postlewait said.

Her whole family, kids, grandkids and all, came for the big announcement and helped celebrate the achievement for this caring teacher who has been a part of the school since the day it opened 20 years ago.

Please join us in thanking Mr. Brown and Ms. Postlewait for their hard work that makes such a difference in the lives of our community's children!

**Baby News!** The Jan Dils team is happy to announce the future arrival of a new family member! Medical Fee/Invoice Specialist **Amanda Nolan** will welcome a new baby late this summer—we will keep you posted so you can help us congratulate her and her family when the big day arrives!



Once you make this "Crazy Cake" from scratch in just minutes, we're betting you'll never buy another cake mix!

Reception Specialist Tammie McGee agreed to provide this month's recipe for a cake so delicious easy to make, it's crazy!

### INGREDIENTS

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 ½ cups flour         | 6 Tablespoons oil     |
| 1 cup sugar            | 2 Tablespoons vinegar |
| 1 teaspoon baking soda | 1 teaspoon vanilla    |
| 3 Tablespoons cocoa    | 1 cup water           |
| ½ teaspoon salt        |                       |



**Directions:** Put flour, sugar, baking soda and salt into an 8"x8" ungreased cake pan. Make 3 holes in the mixture. Put oil into one hole, vinegar in another, and vanilla in the third. Pour water over all and blend with a fork. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes, and enjoy!

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963 MARKET STREET  
PARKERSBURG, WV 26101

## IMPORTANT VETERANS BENEFITS NEWS FOR EVERYONE

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## Applications Being Accepted for 2015 National Veterans Wheelchair Games

**T**he world's largest annual wheelchair sports event for disabled U.S. Veterans is kicking off another year! The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is currently accepting applications for the 2015 National Veterans Wheelchair Games. Registration began in early January and will close on April 15.

The National Veterans Wheelchair Games is a sports and rehabilitation program for military service Veterans who use wheelchairs for sports competition due to spinal cord injuries, amputations or certain neurological problems. Each year, hundreds of disabled Veterans travel from around the country to compete in the Games, which is the largest annual wheelchair sports event in the world. With them, they bring the fighting spirit and tenacity that defines the Veterans of our Armed Forces.

"I encourage all eligible Veterans to take this opportunity to prove yet again that disability does not mean inability," said VA Secretary Robert McDonald. Competitive events at the National

**"I encourage all eligible Veterans to take this opportunity to prove yet again that disability does not mean inability,"**

– VA SECRETARY ROBERT MCDONALD.

Veterans Wheelchair Games include air guns, archery, basketball, bowling, field events, hand cycling, a motorized wheelchair rally, nine-ball, power soccer, quad rugby, slalom, softball, swimming, table tennis, track, trapshooting and weightlifting. Athletes compete in all events against others with similar athletic ability, competitive experience or age.

The 2015 National Veterans Wheelchair Games will take place in Dallas, Texas, from June 21-26. The Games are cosponsored by VA and Paralyzed Veterans of America, VA's partner in this annual event since 1985. For more information, please visit [www.wheelchairgames.org](http://www.wheelchairgames.org) and follow VA Adaptive Sports on Twitter at @VAAdaptiveSport.



Source: <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2668>