

Sons of The American Legion

November – December 2018 Article / V A & R Commission

What is this program, and why do we have it?

The Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation program promotes our mission to enhance the lives of veterans, military and their families. Initiate, sponsor, and participate in programs and services that assist and enhance the lives of veterans and their families, ensuring restoration and/or transition to normally functioning lives physically, mentally, socially, and vocationally.

What can you do?

A) Assist in activities that help homeless veterans.

Ideas for an Individual Members and Squadrons:

- Bring hats, scarves or mittens to be distributed to homeless veterans.
 - Host or volunteer at homeless veterans' stand downs.
 - Contact homeless veteran emergency shelters in your community for volunteer and contribution needs.
 - Create a "Tree of Gifts" by collecting items veterans need and attaching them to a tree in a location the homeless frequent. Include a sign that says "Take if Needed" or something similar.
-

B) Support rehabilitation and healing of veterans through arts, crafts and hobbies.

National Veterans Creative Arts Festival (NVCAF) NVCAF is the national, annual competition and festival that recognizes the progress and recovery made through recreation therapy and raises the visibility of the creative achievements of our nation's veterans after disease, disability or life crisis. The American Legion Auxiliary is the national presenting sponsor, and the Sons of The American Legion should strive to increase monetary support by encouraging detachments to sponsor fundraisers that will contribute to this worthy cause.

C) Help The American Legion, State Department of Veterans Affairs and Chamber of Commerce in your Detachment promote job fairs for veterans and their families.

- Host an informational table a local job fair.
 - Serve as a career e-mentor for veterans.
 - Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, specifically if it's a build supported by The American Legion.
-

D) Enroll members as VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) Volunteers at VA health care facilities.

- If you live near a VA facility, become a regular VAVS volunteer and invite others to do the same.
- Send notes and provide supplies to support those who volunteer at VA facilities.

E) There isn't a VA hospital close to your community? Find opportunities for SAL members to serve veterans in your area.

- Help a veteran use the Internet.
 - Supply postage for local veterans in rest homes or assisted living facilities.
 - Organize transportation for veterans to assist them with essential errands or medical appointments.
 - Buy school supplies, throw a baby shower, or send care pkgs. to military kids who are headed to college.
-

F) Transitioning back to civilian life is one of the biggest challenges veterans face today. Educate yourself about resources so you can help veterans access all their VA benefits, not just health care. Work with your local American Legion Post Service Officer.

- Help eligible veterans attain benefits through referrals.

G) Assist and support caregivers of veterans.

- Familiarize yourself with the service of the VA caregiver support program.
 - Familiarize yourself with the Military and Veteran Caregiver Peer Support Network.
-

All of these ideas and more assist in serving our Veterans.

They Deserve it and they have Earned it!

Respectfully Submitted

SAL Natl. VA & R Commission