

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS ANNUAL REPORT 2015
"Advocating for Veterans & Their Families"



Daniel J. Bullis, Chairman
Sergeant Major, U.S. Army (Ret.)

Randy Stone, Vice-Chairman
Major, United States Marine Corps

Isiah Leggett, County Executive
Captain, U.S Army, Vietnam Veteran



MEMBERSHIP LIST 2014 - 2015

VETERANS REPRESENTATIVES

Jim Campbell, Military Officers Association of America
 Daniel Bullis, Disabled American Veterans
 Octavia Dixon, Veterans of Foreign Wars
 Ron Drach, Disabled American Veterans
 Bill Gray, Vietnam Veterans of America
 Elizabeth (Jane) McCarthy, American Legion
 Wayne Miller, Disabled American Veterans
 Randy Stone, American Legion

GENERAL PUBLIC MEMBERS

Dan Bolling
 Sharon Hodge
 Marie Wood

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Jerry S. Godwin, Dept. of Economic Development
 Michael L. Subin, Office of the County Executive
 Joanna L. Starling, Montgomery College

NON-VOTING CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Austin Morris, Office of Congressman Chris Van Hollen

STAFF

Betsy Luecking, *Community Outreach Manager*
 Carly Clem, *Administrative Specialist I*

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL



Commission on Veterans Affairs
November 6, 2015

Via Letter of Transmittal Electronically to:

The Honorable Isiah Leggett, Montgomery County Executive
The Honorable George Leventhal, President, Montgomery County Council
Uma S. Ahluwalia, Director, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

The Commission on Veterans Affairs is pleased to present a summary of its activities for the past year. We continue to advise and consult with you on issues of concern to the estimated 44,000 veterans, and their families, who live in the County. Under your leadership and with your support, the Commission is mandated to research, assemble, analyze and disseminate information that will assist in meeting the needs of Veterans and their families.

We were pleased to be part of the dedication of Memorial Plaza on November 10, 2014 where 2015 was designated as the Year of Montgomery County's Veterans and Their Families. We are working to increase outreach to the general Veteran population regarding programs, services and recognition events. We are very grateful to Neil Greenberger, County Council and Merlyn Reineke, Montgomery Community Media for organizing and including the Commission in the Honor & Gratitude Salute to Vietnam Veterans event held on October 24, 2015. We are supporting Veterans through our Veterans Education Partnership which includes Montgomery College Combat to College, Universities at Shady Grove and the University of Maryland Terp Vets.

We continue to encourage cooperation, coordination and collaboration among all agencies and non-profits that serve veterans so that everyone works together to provide the best services possible to veterans and their families. We have established a close relationship with Serving Together which is a resource and referral source for Veterans and their families. The Office of Human Resources hiring initiatives for disabled veterans and veterans has led to as of August, 30, 2015 the hiring of 167 veterans including eight disabled veterans. We are pleased with the County's efforts to end homelessness amongst veterans and to assist in obtaining permanent housings with the Zero 16 campaign. We are working to increase VA presence in the County and were happy to learn in August, 2015 of the VA's intent to establish Community Based Outpatient Clinic in the County in 2016.

We wish to recognize and give our personal thanks to all Commissioners, the many community members, and the agency staff who participate in our meetings for their commitment and dedication. We would like to acknowledge DHHS Director Uma Ahluwalia for her role in meeting with the Boards, Commissions and Committees to keep us informed of important health and human services issues, Dr. Jay Kenney, Chief, Aging and Disability Service, Betsy Luecking, Community Outreach Manager, and Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist, for their outstanding support in providing the Commission with the resources needed to carry out our mission. This report is the result of our combined efforts.

It has been a pleasure to work with you and members of the Commission during our term of service. We are confident that you will continue to support the Commission's efforts to enhance the lives of our Veterans. Our meetings are open to the public, and we invite you to join us for any meeting.

Sincerely,

Dan Bullis, Chair



Randy Stone, Vice-Chair

2015 YEAR IN REVIEW

Commission on Veterans Affairs Dan Bullis, Chair • Randy Stone, Vice-Chair

Montgomery County's Commission on Veterans Affairs supports various county initiatives and organizations that support veterans and their families during their transition to the civilian workforce. Their work has resulted in:

- The Commission was pleased to join with the County Executive and County Council on November 10, 2014 in declaring "2015: The Year of Montgomery County's Veterans and their Families." This declaration acknowledges the service and sacrifice of our veterans and their families while shedding light on their needs such as employment assistance.
- The County Council passing legislation in 2009 for the County's hiring preference for people with disabilities and veterans including disabled veterans. As of October, 2015, the County has hired 167 veterans including 8 disabled veterans.
- The County's Office of Human Resources signed on as a partner with the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs when they launched Operation Hire July 1, 2015.
- The County Executive was notified on August 18, 2015 by the Department of Veterans Affairs of their intention to lease space for a Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Montgomery County.
- The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs had dedicated a Veterans Benefits Specialist to the County. The position has remained unfilled since August 18, 2015.
- The Veterans Education Partnership was established by the work of the Commission and working to increase outreach to the general veteran population regarding programs and services including supporting veterans at Montgomery College Combat to College Program, Universities at Shady Grove Veterans Services and the University of Maryland Terp Vets.
- The Commission continues our fight against veteran homelessness through our support of Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers and the Zero 16 Campaign to End Veteran homelessness. As part of Montgomery County's Fiscal Year 2016 budget, an appropriation by the County Council in the amount of \$500,000 was approved to provide housing and supportive services to functionally end veteran homelessness in the County. The funding is reoccurring every year and is available to veterans who have received less than an honorable discharge and are therefore not eligible for VA programs. The County has received 86 VASH vouchers over the last five years, each worth \$13,122 or \$1.1 M per year in housing subsidies
- The Commission supports the good work of the Silver Spring Vet Center. Operated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Vet Centers provide free readjustment counseling to combat veterans and their families to help with the transition from military to civilian life. Counseling can help with issues such as employment assessment, PTSD, sexual trauma, substance abuse, and screening and referral for medical issues such as traumatic brain injuries and depression. The Silver Spring Vet Center is located at 2900 Linden Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20910.
- The Commission supports the work of Serving Together, which is a collection of local community-based resources for veterans, service members and their families. Its goal is to provide clear guidance on how to access the care and support they need. This includes support during transition to the civilian world and job placement.
www.servingtogetherproject.org.

2015 YEAR IN REVIEW

- The Commission continually seeks out job placement resources for veterans and their families. We support Bob Pelletier and the team at Montgomery Works-Partner of the American Job Center Networks and Tony Cancelosi of Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind for their work on veteran hiring.
- MOAA Transition Support to Veterans in Montgomery County Business and Networking Group (BANG) – The Military Officers Association of America Transition Group for Northern VA and Southern MD is concerned that military service members transitioning back into civilian life are unprepared when seeking employment. The Northern Virginia (NOVA) Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Business and Networking Group (BANG) was created in 1996. BANG is a monthly program that provides business and networking assistance. Each month an employer is invited to speak about their company and offers assistance as well as accepting resumes. In addition BANG sends out a weekly e-mail broadcast that provides employment opportunities, veterans' updates, and job fair announcements. The group is open to non-military job seekers and networkers. The Montgomery County Chapter of the MOAA started BANG in Montgomery County and held its first meeting with students at Montgomery College on November 3, 2015. The Commission has endorsed and supports this project of the Montgomery County MOAA of creating BANG in the County.
- To honor our veterans the County at the suggestion of the Commission has installed and supports a digital TV display in the Rockville Memorial Library and a 55 inch digital display between the entry doors at the Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza that has the photos and names of those County residents who have been KIA back to World War II and current announcements of Veteran related activities. This display was developed and is maintained by Commission staff.
- The Honor & Gratitude Salute to Vietnam Veterans was held on October 24, 2015 at the Universities at Shady Grove. Over 200 Vietnam Veterans and a crowd of over 800 attended this event that was planned to honor the service of Vietnam Veterans and Vietnam Era veterans. The event is viewable on YouTube at: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=z8qYy7nXksY>.
- The Veterans Tribute Concert was held on November 3, 2015 at the Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza. Dan Bullis, Randy Stone and Mike Subin were all featured speakers. It was attended by about 125 veterans, family members & the general public. Mike Subin welcomed all who were there on behalf of the County Executive. Dan Bullis urged attendees to thank the veterans they met & to honor their service. Randy Stone spoke about music and how it affected him & his fellow Marines in Iraq & Afghanistan. It made them think of home. It also made them think about why they were half way around the world, fighting for the freedom of others & for the freedoms we enjoy here at home. The 19th Street Band played a mix of Americana, Country & Rock 'n Roll on their acoustic instruments. The audience thoroughly enjoyed the show. This concert was funded by the Walter Reed Society and we give thanks to that organization.

LOOKING AHEAD FY 16 PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

Commission on Veterans Affairs
Dan Bullis, Chair • Randy Stone, Vice-Chair
November 2015

- 2015 Year of the Veteran and Family Review
- Veteran Friendly Business Initiative
- Vietnam Veteran Memorial to be located in County
- Community-Based Outpatient Clinic to be located in County
- MDVA Hiring of Veterans Benefits Specialist for County
- Veteran Hiring Initiatives
- Veteran Outreach to Greater Community
- Veterans Education Partnership
- Montgomery County Veteran Survey
- Zero:16 Campaign to End Veteran Homelessness
- Montgomery County Homefront Cable TV Program
- Silver Spring Civic Building Veterans Plaza Display
- Rockville Memorial Library Veterans Display
- Silver Spring Veterans Day Concert
- HUD - Veterans Administration Supported Housing (VASH) vouchers
www.hudexchange.info/hud-vash/hud-vash-eligibility-requirements

COMMISSION POLICY PRIORITIES FY 16

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEETING WITH THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE, COUNTY COUNCIL
Top Two Policy Issues for Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16)
Dan Bullis, Chair • Randy Stone, Vice-Chair
October 15, 2015**

On behalf of the Commission on Veterans Affairs, we want to thank you for your efforts on behalf of the County's estimated 46,000 veterans. Here are the Commission's top policy issues for FY16:

1. Support Efforts & Funding to End Veteran Homelessness in Zero:16

With the Zero 16 Campaign, we thank the Council for providing the support needed to end homelessness amongst the veteran population and to assist veterans to obtain permanent housing. According to the Chapman Todd, Zero 16 Campaign Coordinator there are 33 veterans remaining to be housed by the end of the year. We ask that the Council ensure that the \$500,000 will be recurring and not a one time expenditure to continue to provide rapid rehousing in the upcoming year.

2. Support Increased Access to Health/Mental Health for Veterans

We ask the Council to work with us to increase access in the County to health/mental health care for veterans. The County and its contractors need to encourage veterans and their families to enroll them in the VA health care system and we ask that information be provided on County Ride On buses as to how to enroll. Recent studies indicate that 1 out of 5 veterans returning from Iraq or Afghanistan have some type of mental health issue from Traumatic Brain Injury to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. We recommend that you continue/increase funding to support agencies serving Veterans and their families such as Serving Together of the Mental Health Association, Easter Seals and Bethesda Cares. We understand that there are plans underway for a Mental Health Court and request some consideration for how veterans might be served there or a separate Veterans Court.

To provide greater access to health care, we are pleased that the VA Medical Center in D.C., will be establishing a Community Based Outpatient Clinic in the County in 2016.

As you are aware the County Executive and then President Craig Rice designated 2015 as "The Year of Montgomery County. As part of this year's activities, we have been working with Neil Greenberger and Merlyn Reineke of Montgomery Community Media to plan the County's first Salute to Vietnam Veterans to be held on October 24, 2015 at the Universities of Shady Grove. Bob Schieffer formerly with Face the Nation is our MC. We hope that you can attend.

Thank you.

LETTER TO GOVERNOR LARRY HOGAN REGARDING PURPLE LINE



Commission on Veterans Affairs
May 18, 2015

Via: Electronic Transmission

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan
Governor, State of Maryland
State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Hogan:

In November 2014, Montgomery County Executive, Ike Leggett, and the President of the Montgomery County Council, Craig Rice, made a momentous decision. They declared that 2015 would be the year of Montgomery County's veterans and their families. The declaration, among other things, recognized our County veterans' enduring vigilance and military service and applauded their continuing public service to our County as reservists, civic volunteers, coaches, educators and legislators. Montgomery County's Commission on Veterans Affairs is charged with coordinating events to celebrate Montgomery County veterans and their families in 2015. It is also charged with identifying issues of importance to Montgomery County veterans and their families to ensure they receive the support and recognition they so richly deserve. Construction of the Purple Line is one such issue.

We strongly urge you to support the construction of the Purple Line. The Purple Line will help so many of our military retirees, active duty, veterans and their families who use medical services at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC). The Purple Line will provide a direct means of transit to WRNMMC, which will positively impact the ability of our service members, veterans and their families to receive the medical attention they need. Both WRNMMC and Naval Support Activity - Bethesda (NSA-B) have experienced a tremendous explosion in growth over the past five years due to the consolidation on the NSA-B/WRNMMC campus of various military institutions.

Some statistics say that the number of personnel working aboard NSA-B has increased by about 45% since the Congressionally-ordered Base Closure and Realignment Commission decisions of 2005 with an increase of almost 100% of annual visits to NSA-B during that same time. The Purple Line will aid those employees of WRNMMC and NSA-B by decreasing the amount of traffic and congestion in that part of the County. Less time in traffic will equate to more time providing medical treatment to service members, veterans and their families. It will also alleviate the commuting pressures on the invaluable employees of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and students at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS). Less time in traffic will equate to more time for NIH employees to complete their critical and scientific work and USUHS students to prepare themselves for future careers in medicine rendering assistance to our veterans and their families. Construction of the Purple Line, by some estimates, will improve access to transit options for approximately 12,000 personnel at NSA-B and the approximately 20,000 employees of NIH.

2015 is a crucial year for Montgomery County veterans and their families. Governor Hogan, you have an incredible opportunity to positively shape their lives and thank them for their years of tireless and courageous service to the State of Maryland and our Nation. We respectfully urge you to fund the construction of the Purple Line. Funding for the Purple Line shows support for our veterans and their families. They have stood shoulder to shoulder for us; let us now stand shoulder to shoulder for them and build the Purple Line.

I am available to answer any of your questions. Thank you for your time and consideration, Governor Hogan. Please feel free to contact the Commission on Veterans Affairs Office at 240-777-1246.

Respectfully

Daniel J. Bullis
Chair

VAN HOLLEN, LEGGETT ANNOUNCE VASH HOUSING VOUCHERS FOR HOMELESS COUNTY VETERANS

Congressman Van Hollen News Release - April 20, 2015

Today Maryland Congressman Chris Van Hollen and Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett announced that the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County has been granted \$72,776 in new Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

“Montgomery County has been a leader in the effort to ensure every veteran has access to resources that help them thrive as civilians, and I’m proud that the budget I’ve put forward allows for increased funding for vital programs for our veterans such as HUD-VASH,” said Congressman Van Hollen. “No veteran should have to worry about not having a roof over their head, and this program helps keep our commitment to care for those who have bravely served our nation.”

County Executive Leggett said, “As a veteran myself, I am very sensitive to the plight of veterans with families who find themselves homeless. I am very grateful to Congressman Van Hollen for his efforts and support. I am grateful as well to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for its commitment to helping those who have valiantly served their country make their way during difficult times.”

BACKGROUND:

Montgomery County, MD has been at the forefront of helping homeless veterans. Congressman Van Hollen, Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett, and the County’s Commission on Veterans Affairs have been strong advocates of this program.

This supportive housing assistance is provided through the HUD-VASH Program, which combines rental assistance from HUD with case management and clinical services provided by VA. The \$72,776 grant for Montgomery County is part of \$65 million in grants announced by the Department of Housing and Urban Development today to support the housing needs of more than 9,300 homeless veterans across the country. In Montgomery County, the Housing Opportunities Commission provides rental assistance to homeless veterans while nearby VA Medical Centers offer support services and case management.

MIKULSKI, CARDIN, VAN HOLLEN AND LEGGETT ANNOUNCE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HAS BEGUN LOCATION SEARCH TO LEASE SPACE FOR COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Montgomery County, Maryland News Release - 9/1/2015

Today U.S. Senators Barbara A. Mikulski and Ben Cardin (both D-MD), Maryland Congressman Chris Van Hollen, and Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett announced that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has begun searching for a location in Montgomery County for a new Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC). While the VA's goal is for no veteran to be more than 30 minutes from medical care, many of Montgomery County's veterans face a much longer drive to reach the VA Medical Center in Washington, D.C. The VA's search is a promising sign that after years of delay, veterans in the region will have access to the quality care they deserve.

"Maryland veterans who have fought on the front lines shouldn't have to stand in line for the care and benefits they have earned and deserve," Senator Mikulski said. "With a new Community-Based Outpatient Clinic in Montgomery County, veterans will be able to access the care they need from a doctor in their own community. Promises made to our veterans and military families must be promises kept."

"It is an honor to work on behalf of Maryland's veterans to ensure that they have access to convenient and quality health care," said Senator Ben Cardin. "I applaud the VA for its steps to identify a location for the first-ever Community-Based Outpatient Clinic in Montgomery County and urge the agency to make similar efforts for all Maryland veterans who face lengthy travels to receive the health care they so merit."

Congressman Van Hollen said, "Veterans who fought for our country should not have to fight gridlock and other obstacles get access to health care, which is why I have long pushed for a new Community-Based Outpatient Clinic to better serve our region's veterans. With the process for selecting a location within Montgomery County underway, the long wait for more accessible care is finally almost over."

County Executive Leggett said, "I am very pleased to hear that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is planning to open a Community-Based Outpatient Clinic here in Montgomery County. In 2008, I established the Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs to give our veterans a voice in how the County can best serve them, and they said having services here in the County is a priority. Thanks to Congressman Chris Van Hollen and Senators Ben Cardin and Barbara Mikulski for making it happen."

The VA is searching for space to lease in the area of Rockville and Gaithersburg. Of the more than 44,600 veterans living in Montgomery County, more than 10,000 are enrolled in the VA health care system. According to statistics provided by the VA, over 4,000 of these veterans live within easy driving distance of the general area.



Proclamation

Montgomery County Maryland

WHEREAS, the vigilance and military service of the residents of Montgomery County who served in the Armed Forces has been instrumental to the preservation of the freedom, security, justice and prosperity enjoyed by all in the County; and

WHEREAS, our local active duty military members, retirees, reservists, National Guard and their families are our neighbors, volunteers, coaches, teachers, educators, legislators, colleagues in civic clubs, religious institutions and many more; and

WHEREAS, the families of our 46,000 veterans in Montgomery County are forever diligent in their support, dedication, love and endurance through long separations, multiple tours of duty, and the challenges associated with post-deployment conditions; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County wishes to honor our Veterans and their families. The year 2015 is a fitting time for Montgomery County to celebrate and honor our Veterans and their families;

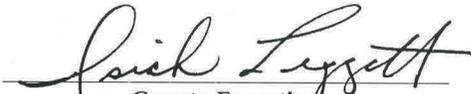
NOW, THEREFORE, DO WE, Isiah Leggett as County Executive, and Craig Rice as County Council President, declare that 2015 shall be the year of

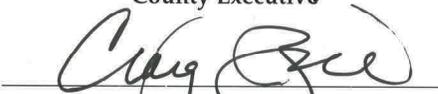
MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

We encourage all of our residents to join us in honoring our Veterans and their families for their courage and sacrifice.



Signed this 10th day of November in the year 2014 .


County Executive


County Council President

COUNTY CABLE AND COMMISSION LAUNCH MONTHLY HOMEFRONT TV SHOW HIGHLIGHTING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Immediate Release: Tuesday 20 October



County Cable Montgomery and the Commission on Veteran's Affairs have launched a new monthly show called "Homefront" that provides information on topics and services for veterans and their families living in Montgomery County. The show's inaugural segment, which began airing recently, features County Executive Isiah Leggett, a Vietnam veteran, discussing the programs and services the County offers. Leggett created the Commission on Veterans Affairs in 2008.

The 15-minute program airs on Comcast/RCN channel 6 and Verizon channel 30 on Sundays at 6:30 p.m. and 10:45 p.m. and on Fridays at 10:30 p.m. The show is also available for viewing on demand on the County Cable Montgomery website at <http://montgomerycountymd.gov/ccm>.

For more information on the Commission on Veterans Affairs, go to www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/ADS/CVA/CVAIndex.html.



Homefront host Mike Subin interviews County Executive Isiah Leggett.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD SALUTES & HONORS VIETNAM VETS

October 24, 2015

*Event Planners Neil Greenberger, Montgomery County Council, and
Meryln Reineke, Montgomery Community Media*



Huey helicopter sent over from Andrews Air Force Base to honor Vietnam Veterans.

OUR COMMISSIONERS WHO SERVED DURING VIETNAM WAR



James Campbell
Representing the Military Officers
Association of America



Daniel J. Bullis, Chairman
Representing Disabled
American Veterans



Ron Drach
Representing Disabled
American Veterans



Bill Gray
Representing Vietnam
Veterans of America



Jane McCarthy
Representing
American Legion



Wayne Miller
Representing Disabled
American Veterans



Mike Subin
County Executive
Designee

5 FORMER VIETNAM POWs AND COUNTY RESIDENTS ATTEND MONTGOMERY COUNTY EVENT THAT HONORED VIETNAM VETERANS

County Council Press Release: 10/20/15

ROCKVILLE, Md., October 19, 2015 - Everett Alvarez, Jr., Fred Cherry, Michael Cronin, Hubert Clifford Walker and Larry Stark, each of whom endured horrendous conditions as a prisoners of war during the Vietnam War, but who emerged with a determination to return with “our personal integrity, our reputation and with our honor,” all will be present on Saturday, Oct. 24, as Montgomery County honors the men and women who served the nation during the Vietnam War. The event will take place at the Universities at Shady Grove in Rockville, starting at 10:30 a.m.

The gathering of the five former POWs, each now a resident of Montgomery County, will mark a rare public appearance by the five together.

The Vietnam War - which changed the lives of those who served and altered the political scene back home—ended for the United States in 1975. Bob Schieffer, who recently retired as host of *CBS News' Face the Nation*, will be the host and guest speaker for *Honor and Gratitude: Montgomery Salutes Vietnam Veterans*. It will be the first significant event in the 40 years since the war ended to honor the County's Vietnam veterans. It is estimated that between 130 and 140 Montgomery County residents lost their lives in the Vietnam War. There are more than 13,000 Vietnam veterans currently living in the County.

County Executive Ike Leggett (who is a Vietnam vet), Council President George Leventhal and the County Council will lead the special ceremonies at the Universities at Shady Grove at 9630 Gudelsky Drive in Rockville. The event will be recorded and broadcast on many of the public cable television channels that compose the County's PEG (Public, Education, Government) organization, which is hosting the event. In addition, the PEG organization has been recording the stories of many of the veterans for a documentary that will be broadcast after the event.

Among the speakers will be U.S. Senator Benjamin Cardin; U.S. Congressmen John Delaney and Chris Van Hollen; and Maryland Secretary of State John Wobensmith, a Navy veteran who served at the National Security Agency during the Vietnam War.

The program will include a look back at some of the significant events of the U.S. involvement of the conflict that dates to July 8, 1959, when two U.S. military advisers were killed in a raid at Bien Hoa. More than 800 people are expected for the Oct. 24 event, including those who were present in major actions of the 11-year U.S. involvement. Those events included attacks on the USS Maddox in August 1964 that led to Congress on Aug. 7, 1964, passing the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution that gave President Lyndon Johnson the power to take whatever actions he saw necessary to defend South Vietnam against Viet Cong forces.

Honor and Gratitude: Montgomery Salutes Vietnam Veterans event organizers are currently seeking to contact more of the veterans who will be honored on Oct 24. Those veterans, or family and friends of the veterans, seeking more information about the event should call 301-424-1730 / ext. 350. Additional details, including how to register to attend the free event, can be found on the event's web site at: <http://www.mocovietnamvets.org/>

“It has been four decades since our Vietnam veterans returned home,” said County Executive Leggett. “We want to take this opportunity to acknowledge their courage and patriotism and say thank you for making the world a better place. As a veteran of the Vietnam War, I know the sacrifices that were made by members of our military during times of war. This event is a perfect way for all of us to pay tribute to these brave and honorable men and women.”

Mr. Schieffer was a reporter for more than half a century and 2015 marked his 46th year at CBS News and his 24th anchoring *Face the Nation*. Prior to joining CBS in 1969, he was a reporter at the Fort Worth Star-Telegram where he was the first reporter from a Texas newspaper to report from Vietnam.

5 FORMER VIETNAM POWS AND COUNTY RESIDENTS ATTEND MONTGOMERY COUNTY EVENT THAT HONORED VIETNAM VETERANS - CONTINUED

Mr. Schieffer has won virtually every award in broadcast journalism including eight Emmys, the overseas Press Club Award, the Paul White Award presented by the TV News Directors Association and the Edward R. Murrow Award given by Murrow's alma mater Washington State University. In 2008, he was named a living legend by the Library of Congress. In 2013, Mr. Schieffer was inducted into the National Academy of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame.

Other speakers at the event will include veterans who served in various aspects of the Vietnam conflict. The event will honor their service and also will look at how those experiences influenced their lives since.

Retired Navy Commander Alvarez, Jr., who was the first American aviator shot down over Vietnam and held prisoner for 8 ½ years, will be among the featured speakers at the event. He holds numerous military decorations including the Silver Star, two Legions of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, two Bronze Stars and two Purple Hearts.

Commander Alvarez, the grandson of Mexican immigrants, was a 26-year-old Navy pilot based on the USS Constellation aircraft carrier in the South China Sea on Aug. 5, 1964, as tensions were heightening in the area. He was part of a bombing mission over North Vietnam sent in retaliation after a reported North Vietnamese attack a day earlier on two U.S. destroyers. The attack became known as the Gulf of Tonkin incident and led to the start of significant escalation of U.S. military action in Vietnam.

In a recent interview with the BBC News, Commander Alvarez, who now lives in Potomac, said he survived imprisonment in what became known as the "Hanoi Hilton" thanks to the mutual support of the other prisoners who communicated with each other by tapping on the prison walls.

"We had a philosophy that you didn't ever let your fellows down," he said in the interview. "If they couldn't take care of themselves, you took care of them because you knew darned well they would do the same. And we had a goal. We were determined to come home with our personal integrity, our reputation and with our honor."

Retired Air Force Colonel Cherry, who now lives in Silver Spring, was on a combat mission on Oct. 22, 1965, when his [F-105 Thunderchief](#) fighter-bomber was shot down over North Vietnam. Colonel Cherry ejected and was subsequently captured, becoming the first and highest ranking black officer to become a [prisoner of war](#) in Vietnam. Subjected to harsh interrogation and repeated torture, he spent more than seven years as a prisoner of war in Hanoi until his release on Feb. 12, 1973.

Colonel Cherry was awarded the [Air Force Cross](#), the [Silver Star](#), the [Legion of Merit](#), two [Distinguished Flying Crosses](#), two [Bronze Stars](#), two [Purple Hearts](#), the [Meritorious Service Medal](#) and the Outstanding Service to the Military Community award from the [Tuskegee Airmen](#).

Mr. Cherry's life is the subject of the book, *Two Souls Indivisible: The Friendship That Saved Two POWs in Vietnam*, by [James S. Hirsch](#).

Retired Navy Captain Cronin, a pilot, was on his second tour of duty in Vietnam and had flown 175 missions when his A4 Skyhawk was shot down over North Vietnam on Jan. 13, 1967. He was released after the Paris Peace Accords were signed on March 4, 1973. Captain Cronin earned two Silver Stars, the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, four Bronze Stars, 15 air medals and two Purple Hearts.

After returning home, Captain Cronin was amazed to learn no U.S. law existed to declare war crimes to be an offense that U.S. courts would prosecute because, after six years of torture, he said he understood that such a law was crucial to protecting U.S. service personnel. During the mid-1990's, while flying as a commercial airline pilot and while studying for his law degree, Captain Cronin conceived the idea of the War Crimes Act of 1996, which states that any war crimes committed by or to a U.S. Armed Services member or U.S. national are federal crimes as required by the Geneva Conventions.

5 FORMER VIETNAM POWS AND COUNTY RESIDENTS ATTEND MONTGOMERY COUNTY EVENT THAT HONORED VIETNAM VETERANS - CONTINUED

Retired Air Force Colonel Walker, who now lives in North Bethesda, was held as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam from Jan. 14, 1968, until his release on March 14, 1973. He was a crew member of an EB-66C aircraft with the call sign "Preview 01." It departed Takhli Royal Thai Airbase on a single aircraft mission to selectively jam enemy radar for an ensuing strike mission. However, Preview 01's F-4 fighter escort aircraft were drawn away by a MiG-21. As soon as the Phantoms had been drawn off and engaged in aerial combat with the MiG, two other North Vietnamese planes came from low altitude and shot down Preview 01 with an air-to-air missile.

All seven crewmen were able to eject, but they were in enemy territory. Four were eventually captured, but their status was unknown. It was years later that military intelligence learned that each of the four had in fact been captured and each man's status was changed to prisoner of war. Colonel Walker was awarded the Silver Star, the Bronze Star and the Legion of Merit.

Mr. Stark was working as a Navy civilian in Hue, which is in the northern part of South Vietnam. He was heading an industrial relations office that had the responsibility of hiring Vietnamese to work for various military organizations. During the 1968 Tet offensive, Hue came under attack. Mr. Stark and others tried to hold off the enemy from their buildings, but on Jan. 31, 1968, he was captured and held for 5 ½ years. Mr. Stark's family did not know he was alive until just a few days before his release on March 05, 1973. He was one of only two Department of Defense civilian employees who were captured. In 1962, President Kennedy had authorized that civilians could be eligible for a Purple Heart medal if they were involved in combat. On Jan. 4, 2010—more than 40 years after his service—Mr. Stark was presented with Prisoner of War and Purple Heart medals at the Washington Navy Yard. "This gentleman lost half a decade of his life in captivity and served as part of the Department of Defense when he was captured," said Assistant Secretary of the Navy Juan Garcia at the ceremonies. "That kind of sacrifice is rare. We haven't had anyone held for that long in [recent] conflicts; it doesn't happen like that anymore. So it is an honor to be here to meet and be part of a ceremony for a real American hero."

Other featured speakers at the event will include retired Brigadier General Wilma Vaught, who ended her service after 28 years in the U.S. Air Force as one of the most decorated women in U.S. military history and who was one of the few military women to serve in Vietnam who was not a nurse. Brigadier General Vaught, who retired in 1985, forged new paths and pioneered opportunities for the servicewomen who would follow. When she was promoted to brigadier general in 1980, she became one of a handful of women to have achieved that distinction.

While her military accomplishments are extraordinary, General Vaught's most lasting contribution likely will be her successful efforts related to the Women In Military Service For America Memorial. She was the driving force that built and now operates the \$22.5 million memorial, which is located at the gateway to Arlington National Cemetery. The Women's Memorial is the nation's only major memorial to pay tribute to the nearly 3 million women who have served in the U.S. military.

Another speaker will be retired Army Lt. Colonel Douglas "Lamar" Allen, Jr., a Burtonsville resident who was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for flying his helicopter in a monsoon to rescue numerous wounded and injured soldiers who were pinned down after an ambush.

In March 1969, during heavy inclement weather in the central highlands of Vietnam, he was flying on a different assignment when he monitored that a "sister" ground unit had been ambushed and had wounded soldiers still under attack, but needed numerous wounded to be extracted. The normal Medevac (evacuation) units indicated they were grounded due to the weather and could be hours from sending help. Lt. Colonel Allen broke into the discussion and indicated he and his crew were in position to could try and assist.

"I just said to my crew that we need to do this and no one said not to," said Lt. Colonel Allen. "Due to the weather and to stay out of enemy ground fire—we were flying at tree top level, but knowing the area of operations, I felt confident we could find them and hopefully get in and out quickly. Everything was moving pretty quickly, but they carved out a landing area for us and we were in and out in about two minutes. We got all six wounded out and they say we saved several lives. I thought it was 60-40 that we could make it, and we were lucky. In those situations, you just did whatever needed to be done to assist your fellow soldiers."

5 FORMER VIETNAM POWS AND COUNTY RESIDENTS ATTEND MONTGOMERY COUNTY EVENT THAT HONORED VIETNAM VETERANS - CONTINUED

Also speaking will be Tom Murphy, a current Rockville attorney who was seriously wounded in Vietnam and ironically ended his long recovery in nearby Walter Reed Army Hospital.

Pfc. Murphy was with the 25th Infantry Division of the Army in June 1969 when his unit was on patrol in an area known as Parrot's Peak, close to the Cambodian border. A major battle erupted at Fire Base Washington about two miles away as two North Vietnam regiments attacked a much smaller American company.

"At first light, we went out to the edge of the jungle, marching toward the fire base on patrol," he said. "Most of the area had been cleared and was open. I was on line with my unit searching the area, and there was not much out there except this lone tree. And from behind this tree jumps an NVA soldier with an AK-47. He didn't even have a helmet on. I had an M-16. He shot me and I shot him. I lived and he died."

Mr. Murphy was awarded a Purple Heart for his service actions. He went on to become a Rockville attorney and eventually became the first Vietnam veteran to be elected president of the Bar Association of Montgomery County, as well as the Maryland State Bar Association.

"So many in our community heroically served our nation, and the world, 40 years ago," said Council President Leventhal. "Oct. 24 will be a day where our County recognizes those whose actions helped that had such a great impact on our nation. There have been many books written, and many movies made, about the people we will honor, but on this day, we will personally thank—and hear directly from—some of the men and women who did so much to shape the life and freedom we know today."

An important part of event will be the opportunity to record the stories of the Montgomery residents who served in Vietnam.

"Whether they were troops in the jungles, on helicopters and bombers, serving on the ships, the river patrol boats, in the medical corps or the troops supplying them all, there are stories that have yet to be told about Vietnam," said Merlyn Reineke, chair of the PEG Governing Board. "This event will introduce a new generation to the sacrifices made by the brave men and women in Vietnam, and as the County's cable providers, we will be there to preserve these stories so future generations will know about their heroism. It is hard to believe there has never been a major event to honor Montgomery County's Vietnam vets, but we think this is the right time to salute them."



Five former POW's and County Residents, seated left to right: Retired Navy Commander Everett Alvarez, Jr.; Retired Air Force Colonel Fred Cherry; Retired Navy Captain Michael Cronin; former Navy Civilian Larry Stark; Retired Air Force Colonel Hubert Walker.

TOM MURPHY SHARES AMERICAN ANTHEM



At the Montgomery County Salute to Vietnam Veterans event on October 24th Tom Murphy quoted lyrics from American Anthem. Tom is a current Rockville attorney who was seriously wounded in Vietnam and ironically ended his long recovery in nearby Walter Reed Army Hospital. Pfc. Murphy was with the 25th Infantry Division of the Army in June 1969 when his unit was on patrol in an area known as Parrot's Peak, close to the Cambodian border. A major battle erupted at Fire Base Washington about two miles away as two North Vietnam regiments attacked a much smaller American company. Mr. Murphy was awarded a Purple Heart for his service actions. He went on to become a Rockville attorney and eventually became the first Vietnam veteran to be elected president of the Bar Association of Montgomery County, as well as the Maryland State Bar Association.

These lyrics were written for the movie *The War* by Ken Burns for his World War II story. Regardless of the conflict, the words remain very meaningful. YouTube rendition: www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdjnAFqapg4

Music and Lyrics by Gene Scheer / Performed by Norah Jones for The War

All we've been given by those who came before,
The dream of a nation where freedom would endure.
The work and prayers of centuries have brought us to this day.
What shall be our legacy, what will our children say?
Let them say of me I was one who believed in sharing the blessings I received.
Let me know in my heart when my days are through,
America, America, I gave my best to you.

Each generation from the plains to distant shores,
With the gifts they were given were determined to leave more.
Battles fought together, acts of conscience fought alone,
These are the seeds from which America has grown.
Let them say of me I was one who believed
In sharing the blessings that I received.
Let me know in my heart when my days are through,
America, America, I gave my best to you.

For those who think they have nothing to share,
Who feel in their hearts there is no hero there,
Though each quiet act of dignity is that which fortifies,
The soul of a nation, that will never die.
Let them say of me I was one who believed
In sharing the blessings I received.
Let me know in my heart when my days are through,
America, America, I gave my best to you.
America, I gave my best to you.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD SALUTES & HONORS VIETNAM VETS



Everett Alvarez, Jr. was the first American aviator shot down over Vietnam and was held prisoner at Hanoi Hilton for 8 1/2 years. Seen here with Bob Schieffer, MC, formerly of Face the Nation.



Brigadier General Wilma Vaught retired after 28 years in the Air Force and served in Vietnam. She later went on to lead the effort to build the Women in Military Services for America Memorial.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD SALUTES & HONORS VIETNAM VETS



*Vietnam Veterans Dave Gudes, Bill Bennett, and Roland Kauffman.
Roland is a former Commissioner with the Commission on Veterans Affairs.*



Bill Gray, Vietnam Veteran and first Chair of the Commission on Veterans Affairs, with Nam Knights.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD SALUTES & HONORS VIETNAM VETS



Nam Knights of America (Montgomery County) joined us at the event.



FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA & DR. JILL BIDEN VISIT SILVER SPRING VET CENTER



First Lady Michelle Obama and Jill Biden meet with Team Leader Wayne Miller, right, and Marital Family Therapist Tamia Barnes, left, during a visit to a Vet Center in Silver Spring, MD. (AP Photo/Kevin Wolf)

Associated Press - April 17, 2015

Silver Spring, Md. — Wayne Miller was 18 when he lost his leg and became temporarily paralyzed after being hit by a mortar round during the Vietnam War.

He told his friends he'd been in a motorcycle accident.

"It was a tough time," said Miller, who had to readjust his social life while being cared for by his parents.

Now 64 and walking with only a slight limp from his metal left leg, Miller is a social worker and the team leader of the Silver Spring Vet Center.

On Friday, Miller served as guide during a visit by Michelle Obama and Jill Biden, who toured the therapeutic services center as part of their Joining Forces initiative, which highlights the need to provide resources and support for military members and their families.

"There are a lot of veterans who don't know that these resources exist, and that's the thing that we want to change," Obama said. "Every vet, every family member should know that there are places like this that feel like home, with people who are professional, that are trained, who know how to deal with any issue that you all encounter."

"The reason we're here today is to listen to you, listen to your experiences and learn from you," Biden said to the small group before closing the round table so clients could share their stories privately.

The center opened two years ago in a nondescript brick building just off I-495. It provides services ranging from bereavement support to sexual trauma therapy — help that Miller said is invaluable now and would have been just as helpful for him when he returned home after being injured.

"How does a family deal with a veteran?" said Miller, who served as a U.S Marine Corps corporal in south Vietnam. "How does a person with a disability deal with their family?"

Those are the types of questions the staff of five handles daily at the center.

Miller said the center was designed to encourage a sense of home and place of safety. A red, white and blue "welcome home" sign hangs in the reception area next to a coffee pot. Therapy rooms and offices are painted in subdued colors, and patriotic artwork hangs on many of the walls.

"It's more of a home than a hospital," he said. "The nice part about this place is that we were able to give it all the love."

Counselor Tamia Barnes' office got the approval of both Obama and Biden, who called her room "very warm and inviting."

Decorated with comfortable leather seats and children's artwork on the walls, Barnes said she wanted a "private practice feel" for clients who come to see her for marriage and family therapy sessions.

Barnes said the center also handles compulsive hoarding issues, substance abuse, anger management; whatever problem a military member or their family is struggling with, they work to create a solution.

"If there is a treatment needed, we are allowed to treat that need," Barnes told the women. "I'm thankful you are all here. I feel like we're one of the best-kept secrets."

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION SILVER SPRING VET CENTER SERVICES



Silver Spring Vet Center Staff, Left to Right: Ed Benedict, Michael Gatson, Tai Harmon, Tamia Barnes, Wayne Miller, Courtnee Hawkins

Readjustment Counseling Services

After war, some veterans experience psychological and social distress and difficulties in readjusting to civilian life. In 1979, the Department of Veterans Affairs established Vet Centers to assist Vietnam-era veterans with such problems. Congress later expanded Vet Center services to include combat veterans of other conflicts. These services are available at Vet Centers in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands and Guam.

Services Available

- Individual counseling
- Marital and family counseling
- VA benefits assistance and referral
- Substance abuse counseling and referrals
- Primary health care for basic medical needs
- Pre-employment assistance and employment counseling
- Discharge upgrade information
- Community, social service and medical referrals
- Sexual trauma / harassment counseling (veterans of all eras)

The Vet Center also has a network of federal, state, city and community resources to help you. We will try to address any concerns or problems you bring to us.

At the Vet Center, you can expect help from professional counselors who will treat you with respect and understanding. Many of the counselors are also war veterans, so they understand your problems first hand, and have the training and skills to help solve them.

There is no charge for the assistance you receive at the Vet Center because of your sacrifices and efforts for this country. Veterans applying for assistance are asked to bring a copy of their Military Separation or Military Discharge (DD214) with them.

Vet Center Combat Call Center
1-877-WAR-VETS (927-8387)

National Suicide Hot Line
1-800-273-8255 (Toll Free)

**Bereavement Counseling for
Surviving Family Members**
202-461-6530 (V)

Location and Hours of Operation

2900 Linden Lane, Suite 100
Silver Spring, MD 20910
301-589-1073 (V)

Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Second Saturday of month:
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Eligibility

War Zone Veterans - All Eras Including:

WWII

Three eligible categories
European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal
(7 Dec 1941 to 8 Nov 1945)
Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal
(7 Dec 1941 to 2 Mar 1946)
American Campaign Medal
(7 Dec 1941 to 2 Mar 1946)

American Merchant Marines in Oceangoing Service

7 Dec 1941 to 15 August 1945

Korea

27 June 1950 to 27 July 1954
(eligible for the Korean Service Medal)

Vietnam

28 Feb 1961 to 1 May 1975

Lebanon

25 Aug 1982 to 26 Feb 1984

Grenada

23 Oct 1983 to 21 Nov 1983

Panama

20 Dec 1989 to 31 Jan 1990

Persian Gulf

2 Aug 1990 to -

Somalia

17 Sept 1992 to -

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Albania (former Yugoslavia operations)

Global War on Terrorism/OIF/OEF

11 Sept 2001 -

PROJECTED NUMBER OF VETERANS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

The U.S. Census Bureau, 2014, estimates that there are approximately **44,257 veterans living in Montgomery County, Maryland**. According to a 2014 American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, 12.6% of Americans self-reported as being a veteran. The Census Bureau defines as veteran as men and women who have served (even for a short time), but are not currently serving, on active duty in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or the Coast Guard, or who served in the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II. People who served in the National Guard or Reserves are classified as veterans only if they were ever called or ordered to active duty, not counting the 4 to 6 months for initial training or yearly summer camps. All other civilians are classified as nonveterans.

Veteran Population of Montgomery County, MD - 2014		
Subject	Veterans	Total Population
Civilian Population 18 years and over	44,257 (6.0%)	785,028
Period of Service	Veterans	% of 46,533
Gulf War II (9/2001 or later) veterans	10,842	24.5%
Gulf War I (8/1990 to 8/2001) veterans	10,975	24.8%
Vietnam era veterans	11,064	25.0%
Korean War veterans	4,824	10.9%
World War II veterans	4,602	10.4%
Gender	Veterans	% of 44,257
Male	37,972	85.8%
Female	6,285	14.2%
Age	Veterans	% of 44,257
18 to 34 years	5,399	12.2%
35 to 54 years	11,507	26.0%
55 to 64 years	6,284	14.2%
65 to 74 years	8,542	19.3%
75 years and over	12,525	28.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014

Montgomery County, MD Veteran Demographics - By City (2009 - 2013)

United States Census QuickFacts only includes data for incorporated places with a population of 5,000 or greater.

Ashton-Sandy Spring	333
Aspen Hill	2,115
Bethesda	3,427
Burtonsville	309
Chevy Chase	621
Clarksburg	537
Damascus	765
Darnestown	337
Four Corners	516
Gaithersburg	2,805

Germantown	3,128
Glenmont	506
Kemp Mill	709
Poolesville	240
Layhill	269
Leisure World	1,620
Montgomery Village	1,414
North Bethesda	2,442
North Kensington	636
North Potomac	737

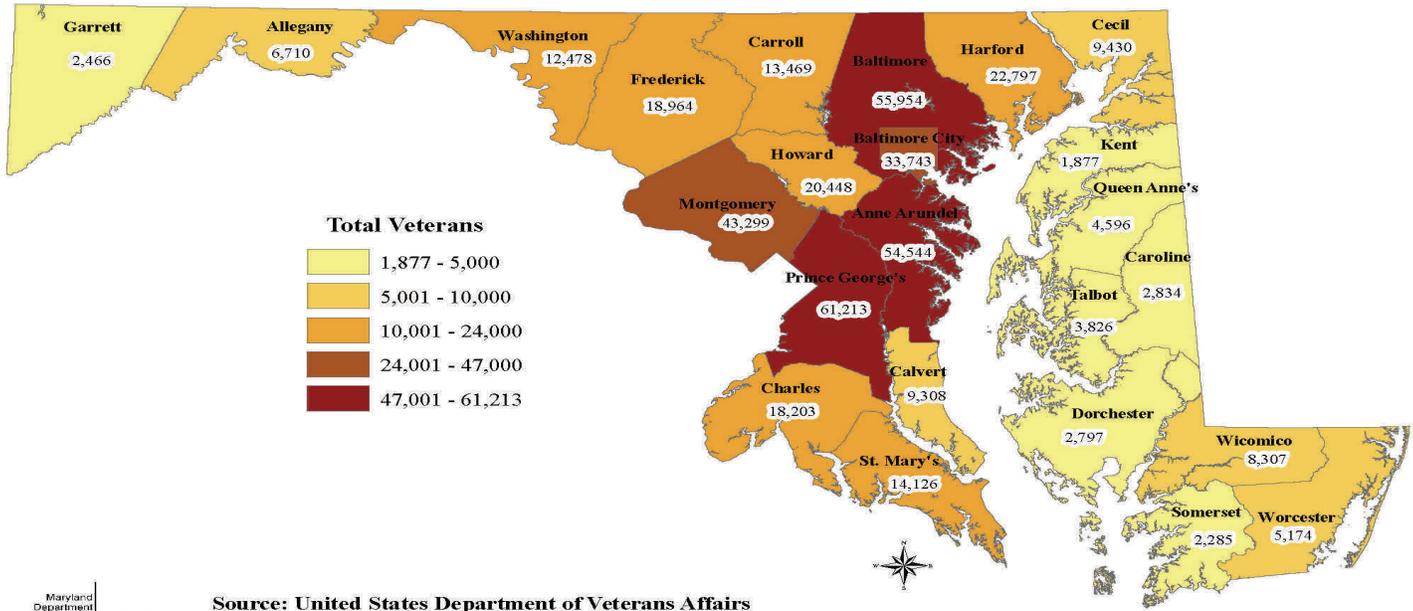
Olney	1,789
Poolesville	240
Potomac	2,429
Rockville	3,115
Silver Spring	3,427
South Kensington	529
Takoma Park	596
Travilah	589
Wheaton	2,028

Source: U.S. Census QuickFacts 2009 - 2013

PROJECTED NUMBER OF VETERANS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

Projected Number of Veterans in Maryland - 2015

Projected Veterans in Maryland: 428,861



Source: United States Department of Veterans Affairs
 Map prepared for the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs
 by the Maryland Department of Planning

MONTGOMERY COUNTY VETERANS ENROLLED IN THE VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Montgomery County, MD - Veterans Enrolled in the VA Health Care System By Zip Code (2013)

	Silver Spring / Wheaton / Kensington / Aspen Hill / Colesville	Germantown	Rockville	Potomac	Gaithersburg / Montgomery Village
Zip codes covered	20901, 20902, 20903, 20904, 20905, 20906, 20907, 20908, 20910, 20914, 20915, 20916, 20918, 20895, 20993, 20997	20874, 20876	20847, 20848, 20849, 20850, 20851, 20852, 20853, 20857	20854	20877, 20878, 20879, 20882, 20883, 20884, 20885, 20886, 20898, 20899
Veteran population (number)	8,869	3,188	3,000	2,734	4,317
Veterans percentage of population	4.3%	3.69%	4.8%	6.1%	4.6%
Elderly (65 years old+) percentage of total population	13%	5.1%	14.0%	19.2%	9.3%
Percentage of population below poverty line	7%	6.3%	4.7%	2.7%	6.95%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2013

KEY CONTACTS FOR THE VA AND OTHER RESOURCES



Serving Together is the County's place to find all programs and services for veterans. The Veteran and Family Peer Navigator can help you find information on financial assistance, employment programs, benefits services, housing and homelessness assistance, and more. You can reach the Peer Navigator at 301-738-7176 Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or by e-mail at peernavigator@servingttogetherproject.org. To view their online resource directory or calendar of events visit www.servingttogetherproject.org.

Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA)

Phil Munley, Director of Program Services
E-mail: pmunley@mdva.state.md.us

410-230-4444 x 6457 (V)

The MDVA Service and Benefits Program provides assistance to the men and women who served in the Uniformed Services of the United States, their dependents, and survivors in obtaining benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense, State of Maryland and other programs for veterans and their families. The MDVA is currently working to hire a full-time Veterans Benefits Specialist (VBS) for Montgomery County. This person will work out of Montgomery College in Rockville.

Silver Spring Vet Center

Wayne Miller, Team Leader/Director
2900 Linden Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20910
E-mail: wayne.miller3@va.gov

301-589-1073 (V)
202-273-9116 (Bereavement Counseling)

Open Monday - Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Second Saturday each month 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.. Walk-ins are permitted during these hours, but appointments are requested. After hours appointments as needed. Veterans must show proof of service. The center provides benefits counseling and assistance with navigating the VA and paperwork, as well as employment counseling, counseling on PTSD and sub-PTSD, substance abuse counseling, family and marital counseling, psychological counseling related to readjustment, coordination and referral with doctors, employment related issues, assistance with basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing, medical and legal referrals, homeless assistance and will work with Montgomery County to find shelter placement, sexual trauma counseling, community outreach, bereavement counseling, and more. All services are provided at no cost to the veteran and their family. **Directions:** The Silver Spring Vet Center is located near the intersection of Seminary Road/Capitol View Avenue. You can also take the #5 Ride On Bus from either the Silver Spring Metro Station or the Twinbrook Metro Station and be dropped off at the Capitol View Avenue stop.

Outreach at Piccard - Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center

1301 Piccard Drive, Room 1005, Rockville, MD 20850

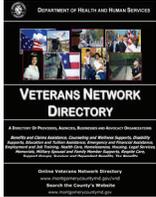
The Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) is providing outreach services to veterans at the County's Crisis Center. VAMC Homeless Outreach Staff and Veteran's Justice Outreach Staff are available for both drop in and scheduled visits. The VA will be available to assist veterans by making referrals and connecting veterans who are eligible for VA services with the VA healthcare system. Maryland's Commitment to Veterans (MCV) is also providing staff to be on-site to assist veterans and their families with coordinating behavioral health services, including mental health and substance abuse services - either with the VA or Maryland's Public Health System; facilitate transportation to behavioral health appointments; provide information and referrals related to employment, education, housing or VA benefits; and provide outreach to educate residents, veterans and community groups about MCV.

- Fatmata Kamara, VA Outreach Social Worker
E-mail: fatmata.kamara@va.gov, 202-253-9261
Ken Barnum, VA Outreach Social Worker
E-mail: kenneth.barnum@va.gov
Office Hours: Monday, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
(Staff alternate Mondays)
- Karen Carrington, Veterans Justice Outreach
E-mail: karen.carrington2@va.gov
Office Hours: Tuesday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Melissa Barber, Regional Coordinator, MCV
E-mail: mbarber.mcv@gmail.com, 410-725-9971
Wilson Smith, Outreach Specialist, U.S. Vets, 202-734-8298
Clayton McGee, Senior Outreach Specialist, U.S. Vets, 202-573-4961
Office Hours: Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
(Staff alternate Thursdays)
- Julie Riggs, Peer Navigator, Serving Together
E-mail: peernavigator@servingttogetherproject.org, 301-738-7176
Office Hours: Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

CONNECT WITH THE COMMISSION



Visit us on the web! Read Commission Agendas, Meeting Summary Minutes, testimony, and more: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cva. Our **Veterans Affairs website** has information on programs and resources, County events, and listings of Montgomery County fallen heroes dating back to World War II: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/veterans.



Our online **Veterans Network Directory** is a list of providers, agencies, businesses and advocacy organizations that offer: *benefits and claims assistance, counseling and wellness supports, disability supports, education and tuition assistance, emergency and financial assistance, employment and job training, health care, homelessness, housing, legal services, memorials, military spousal and family member supports, respite care, support groups, survivor and dependent benefits, and tax benefits:* www.montgomerycountymd.gov/vnd.



Like us on Facebook! facebook.com/MCGCVA



Sign up for eSubscribe to receive emails about Veterans information and resources. www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcg/esubscribe.html

COMMISSION PRESENTATIONS FOR 2014 - 2015

- November, 2014:** *Satellite Meeting held at Flower Valley Elementary School*
Presentation of the History of the Commission and its Priorities in 2015 – *Top Policy Issues for the Council - Jerry Godwin, Chair; Commissioner Dan Bullis and Bill Gray*
Presentation - *Ed Chow, Secretary, Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs*
-
- December, 2014:** **Outreach Mission of the Washington, DC VA Medical Center in Montgomery County** – *Brian A. Hawkins, Medical Center Director, DCVAMC*
-
- January, 2015:** **Strategic Planning: 2015 Shall be the Year of Montgomery County's Veterans and Their Families**
-
- March, 2015:** **Mission and Programs of Montgomery County's Public Information Office** – *Ohene Gyapong, Deputy Director, Public Information Office*
-
- April, 2015:** *Satellite Meeting held at Easter Seals in Silver Spring*
Remarks – *George W. Owings, III, Secretary, Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs*
-
- May, 2015:** **Update and Planning for Montgomery County Salutes Vietnam Veterans Event** – *Merlyn Reineke, Executive Director, Montgomery County Media, and Neil Greenberger, Legislative Information Officer, Montgomery County Council*
-
- June, 2015:** **Veterans Economic Communities Initiative** – *Sharisse Y. O'Banion, Consultant, Washington, DC Metro Area Economic Liaison, Office of Transition, Employment and Economic Impact, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*
Department of Defense (DoD) Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) – *Ann Dodelin, Consumer Reviewer Administrator, Peer Review and Science Management, SRA International, Inc.*
-
- Sept, 2015:** **Zero16 Campaign to End Veteran and Chronic Homelessness In Montgomery County** – *Chapman Todd, Zero16 Campaign Coordinator, and Nili Soni, Montgomery County Continuum of Care Coordinator, Special Needs Housing*
Update on Hiring and Expectations of Veterans Benefits Specialist for Montgomery County – *Phil Munley, Director, Veteran Service Program, Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs*
-
- Oct, 2015:** **The Work of Serving Together** – *Julie Riggs, Veterans and Family Peer Navigator; Serving Together, Mental Health Association of Montgomery County*

7TH ANNUAL TRIBUTE TO AMERICA'S VETERANS CONCERT

SSTCi would like to thank everyone who made our
7th Annual Tribute to America's Veterans Concert possible.

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS**

THE 19TH STREET BAND

Our special guests:

DAN BULLIS

*Sergeant Major, U.S. Army (Ret.)
Chairman, Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs
Commander, American Legion Post 41, Silver Spring, MD
Vice President, Walter Reed Society*

RANDY STONE

*Major, United States Marine Corps
Iraq (2005–2006) and Afghanistan (2010–2011)
Vice Chairman, Montgomery County Commission
on Veterans Affairs*

with Special Remarks from

**COUNTY EXECUTIVE
IKE LEGGETT**

Vietnam Veteran

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS



HOW TO CONTACT YOUR COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS



**County Executive
Isiah Leggett**

The **County Executive** can be reached at:

Executive Office Building
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850
240-777-0311 (V)
301-251-4850 (TTY)
ocemail@montgomerycountymd.gov



Montgomery County Council

The **County Council** can be reached at:

Stella B. Werner Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850
240-777-7900 (V)
MD Relay 711
240-777-7888 (FAX)
county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov

Seated, left to right: Hans Riemer, Nancy Floreen, George Leventhal and Tom Hucker. Standing: Roger Berliner, Sidney Katz, Nancy Navarro, Craig Rice and Marc Elrich. Photo by Clark W. Day

**Isiah Leggett, County Executive
Uma S. Ahluwalia, Director
Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
401 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850
240-777-1246 (V) or via MD Relay 711**

**Language translation and alternative formats of this report are available upon request.
For additional information on the Commission, please call the telephone numbers or write to the
address listed above or e-mail via the contact information listed below.**

*Montgomery County does not discriminate on the basis of disability in
employment or in the admission or access to its programs or services.*

2014 - 2015 Annual Report Prepared By:

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