



HAPPY HOLIDAYS



Our country is so great because of all our caring people,
especially the men and women in the armed forces
They have volunteered to do the job
To keep up the American tradition of liberty and justice for all
they fight for our rights, and others like us
Freedom is their banner and they carry it all over the globe

We hear heroic stories that touch our souls
Men and women who come to the aid of those they are sent to protect
No matter what their race or religion
They will be spending the Holidays away from loved ones
Remember them and keep them in your prayers
Now and throughout the year

“VA is making good on its promise to help veterans buy homes, and Veterans are achieving their dreams.”

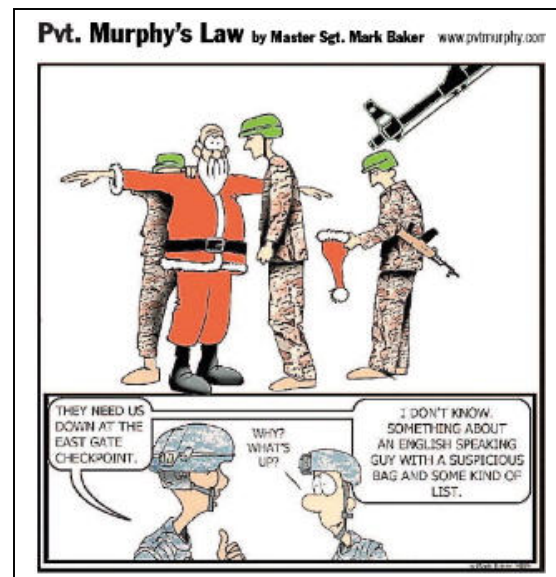
Veterans More Likely To Avoid Foreclosure With VA-Backed Loan

WASHINGTON – Despite problems in the nation’s housing market, mortgage loans backed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) had a lower foreclosure rate than any other type of home loan in the industry, as of the end of the last fiscal year. “The dedication of VA’s loan professionals, the support of our partners in the mortgage industry and most importantly, the hard work and sacrifice of our Veterans have made this possible,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “VA is making good on its promise to help Veterans buy homes, and Veterans are achieving their dreams.” Currently, about 1.3 million active home loans were obtained using VA’s Home Loan Guaranty Program. The program makes home ownership more affordable for Veterans, active-duty members, and some surviving spouses by protecting lenders from loss if the borrower fails to repay the loan. More than 90 percent of VA-guaranteed loans are made without a down payment. Despite this, VA has the lowest serious delinquency rate in the industry, according to the Mortgage Bankers

Association. Furthermore, VA’s percentage of loans in foreclosure is the lowest of all measured loan types—lower even than prime loans, which require high credit scores and a 20 percent down payment by the borrower. Much of the program’s strength stems from the efforts of VA employees and loan services nationwide, whose primary mission is to help Veterans stay in their homes, avoid foreclosure and protect their credit lines from the consequences of a foreclosure, Shinseki said. Depending on the situation, VA’s loan specialists can intervene on a Veteran’s behalf to help pursue home-retention options such as repayment plans, loan modifications and forbearance. Additionally, under certain circumstances, VA can refund a loan, which involves purchasing the loan from the mortgage company and modifying the terms so the Veteran can afford the new mortgage payment.

Xerox Is doing Something Cool

If you go to this web site, www.LetsSayThanks.com you can pick out a thank you card and Xerox will print it and it will be sent to a soldier that is currently serving in Iraq. You can’t pick out who gets it, but it will go to a member of the armed services. How AMAZING it would be if we could get everyone we know to send one!!! It is FREE and it only takes a second. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if the soldiers received a bunch of these? Whether you are for or against the war, our soldiers over there need to know we are behind them. This takes just 10 seconds and it’s a wonderful way to say thank you. Please take the time and please take the time to pass it on for others to do. We can never say enough thank you’s. Thanks for taking to time to support our military!



Training Grants For Veterans

The Department of Labor announced 17 grants, totaling more than \$7.5 million dollars, to provide approximately 3,000 veterans with job training to help them succeed in civilian careers related to "green jobs." Fields of employment include energy efficiency and renewable energy, modern electric-power development and clean vehicles. To view

more information about this initiative, visit the [Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration](http://www.dol.gov/eop/vet) website and look for the "green jobs" heading. More information on the Labor Department's unemployment and re-employment programs for veterans is available on the [Department of Labor](http://www.dol.gov/eop/vet) website.

Rockland County operates an information and referral service under the name **Information Rockland-NY Connects (InfoRock)**. This service is part of Rockland's continuing effort to make access to services and government agencies user friendly and responsive to residents. **InfoRock-NY Connects can be contacted at 364-2020**, and serves as our County's hotline for health and human services inquiries such as:

Food, Shelter, Financial Assistance
Health Programs
Family Planning
Children & Family Support Services
Child Care
Service
Employment & Training
Services
Home Care

Senior Programs
Long-Term Care
Adult Protection
Mental Health Programs
Counseling & Crisis

Advocacy & Legal

Immigration

Prescription Discount Plan

InfoRock-NY Connects Call Specialists have knowledge regarding the many services provided by County government and local community agencies. This results in fast and accurate responses to critical health and human service inquiries and puts information into the hands of those who need it, when they need it.

InfoRock serves as the "Point of Entry" for **NY Connects**, an initiative launched by New York State Office for the Aging and New York State Department of Health. **NY Connects** is a statewide program which provides information and assistance to all individuals in need of long term care services, regardless of age, income or payment source. **NY Connects** provides information on local long-term care services including but not limited to:

Home Delivered Meals
Transportation
Respite Care
Friendly Visiting
Counseling & Support

InfoRock 364-2020 is Rockland's best resource to get connected to health and human service information

GET CONNECTED TODAY!!!!

CALL INFOROCK AT 364-2020 BETWEEN 8:00AM and 5:00PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY OR VISIT INFOROCK'S WEBSITE WWW.INFORMATIONROCKLAND.COM

"ITS GOD'S JOB TO FORGIVE BIN LADEN - ITS OUR JOB TO ARRANGE THE MEETING"
USMC

Shinseki Releases VA Hospital Report Card

WASHINGTON – For the second consecutive year, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has released a “hospital report card” as part of VA’s effort to provide the public with a transparent accounting of the quality and safety of its care.

“This report demonstrates VA’s determination to be open and accountable,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “As a health care organization, transparency of information is essential to providing quality care for our Veterans.”

In addition, for the first time, data from both the 2008 and 2009 reports will be available to the public in machine-readable format on Data.gov. To empower Veterans and the public at large to track quality, safety and access to Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facilities, VA’s hospital report cards include raw data on care provided in outpatient and hospital settings, quality of care within given patient populations, and patient satisfaction and outcomes.

VA issued its first facility-level report on quality and safety in May 2008. As part of the Obama Administration’s commitment to open government and accountability, VA highlights its rigorous quality programs and actions taken to address the issues VA identified from the last report.

The report gives the health care system high marks, with VA facilities often outscoring private-sector health plans in standards commonly accepted by the health care industry. “Patient-centric care is our mission,” said Shinseki. “As Secretary, I am committed to continuing to meet and surpass our high standards of care each and every day.”

In addition to allowing VA to demonstrate the quality and safety of its care, the report card provides opportunities to enhance health services.

Hospital Report Card 2/2/2/2

Some of the marked improvements that VA showed in 2009 include:

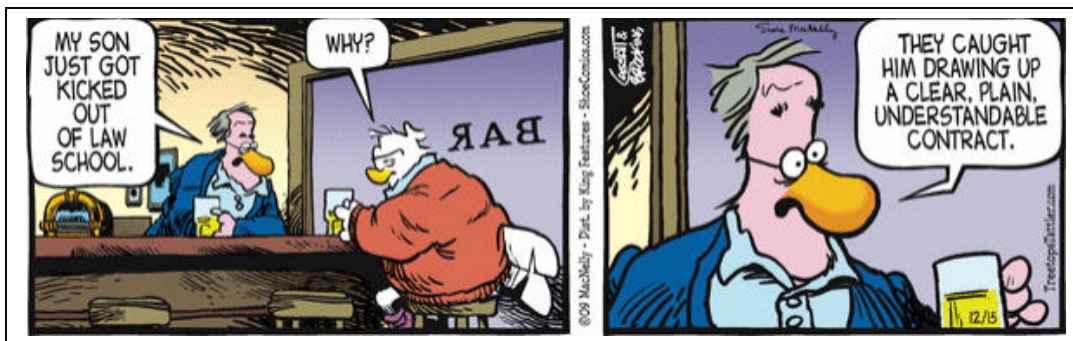
- Smoking cessation counseling provided to 89 percent of Veteran patients, a 6 percent improvement from 2008; and

- Among all ages at risk, 94 percent of Veterans received a pneumonia immunization, a 4 percent improvement.

The report notes there is more to be done for women Veterans. To address this priority and provide women Veterans with the highest quality care VA has implemented several initiatives, such as placement of women advocates in every outpatient clinic and medical center, and creating a “mini-residency” program on women’s health for primary care physicians.

The report also found minority Veterans are generally less satisfied with inpatient and outpatient care than other Veterans. In addition to targeting outreach efforts to these Veterans, a minority Veteran program coordinator has been placed in every medical center.

“VA’s hospital report card will become a valuable resource of information for Veterans, stakeholders and the department.” said Shinseki. “It will allow VA’s health care system to be forward looking and focused on advancement.”



The office of Dr. William Grosso would like to extend an invitation to veterans who are suffering with spinal problems to have a free consultation at their office. They specialize in back and neck conditions including disc herniations, arthritis, sciatica and sports injuries. They offer gentle treatments, spinal decompression, nutrition and exercise advice. Call 845 634- 7800 to schedule a free consultation.

Appointing Your Health Care Agent in NY State or NJ By David Kamchi, Capt. USAR

Veterans and members of the Armed forces 18 yrs. Or older, should seriously consider a preparing a medical directive and a non-medical directive. Each individual should make certain that, in case of an unexpected occurrence, their wishes are known and honored.

Advanced medical directives include Helath Care Proxy, Medical Living Will, and a DNR. Non-medical directives are a Durable Power of Attorney, a Power of Attorney and a Will. The following sites offer information about Medical Directives:

Health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/healthcareproxy
state.nj.us/healthdocuments
caringfo.org
agingwithdignity.org

A valuable source for individuals in the Lower Hudson Valley would be the Assuring Your Wishe Program by the United Hospice of Rockland County.

**HAVE A WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS, A JOYOUS HOLIDAY
AND A HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR
FROM ALL OF US AT
THE ROCKLAND COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY
DON'T BE A GRINCH AND ENJOY YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS,
AND DON'T FORGET THOSE LESS FORTUNATE THAN YOU**

