



As American Legion Auxiliary members, we are committed to supporting the needs of our veterans and their families. But to help, we must first understand the needs and requirements for veterans today and in the future. As documented by the Pew Research Center, America's veteran population is dramatically changing. Are you ready to respond?



Gulf War-era veterans now account for the largest share of all U.S. veterans.

Why We Care: The needs of Gulf-era veterans may be different than those of previous generations (Gulf War illness, toxic exposure)



The share of the U.S. population with military experience is declining.

Why We Care: The veteran pool is shrinking which means the opportunities to engage may also shrink.



VA projections suggest the number of living veterans will continue to decline over the next 25 years.

Why We Care: By 2046, WWII and Vietnam veterans will no longer be living so our service model will need to align with the needs of those veterans who served in the Gulf-era.



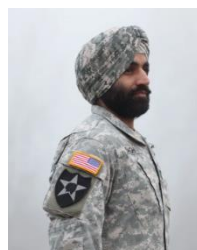
The demographic profile of veterans is expected to change in the next quarter century.

Why We Care: More female veterans will be present in the veteran population so services may need to adjust and enhance to better align with the needs of women.



As with trends in the U.S. population overall, the veteran population is expected to become more racially and ethnically diverse.

Why We Care: It will be important to recognize that the veteran composition is becoming more culturally diverse so we may need to align our approach to address cultural differences.



The VA has established goals for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Why We Care: As a Veterans Service Organization, we support all America's veterans regardless of color, faith, or sexual orientation. Assuring that our organization is perceived as a "safe space" for all veterans is an important component to building a positive volunteer experience, for our members and those we serve.



The veteran population will trend younger.

Why We Care: the needs of younger veterans will differ from those of older veterans so we will need to align services.



Fewer members of Congress have prior military experience.

Why We Care: Lawmakers and legislators will not understand the importance of serving the veterans community making VSO engagement more necessary and critical.



Americans continue to see veterans' service services as an important priority.

Why We Care: Our mission resonates with the majority of Americans. This is a great statistic and should help not only with securing funding and volunteer resources, but also an opportunity to engage for membership.



The demographics of where Veterans live is changing.

Why We Care: About half of U.S. veterans live in 10 states, but the states among the top 10 are expected to change. The bulk of veterans, according to the VA, are moving to the western and southern regions of the U.S. These are the states with the current and projected highest numbers of veterans. Our members must be able to serve the veteran populations as they geographically relocate.

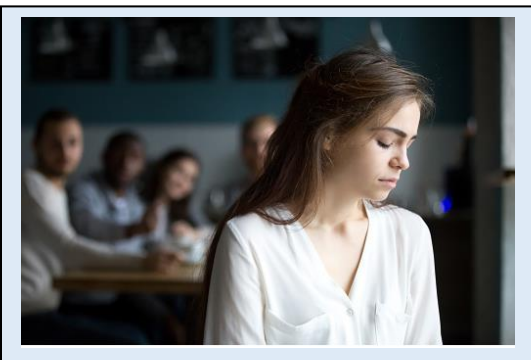
As U.S. demographics continue to shift, so does the makeup of the American veteran population. Pew Research Center has analyzed some of these changes using data from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the U.S. Census Bureau, the Department of Defense, Center surveys and other news reports. Please check out the full report and other relevant information available in the links below to learn more about the veteran community and how it is trending.

[Pew Research Center Report](#)

[U.S. News: A Look at the Changing Face of America's Veterans](#)

[Key Findings About America's Military Veterans](#)

[The Changing Profile of the U.S. Military: Smaller in Size, more diverse, more women in leadership](#)



PTSD Monthly Update

News Relevant to the Issues of Trauma and PTSD



As The American Legion kicks off it's **Be the One** campaign to destigmatize asking for mental health support, provide peer-to-peer support and resources and educate everyone on how they can Be the One, be sure to check out the PTSD National Center for PTSD through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to learn more about services available. The National Center for PTSD is the world's leading research and educational center of excellence on PTSD

and traumatic stress. Sign up to receive the PTSD Monthly Update to stay up to date on treatment, information, and services available for those who suffer with PTSD. The PTSD Monthly Update is an electronic newsletter produced by the National Center for PTSD, Department of Veterans Affairs. Link to subscribe: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/publications/monthly_update.asp

VA&R Success Story: Gift of Technology **(Department of Kansas)**

Let's hear it for the team at the Fort Dodge Kansas Soldiers' Home in Ft. Dodge, Kansas. Larry and Sheri Cook of Dodge City Brewing had two iPads they no longer used. A friend of the team, Warren Duree, took them and performed a factory reset. Warren and his wife Lindy, purchased covers for them. The Cooks also purchased new charging cords with the intention of donating them to Veterans at the Fort Dodge Kansas Soldiers' Home. ALA Department of Kansas NEC and Ft. Dodge Soldiers Home volunteer Paula Sellens delivered the iPads to the two veterans who were thrilled to receive them. What a great story of our ALA family collaborating with a local business to make great things happen for our veterans. Well done and BRAVO to the Sunflower State!



VA&R Success Story: Making it Fun **(Department of New York)**

Congratulations to the ALA Department of New York as they gathered their team to create "Valentines for Veterans." Because the event was so fun and engaging, the Junior team from Unit 789 in Carthage, New York signed up two new members. And why? Because it was so FUN! It was a win for our veterans, a win for Unit #789 and a big win for our junior members! Keep up the great work!



VA&R Success Story: National Salute to Veterans **(Department of Nevada)**

The month of February is the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans celebratory month and with it comes many members, units and departments volunteering on behalf of our veterans. Cheers to Department of Nevada VA&R Chairman Maria Moss and ALA Paradise Unit #149 for volunteering at the VA Clinic in Las Vegas. The team handed out popcorn and chocolate goodies as they celebrated Valentine's Day and offered "Thank You for Your Service" greetings to Nevada's veterans. This picture of Maria says it all! Joyful pink sweater for Valentine's Day, proudly wearing an "Honor Their Service" button, masked up for safety and National President Vickie's pin fully on display. Way to go Nevada!



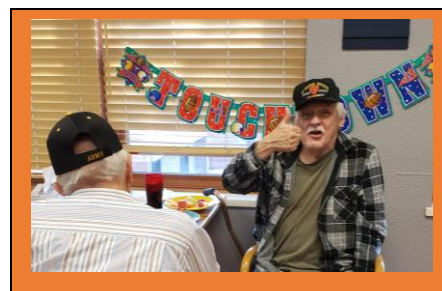
VA&R Success Story: Sew Grateful **(Department of Iowa)**

What an awesome time when friends gathered to create items for our veterans. At the helm of this experience was Central Division National Vice President Ann Rehbein who planned and organized the event on February 4 also known as "National Sew Day." American Legion Auxiliary members in Ames, Iowa gathered for fun and fellowship and together created quilt tops and blankets for project "Quilts of Valor."



VA&R Success Story: Superbowl Party Time **(Department of Colorado)**

A great time was had by all when American Legion Auxiliary members from Unit #78 in Rifle and Unit #100 in Carbondale collaborated together to organize a Super Bowl Party for our veterans who reside in the VA Living Center in Rifle. Additionally, they got the community and local businesses involved with special thanks to WingNut who donated the chicken wings for the party. It's pretty clear that great things happen when we work together! Members joined in on the fun by serving our veterans lunch and snacks. Colorful decorations brightened up the experience and everyone enjoyed the opportunity to bring joy to the team. It was a big win all around...for the members of Unit #78 and #100, our American Legion Family and most importantly our veterans.



Q3 Holiday Calendar

March 2023

3	National Anthem Day
3	Navy Reserves Birthday
4	Hug a GI Day
5	U.S. Navy Seabee Birthday
13	Daylight Savings Time Begins
13	National K-9 Veterans Day
15	American Legion Birthday
17	St. Patrick's Day
21	Rosie the Riveter Day
25	National Medal of Honor Day
29	National Vietnam War Veterans Day

April 2023

Children & Youth Month

5	Gold Star Spouses Day
9	Natl Former POW Recognition Day
9	Easter Sunday
14	Air Force Reserve Birthday
15	Purple Up Day for Military Kids
23	Army Reserves Birthday

May 2023

National Military Appreciation Month

Month of the Military Caregiver

1	Silver Star Service Banner Day
1	Loyalty Day
4	National Day of Prayer
8	V-E Day
12	Military Spouse Appreciation Day
13	Children of Fallen Patriots Day
14	Mother's Day
20	Armed Forces Day
22	Maritime Day
26	National Poppy Day
29	Memorial Day

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Important Communication Updates from the VA!

VA relaxes masking requirements at medical facilities (3/3/23)

Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced it has relaxed the masking requirement at VA medical facilities. This update ensures the safety of Veterans while accommodating individual masking preferences and aligning with CDC guidelines.

VA to award \$52.5 million in grants to local organizations working to prevent Veteran suicide (3/2/23)

Today, the VA announced the availability of \$52.5 million in grants to community-based organizations that provide or coordinate suicide prevention services for Veterans and their families – including conducting Veteran mental health screenings, providing case management and peer support services, delivering emergency clinical services, reaching out to Veterans at risk of suicide and more.

VA to award \$16 million in grants to help Veterans and service members with disabilities participate in adaptive sports (2/24/23)

Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced the availability of nearly \$16 million in grants to qualifying organizations to help more than 13,000 Veterans and service members with disabilities participate in adaptive sports. This funding will help these organizations plan, develop, manage, and implement a variety of sports and equine therapy activities, including life-improving programs for Veterans and training for providers. More information about these grants can be found in the two Notices of Funding Availability.

Wise Words from Past Leaders

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan..." These words of Abraham Lincoln state our commitment to the veteran and his family. Today, more than ever, we are needed as volunteers to perform services at the community level, filling the vacuum created by reduced federal services. A concerted effort must be made to recruit more volunteers, for volunteerism is Americanism. Volunteer service in the VA Medical Centers has always been a hallmark of our organization and the need is even greater this year. With the increasing number of World War II veterans approaching age 65, greater demands will be made on health services. Too, the veterans of Vietnam need a special kind of help and compassionate understanding that can only come from our volunteers. Remember, the American Legion Auxiliary is the "watchdog" of veteran's benefits, supporting the efforts of the American Legion. We must be ever alert to the threat of losing these rightful benefits. The need for medical services will not decrease in the coming years, nor will the need for volunteers. Giving a few hours at a hospital, nursing home, or in your own community can make a difference in the life of another – and in your own life.

-Helen Adams Gardner served the American Legion Auxiliary as National President in 1984-1985. In her address to membership she shared, "America is still the land where dreams come true."



**Helen Adams Gardner
(Florida)**

Veterans Affairs and
Rehabilitation Chairman
1982-1983
National President
1984-1985