

# VVA 788 NEWS

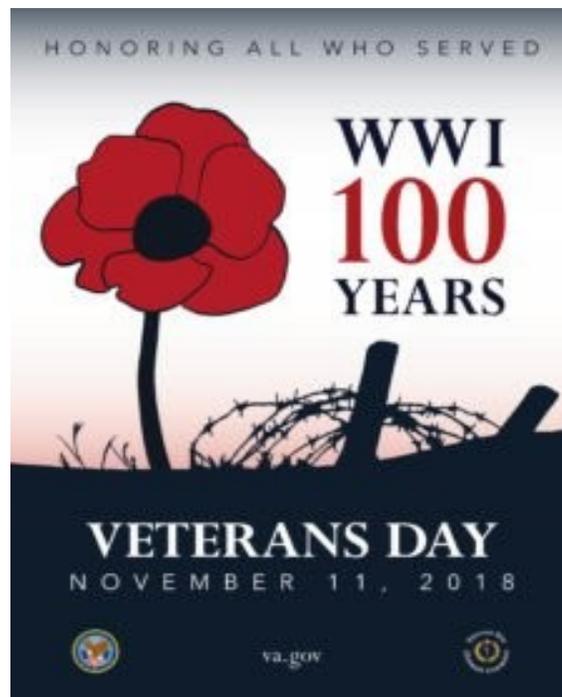
vva788.org

*HELPING VETERANS, COMMUNITIES,  
AND THOSE SERVING IN HARMS WAY*



*Vietnam Veterans of American Chapter 788*

*November 2018*



## **Veterans Day 2018**

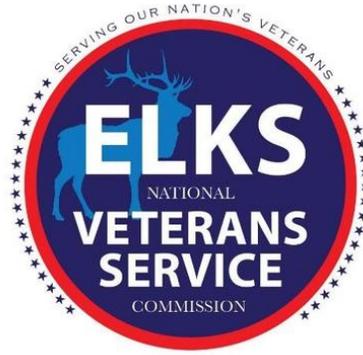
Veterans Day is always observed officially on November 11, regardless of the day of the week on which it falls.

The Veterans Day National Ceremony, like most ceremonies around the nation, is held on Veterans Day itself.

However, when Veterans Day falls on a weekday, many schools and communities choose to hold Veterans Day parades or other celebrations on the weekend before or after November 11 so that more people can participate.

For information about Veterans Day Assemblies at schools in Gallatin County visit:

[vva788.org/calendar](http://vva788.org/calendar)



## **ELKS NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION**

### **“NOVEMBER IS ELKS VETERANS REMEMBRANCE MONTH”**

This November and every month of the year, Elks will serve thousands of Veterans across the country. Elks volunteer at more than 330 VA Medical Centers, State Veterans Homes, clinics, transitional shelters and Veterans facilities where they plan activities, buy needed supplies, host meals and offer friendship.

Elks help Veterans rehabilitate and thrive by supporting adaptive sports events, and providing therapy kits and wheelchair gloves to recovering Veterans.

More recently, Elks have pledged to help end Veteran homelessness by pledging \$4 million dollars to assist Veterans experiencing homelessness. We've since helped thousands of Veterans exit or prevent homelessness.

Our Elks Lodges are focal points for supporting local military members and Veterans and meeting their needs. Last year alone, the total value of Elks' contributions to our nation's Veterans was nearly \$47 million, and our members served more than 677,000 Veterans.

Let us also remember the words of Elk member and President John F. Kennedy who said, "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them."

Elks pledge "So long as there are veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them." The Elks National Veterans Service Commission takes that pledge one step further, and promises service to our nation's veterans and military members, with a special focus on service to those in need.

To learn more, visit [elks.org](http://elks.org)



The current program in Gallatin County is called SSVF ( Supportive Services for Veteran Families). The goal of the SSVF program is to promote housing stability among very low-income Veteran families who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing. Each household's eligibility for the program is based on income.

To become a participant household under the SSVF program, the following conditions must be met:

1. A member of a "Veteran family": Either (a) a Veteran or (b) a member of a family in which the head of household, or the spouse of the head of household, is a Veteran.
2. Very low-income: Household income does not exceed 50% of area median income (AMI).
3. Occupying Permanent Housing: A very low-income Veteran family is considered to be "occupying permanent housing" if they fall into one of three categories
  - Category 1– Is residing in permanent housing and at risk of losing that housing
  - Category 2– Is literally homeless and at risk to remain in this situation, but could become a resident of permanent housing within 90 days pending location or housing development
  - Category 3–Is literally homeless after exiting permanent housing within the previous 90 days.

SSVF provides outreach, case management, connection to VA benefits and programs, connections to public benefits and mainstream, community resources, and temporary financial assistance. Housing First establishes housing as the primary intervention in working with Veterans experiencing homelessness. The Housing First approach is informed by research demonstrating that a homeless individual or household's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing, and that other issues impacting the household can and should be addressed as housing is obtained.

SSVF program also works directly with victims of domestic violence. Under this program, a participant household experiencing domestic violence receives special consideration in SSVF regards to supportive services. This is a consideration designed for participants fleeing a domestic violence situation mid-stream during their SSVF participation such that the original participant household breaks apart.

For more information regarding all of these services, please contact the SSVF Coordinators at the information provided:

**SSVF Coordinators:**

Christa Ziegler: 406-422-7763  
Mike Koosman: 406-647-6982

Office:406-624-6277  
Office address: 104 E Main ST STE 213, Bozeman MT

Office hours: M-F, 8 AM-5 PM

## VA Releases National Suicide Data Report for 2005-2016



The VA has released national-level and state-level findings from its most recent analysis of veteran suicide data, from 2005 to 2016. On average, about 20 current or former service members die each day; 6 have been in VA healthcare and 14 had not.

From 2015 to 2016, the overall current and former service member suicide count decreased from 7,663 to 7,298 deaths, a decrease of 365; the veteran-specific suicide count decreased from 6,281 to 6,079 deaths, a decrease of 202; and from 2015 to 2016, the veteran unadjusted suicide rate decreased from 30.5/100,000 to 30.1/100,000.

Though the data showed the rates of suicide to be highest among younger veterans (ages 18-34) and lowest among older veterans (ages 55 and older), because the older veteran population is the largest, this group accounted for 58.1 percent of veteran suicide deaths in 2016. The rate of suicide among 18-34-year-old veterans continues to increase.

The report showed that the use of firearms as a method of suicide remains high, with the percentage of suicide deaths involving firearms at 69.4 percent in 2016.

The “VA National Suicide Data Report 2005–2016,” and the accompanying state data sheets are available at: [https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention/Suicide-Prevention-Data.asp](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/Suicide-Prevention-Data.asp)

