

“Who is a Veteran?” Basic eligibility for veteran’s benefits, Part 1

■ By Hoyt Tidwell, Lawrence County Veterans Service Officer

Hello from the Veterans Service office!

A broad range of benefits are offered to veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and to certain members of their families by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Among these benefits are various types of financial assistance, including monthly cash payments to disabled veterans, health care, education, and housing benefits. Basic criteria must be met to be eligible to receive any of the benefits administered by the VA.

For a former service member to receive certain VA benefits, the person must have active U.S. military service for a minimum period of time and meet nature of discharge requirements. Some members of the National Guard and reserve components have difficulty meeting the active duty and length of service requirements. However, a member of the National Guard or reserve components who is activated for federal military service and serves the full period of activation is considered a veteran for purposes of VA benefits.

Feeding the hungry among us

■ By Emily Kennedy, Guest Columnist to the Advocate
Feeding the hungry in our country just got harder. Recently, due to the failure of Congress to pass a budget continuing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), over 47 million Americans have been hit with cuts in food stamps (also called SNAP or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits), including 1 million veterans. Also included are 1 million people in the state of Tennessee. In other words, more than 1/5 of Tennessee’s population is considered food insecure. The loss of ARRA benefits means that a family of four that gets \$668 per month will now receive \$36 less.

Some folks applaud the dying of this measure, arguing that our country should be focused on getting people off food stamps not giving them more to spend. But in addition to helping people whose jobs were lost during the recession, the additional money each month has another purpose. According to the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), one dollar of food stamp benefits creates a “ripple effect” throughout the economy. In other words, when someone lives paycheck-to-paycheck, one additional dollar benefits the economy \$5. The dollar that gets spent at the grocery store also pays the salaries of clerks, truckers who bring in the food and supplies, and farmers who grow the crops.

Negotiations in the Senate and House promise more reductions to the SNAP program. The Democratic-controlled Senate is proposing \$4 million in cuts. The Republican-controlled House is proposing \$39 million more in cuts and a severance of ties to the Farm Bill, through which SNAP is funded, to make reductions easier to accomplish.

It is wise to teach people to support themselves. It is paramount to eliminate fraud and waste in the SNAP program. But, eliminating waste in other bloated areas like defense spending and unnecessary subsidies to millionaire farmers first is both just and prudent. According to Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan, chairman of the House budget committee, “Right now, the federal government favors the big guy over the little guy. We subsidize large agribusiness and the wealthy at the expense of the family farmer and the taxpayer. It’s an egregious example of cronyism. Both parties are to blame, but I’m hopeful both sides can come together to set this right.” Ryan might agree or disagree about the SNAP program itself,

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details of family lore go in one ear and out the other. You can make a small step to change that.

Even if you don’t start a full journal of your life, at least write down for your loved ones what you remember about November 22, 1963 -- or what older friends and relatives passed on to you.

(My mother was spending part of her fifth wedding anniversary getting dental fillings, when Dr. Hopper’s mother called the office, distraught over the news bulletins. Me? I just remember that some sort of big funeral messed up my Saturday morning cartoons that weekend.)

After the hoopla over the JFK anniversary subsidies, our lives will again be cluttered with data about the Next Big Anniversary or the Next Hot Topic or the Next Outrageous Celebrity; but the successes and failures of the era need to remain fresh in our minds.

The JFK presidency, of course, was popularized as the “Camelot” era. In the spirit of that Broadway musical’s title song reprise, I hope your activities on November 22 will carry the theme “Don’t let it be forgot.”

WANTED
Someone to put numerous Barbie doll collections on Craig’s list. Anyone willing to do so, will let keep 60% of proceeds therefrom.
762-9578

Another Year, Another Birthday



Look who’s turning the **BIG 90**
ONDA BAILEY
Family & friends join us for cake and ice cream on Nov. 23 at Lions Apartments Activity Room from 1:00 - 3:00

Card of Thanks
The family of Jesse Troy Doss would like to express our thanks to each one who comforted us during this time of grief. For the ones who called, sent food, cards, flowers and prayers. For neighbors far and near that showed you cared. Thanks to Bro. Niles Worsham and Neal Funeral Home for the service. We appreciated it all.

The VA uses a two-step process to evaluate claims for benefits. First, the claimant must demonstrate that he or she is eligible. That is, the claimant must prove that he or she is a bona fide veteran and verify certain related matters. In this sense, the eligibility relates to the veteran’s general qualification(s) for the benefit(s). Second, the veteran must prove entitlement to the particular benefit being sought.

To be eligible for most VA benefits, the claimant must be a veteran or, in some circumstances, the survivor of the dependent of a veteran. By statute, a “veteran” is defined as a “person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.” In evaluating the evidence to determine whether the applicant is a “veteran” for the purposes of VA benefits, the VA relies upon military department service records. The VA is bound by information that the service documents contain. Generally speaking, the VA findings will be in accord with the information contained in the applicant’s military service records.

Look for “Part 2” in the December 4 edition.

but even he sees the disparity of favoring big business and the wealthiest who take huge chunks of the American pie.

There are poor folks who live all around us. Many struggle to put food on the table as they work multiple jobs. Others search for jobs that pay decent wages but cannot find them in this economy. These are the working poor. Moreover, as long as there are mental illness, war, drought, flood, homelessness, teenage pregnancy, child abuse, unemployment, catastrophic diseases, and greed, there will be poor people who need governmental assistance. Saving money by making them a little hungrier doesn’t seem to be the wisest choice or the kindest. Making it easier to take even more from them (by disconnecting SNAP from the Farm Bill) would take away any leverage for keeping the food stamp program funded. While some argue that SNAP is an albatross around the neck of the Farm Bill, this is one albatross that must remain connected.

Instead of judging the poor and blaming them for their plight, it is more productive to regard them as human beings who deserve our respect and need our help. These folks are all around us—in our schools and neighborhoods, beside us on the assembly line, assisting us at the grocery store, serving us in restaurants, sitting beside us in church. How many more are one illness/customer complaint/plant closing/divorce away from food stamps? Ask yourself this: how many people really would *choose* to “live □ off the government” for a whopping \$1.60 per meal? This is the amount per person that is allotted in food stamps. And abusing the system has gotten harder. The USDA reports that fraud accounted for less than 3% of all SNAP recipients in 2011, trafficking abuse was 1% in 2012, and benefits are now issued on electronic debit cards that can only be used for food.

And finally, those who follow the Christian faith understand that Jesus did not mince words with regard to the poor and the hungry. Did He admonish people to use true charity by helping people teach themselves to become less poor? Did He specify the parsing out of responsibility to churches? I believe his words were pretty plain. Churches and non-profits should be applauded for their great work with charity and their giving to those in need. But, in this day and time, for hunger to be obliterated, it will take something much larger. It will take government to work for its people.

Card of Thanks
Words of thanks can never express our true feelings and gratitude. The overwhelming outpour of love and support that has been extended to us during this time is absolutely wonderful. To all that have prayed, sent cards and worked so hard, we love you from the bottom of our hearts. I would love to list each one, but I’m sure I would leave someone out. Through all that is done, our prayer is that our Lord received all the glory, for without Him we are nothing.
Love to all,
Sharon & Donnie Kelley

Card Of Thanks
The family of **Tim Byrd** would like to thank all of their family, friends, **Loretto Memorial Chapel and the West Point Community Club** for all their support and love during the loss of their loved one. Thanks for all your thoughts and prayers. God bless you all!
Sincerely,
The Byrd family

We were. . . Continued from A-4

his, “Ich bin ein Berliner,” speech, and make us feel good about ourselves.

In today’s world, his womanizing escapades, a trait gained from his father, Old Joe, and shared by his brother, might have gotten him run out of the White House. Today, politicians’ private lives and bedroom escapades, straight or gay, has become public property, and are given twenty-four hour coverage by TV and social media. Usually, they quit or get beat. My guess is he would have smiled, charmed us all like any mischievous little boy, and we would have forgiven him.

In spite of those who say he would have gotten us out of Vietnam, the truth is that he got us in, over the advice of Eisenhower and others, who warned us of an Asiatic land war. He had close personal relations with the Roman Catholic leaders of South Vietnam and feared to buck the hardliners after his Cuban failure. He might have gotten us out sooner, but that is doubtful, and it is only in the eastern liberal world and Hollywood that such is accepted as gospel truth.

Lee Harvey Oswald robbed us of what might have been. The death of President Kennedy destroyed our moment of giddy optimism and we have not been the same since.

After that day, a lot of us were never young again.

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the Constitution to find a “tax” to justify the establishment of the Affordable Care Act.

The act (Obamacare) requires people to buy health insurance or pay a fine. Ironically on the Web it’s called “marketplace.” Presumably this is meant to infer that there’s a choice – like should I buy the store brand or Red Diamond coffee? There’s no such choice and we are a pack of fools to believe it! It is subterfuge, a wet finger in the wind, a testing for a stab at taking over 18% of the U.S. economy.

When this fiasco doesn’t work, the creates chaos (something this present administration glories in) then the government can step in and become the single health care provider. Bingo! Only four-fifths of the U.S. assets are left for the new King George to grab.

The great charmer is worthy of the whirling dervish or cobra in a basket. Only we are the “charmed.” As long as his audience worships at the alter of our god Political Correctness, he is safe. As long as the “King’s” subjects bow, scrape and grovel when the “caring” charlatan creates a crises, he is safe.

We in the U.S. have traded the God of heaven for the empty wind bag of Political Correctness. This Political Correctness in another more honest age would be identified as cowardly and timid. It is the philosophy of those who said, “We would have a king to rule over us!”

Joe Jones

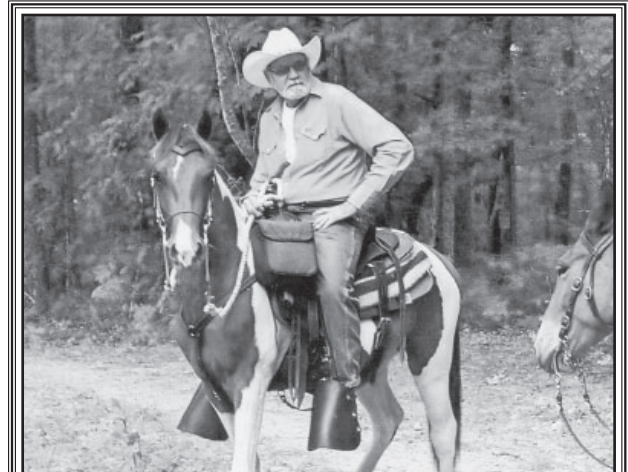
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spending for Tennessee by 2019 at \$716 million on the low side and \$1.5 billion on the high side. This means it is critical that we find significant savings in current budget expenditures.

On the bright side, significant savings have been found through the state’s central procurement process. This is a new statewide system put into effect in 2011 to take advantage of the government’s clout as a volume-buyer to leverage more competitive bidding.

Card of Thanks
The family of Lois Kelsey would like to express our appreciation to everyone who visited with us, brought food, sent cards, e-mails, flowers & money, your phone calls and your many prayers during the illness and recent death of our dear mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and beloved friend. We want to thank Bro. Charles Gresham for the beautiful and comforting words you spoke during the funeral, to Neal Funeral Home, NHC Brink and Caris Hospice for the love and care you showed not only to Maw while she was in your care, but to all of our family as well. You made a very difficult time so much more bearable for us. We would also like to extend a special thank you to Bro. Chad Clanton who visited with the family the night before Maw’s passing and the members of Gum Springs Baptist Church for the wonderful lunch you provided prior to the funeral, and to Bishop Don Jackson, Roxanne Hunter and all the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for the awesome dinner you provided following the funeral. No kind deed has gone unnoticed and we thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for being there for us during this sad time in our lives. God bless each of you for your love and support.
With deep gratitude,
Vernon & Jeanetta Kelsey and family
Troy & Priscilla Kelsey and family
Larry Kelsey and family • Mary (widow of John) Kelsey and family

Circle J Ranch & Friends
sponsoring a benefit for
Stevie Bivens
Southeast Fire Dept. and Community Center
Owens Rd. & Hwy. 98 Rabbit Trail Rd.
Five Points, TN
Friday, November 22 • 7 a.m. til ?
Yard Sale - BBQ Plates \$10 • BBQ Plates start at 4 p.m.
Saturday, November 23 • 7 a.m. til ?
Turkey Shoot, Big Buck Contest, Big Doe Contest, Auction, Kids Turkey Shoot (BB Guns), other fun ways to give!!
FOOD TOO!! Starts at 11 a.m.
Stews, Boston Butts, Hamburgers & Hot Dogs.
Turkey shoot starts at 9:00 a.m.
Auction starts at 12:00 Noon
For more information and to donate items, please contact:
Jerry Morris - (256) 710-9925
Nathan Brewer - (931) 242-6912
David Allen - (256) 762-2776
Sonya Corbin - (931) 629-2568
Jimmy Corbin - (931) 638-0626



In Memory of Felix Walter

1944 ~ 2012

A year ago a very dear friend to many was lost. It was a day of blessing for him due to it ending his suffering, but for many it just begun. Even though we know he is with the Lord due to a white dove being present, it’s still hard. If you knew Felix at all you would understand. Felix loved the Lord and with that love he loved others. He knew how to make you laugh. He could tell a story in a manner that only Felix could tell it. He loved the outdoors. He loved to horseback ride and hunt. Felix just knew how to make you feel loved. Felix loved the Lord and with that love he loved others. He loved his family with all he could give them... his heart, his strength and him. It is because of that love his family remembers him; still with tears and heartbreak and most of all love. Felix just know you are loved and missed.

Your loving family, your wife, daughter, granddaughter, grandson, and great granddaughters.
Rose, Felicia, Peyton, Paxton, Danica & McKinzly