

VETERANS CONNECT

Message From the District Director

Karen Tyler

Welcome to our first edition of the Eastern Essex District Department of Veterans' Services quarterly Newsletter, **Veterans Connect**. Our District is made up of eight towns: Essex, Georgetown, Hamilton, Ipswich, Newbury, Rowley, Wenham, and West Newbury. Veterans' Services is charged with assisting Veterans, their surviving spouses, and dependents with all things related to Veteran benefits as well as some basic emergency needs. Our office assists with paperwork for local, state, and federal benefits. The claims we file address service connected disabilities, veterans' pensions, education, employment, annuities, and such. This newsletter is intended as a means to share information about the various available benefits as well as current issues affecting the veteran community. All readers are encouraged to sign up for future Newsletters as well as encourage other veterans by adding your email to our [Mailing List](#) or email kt Tyler@eessexvets.com.

POW/MIA Chair of Honor Ceremony

Eastern Essex Veterans' Services hosted a POW/MIA Chair of Honor unveiling Ceremony on Wednesday, November 20th at 6:30 p.m., in the gymnasium at Ipswich Town Hall. The POW/MIA Chair is to remind the community of the service and sacrifice of those who were Prisoners of War or Missing in Action, so they are never forgotten. The Chair will be on display outside of the Town Manager's Office at Ipswich Town Hall. In addition to the unveiling of the Chair, there was a Missing Man Table Honor Ceremony. The keynote speaker was [Jim Kurtz](#), author of [The Green Box](#).



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- Holiday Donation DAR
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DID YOU KNOW?

THE BLUE WATER NAVY VIETNAM VETERANS ACT BEGAN ON JANUARY 1, 2020

LEARN MORE AT VA.GOV
Search for "Blue Water Navy"



VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Blue Water Navy Veterans Act

AHOY, Navy Veterans: Did you serve in Vietnam or the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)? If the answer is yes, you need to pay close attention to the following information.

New disability compensation and health care benefits may now be available to you depending on the locale and timeframe of your service in the United States Navy. The Blue Water Navy Act of 2019 was signed into law last June 25th and went into effect on January 1, 2020. In essence, it extends the presumption of herbicide exposure, such as Agent Orange, to Navy Veterans who served as far as 12 nautical miles from the shore of Vietnam between 01/09/62 and 05/07/75 and have since developed one of 14 conditions related to such exposure. Some of the most common conditions related to herbicide exposure are Type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's disease, and a few different forms of cancer.

Navy veterans who served in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between 09/01/67 and 08/31/71 may also be eligible to receive these same benefits.

If your military service meets the timing and the geography requirements and you suffer from an eligible condition, you should meet with your Veterans' Service Office to determine if you currently have sufficient documentation to support a formal claim. If you had a previous herbicide claim that was denied, you should file a new claim. If you know of any fellow veterans that may be eligible for the new benefits, please encourage them to pursue the matter.

For more information about Agent Orange exposure and disability benefits, please go to: <https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/hazardous-materials-exposure/agent-orange/>

Town Office Hours

The District Director of Veterans' Services visits each Town once a month:

[Essex](#) - 3rd Thursday, 10:30 a.m. - Noon

[Georgetown](#) - 1st Thursday, 10:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m.

[Hamilton](#) - 2nd Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.

[Ipswich](#) - by appointment, please call 978-356-3915 ([Office Hours](#))

[Newbury](#) - 3rd Tuesday, 10:30 a.m. - Noon

[Rowley](#) - 1st Monday, 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

[Wenham](#) - 2nd Thursday, 10:30 a.m. - Noon

[West Newbury](#) - 2nd Monday, 10:30 a.m.

For **locations**, please visit our website at: eessexvets.com

Town Events

Rowley Veterans Association Coffee Socials

The Town of Rowley Veteran's Committee is hosting coffee socials at the Rowley Veterans Association on March 28 and April 25, 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

You are invited to come and meet other Veterans, socialize, and network. It's an opportunity to learn more about Veteran benefits and to stay better connected to your community. In the future, coffee socials will be scheduled for the 4th Saturday of every month. Please check our [website](#) and [The Daily News](#) for more upcoming events for Veterans in your town.

CONGRATULATIONS

A.P. Gardner Post 194 Celebrates 100th Anniversary

On February 15, 2020, local veterans, town leaders, politicians and proud citizens gathered at Hamilton Post 194 to celebrate 100 years of continuous vibrant operation and reaffirm a commitment to duty. [Story and Photo](#)

Memorial Day, Monday, May 25

Check our website calendar <https://www.eessexvets.com/> for upcoming Town events. **The Veterans' Services office will be closed on Memorial Day.**

Spotlight - Doug Dawes, Veteran, USAF

by William E. Commette, Veteran, United States Army

Doug Dawes, a local, active, and proud veteran, has agreed to share his military experience with other Eastern Essex Veterans' Services constituents through this newsletter.

After graduating from high school, taking some college courses, and working for the telephone company in a communications capacity, Doug began con-



sidering some possible opportunities in the military. He developed a relationship with an Air Force recruiter in Salem, MA and completed his enlistment paperwork in 1968. In December of 1968 he began

what was to be a four year tour of duty in the United States Air Force.

Doug's basic training and initial Air Force schooling took place at Lackland AFB and Sheppard AFB, both in Texas. Doug was trained to be a C-130 crew chief overseeing maintenance on this specific military aircraft. The C-130 Hercules is a 4 engine turboprop designed as a troop, medivac, and cargo transport aircraft, could be rigged to drop the 15,000 pound concussion bomb, and was also utilized as a gunship. The C-130 is capable of using unprepared runways for takeoffs and landings.

Doug's first regular assignment was at Pope AFB in Fayetteville, NC, followed by Mildenhall AFB in England. While stationed in England, Doug's crew flew missions to Turkey, Spain, Germany, and Libya as well as participating in NATO war games. After his TDY tour in England, Doug was assigned to Clarke AFB in the Philippines but he and his crew actually spent almost all of their time in Vietnam. Their assignment required them to be on military bases in Vietnam cities such as Da Nang, Cam Ranh Bay, Pleiku, Khe Sanh, and other less known destinations transporting critical supplies to our American troops.

When Doug reflects back on his military service he firmly believes that it helped him quickly mature, build confidence, and better understand the benefits of teamwork. These lessons helped him return to civilian life with a new attitude, finish his formal education, and become successful in the career of his choice.

Doug has resided in Georgetown, MA with his wife, Pam, for over 40 years and they have three grown sons. He is currently a Town Selectman, works as a Real Estate Broker for Keller Williams Realty, and is Commander of the Georgetown Rene J. Gagnon American Legion Post #211. Also, he is involved with various committees, clubs, councils, and is on the Missions Committee of his church.

Contact Us

[Karen Tyler](#)

District Director

[Kathy Collins](#)

Assistant to the Director

[Karen Summit](#)

Treasurer

District Office:

Phone: 978-356-3915

Fax: 978-356-6488

E-mail:

kt Tyler@eessexvets.com

Board of Directors

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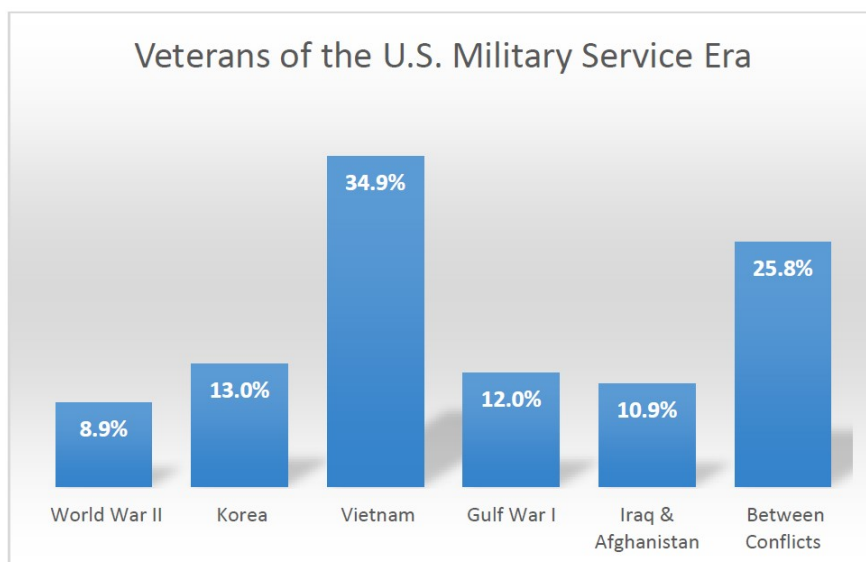
Representative

West Newbury Town Hall

Supporting Veterans in Massachusetts

340,288 Veteran Population in Massachusetts

6.40% of Massachusetts's adult population are veterans of the U.S. military



For more information: <http://www.veteransdata.info/>

Links to Share

[Special Tax Considerations for Veterans](#)

[U.S. Veterans Magazine](#)
[Learn more about Vietnam Veterans Day](#)

[U.S. Veterans Magazine](#)

[Military Times](#)

[Military Families Learning Network Upcoming Webinars](#)

[Learn how to replace lost medals and awards](#)

For more information:
eessexvets.com

www.facebook.com/eessexvets/

Important Military Holidays and Observances (March—May 2020)

March 3, 2020 – Navy Reserve Birthday

March 13, 2020 K-9 Veterans Day – The date is the official birthday of the United States K9 Corps and a day to honor their service.

March 25, 2020 Medal of Honor Day – A holiday to honor the heroism and sacrifice of Medal of Honor recipients for the United States.

March 29, 2020 – Vietnam Veterans Day – A national holiday to recognize and honor Veterans who served in the military during the Vietnam War.

April 5, 2020 – Gold Star Spouses Day – A day dedicated to those whose spouses gave their lives while serving in the U.S. military or as a result of service-connected injuries or illness.

April 14, 2020 – Air Force Reserve Birthday

April 23, 2020 – Army Reserve Birthday

May 1, 2020 – Silver Star Banner Day – Per Congressional resolution, it is an “Official Day to honor wounded, ill, and injured Veterans”.

May 8, 2020 – Military Spouse Appreciation Day – This date recognizes the service and sacrifices of military spouses.

May 13, 2020 – Children of Fallen Patriots Day – A day to honor the children left behind by the brave men and women who gave their lives while defending our freedom.

May 16, 2020 – Armed Forces Day Observed on the third Saturday every May, this is a day dedicated to paying tribute to men and women currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

May 25, 2020 – Memorial Day A solemn occasion to honor the men and women who died while serving in the military. [Learn more about Memorial Day here.](#)

Retrieved from: <https://www.hfotusa.org/important-military-holidays-and-observances-for-2020/>

Donations



Many thanks to the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Danvers Chapter <http://www.massdar.org/GenIsraelPutnam.html> for their holiday season donation of over 440 items to the Eastern Essex Department of Veterans Services office in Ipswich Town Hall. Most items have been collected by Veterans and Widows and remaining items will be donated to the Chelsea's Soldiers Home.

Board of Directors

The next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2020 , 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., in the Veterans' Service Office, Ipswich Town Hall. Our presenter for the evening will be Richard Barbato, MSW, Management Analyst, Office of Planning and Policy, Readjustment Counseling Service, Department Of Veterans Affairs.

"Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have ever made a difference in the world. A veteran does not have that problem." Ronald Regan

Eastern Essex District Department of Veterans' Services

Town Hall
25 Green Street
Ipswich, MA 01938
[Directions](#)

Phone: 978-356-3915
Fax: 978-356-6488
E-mail: ktyler@eessexvets.com

SIGN UP

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[Please unsubscribe me from your mailing list.](#)

