



WELCOME MICHIGAN CHAPTER

**Saluting Our Veterans
from the
Global War on Terror!**



101st Airborne Division Association,
Michigan Chapter



THE MICHIGAN SCREAMING EAGLE

January 15th, 2024
(v.4; no.1)

"No one left behind!"

Greetings Screaming Eagles,

It is hard to believe that we have entered another New Year and I would like to first wish everyone a belated Happy Hanukkah! ... Merry Christmas! ... and, Happy Kwanzaa! And from the Hirsch family, I hope you have a very Happy and Healthy New Year! And certainly not to be overlooked, this past December 14th marked our chapter's 37th anniversary! It's a significant marker in our history that should be recognized and acknowledged as we move forward into the new year. So, ... Happy Anniversary!

We held our annual Christmas Party and luncheon on December 20th and had over 35 members and guests in attendance. Once again, we gathered, rekindled old friendships, and had the opportunity to make new ones. A good time was had by all with plenty of time for camaraderie and catching up with others. At our luncheon we also celebrated John Malejan's 96th and my own 89th birthdays!

We will next meet for our monthly Gathering of Eagles this coming Wednesday -January 17th, 2024, at the Brunett Activity Center in Livonia (MI). You should have received a postcard as a reminder. Be sure to let Jeanette know if you plan to attend (248-348-9536; email: jeanettevnovak@comcast.net). Doors open at 11:00 a.m.; lunch begins at 12:00 p.m. Spread the word; bring a friend. Hope to see you there!

Over the upcoming year, we hope to increase our presence, visibility, and relevancy in our local communities throughout Michigan. And, of course, I hope we increase our membership and membership this year and encourage everyone to get more involved in our chapter.

Thank you for your continuing support as we move forward into 2024. Looking forward to a successful year!

Ed Hirsch, Col. (ret.), President
Michigan Chapter, 101st Airborne Division Association
Life Member

Airborne/Air Assault!

The “Crisis of Suicide” Amongst Our Veterans, Soldiers, and Families

By

Patrick B. Kavanaugh, Ph.D., Past President – Life Member

This past September, we held our 36th annual state-wide reunion in Fenton (MI). As is our tradition, we gathered to honor and recognize our Eagles who have Soared over the past year, our Soldiers and Families and their many sacrifices, and those currently serving in harm’s way. And, once again, we held our ‘Missing Man Ceremony,’ in honor of our POWs and MIAs. Later that evening, chapter member Paul Schwimmer gave an update of his search team’s recovery efforts over the past year. ... *We Remember!*



On behalf of all our chapter members, we thank and fully support Paul and his recovery team for everything they do. They truly do God’s work as they bring closure to so many of our Gold Star Families as they quietly go about fulfilling our Warrior’s Creed to leave no one behind! At great personal sacrifice, Paul and his team live, breathe, and embody our chapter’s mission and purpose -our “*Rendezvous with Destiny*,” to leave no one behind!

In October 2021, our chapter launched “Operation Lone Eagle,” the purpose of which is to reach out and connect with as many of our Veterans as possible, especially those who feel alienated from themselves, their families and society. And we do so in many different ways, not the least of which is by increasing awareness amongst ourselves and the general public about the current “Crisis of Suicide” amongst our Soldiers, families, and Veterans. We seek to leave no one behind!

In this regard, we published the following article last year in our newsletter (*MSE*, vol.3, no.1). It was later reprinted with graphics in the *Screaming Eagle Magazine*, our Association’s national publication. Since then, it has been sent to many Veterans groups and organizations to increase awareness about this ongoing crisis. It is reprinted here in its entirety. Feel free to

reprint the article in your group's newsletter. Make copies and distribute them to your local community leaders, organizations, churches, and VAMCs -or wherever else you think it might help to increase general awareness of this crisis. ... Or, simply have whomever is in charge of publications in your Veterans group contact me and I will send them a copy ready for publication (camsufism@aol.com). The crisis continues! ... Leave no one behind!

THE "CRISIS OF SUICIDE" IN OUR MILITARY: Some Possible Causal Institutional Factors By Patrick B. Kavanaugh, Ph.D. Past President, Michigan Chapter



Founded in 2010, the Watson Institute is a nonpartisan research group at Brown University. Its Cost of War Project documents and studies the human and financial costs of the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and other related counterterrorism efforts. Its 2021 study concludes that in terms of human costs, four times as many service members and veterans died by suicide (30,177) as those who perished in combat during the Global War on Terror (7,057) during the same 20-year time period! ... Shocking!

Suicide rates among active-duty personnel have been rising steadily since 2004, but especially over the past 5 years; they are currently at an all-time high and their trend-line continues upward. The Army's suicide rate is the highest it's been since 1938, nearly a century ago! According to the Associated Press, suicide rates in the U.S. Military rose once again in 2021 with alarming increases among the Army National Guard and active-duty Army troops.

'The findings are troubling,' Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said. 'Suicide rates among our service members and military families are still too high, and the trends are not going in the right direction.'

The rate of suicides by Army National Guard troops increased by 35 percent, and the increase for active-duty Army service members was nearly 20 percent. Pentagon press secretary John Kirby said the Defense Department cannot explain the increase in suicides, according to the AP. 'It's difficult to denote specific causality with suicide on an individual basis, let alone on an institutional basis,' he said. 'And I think that's why it's so difficult for us to speak to it with any specificity, except to say we take this very, very seriously.'

(Newsweek,

December 10th, 2022)

In October 2022, the Department of Defense (DOD) released its *Annual Report on Suicide in the Military*, providing the most recent annual suicide data for the calendar year 2021. In 2021,

- 519 active-duty service members died by suicide with young, enlisted men in the 18-24-year age group at greatest risk;
- despite the upward trend in military suicides over the last decade, 2021 saw a more than 15% decrease from 2020 for active-duty service members; and,
- 202 dependents died by suicide in 2020, including 133 spouses and 69 other dependents. Firearms were the primary method of suicide for both service and family members.

These studies, reports and statistics reveal nothing less than a “Crisis of Suicide!” among our soldiers, families, and veterans. No question. The sheer numbers and rates revealed paint a dark, dire, and dismal picture, especially since they have been going in the wrong direction for nearly 20 years! There is of a positive when considering *should there be!* unvarnished

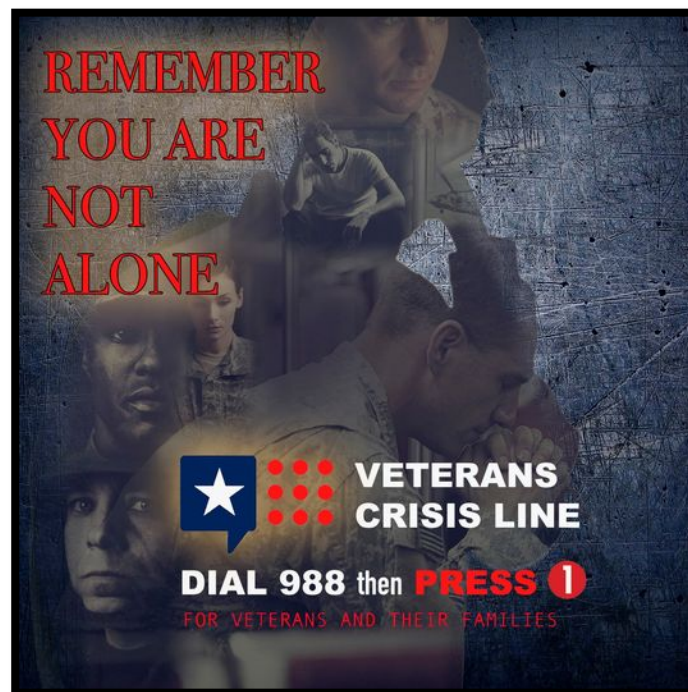
we can address the individual and causes involved in there is a pressing given that 22 of duty soldiers and suicide each and Startling! ...

With that something happening. The recognized the responded in 2021

support and resources for suicide prevention and intervention programs, quality of life services, and mental health and psychiatric services. Their goal is to lower suicide risk factors by increasing awareness programs while reducing the stigma of seeking help and the barriers to receiving these much-needed services and care.

The presiding question at this point in time is suggested by Pentagon press secretary John Kirby, “What specific *causal* factors are operating at either an individual or institutional level that underly and explain this Crisis of Suicide?” Without an understanding of the causal factors involved -individual or institutional, any attempt to intervene in ways that might alter- if not reverse, this 20-year upward trajectory is simply doomed to fail!

There is a rather disturbing lack of any well-founded speculation about what some of the possible causal factors might be that’s fueling this crisis, especially since these suicide rates have been increasing since 2004. This article is written to increase our awareness of the current Crisis



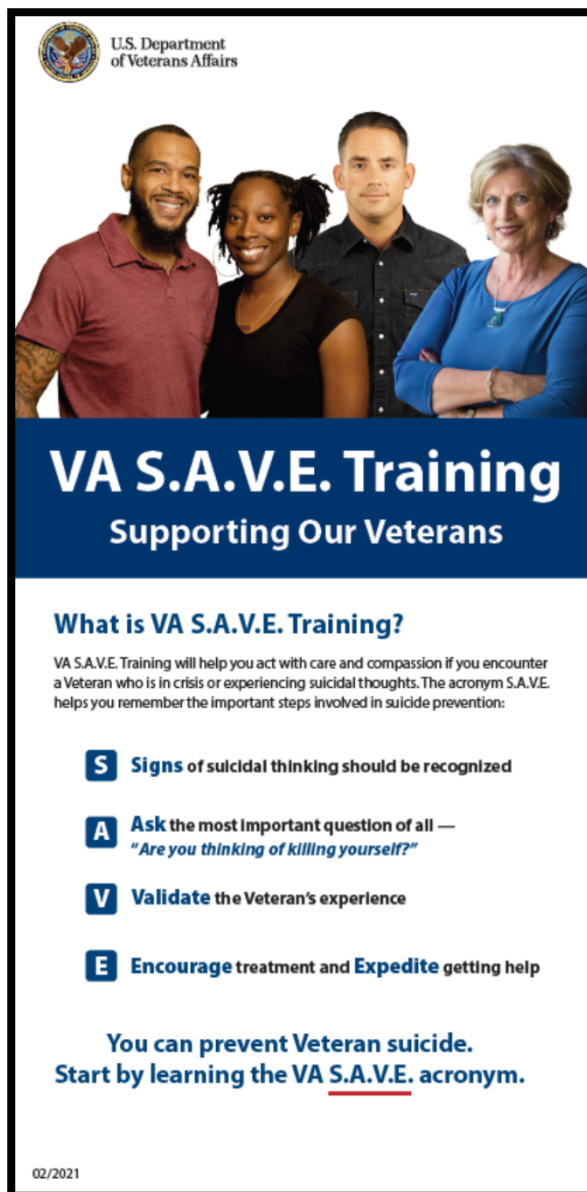
not much by way of interpretive spin them, ... *nor* We must see the reality as it is so underlying institutional this crisis. And urgency to do so, our young active-veterans commit every day! ... Shocking! said, there is positive that’s Pentagon problem and by increasing its

of Suicide among our soldiers, families, and veterans and, also, to consider some possible *institutional* factors underlying and fueling its upward trajectory.

An Historical Perspective: Some Long-term Historical Trends

A recent study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*¹ analyzed Army suicide rates from the DOD's 2022 Suicide, it is among extensive historical suicides in the U.S. taking a long-term suicide among active-US Army, it provides perspective and a new which we might better term historical trends temporary causal

In my suggest some in the search for causal factors Crisis of Suicide. This study that documents suicide rates. from an historical findings reveal a suicide rates among during active combat the Spanish-American World War II, and the significant change the time of the there was a pattern *increase* in suicide duty personnel that continued through our 21st-century wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A poster from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs titled "VA S.A.V.E. Training Supporting Our Veterans". It features a photo of four diverse people (three men and one woman) smiling. Below the photo, the text reads: "What is VA S.A.V.E. Training?" followed by a paragraph explaining the acronym. Then, the acronym is broken down into four points: S (Signs of suicidal thinking should be recognized), A (Ask the most important question of all — "Are you thinking of killing yourself?"), V (Validate the Veteran's experience), and E (Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help). At the bottom, it says "You can prevent Veteran suicide. Start by learning the VA S.A.V.E. acronym." and "02/2021".

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA S.A.V.E. Training

Supporting Our Veterans

What is VA S.A.V.E. Training?

VA S.A.V.E. Training will help you act with care and compassion if you encounter a Veteran who is in crisis or experiencing suicidal thoughts. The acronym S.A.V.E. helps you remember the important steps involved in suicide prevention:

- S** Signs of suicidal thinking should be recognized
- A** Ask the most important question of all — "Are you thinking of killing yourself?"
- V** Validate the Veteran's experience
- E** Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help

You can prevent Veteran suicide.
Start by learning the VA S.A.V.E. acronym.

02/2021

1819 to 2017. Cited in Annual Report on the largest and most examination of Army to date. By historical approach to duty personnel in the us with an additional analytical tool from differentiate long-from short-term factors.

reading, its findings promising directions possible institutional underlying the current is a cross-sectional the historical trends in Examining the data vantage point, its general *decrease* in active-duty personnel in the US Civil War, War, World War I, Korean War. A occurred, however, at Vietnam War when reversal and a general rates among active-

¹ Smith, J.A., Doidge, M., Hanoa, R. et al., An Historical Examination of Military Records of US Army Suicide, 1819 to 2017. *JAMA Netw. Open.* 2019; 2(12).

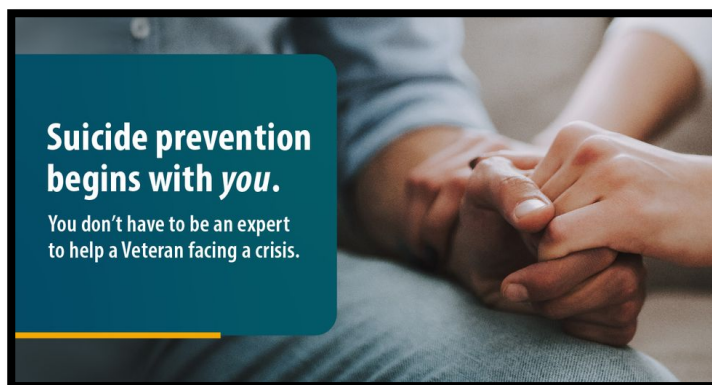
These findings suggest that we are *not* witnessing a 20-year increase in suicide rates that began with the Global War on Terror in the early 2000s. Rather, it is a 60-year historical trend, that initially began with the Vietnam War in the 1960s: suicide rates have been moving in the *wrong* direction for nearly 60 years -*not* 20-years! Moreover, the *increase* in suicide rates since 2004 can be more accurately seen as part of a longer-term historical trend -*not* the result of a shorter-term and more temporary set of causal factors!

The Vietnam War is identified as the historical marker *before* which there was a general decrease in suicide rates and *after* which there was a general increase. The authors suggest that factors operating “away from the battlefield” could be somehow causally involved in this pattern reversal and subsequent *increase* in suicide rates. Any further inquiry about institutional causal factors begins with asking questions about these observations.

So, why did suicide rates begin increasing with the Vietnam War? What institutional causal factors might have been operating “away from the battlefield” at that time? And what is it about the Global War on Terror that sustained and fueled the upward trajectory in these suicide rates?

Examining the historical observations of these wars and distinct namely,

- they were lasting history;
- the exits theatres of operation were chaotic and confusing; and,
- the exits from both violated a core American principle and value contained in our Warriors Creed, *No One Left Behind!*



data from an perspective, other reveal that both have some shared characteristics:

the two longest-wars in US Army

from both

The similarity between the exits from Saigon in 1975 and Kabul in 2021 were immediately obvious to both the American press and public, as reflected in the Wall Street Journal’s headline on August 16th, 2021, “*Saigon on Steroids!*” For veterans of the Vietnam War, it reawakened vivid memories of helicopters desperately trying to evacuate more than 7,000 civilians and personnel from the roof tops in Saigon on April 29th and 30th, 1975. For those from the Afghanistan-Iraq wars, the images of Afghans falling to their death from the tires and wheel wells of C-17 military aircraft rolling down the runway and lifting off from the Kabul airport are now forever etched in their memories.

In the exit from Afghanistan, unknown hundreds -if not thousands, of American citizens, Afghan interpreters, and allied others were sealed off from the Kabul airport, trapped behind enemy lines, and left behind! How many were left behind in Vietnam? ... Or, left behind *after*

Vietnam as so many veterans were shunned, shamed, and held in contempt upon their return home? And in the chaotic exits from each of these two longest-lasting wars in US Army history, what happened to our core American principle and value contained in the Warrior's Creed, Leave no one behind!? ... What "*factors away from the battlefield*" might have resulted in the lengths of these two wars and their chaotic exits?

Certainly, the lack of a coherent exit strategy from Saigon in 1975 and again in Afghanistan in 2021 should, in no way, reflect poorly on our brave and patriotic young men and women who served in these wars, many of whom volunteered for multiple deployments in the Global War on Terror. Nevertheless, many believe that their sacrifices and those of their comrades served no meaningful purpose: their loss of limbs and lives were for nothing! And, many feel deeply betrayed and angry, and -for too many, alienated from themselves, their families, and their communities!

It is here where the DOD's 2021 initiatives can make a significant impact in lowering suicide risk factors awareness of the reaching out to family members in is also here that our can do whatever we connect with our and families, let not alone, and help information on the many services now available. In Michigan, for example, we started *Operation Lone Eagle* in October 2021, shortly after the humiliating debacle of our exit from Afghanistan. (For those interested in knowing more, feel free to visit our website [101stairbornemichiganchapter.com] where *The Michigan Screaming Eagle*, is posted; especially relevant are the October 2021 and January 2022 editions.)



by increasing problem and those service and need of services. It respective chapters can to reach out and younger veterans them know they're them access

At the same time, some very difficult but important questions need to be asked by and of our military leaders and institutions in the search for any causal institutional factors operating "away from the battlefield." Has anyone in a position of institutional power, for example, noticed the shared characteristics between the Vietnam War and Global War on Terror? Has anyone considered that some causal *institutional* factors, -e.g., a different theory and philosophy of war, might have been introduced at the time of the Vietnam War and continued operating through the Global War on Terror? Moreover, that these institutional factors could be *causally* involved in the increase in suicide rates that began with the Vietnam War? ... *If not, why not?*

Far too often, those who fought in the War on Terror have been left to fight their personal and private War of Terror by themselves, continuously repeating, reliving, and reexperiencing their war-time experiences, preventing them from seeking help or otherwise adapting and reintegrating back into civilian life. Often unacknowledged -if not unrecognized, is that the re-living of these wartime experiences -or the ever-present threat thereof, impacts the lives and

every day experiences of their families and children. ... *Has their private War of Terror fueled the upward trajectory in suicide rates among our service and family members?*

Something else seems to have been operating “away from the battlefield” at the time of the Vietnam War and is well-worth considering as a causal institutional factor involved in our current Crisis of Suicide.

Some Specific Socio-Cultural Factors Operating “Away from the Battlefield” at the Time of the Vietnam War

At the time of the Vietnam War, a *therapeutic* cultural orientation was emerging in the Westernized cultures, especially in our country.² Authorized by psychiatric liberalism and administrative law, the language, principles, and values of the therapeutic endeavor were just beginning to noticeably influence our political and social institutions in the early ‘60s, shaping their core values and beliefs, and guiding their policies and decision-making.

Over the past 60 years, we have witnessed a seismic shift in our culture in which a therapeutic system of values has encircled and penetrated our political and social institutions and most every aspect of life in contemporary society. For example, the therapeutic values of *empathy, compassion, caring, and understanding* -to name a few, now permeate and shape the vision, mission, and purpose of our institutions. And therapeutic speech codes are now designed and implemented to prevent any speech that might offend the feelings or sensibilities of others.

In this cultural context, our institutions now function like therapeutic instruments that compassionately intervene for the purpose of establishing *equity, fairness, and social justice* in our society and everyday lives. No secret. Those in positions of institutional power now make decisions within this therapeutic framework, guided by its therapeutic set of values. In so doing, they fulfill a therapeutic role, mission, and purpose by fundamentally transforming our systems of social change to create a better world, -e.g., our healthcare, immigration, educational, judicial, law enforcement, and *military* systems -to name a few.

Within this therapeutic cultural context, it seems that since Vietnam our armed forces have been increasingly fighting *therapeutic* wars in which the primary purpose is “to win over the hearts and minds of the people” -*not* to vanquish or conquer our enemies; “ordnance on target” is no longer the primary mission, purpose, or objective of our wars. And, interestingly, the Vietnam War was the marker at which time the pattern of *decreasing* suicide rates in previous wars reversed and began to gradually *increase* leading to our current Crisis in Suicide!

Did the same set of *therapeutic* assumptions, values, and philosophy of war introduced in the jungles of Vietnam lead to similar results 46 years later in the deserts of Afghanistan in terms of producing the two longest wars in U.S. Army history; the humiliating exits from both theatres of operation; violating the core value and principle of the Warriors Creed; and, fueling the 60-year upward trajectory in suicide rates?

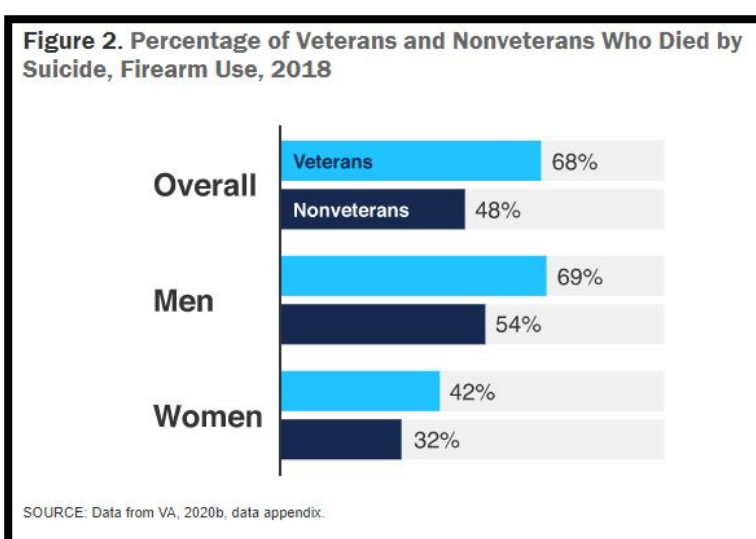
² Szasz, T. (1963). *Law, Liberty, and Psychiatry: an inquiry into the social uses of mental health practices*. The Macmillan Company. New York (NY)

These and other such questions *must* be asked of and by our politicians and military leaders in the search for institutional causal factors that might underly our current Crisis of Suicide! It is necessary to do so to establish some working hypotheses.

Our Nation's 21st Century “Woke” Society and Military: Purging and Cleansing “Systemic Racism” and “Toxic Masculinity”

In their 2021 study, the Watson Institute's Cost of War Project discusses stress factors particular to military life as *causally* involved in the current Crisis of Suicide. It cites high exposure to various forms of trauma (mental, physical, moral, and sexual, stress and burnout) and, especially, the influence of the military's “hegemonic masculine culture,” continued access to guns, and the difficulties of re-integrating life following discharge.

“Hegemonic more known as masculinity,” understood as practices that, legitimize the position of American general and



re-integrating life following

masculinity” - commonly “toxic is most often those social at once, dominant men in society in justify and

perpetuate the subordination of the common male population and women and other marginalized ways of being a man. “Toxic masculinity” purports to explain *how* and *why* men maintain dominant social roles over women and other gender identities perceived as “feminine” in our society.

From a systems perspective, “toxic masculinity” is understood as *the cause* of female distress, discomfort, and disconnectedness (*the effect*), which is then interpreted as the *cause* of the high rates of suicide among our younger female veterans. The most therapeutic solution? To cleanse and purge the system of this malignancy -the pathogenic *cause*, thereby reducing suicides rates among young female veterans (*the effect*). As “systemic racism” must be cleansed from the social and political institutions of the larger culture, so too “toxic masculinity” must be purged from the military culture, especially from the 18-24-year-old young, enlisted man.

“Woke-ness” has seeped into our military institutions and now premises the decision-making of our leaders who have agreed to participate in this grand social experiment and engineering project: “mission creep” can take many different forms! Radical and sweeping changes are fundamentally transforming our military culture. The U.S. Special Operations

Command, for example, now has a Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan which asserts that “diversity and inclusion are operational imperatives.” And in a recent interview with NPR's *Morning Edition*, Gen. David Berger -commandant of the Marine Corps, said that the Corps is planning a major overhaul designed to address its lack of diversity and problem with troop retention by more closely reflecting the values and make-up of society.

Of course, no one serving in our military should be disparaged, degraded, or diminished based upon their gender, race, religion, class, sexual orientation, or for any other reason for that matter. No question. But that list should also include the young, enlisted man serving on active duty who is now seen as a “toxic male” and must be cleansed and purged of his toxicity for the greater good of the military! This is the same group of young men who comprised the highest suicide risk group in 2021, according to the DOD’s Annual Report on Suicide! ... Is this institutional cleansing *causal of* or *correlative with* their high suicide rates?

There seems to be something ethically and morally conflictual for the 18-24-year-old young man who enlists in any branch of the armed services, only to discover he’s entered an enlightened “Woke” culture in which he must participate in workshops on *inclusivity* and *diversity*, ostensibly for the purpose of improving lethality as a fighting force! In this process, however, he must implicitly -if not explicitly, acknowledge that he is -in his essence, a “toxic male” and then actively participate in purging himself of his “toxic” beliefs, values, and attitudes. ... *Does this institutional process not alienate him from himself, his family, and his past? Is this not a traumatic and traumatizing experience for him?*³

³ Dr. Kavanaugh consulted at the VAMC-Detroit for over 25 years and has worked with those who have experienced traumatic and traumatizing experiences -wartime and otherwise, for over 50 years in his private practice.

Following the Vietnam War, our soldiers were shunned, shamed, and held in contempt upon their return home. They were not welcomed, nor were they respected for having participated in the war. It now seems that our young male soldiers are shunned, shamed, and held in contempt upon entering the military where they are not welcomed or respected for who they are as people or as patriotic Americans. Instead, they are degraded and dismissed as “toxic males!”

As we increase our awareness of the ongoing and longstanding “Crisis of Suicide” among our soldiers, families, and veterans, we must also increase our awareness of any underlying causal institutional factors. Hard and difficult questions must be asked. Systematic and rigorous studies must be conducted. Any institutional factors or “institutionalized wisdom” that perpetuate and sustain this longstanding Crisis of Suicide

must be addressed and remedied immediately. Why? ... there is a pressing urgency to do so: 22 young soldiers and veterans



BUDDY CHECK

Firearm Safety

Nearly half of all Veterans own a firearm, and most Veteran firearm owners are dedicated to firearm safety. Firearm injuries in the home can be prevented by making sure firearms are **unloaded, locked, and secured** when not in use, with ammunition stored in a separate location.

Firearm Storage Options

There are several effective ways to safely secure firearms, as shown below. Learn more and find the option that works best for you and your family from the National Shooting Sports Foundation at www.nssf.org/safety.



Cable Lock
Price: \$10–\$50



Lockbox
Price: \$25–\$350



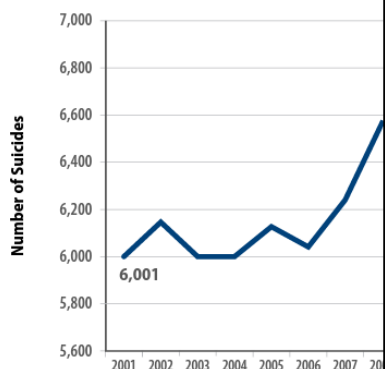
Gun Safe
Price: \$200–\$2,500

Practicing safe storage can decrease risk for suicide.

Since many suicidal crises are brief, safe storage practices can save a life by increasing the amount of **time and space** between the suicidal impulse and access to a firearm or other household risks.

NATIONAL VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION ANNUAL REPORT | S

Figure 2: Veteran Suicide Deaths, 2001–2020



Average Number of Suicides Per Day

- Among all U.S. adults—including Veterans—the average number of suicides per day increased from 10.1 in 2001 to 121.0 in 2020. The average number of suicides per day among Veterans was 16.8 in 2001 and 10.1 in 2020.
- The average number of Veteran suicides per day in 2020, approximately 39.7% (6.7 per day) were among Recent Veteran VHA Users¹⁶ and 60.3% (10.1 per day) were among Other Veterans.

Suicide Rates

Over the 2 decades from 2001 through 2020, the Veteran population decreased by 24.6%, from 25.7 million to 19.4 million. In the same years, the non-Veteran U.S. adult population increased by 27.2%, from 186.6 million to 237.3 million. In this context, it is important to assess suicide mortality rates, which convey the incidence of suicide relative to the size of the population.

committed suicide yesterday. And there will likely be another 22 today ... and tomorrow... and the next day... and the next day ... and the next day... and the next...

MEMORIES OF OUR CHAPTER'S CHRISTMAS PARTY AND LUNCHEON -2023



Happy Hanukkah! ... Merry Christmas! ... Happy Kwanzaa!
2023

And Happy New Year!
2024





Markers & Milestones:

-Received from Lynn Hacker, Allen Konkel's daughter:

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Allen J. Konkel of Dearborn, Michigan, who passed away on October 28, 2023, at the age of 84, leaving to mourn family and friends. Leave a sympathy message to the family on the memorial page of Allen J. Konkel to pay them a last tribute. He was predeceased by his parents, Anthony Konkel and Gladys Konkel. He is survived by : his wife Joyce Helen Konkel; his children, Allen John Konkel (Catherine) and Lynn Elizabeth Hacker (Curtis); and his grandchildren, Thomas, Sarah and Robert. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Michigan Community VNA Hospice 30800 Telegraph Rd, Suite 1728, Bingham Farms, MI 48025 or a local animal shelter of your choice. Visitation was held on November 2nd, 2023 at the Voran Funeral Home in Dearborn, MI. His burial was held on November 6th at the Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly, MI. ... **R.I.P.**

-Received from John C. Malejan, 2nd Vice President -Life Member

Past President Patrick Kavanaugh and myself were recently asked by the Rolling Thunder, Michigan Chapter 5, to be the Grand Marshalls in their annual Memorial Day “Freedom Ride” from Hartland to Lansing, held this year on Saturday, May 26th. We accepted their invitation on behalf of our chapter and hope to increase its visibility, presence, and relevancy in the local communities along this year’s “Freedom Ride.”

Received from Randal Underhill, Executive Director,
101st Airborne Division Assn & Screaming Eagle Foundation (931-431-0199)

The latest edition of the Screaming Eagle Magazine is off to the printer and the digital version has been posted online to our website. The Board of Governors made the difficult decision at their last meeting to end the printed version of the magazine beginning January 2024. Printing costs and postage have continued to increase, and the cost of the printed version is just no longer sustainable for the Association. We will continue to publish the magazine in its digital format and email the link directly to members as well as make it available on our website. We sincerely appreciate your understanding in this matter. The Veterans of Foreign Wars also made this difficult decision recently and it unfortunately seems to be an era of communication coming to a close in lieu of a more cost efficient and sustainable alternative. If you are prepaid and would like a refund, please contact the office. The Screaming Eagle Magazine is available at <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/681262367/> Thank you all for your service and membership in the 101st Airborne Division Association. Keep the Division’s Soldiers and families in your thoughts and prayers as they deploy and stand guard for the United States around the globe in these uncertain times.

We here at the Association wish all of you a Happy New Year filled with joy and prosperity. I wanted to take a moment and give an update on our efforts to support our local community and military families. The Screaming Eagle Foundation began fundraising efforts following the tornado that tore through North Clarksville, TN where many Soldiers and Military Families reside. We are proud that the outpouring of support has been amazing. We presented a check for \$30,132 to the American Red Cross of Tennessee for Tornado Disaster Relief. These funds were raised through various organizations, businesses and individuals, and we greatly appreciate their generosity as Clarksville begins the process of rebuilding lives, homes and businesses.



2023 was a great year, we are hopeful that 2024 will bring continued successes. Don't forget that the last Snowbird Reunion held by the Florida Gulf Coast Chapter will be this upcoming February 14th thru 17th at the Tampa Westshore Marriott. Make your arrangements now to attend.

-Received from Ramon Baca -Life Member

Jill Hass, President and Founder of Warrior Path Home, is hoping to inform as many veterans as possible about the resiliency seminars she offers. She can provide an overview at your respective post. (see the flyer below) If interested, she can be contacted for more information at her website (<https://www.warriorpathhome.org/>) or can be reached at 810-207-1378.



Also, you may be aware that the Governor recently signed into law a few amendments to the Disabled Veterans Property Tax Exemption for those determined by the US Dept. of Veterans Affairs to be one of the following three: permanently and totally disabled as a result of service and entitled to veterans' benefits at the 100% rate, **OR** is receiving or has received pecuniary assistance due to a disability for specially adapted housing, **OR** rated as individually unemployable.

Please help spread the word of these changes! The attached documents highlight the key pieces of legislation. I sent this information to all the township assessors, treasurers and supervisors and offered my assistance in deciphering VA letters of eligibility. If any of your veterans are given a hard time when filing for this exemption, please let me know. As always, thank you for your support!

Summary of the amendments:

SB 176:

- The exemption applies to any property used and owned as a homestead by the surviving spouse, **including homestead property acquired after the disabled veteran's death.**
- An exemption granted on real property used and owned as a homestead by a disabled veteran or the veteran's surviving spouse on or after January 1, 2025, would **remain in effect without subsequent reapplication until rescinded as described.**
- Prescribes the method a local treasurer must take to **prorate the tax exemption** for a qualified individual described above **who did not use and own the property as a homestead for the entire tax year.**

SB 330:

- Requires a property tax exemption on real property used and owned as a homestead by a disabled veteran or the veteran's surviving spouse to remain in effect until it is rescinded by the individual granted the exemption or denied by the assessor.
- Requires a local assessing unit to implement an audit program.

SB 364:

Amends the General Property Tax Act to include, for tax year 2023 only, a denial by the board of review of an exemption described above as a "qualified error" which could be corrected upon appeal to a board of review.

And,

[All WWII Veterans are now eligible for no-cost VA health care and nursing home services - VA News](#)

- No cost VA health care, medical services & nursing home care for WWII vets... Regardless of length of service or financial status.

[Camp Lejeune Family Member Program \(va.gov\)](#)

- Health care for veterans stationed at Lejeune from 1953-1987 and reimbursement for family members for eligible health care costs (see list).
- As of Nov. 11, 2023 Parkinson's disease is now covered.

[House Passes Bipartisan Slotkin Bill to Address Veteran Burn Pit Exposure | Representative Elissa Slotkin](#)

- Eliminates the unreasonable burden on veterans to prove they were exposed to burn pits while serving in Iraq & Afghanistan.

[Slotkin Joins President Biden for Signing of PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act Into Law | Representative Elissa Slotkin \(house.gov\)](#)

- Blue Star Service Dogs in Pinckney, MI: [Service Dog Training | Www.bluestarservicedogs.org | United States](#)

Not signed into law yet:

- [Slotkin Reintroduces Bill to Support Families of Veterans Diagnosed with ALS | Representative Elissa Slotkin \(house.gov\)](#)
- [Slotkin Reintroduces Bill to Expand Long Term Care for Veterans | Representative Elissa Slotkin \(house.gov\)](#)

Beginning in January 2024 our office will send a monthly "newsletter" via email to veterans, families or friends of veterans who would like to know about our latest updates and services we offer for Livingston County residents. If you would like to be on our email list, please simply reply to me "yes" (**don't reply all**) and I will add you.

Leaders of Veterans Organizations, please mention this to your members during your next monthly meeting or gathering, and if they would like to be added to the list, they can call our front desk (517-546-6338) or email me and they will be added.

Our resolution for 2024 is to reach every veteran in Livingston County and ensure they know about all our services. Livingston County Veteran Services wishes you and yours a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

From the Editor, *MSE*
Submission of Articles:

Submit All Articles to the *MSE* and the *Markers & Milestone* Section to:

The Editor, *MSE*: (email) camsufism@aol.com

All articles and contributions must be in a text file such as Microsoft Word. (Ensure that all submissions can be edited.)

Print Schedule:

1st Quarter 2023

January 1st, 2023 -Submission Date

2nd Quarter 2023

April 1st, 2023 -Submission Date

3rd Quarter 2023

July 1st, 2023 -Submission Date

4th Quarter 2023

October 1st, 2023 -Submission Date

Patrick B. Kavanaugh, Ph.D., Editor,
Michigan Screaming Eagle (MSE)

"No one left behind!"

-Donation Form-

Our mission is to establish our chapter's presence in Michigan's local communities; develop satellite groups and community-based outreach programs for those who have been left behind -our "Lone Eagles;" and, tell the story of the 101st Airborne Division Association to the next generation of young Americans. In so doing, we -at once, interweave our core values of *patriotism, equality, liberty, and justice for all* ever more tightly into the social fabric of our local communities and promote a deep and abiding respect for all who serve -past, present, and future, for our great nation, and for our Flag and all it represents.

Your generous participation in our appeal for donations can help make a significant difference in the lives of those in Michigan's Airborne/Air Assault community who gave and sacrificed so very much to protect our individual freedoms, cherished liberties, and preserve our national and individual sovereignty! Life-altering opportunities that might not otherwise exist for them and their families can happen through your compassionate giving and caring.

We are duty bound to uphold our oath to the Constitution; we are honor bound to help and support each other. Contribute whatever is possible; support our mission so that no one is left behind! Your gift can be influential in shaping our local Michigan communities and the everyday lives of our brothers and sisters who have been left behind! For an even greater impact, consider making your gift a pledge or recurring gift.

Please fill out the following information and earmark where you want to direct your gift:

Name: _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip _____

Phone: _____ Cell) _____ (Home) _____

Email: _____

*****Please update my information: _____**

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| CORPORATE GIFTS | LEADERSHIP GIFTS | SUSTAINING GIFTS | _____ GREATEST NEED |
| _____ \$25,000 | _____ \$5,000 | _____ \$250 | _____ "LONE EAGLE FUND" |
| _____ \$15,000 | _____ \$1,000 | _____ \$100 | _____ CHAPTER SUPPORT |
| _____ \$10,000 | _____ \$500 | _____ \$25 | _____ IN MEMORY OF... |

Please send your contribution to:

John Sosa, Treasurer

1569 Mill Street

Lincoln Park, MI 48146-2358

...Thank You!