The BVA Beacon

*The New York Regional Group Newsletter*

VOL. 14 No 1

Summer, 2015

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Regional Group Web Site: http://www.nyrgbva.org

OFFICERS OF THE NEW YORK REGIONAL GROUP

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BVA OUTREACH INITIATIVE: Your Service, Your Benefits, Your Choice.

Musings on the subject from the 2013 BVA Convention.

The strength of the BVA lies in its Regional Groups (RG). If there is weakness in the BVA, it is because of weakness in the RG’s. If there is strength, it is because of the RG’s.

The biggest, most prevalent problem facing the BVA is the failure to win the affiliation of many blinded veterans in this country. They don’t know or they don’t ‘get it’ because someone like themselves has not talked to them.

The BVA is not as well-known as other veterans groups. Being smaller is not a good enough excuse for not being better known, especially among the visually impaired veterans. We are too silent. We are willing, as individuals, to let other vets ‘beat the drum’ of veterans rights. Virtually no one else is beating the drum for BLIND veteran rights but the BVA.

We must learn to be not only more vocal, but more articulate and smarter. It begins with realizing that we are in a battle to provide not only the best but above the best, the optimum research, treatment, care and hope for all blinded veterans. We are the most aware, the most knowledgeable and the most powerful representatives we have. We should be the most motivated. We cannot morally afford to be satisfied with ‘good enough’.

WANT TO GET CRAZY WITH YOUR APPLE IOS DEVICE? PART 2

Nicole James, M.S.Ed.

CVRT, COMS

Blind Rehab Specialist (iCATS)

Here are some neat, FREE GPS related apps that may get you movin’ and a-groovin’. Check them out:

Voice vision

Developer: Zhi Zheng

Description: This is a utility to help visual impaired persons to get a quick view of the sur-rounding environment by the camera. It helps you detect walls, doors, windows and light sources. You can use it to know an object’s colors. This application converts images from the back camera to sound. It scans from left to right, one to four times per second. A pixel from the image generates a tone at pitch from 440HZ to 15000HZ; the brightness controls the loudness of the tone. The pixels from the top generate high pitch sounds, and the pixels from the bottom of the image generate low pitch sounds. There are about 30 pixels which generate sounds at the same time, like 30 people singing together with different loudness.

Taxi Magic

Developer: RideCharge, Inc.

Description: This app allows you to get a cab from wherever you are, day or night. Many visually impaired and blind people are using this app. Also for a processing fee of $1.50, you can pay your taxi fare in advance with a credit card. Taxi Magic works in over 4000 cities. Very useful app!

TransLoc Rider: Transit Tracking

Developer: TransLoc, Inc

Description: This app helps you learn when your bus is coming. Available in certain locations only.

Saferbus

Developer: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Description: View safety performance of commercial bus companies.

AroundMe

Developer: Attorno A Me S.R.L.

Description: Discover what is around you, banks, supermarkets, restaurants, etc. This app finds your location and uses that to serve as the starting point to find places around you.

Move

Developer: Everyware Technologies

Description: This app is wonderful for the visually impaired and blind. Learn what you have around you!

iNextbus

Developer: Idemfactors Solutions

Description: This app is a real-time bus checker.

Waze GPS and Traffic

Developer: Waze, Inc.

Description: Waze is a GPS and traffic world community app! For people who don’t drive, still may be useful by telling the driver about traffic issues and to know how to plan your routes. Interesting app!

Mapp4All

Developer: Nexora

Description: Help us build a better world! Co-create a map of your city for everyone, together with thousands of people. With Mapp4All you can build a place where all people, regardless of their limitations, can be one more person without feeling excluded.

Seeing Assistant Move LITE

Developer: Transition Technologies S.A

Description: Seeing Assistant Move LITE is an application developed by Transition Technologies S.A. in order to support blind and visually impaired people in everyday life. Application provides advanced geo-location and navigation features as well as current weather reports. Also has a paid version with advanced features.

Google Maps

Developer: Google, Inc.

Description: Comprehensive, accurate maps in 200 countries. This is a voice-guided GPS navigation app for driving, biking and walking. It has information on more than 100 million places. The app has Street View and indoor imagery for restaurants, museums and more.

CLEARING UP AN ISSUE

According to a press release from the Missouri Veterans Association many veterans are under the impression their status as a veteran means the government will pay for their burial.

This is not true, and it can cause great financial hardship for families who don't understand it at a time when they are least prepared to deal with it.

Eligibility for potential burial benefits depends on the veteran's discharge papers (DD214), which cannot always be obtained quickly from government sources. It is very important veterans have their discharge papers located in a secure place known to their next of kin. To be eligible for burial benefits, a veteran must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable at a minimum. Certain other factors including time period and length of service may apply.

For veterans interred at a national or state veterans' cemetery, the plot, opening and closing of the grave and perpetual care are provided at no cost. If buried at a private cemetery, the family must pay these costs, as well as any related expenses.

If burial is to take place in a national or state veterans' cemetery, the cemetery will make the arrangements for the interment only. Neither the cemetery nor the VA makes funeral arrangements or performs cremations. It is the responsibility of the veteran's family to make arrangements for funeral services with a funeral home, including memorial services, viewings, preparing and transporting the deceased, the casket, etc. Any items or services obtained from a funeral home will be at the families' expense, including the plot and grave provisions if the veteran is not buried in a national or state cemetery.

The VA will provide free of charge, a burial flag, government marker and a Presidential Memorial Certificate regardless of where the veteran is buried. The VA does not pay for any expenses related to a veteran's burial or funeral, however certain survivors may apply for a monetary burial allowance paid after-the-fact by the VA. This allowance generally is given only if the veteran was in receipt of VA disability compensation or pension at the time of death, if the veteran died while hospitalized by VA or while receiving care under VA contract at a non-VA facility.

The amount payable depends on whether the veteran's death was related to a military service-connected disability, with the payments ranging from $300 to $2,000. There are other factors which can affect potential eligibility for this benefit, so veterans or their families should contact the VA at

(800) 827-1000 or a veterans service officer for more information prior to actually needing the information.

***GOD BLESS AMERICA***!