



Treatment options for trigger finger

By Bryan Bledsoe

Trigger finger is a condition that causes pain, stiffness, and a sensation of locking or catching when you bend and straighten your finger. It usually happens in the ring fingers or thumbs, but can occur in your other fingers as well. If you’ve ever experienced this condition, you know it hurts like the dickens.

When I discussed the pain with my primary doctor at the VA, I was referred to the hand doctor at the Spokane veteran hospital.

I thought surgery was the only answer. Guess what? I was wrong and found out the doctor has another solution to try first. He gave me a cortisone shot and

told me that my finger would improve within about 2 weeks or so. It worked like a charm.

I wasn’t so lucky with my other hand. The shot didn’t work as planned, so I went back in and discussed having surgery or giving another shot a try. We decided to try another cortisone shot. My finger is improving, but if it doesn’t get better, he can do surgery.

If you or a veteran you know have been having problems with their hands, ask a primary doctor or provider at the VA for a referral to the Orthopedic Hand Specialist.



VA pension can help low-income veterans

By Darryl Heisey
North Idaho State Service Officer

The VA offers a non-service connected pension benefit that helps low-income wartime veterans cope with financial challenges by providing supplemental income.

A World War II couple came to my office asking for assistance in registering for VA Healthcare. During our conversation, I discovered they only received \$720 a month between the two of them. I asked them if I could help them with this and they smiled and said yes.

A few months later they came back and told me that this year they would be able to buy Christmas presents for their grandchildren. The benefit had increased their income by 120 percent.

The sad part of this story is the couple was eligible for this benefit for over 35 years and didn’t know it.

If you’re an Idaho veteran who may be eligible for a non-service connected pension, contact Darryl at (208) 446-1092. Washington veterans should contact Spokane County Regional Veteran Service Center at (509) 477-3690.



Newport hosts “Stand Down” for veterans in need

By Troy Falardeau

More than two dozen veteran support organizations, businesses, and volunteers will gather in Newport to support veterans with a Stand Down on July 27.

In military vernacular, “stand down” refers to a necessary break from combat operations – a safe place to rest and recuperate. The Newport Stand Down will provide a safe place for veterans and their families to engage with supporters and find the resources they need.

Planners expect to have hundreds of participants; veterans from Idaho, Washington and other areas

are welcome. Recent statistics estimate that more than 4,100 veterans live in West Bonner County and South Pend Oreille County. Among them, 13% live in poverty and more than 40% qualify for VA disability claims.

Veterans will have the opportunity to meet federal, state, and county agencies, as well as businesses, nonprofit organizations and local veteran service organizations. Veterans will receive clothing, shoes, toiletries, sleeping bag, haircuts, bath/shower assistance, and health checkups. They can also connect with VA programs and support

organizations to receive assistance with benefits, legal issues, disability claims, employment, housing, substance abuse treatment, and much more.

“Our team has worked for several months to make this happen. We’ve done this to make sure that the veterans in this area can get the resources they deserve,” said Brad Hanson, the coordinator of the event and a veteran, volunteer firefighter and nonprofit manager in Newport. “If organizations and individuals want to join this effort, contact us at (509) 671-3585 or (202) 384-7186.”

To participate, veterans must provide a military or VA identification card or a DD Form 214. Family members are welcome to participate, although some services are available only to veterans.

**Newport
Stand Down**
July 27, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
1400 5th St., Newport
**Lunch will be provided to
attendees, volunteers and
service providers.**

**HEY,
VETERANS
DID YOU KNOW**

***Tinnitus is one of the most
common disabilities among
veterans?***

If you have ringing in your ears (tinnitus) and/or hearing loss that developed due to military service, you may be eligible for VA health care benefits and a monthly disability check? Contact a Veterans Service officer for more information. This is a free service and you do not need to belong to a specific organization to receive help.

Veterans Help Net is on Facebook
Check out our page and give us a LIKE!
facebook.com/VeteransHelpNet





We are proud to accept and honor all veteran educational benefit programs, including the Post-9/11 GI Bill®, Yellow Ribbon Program, Survivors’ & Dependents’ Assistance and more. We’re dedicated to helping you determine your benefits and guiding you through the process.

509.777.3222 | whitworth.edu/veterans



Veteran Affairs Work-study program can lead to employment

A veteran or dependent who uses any of the nine VA education benefit programs available, enrolled in approved training at least at a 3/4 time rate, is eligible for VA work-study!

The program allows an “earn while you learn” philosophy to earn tax-free, state minimum wage (currently \$12/hour in Washington and \$7.25/hour in Idaho). Approved work-study sites are limited in the Spokane and North Idaho region.

WorkSource Spokane has seen many participants in their VA work-study program become employees.

Jeff joined the Navy in 1977, with several deployments to the Middle East and South Korea. He retired in 1997. He was a VA work-study at WorkSource Spokane, working 3-4 hours per day, typically 5 days per week. This experience in workforce development led to Jeff becoming a Human Resource recruiter for a local company after he graduated

from Eastern Washington University. Jeff returned to WorkSource as an employee, now in his 10th year serving on our Talent Solutions Team to help employers find the right candidates.

Mike retired from the Air Force after 22 years, where he worked in munitions and protecting our nuclear arsenal. He worked for a federal contractor before seeking education at EWU. In 2014, Mike came to WorkSource for a work-study opportunity, working with us for 18 months as he finished his education. His duties included reaching out to area veterans to educate them about WorkSource resources while providing a listening ear to hear about the barriers they faced. These skills resulted in a job offer to become a Veteran Representatives at WorkSource Spokane; he has been a permanent employee for five years.

Charlie served 3 ½ years in the Army as an Infantryman. He enrolled at Whitworth University,

obtaining a VA work-study position at Spokane County’s Regional Veterans Center, where he answered calls, provided customer service, and performed other administrative tasks. From WorkSource Vet Reps, who are in-house at the Regional Center twice a week, Charlie learned about and prepared a portfolio for an entry level opening at WorkSource. He was offered the position about a month ago, where he is available to assist walk-in customers and help them pursue their employment goals while he continues his education.

Learn more about the VA Work-study program and other benefits available to veterans living in the Spokane region by attending our Veterans Services workshop held at WorkSource Spokane on the 1st & 3rd Monday of the month at 9:30 a.m. Find out more at www.worksourcespokane.com.

For more information about approved VA work-study sites and applications, visit:

- The Veteran Affairs School Certifying Official (SCO) on campus
- WorkSource Spokane (130 S. Arthur St., Spokane)
- Idaho Dept. of Labor (600 N. Thornton St., Post Falls)
- Spokane County Regional Veterans’ Center (1117 N. Evergreen Ave., Spokane Valley)
- <https://benefits.va.gov/gibill/workstudy.asp>

WorkSource Spokane is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Washington Relay 711.

LightBenders Expands to Montana

LightBenders Institute of Photography is proud to announce its opening at Kalispell Vet Center in Montana. With three locations in two states, LightBenders can provide its 8-week alternative therapy photography program to even more veterans.

For more information about this program, email lightbenders.va@gmail.com or visit facebook.com/lightbenders.vets.



From left: Kalispell Instructor Jonathan Vander Ark, Lightbenders Director Chris Chaffee, Kalispell Vet Center Director Christina Ryan, and Daily Interlake reporter Mackenzie Reiss. (Photo courtesy Lightbenders)

HEY, VETERANS DID YOU KNOW

Did you know that low interest business loans are available?

In Washington, certified veteran business owners qualify for a variety of benefits. Certification requirements include proof of honorable discharge and proof of 51% ownership of a Washington enterprise. Benefits include eligibility for a “linked deposit” state-backed business loan with a lower interest rate, publicity on Veterans Affairs website and loan priority for veteran-owned businesses.

Contact Veteran Affairs WDVA at 1-800-562-2308 or www.dva.va.gov to learn more.

HEY, VETERANS DID YOU KNOW

You’re eligible for Work Study through GI Bill?

If the VA is funding your education through GI Bill Education programs, including the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program, you are eligible for the VA Work-Study program.

The VA Work Study program pays you a tax-free hourly wage while working part-time with a veteran related service program, providing a monthly income, great work experience, and a stepping stone to future employment.

Contact your Veterans Resource Center (see “How Can I Get Help?” on this page) to see if this program is right for you.

HOW CAN I GET HELP?

Every county and state has a Veteran Affairs office to answer questions about benefits and provide assistance. There are also other useful resources for veterans in the Inland Northwest.



GO ONLINE

VA.gov
The Department of Veterans Affairs website has resources on every topic relevant to veterans.

VA.gov/welcome-kit
The VA Welcome Guide covers all types of benefits and services available for veterans, new recruits, active service members and their families.

DAV9.com
Based in Post Falls, Disabled American Veterans Chapter 9 Fort Sherman shares links and information to both local and national help organizations for veterans.

Explore.VA.gov/benefits-navigator
Explore VA benefits and discover which ones you and your family may be eligible to receive.



IN PERSON

Spokane County Regional Veteran Service
1117 N. Evergreen Rd., Spokane Valley, WA (509) 477-3690

Apply for emergency services, or have any benefits or service questions answered by 5 Veteran Service Officers (VSO) and staff.

North Idaho Veteran Services and Benefits Office
120 E. Railroad Ave., Post Falls, ID (208) 446-1092

Meet with a VSO or staff for help with VA benefits enrollment, claims or other veteran needs.

Goodwill Support Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
130 E. Third Ave., Spokane, WA (509) 828-2449
SSVF helps homeless veterans and their families find housing and connects veterans with other support organizations.



BY PHONE

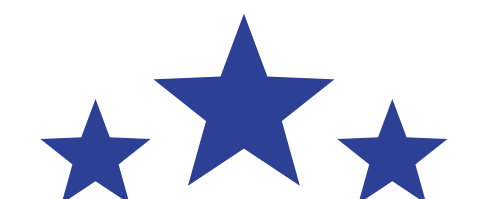
Spokane County Regional Veteran Service
(509) 477-3690

North Idaho Veteran Services and Benefits Office
(208) 446-1092

Veteran Crisis Line
1 (800) 273-8255, press 1

North Idaho Crisis Center
(208) 625-4884

Washington or Idaho 2-1-1
Dial “2-1-1” for health and human resources referrals. **Healthcare for Homeless Veterans HCHV**
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Upcoming Inland Northwest Stand Downs

Stand Downs provide supplies and services to homeless veterans, such as food, shelter, clothing, health screenings and VA Social Security benefits counseling. Veterans can also receive referrals for other assistance, such as health care, housing solutions, employment, substance use treatment and mental health counseling. Free to all veterans.

All opening ceremonies at begin at 8 a.m.

July 27
Community Center
Newport, WA

Sept. 28
Grant County
Fairgrounds
Moses Lake, WA

Sept. 14
National Guard Armory
Wenatchee, WA

Oct. 5-6
Asa Wood Elementary
Libby, MT

Sept. 21
Stevens County
Fairgrounds
Colville, WA

Sponsored by local veteran organizations and Mann-Grandstaff VAMC. For more information, contact Mann-Grandstaff VAMC Outreach /Stand Down Coordinator Kevin Copelin at (509) 462-2500, ext. 4017 or Kevin. Copelin@va.gov. Visit www.va.gov/homeless/events.asp to find Stand Down events across the country.

Idaho Department of Labor Monthly Hiring Event

Wednesday, August 14
10 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
600 N. Thornton St.
Post Falls, Idaho

Full-time, Part-time, Seasonal, and Temporary Entry-level, Skilled Trades and Professional-level positions available. Computers onsite for online applications. Call (208) 457-8789 or visit labor.idaho.gov for more information.

Family & Friends CPR Class

Aug. 28, Sept. 25, Oct. 23
4-5:30 p.m.
Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center
2nd Floor, Room C223

Learn basic CPR skills, choking relief for adults and infants, and AED operation (no CPR card will be issued). Free for veterans, their family members, caregivers, or friends (children over 12 years old please).

Space is limited. Call Kari at (509) 434-7657 to register.



VeteransHelpNet partners with *The Spokesman-Review* to publish Veterans Chronicle on the third Friday of every month to increase awareness about veteran issues and help veterans find hope and help.

If you would like to share a veteran story or a "Did You Know" fact about resources for veterans, please contact info@VeteransHelpNet.com or visit www.VeteransHelpNet.com. For advertising information, please contact (509) 459-5095 or advertising@spokesman.com.

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HEY, VETERANS DID YOU KNOW

You can get free help from Veteran Service Officers?

Veteran Service Officers (VSO) are trained, certified and accredited advocates for you! They are not VA employees and assistance is FREE. We recommend contacting a VSO before you call the VA.

Every state and most counties have a Veteran Affairs center with one or more VSO, as do many veteran service organizations, like DAV, VFW and the American Legion.

In Washington, there are five VSOS at Spokane County Regional Veteran Services Center (See "How can I get Help" on page 2).

In Idaho, North Idaho Veteran Services and Benefits Office ("How can I get Help" on page 2) has 2 VSOs and a great staff to help you.

HEY, VETERANS DID YOU KNOW

Recently incarcerated veterans are eligible for transition services?

If you're a veteran who has been released from jail or prison in the last 12 months, you may be eligible for services under the Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program.

Services include: education and training, upgrade and retraining, funding for work attire, transportation, childcare, vehicle repairs and rent. To inquire about potential eligibility:

In Idaho, contact Veterans Representative Robert Shoeman Kootenai County Local Office Idaho Department of Labor at 208-457-8789 ext. 3993, www.labor.idaho.gov.

In Washington, contact WorkSource at (888) 316-5627 or Spokane County Regional Veteran Service Center at (509) 477-3690.



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