



TO: Partners of the Rocky Boy Veterans Center

From: Rocky Boy Veterans Center

Date: August 22, 2016

The Rocky Boy Veterans Center was established on June 24, 2015. Prior to the existence of the Rocky Boy Veterans Center, the Rocky Boy's American Legion Post 67 was the sole Veterans organization in Rocky Boy. In January 2016, RBVC has submitted required documentation for recognition as a Non-Profit Organization, and has been approved, dated August 24, 2015. The RBVC operates with four staff members, in which two are paid employees and two are volunteer staff. The mission of the RBVC, "Veterans helping Veterans for a better future" is the basis for all action in serving and honoring Rocky Boy Veterans and Service Members. The RBVC and American Legion Post 67 maintain the vision of, "The Rocky Boy Veterans Center will become the hub for Veterans, Service Members and their families to receive all benefits they have earned in their service to the Chippewa-Cree people and our country". The Rocky Boy Veterans Center board consists of seven (7) board members, in which five (5) are military Veterans. The board brings to the center a variety of backgrounds and expertise when moving the organization forward.

Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation enrollment is at or around 6844 Chippewa-Cree tribal members. Of the 6844 tribal members, 330 are military Veterans (Rocky Boy's Veterans Business Outreach Center assessment, 2011). Of the 330 military Veterans, 176 Veterans currently reside on Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation. The Veteran population consists of Veterans serving during Peacetime, Korean Conflict Era to Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom Era and Service members who continue to serve the Nation today. Nearly 36% (64/176) Veterans have been identified as needing services that range from referral to case management.

The geographic region served is Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation and surrounding areas, to include Havre, Big Sandy, Chinook and Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. More intense services are targeted toward Veterans residing on the Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation. The Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation is geographically isolated from urban areas and is highly rural. The Rocky Boy's Agency is located 30 miles south of Havre, MT. (population 9,792, US Census Bureau, 2014). There are no urban areas south or east of the reservation. 110 miles to the west and south, is Great Falls, MT. (population 59,152, US Census Bureau, 2014).

The types of service provided at this time by the Rocky Boy Veterans Center consist of minimal case management, referral to tribal, state and federal service providers located both on and off the reservation; transportation to VA clinics or VA referred medical appointments, cultural support, minimal supportive direct services (lights, propane, and/or food) and accessing military records.

The annual operating budget in 2015 was \$74,857.00. The budget expenses consisted of \$24,857.00 for utilities and maintenance for the building that program and staff are housed,



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VETERANS CENTER**

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minimal direct and supportive services for area Veterans, and maintenance of program vehicle. This amount includes the salary of one staff member and the director. This budget also includes The Highly Rural Transportation Grant, a \$50,000 Federal grant, which provided for one vehicle and one paid driver to transport Veterans to VA medical appointments or VA referred medical appointments.

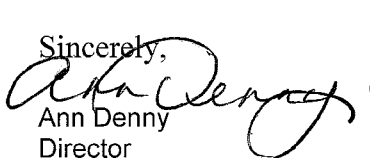
The Rocky Boy Veterans Center's five (5) year plan consists of projects, beginning with "2016, Strengthen the Warrior" project. This year's project includes expansion of the center with regard to staff. Part of the plan is written for training and development of professional services to be provided by the staff to our Veteran population. Additionally, plans include providing information to the Veteran population from tribal, state and federal service providers through conferences and/or workshops. The "2016, Strengthen the Warrior" project is the foundation of future projects, in which each builds on the other.

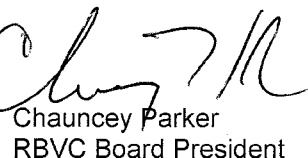
The decision to mount the "2016, Strengthen the Warrior" project and continuing projects was planned and based on an assessment conducted with the Veteran Community in 2011. The factors that contribute to this decision included continued assessment of needs for the area Veteran population and evaluation of the services provided. The opportunity for the development of a Veterans Center came at a time when concerned Veterans compiled data from the assessment in 2011 and identified a variety of needs at that time, specific to Korean Conflict Era Veterans to OEF/OIF Era Veterans, in which those same needs for the Veteran require addressing today.

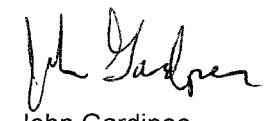
The expansion of the existing Rocky Boy Veterans Center and services rendered by the staff is of utmost importance to the Rocky Boy Veterans Center Board, RBVC staff and volunteers, the Rocky Boy Community and especially to the Veteran population in the area. The high level of commitment of the staff and board originates from challenges and successes of personnel experiences from Veterans to assist other Veterans to move forward using benefits earned as a stepping stone, one of many, on a path toward stability and better quality of life. The nature of the commitment has been created from military experiences and American Indian traditional and cultural background from the staff and board.

The RBVC has a diverse population of Veterans in the service area which range from tribally enrolled to non-enrolled and non-native veterans, disabled, male and female and young and elderly Veterans. The Rocky Boy Veterans Center is pursuant to providing services and support to a Veteran population in which we believe is highly underserved on this reservation and in this local area; the Veterans we intend to and currently serve struggle to provide a stable quality of life for themselves and family in which our mission is to provide information and support to help them to make informed decisions, and provide preventative efforts that address the physical, spiritual, social and psychological needs culturally appropriate to the Veteran.

Sincerely,


Ann Denny
Director
Rocky Boy Veterans Center


Chauncey Parker
RBVC Board President
American Legion Post 67 Commander


John Gardipee
RBVC Board Member
American Legion Post 67 Adjutant

ROCKY BOY VETERAN DEMOGRAPHICS:

World War II Era

- 7% of the 94,404 Veterans in Montana served during World War II*
- 0% of Veterans in Rocky Boy that have served in World War II era survive today

Korean Conflict Era

- 11.1% of the 94,404 Veterans in Montana served during Korean Era*
- 2.8% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy have served during Korean Era (5/176)
- 2.8% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during Korean Era are unemployed (5/176)
- 2.8% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during Korean Era have been identified as elderly/disabled (5/176)

Vietnam Era

- 37.8% of 94,404 Veterans in Montana served during Vietnam Era*
- 20% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy have served during Vietnam Era (35/176)
- 4% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during Vietnam Era are homeless (7/176)
- 8% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during Vietnam Era are unemployed (14/176)
- 8.5% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during Vietnam Era have been identified as elderly/disabled (15/176)

Gulf War Era

- 15.9% of the 94,404 Veterans in Montana served during Gulf War Era*
- 21% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy have served during Gulf War Era (37/176)
- 3.5% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during Gulf War Era are homeless (6/176)
- 6% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during Gulf War Era are unemployed (11/176)
- 4.5% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during Gulf War Era have been identified as elderly/disabled (8/176)

Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom Era (OIF/OEF)

- 10.7% of the 94,404 Veterans in Montana have served during OIF/OEF*
- 19% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy have served during OIF/OEF (33/176)
- 11% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during OIF/OEF are homeless (20/176)
- 9% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during OIF/OEF are unemployed (16/176)
- 5% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served during OIF/OEF have been identified as elderly/disabled (9/176)

Non War Time

- 24.8% of the 94,404 Veterans in Montana have served between conflicts*
- 38% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy have served between conflicts (66/176)
- 9% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served between conflicts are homeless (16/176)
- 28% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served between conflicts are unemployed (38/176)
- 15.5% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that served between conflicts have been identified as elderly/disabled (27/176)

Other Facts

- 36% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy have been identified as elderly/disabled (64/176)
- 16% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy are Females (28/176)
- 18% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy are identified as combat Veterans (male/female) (31/176)
- 6% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that are female are identified as homeless (10/176)
- 6% of 176 Veterans in Rocky Boy that are female are identified as unemployed (10/176)

17 enrolled members of the Chippewa-Cree Tribe are still serving in the US Armed Forces

Source: Rocky Boy VBOC Assessment 2011 and *Housing Assistance Council Tabulations of the Census Bureau's 2009-2013 American Community Survey

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Rocky Boy Veterans Center (RBVC) holds that "Veterans helping Veterans for a Better Future" is the basis for all action in serving and honoring Rocky Boy Veterans and Service Members.

VISION STATEMENT:

The Rocky Boy Veterans Center will become the hub for Veterans, Service Members and their families to receive all benefits they have earned in their service to the Chippewa-Cree people and country.

PROJECT:

PROJECT INFO:

- The "2016, Strengthen the Warrior project" is the first of a five year plan
- Builds the foundation to start year two "2017, Support the Warrior."
- Project operates from January to December 2016
- Will expand the RBVC with additional staff and programs:
 - Transition Assistant Coordinator
 - Warrior Advocate
 - Certified Nursing Assistant
 - Veterans Center Service Driver
 - Veterans Center Administrative Clerk
 - Direct access to Service Providers
 - Intensive case management
 - Culturally appropriate support system

INFORMATION & REFFERAL

The current staff of the RBVC consists of the Director and 4 volunteers from the American Legion Post 67. The RBVC currently provides information dissemination to all Veterans, as well as case referrals to Service Providers within the area.

DIRECT SERVICES

The RBVC provides limited direct services to Veterans facing economic hardships in the form of direct payments to area vendors for electricity, propane, food, fuel, comfort items, etc.

TRANSPORTATION (via The American Legion Post 67):

The RBVC provides transportation services to Veterans living on the Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation and in Hill County to VA medical/VA referred medical appointments.

OBJECTIVES:

The following goals have been identified for the project; these goals will move the RBVC forward while building the foundation for the following year's project.

- GOAL 1: Introduce and integrate a culturally appropriate support system
- GOAL 2: Provide information and education to access VA benefits
- GOAL 3: Expand current intensive case management services
- GOAL 4: Increase overall support resources
- GOAL 5: Increase training and collaboration for the RBVC staff

Primary objective for 2016: is that the RBVC will provide the necessary resources to Rocky Boy Veterans, so they can make informed decisions to provide a stable quality of life for themselves and their families.

Contacts:

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