



TUESDAY

SEPTEMBER 10

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The more, the merrier

Army Veteran and DAV life member Larry Seecat's easy-going temperament can be infectious. Delivered in a slow, steady drawl, there's something about his enthusiasm and appreciation for the National Disabled Veterans TEE Tournament that makes you feel at ease.

A Veteran of Vietnam, Seecat, who went legally blind after suffering a stroke, is here for the seventh time after learning about the event while receiving care at the Louisville VA Medical Center in Kentucky years ago.

"When I got out on the golf course, I met guys that were the same as I was, and we got to be real good friends and still keep in touch," he said.

Seecat estimates he has recruited about seven different people from his local area through the years to attend the event.

"I just told them like it was," he explained. "That it was really good to get out and meet different people and meet people that have the same handicaps that they've got. It doesn't make a difference how good you hit a ball or how good you putt a ball or anything else. You're there to have a good time and relax."

"If our participants can go out there and gain a sense of normalcy while enjoying themselves and making new friends then we call that a success," said DAV National Voluntary Services Director John Kleindienst. "And none of this could be possible without the VA and the volunteers who come out here and give their time so freely and selflessly."

"I couldn't say thank you enough to the volunteers," said Seecat. "They're out of this world."

"It's just a fantastic place to play golf. I don't see very well but there are plenty of good instructors to help you out. It's just so much fun."



Army Veteran Larry Seecat and his wife and golf buddy Patty wait to tee off at last year's TEE Tournament. The DAV life member loves golfing, but his favorite part of the event is spending time with his fellow Vietnam Veterans.



Hosted by DAV (Disabled American Veterans)
and the Department of Veterans Affairs



Here since the beginning

Legally blind, open heart surgery, five heart bypasses, a stroke and a collapsed lung.

Vietnam Veteran Larry Seacat has had a score of health issues that might keep a lesser man on the couch and catching up on Judge Judy verdicts.

His family had other plans.

“I had already had open heart surgery when my youngest son was taking golf in school. He said, ‘Dad, you need to exercise. Will you get out and play with me?’ And from that second game, I was hooked. I love every minute of it now and get out and play every chance I get.”

This will be Seacat’s seventh year at TEE. His team has won the overall tournament three times in the last five years, and he’s looking to add a fourth.

“I like getting out there to meet the people and make a lot of new friends, but I’m very competitive. It’s fun and all, but I play to win.”

But for him, there’s another purpose.

“It just feels good to exercise. I meet a lot of guys who are legally blind, just like I am. Matter of fact, six of us are going from our blind rehab school. I can see right in front of me, but can’t see side to side or up and down. But you know, I feel really fortunate, because there are gentlemen and women who are worse off than I am. I just feel fortunate that I even get to play in this game. Some are worse than me, and a lot of them are much better players than me.”

Seacat said his biggest cheerleader — the one who makes him get off his butt — is the person he’s been married to for 48 years.

“I tell you what, Patty is as wonderful as they come. If I’m late on my medicine, she comes in and gives me a good chewing out. She is a really good watch dog. And when I go to Iowa, she’s my golf buddy.”

And he credits his medical team at the Louisville VA Medical Center with the opportunities.

“I love to hunt, I love to fish. I take advantage of every chance they give me. If VA comes up with something that I can be competitive in, I’m all in. I would be nowhere near where I am today if it were not for VA. VA has done wonders for me.”



CHEERS FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS

You'll find many DAV volunteers here at the tournament, but DAV also has many volunteer opportunities that enable selfless individuals to keep giving back to veterans.

Many DAV volunteers regularly give back through the VA Voluntary Service Program, dedicating their time to supporting a wide array of services at VA medical centers, community living centers and clinics. Opportunities range from being a much-needed buddy to a veteran during their recovery, to completing highly technical and professional tasks.

Another way our volunteers give back is through our Transportation Network, which provides free rides for injured and ill veterans to their VA medical appointments. For more than 30 years, this unique program has ensured countless veterans have access to crucial medical care that may otherwise be out of their reach. In 2018, volunteer drivers donated more than 1.4 million hours of their time, logging in over 17 million miles. To meet this demand, DAV operates a fleet of volunteer-driven vehicles with the help of over 178 hospital service coordinators nationwide.

A lot of veterans across the country could also use a helping hand with tasks like grocery shopping, yardwork, running errands or other needs.



Likewise, there are plenty of people who want to help but don't quite know how. That's why DAV launched a new tool to connect veterans in need with those who want to help. The web-based community VolunteerforVeterans.org allows veterans to identify the assistance they need and connects them with volunteers in their community.

And if you need assistance getting to and from your VA medical appointments, please contact the hospital service coordinator at your local facility, or you may contact DAV directly at vavs@dav.org for additional assistance.



Today's Schedule

6 – 7:30 a.m.

BREAKFAST BUFFET at your hotel

7:30 a.m.

LOAD BUSES (Each team has the same bus all day)

8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

ALL TEAMS GOLF & COMPANION ACTIVITIES

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

LUNCH SERVED AT YOUR EVENT

5:30 – 7 p.m.

DINNER – Riverside Event Center

6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES – Riverside Event Tent

6:45 – 8:15 p.m.

EDUCATION SESSION – Roberts Private Dining

Healing Touch - Mr. Ralph Hobbs

MBA, HCSM Practitioner

7 p.m. – 10 p.m.

POOL PARTY – Courtyard at Riverside Resort

*Shuttle between hotels run 8 – 11 p.m. (Shuttle pick ups on the hour)



Get Social This week inspire other veterans, family, friends and people everywhere by sharing your experience through social media. Don't forget to use the hashtag **#TEE2019** when sharing photos and videos from this week.

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