

*This Week at VA*

*Episode #13*

*John Lee Dumas- Army Veteran, Entrepreneur on Fire*

*Hosted by Tim Lawson*

(Text Transcript Follows)

**[00:00:00] PSA:**

**Man 1:** I served in Vietnam.

**Women 1:** I served in Iraq.

**Man 2:** No matter where you served or when.

**Man 3:** VA has benefits for Veterans of every generation.

**Male Narrator:** To learn what benefits you may be eligible for, visit [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).

[00:00:15] Music

**[00:00:26] OPENING MONOLOGUE:**

Timothy Lawson (TL): Good morning everybody, I'm Timothy Lawson your host for this week at VA. This is episode 13 as we get the ball rolling in 2017; I really appreciate everybody for the kind words and the positive feedback about last week's episode that featured Air Force Veteran Jim Davis. Jim spent little over a decade homeless and sort of nomadic in the wilderness on the eastern seaboard even wondered off toward Montana. And, after about ten or 12 years of living this lifestyle, he emerged from the woods. He tapped into help at the VA and other people that were able to assist him. Is now giving back to Veterans, serving back in the community as the Veteran outreach specialist at Pathways to Housing DC. I know Jim was really honored to be able to share his story. We were privileged to be able to share it. And, we just all one a thank you for listening and giving us great feedback on that. If you haven't heard it, it's the last episode—it's last week's episode. It's

in the feed, iTunes, Stitcher, Google Play, is where we can be found as well as the blog, [blogs.va.gov](https://blogs.va.gov) [Link to the VA blog page]. I want to take a second to highlight the blog. It is such an incredible resource we have here at VA. All the content that we create and curates, gets populated and lives at the blog regardless of whether we put it on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, no matter, Flickr, places like that. Chances are, if it made it out there it lives somewhere on the blog. So if you're keeping track of the blog, you're visiting it, you're definitely, you're making sure that you're getting access to each story and staying up to date on what's going on with health and VA careers, the Center for Women Veterans, the Secretary, and everything not only within VA but inside the Veteran community. We have more than 500 registered contributors that either have or do regularly contribute at the Vantage point blog. I highly suggest that you go to [blogs.va.gov](https://blogs.va.gov) [Link to the VA blog page] and bookmark it and put it into your daily weekly routine to stay up to date on what we have going on as an organization, what progress we're making in the transformation of VA, what's going on inside of our community, and getting access to all of our videos, photos, podcasts, and stories because they all live right there on the blog.

This week's podcast features Army Veteran John Lee Dumas. John is an Army Veteran and is probably—is definitely most well known for being the host of the Entrepreneur on Fire podcast. John was living a normal, commercial life one day. I believe he was doing commercial real-estate, listening to podcasts, ran out of podcasts and decided, "Hey, I'm gonna do my own." So, he launched the Entrepreneur on Fire podcast, which was groundbreaking and disruptive in a way that it was a daily podcast and no one was really doing that at the time; this was about four years ago, I believe. No one was doing that at the time; everyone was doing weekly shows. John came in with a full-length daily podcast and really disrupted the market and became very successful and very well known. And, he contributes that, as he'll mention in the interview, to being a veteran, having that sense of motivation and discipline to be able to follow through with that aspiration that he had. So, John and I are gonna talk about why he joined the military, being a part of the first commission class—first class to commission after 9/11, being a veteran in entrepreneurship, how veterans can thrive and maybe what holds them back in entrepreneurship and being in business, and then John

just recently moved to Puerto Rico. And, and, wants and comments a bit on the care he's gotten at the medical center and why he continues to trust the VA with his care. Enjoy.

[00:04:27] Music

**[00:04:33] INTERVIEW:**

**TL:** John Lee Dumas, it's been a while. It's good to talk to you man.

**John Lee Dumas (JD):** Tim, it's always good to hear your voice. Your energy is one of those that matches mine which is pretty cool.

**TL:** Yeah. Absolutely.

**JD:** [Laughter]

**TL:** You and I connected a few years ago I think through the podcasting network. I think we ran into each other at some conference in Vegas. It's hard to keep track of them all anymore.

**JD:** It was one of those.

**TL:** Yeah. At one of those. We've been able to keep in touch ever since. We exchanged a lot of conversations on podcasts, especially ones that pertain to Veterans and when we started the VA podcast I knew that I wanted to have you on and I'm so glad that you made time for it so thank you for joining me.

**JD:** Well dude, I think even if you weren't a veteran I'd still keep in touch 'cause you're just a cool guy but put a Veteran on top of that and you have my undivided attention.

**TL:** Aw I appreciate that John. John, the audience heard before the interview about you, your business, "Entrepreneur on Fire", stuff like that. But the one thing that the audience loves to hear from the

veteran itself is the one thing that we all have in common, right? Join the military. Bring us back to that decision for you.

**JD:**

So I was in high school and I was just kind of floating a little bit. I wasn't really excited about any specific subject and you know I knew that I was definitely going to go to college but I didn't really know what I was going to major in college so I really just didn't have this clear focus in life. You know, I did look up to my father in a lot of areas and he was an Army veteran. He was actually still in the reserves at that point. He spent four years active as a JAG Officer and then he did a total of I think it was 32 years in the reserves. So he was an active reserve member going every year off for his two weeks of duty as a JAG Officer. So I kind of grew up in that lifestyle, with my grandfather telling stories about being in the Navy. My other grandfather, who unfortunately passed away before I was even born but he was a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army and he used to teach at Fort Rylie Kansas which was pretty interesting because I ended up being stationed there for three years so that was kind of a cool little thing that happened. But I kind of grew up in that environment and I said, 'You know, I don't have like this clear path. Like I don't know if I want to be a doctor or a dentist or a veterinarian. So why don't I go ahead, apply for an ROTC scholarship.' My father, who was a huge proponent of it was basically saying, 'John over the years I've saved up' it was something like 35,000 dollars which is a lot of money but you know at that time seemed like all the money in the world. He's like, 'Whatever you don't spend in college, is going to be yours after college.' He's like, 'This is for your education and if you accept a scholarship and that pays for your education, then that's your money.' So I had a pretty big financial incentive to do so as well, cause I was like, 'I can graduate at 22 and be a 35,000 heir.' Which you know is equivalent to a millionaire in my mind at that time. So all those things just made sense. I applied for the ROTC scholarship, got accepted at 17 and started to look at schools that had great ROTC programs and Providence College in Rhode Island really rose to the top it was just incredible the program they had put together there. They were kind of the emphasis for all of Rhode Island. So Brown went there, University of Rhode Island, RIC, Bryant. All the local schools went to Providence for this centralized ROTC program. I said, 'You know what, this is

something that I want to do' and I committed my senior year in high school.

**TL:** That's awesome. So you if I remember right were one, the first class to commission after 9/11. Is that right? Do I remember that right?

**JD:** You are correct. So my senior year, so we had already been through advanced camp which is what all ROTC cadets have to do their junior/senior year summer. So we're in our senior year of college as fourth year cadets and 9/11 happens. And we spent the rest of that year knowing that we were going to be the first round of commissioned officers post 9/11. But I don't know, Tim, if I've actually told you this story. I've told this story very very rarely so if I feel like if I told anybody it wouldn't be to you but it's pretty crazy because I worked really hard and I was actually out of 17 cadets, I placed fourth. Which was pretty high, which pretty much assured me that I was going to be able to choose any branch that I wanted to get into. I decided I wanted to be an engineer. I wanted to be an Army Corp of engineers. That was like my thing. And I was pretty much assured that I was going to get that. So when 9/11 happened, the plane that hit the pentagon, actually hit the ROTC headquarters portion of the Pentagon. Which to make a long story short, destroyed all of the documents, of we as cadets, from all over the country had sent in, our number one through 17 desired branch. So that all got disintegrated, the world was in such this crazy place that there was like, 'We're not going to have you guys resubmit these forms cause we don't have time for that. We're literally going to randomly assign you a branch.' So my year...

**TL:** Wow.

**JD:** ...of college, everyone got randomly assigned. And that's the only reason I was in armor. That wasn't even in like my top 15. Like I wanted nothing to do with tanks. And sure enough I got assigned as an armor officer. Just like you know any good soldier, just took it on the chin and drove forward.

**TL:** Yeah. Side note for anyone that visits Washington D.C., the Pentagon memorial at the Pentagon is really well done and worth visiting.

**JD:** I've never been.

**TL:** Yeah it's great. What was your impression of the military before that happened? We've had a number of guests on the show and it's one of my favorite things to talk to veterans about because it's such a turning point in history and there's such a stark difference in how we felt about America and the military on September 12<sup>th</sup>, right, versus September 10 of that year. So before 9/11 you're this cadet. What did you think you'd be doing in the military before the attacks?

**JD:** You know, honestly, it's funny you say that because it's true. I thought it was going to be a place that for four years I was going to kind of play on tanks, you know, hang out, see different parts of the world and country that I had never seen before. You know, just do my best to continue my college experience of having fun. Then when 9/11 happened everything changed. I was like, 'Okay. This just got real. This just got serious. Like this is now all of a sudden life and death.' My mindset had to change and sure enough it was just about one year, no sorry it was almost about two years to the day. So 9/11 was obviously September of 2001, in September of 2003, so two years from the day that happened I was in Iraq with my platoon of four tanks, 16 men patrolling the streets of Fallujah. So it was just kind of crazy to see, you know, what that event transpired in my life.

**TL:** Yeah. Maybe what you just answered is the answer to this question but can you give us an experience in the military that sort of sums up your time of service?

**JD:** Well it would definitely be during my 13 months of tour, my 13-month tour of duty in Iraq. There was just a lot of things that happened during those 13 months. And I will say I think it's given me a really great perspective on life. Because I think for a lot of people I think it takes a traumatic situation. Like I've seen people in their mid 30's or 50's you know kind of floating through life, not really appreciating it for what it

is. Then having something like, you know, cancer to really slap them into reality. You know, they beat it but they're like, 'Wow I was literally facing death.' And that kind of made them appreciate life. And you know, that happened to me at 23 years old and it happened to me a lot, a lot of times throughout my 13 months. But the one time I'll share right now specifically is, you know, we used to get mortar pretty consistently at our base in Habbaniyah and one day one evening, or I should say middle of the night, I woke up you know, to a very distant like boom. And then it was a little louder the next time boom. And then a little louder the next time boom. And it was very obvious that these mortar rounds were being walked in a forward line down, unfortunately with our barracks right in the crosshairs eventually. And it just kept going boom, boom getting louder and louder and everyone in the barracks just kind of looking at each other like we can't do anything. You don't want to go outside because that's even more dangerous but you know the barracks aren't these super protective bunkers. They're like 1800 concrete structures that would collapse pretty quickly for sure if they got a direct hit. Then like the 15<sup>th</sup> round, somewhere around there, fortunately ended up being the last one but it just exploded right outside of our bunker. Right on top of a Humvee and it just the whole thing exploded so it was really extra loud like a baboom baboom noise. I remember thinking during that, that walking of the mortar rounds towards our barracks like wow this could be it. Time really slowed down. There was really nothing. You feel so hopeless during that time. I just remember thinking to myself if I make it through this I am never going to devalue the gift of life again. Sure enough, I made it through that. By the way, that explosion, there was some serious injuries within the barracks. There were people that got shrapnel, so there was real injuries that happened from that. And a real slap in the face like wow, you just literally dodged a bullet but in this case it was dodging mortar rounds. You know, had there been one more mortar, that next mortar could have been the one that dropped right on our barracks. You know, whenever I've got frustrated with E of Fire or with life or with anything. I just take myself back there and I just say, 'You know what it literally could have been that quick and over. So no matter what you're going through now, just realize it. Realize the fact that you're alive is a blessing.'

**TL:** Yeah. Absolutely, that's a really powerful story John. I appreciate you sharing that with the audience.

**JD:** Mhm.

**TL:** Tell us about your decision then to get out of the military.

**JD:** I was always a 4-0 guy, that was always my mentality. When I, it was senior year in high school, I was like, 'Okay going to do this for four years, and then I'm going to go on to my next thing.' So it was never like, you know Army focus, it was just, it seemed like the right move for me at 17/18 years old for the reasons I just discussed. I never thought of making a career about it. But I will say, the Army did grow on me. I love the comradery. It was definitely a place that I excelled in certain areas like you know, I always was like the leader in the EPFT test. I always had the high score. There was a lot of things I did excel in the military in. There was also plenty of areas that I struggled in too. But overall I was a good fit. So I let myself be open during my four years to you know, thinking about what it would be like to stay in, to have a career in the military. But I just never crossed, I just never turned that corner. It just never happened for me and you know, frankly as soon as my four years was up I had 77 days, I'll never forget that number. Of built up leave so I ended up being able to get out of the military 77 days even before...

**TL:** Yeah.

**JD:** ...that, my four years. Which I thought was the coolest thing in the world cause I was like, 'I'm getting paid right now, you know, like I was an officer in the U.S. Army, but I'm not essentially.' You know, I'm like driving cross country and like taking trips. But still you know, every first or the 15<sup>th</sup>, still getting paid.

**TL:** Yeah.



**JD:** Still getting my housing allowance, still getting all these things. So that was cool but yeah that was my thing. I was always a 4-0 person and I always wanted to explore the next chapter in my life.

**TL:** Sure. When Veterans transition out of the military, one of the things they often experience is an emotional crisis. Is that something that you dealt with shortly at any time after getting out?

**JD:** You know, it was interesting and I did deal with, I wouldn't know if I'd quite determine it as a crisis because that's a very strong word but I did deal with emotional struggles that I did not expect. When I got out I was like, 'Wow the world is my oyster, it'll be so amazing to not wake up at 4:15 every single day and have literally 12-14 hours of grind, of PT, of training, drills, of just having to be on base in uniform.' You know, just like that, I thought that that was going to be like Heaven was getting out. You know frankly, after a couple weeks of sleeping in you know, playing around on the computer just kind of doing whatever, I was like, 'Wow this is boring.' And it feels really weird not to be relevant anymore. Like I literally was like waking around and I almost feel like I'm a ghost, I kind of feel like I'm an imposter. Like I'd be going into a store and I'm like, nobody cares if I'm here or not here. People are all running around you know in a rush because they're picking up food for dinner or doing these errands on their lunch break. I'm just like, 'I have nothing to do.' It was good for a couple weeks but it just kind of put this emotional void in me that I did not expect or plan for but happened. I was like, 'Wow this is surprising that I am experiencing this.' But hey, it's just proving to me that I want to be relevant to this world so what's that next thing going to be for me? I would say unfortunately it made me jump into a few things that ended up being big failures and big disappointments and big struggles, compounding upon themselves. But at the same time I learned from those mistakes as well and it allowed me to grow into the person I am today.

**TL:** Yeah. The, after a number of those failures, the thing that hit was Entrepreneur on Fire, the daily podcast that absolutely blew up and completely shook the podcasting world. It was really fun to watch as a fellow podcaster in the industry at the time. You definitely led the way in the way that people look at podcasting as a business and it's one of

the most successful shows to date. It's still going at like what, nine million episodes or something like that? How many?

**JD:** [Laughter] 1545 baby.

**TL:** 1545. You're really well known in the business realm and Veterans are, have been going into entrepreneurship since World War II right? That was one of the reasons we call them the greatest generation is not only the day they went off and fought this war for us but they came back and half of them started businesses or self-employed in some way. Looking at Veteran entrepreneurship, what do you think, and we're going to look at both sides of this coin, what are some, what are a couple things you notice in yourself or the Veterans that you have been able to observe that works in their favor, being a Veteran and going into entrepreneurship?

**JD:** The biggest thing that worked in my favor was that I became an entrepreneur with discipline and that's the biggest thing lacking. Is so many entrepreneurs do not have discipline and discipline was a trait I had to acquire, you know, during my training as a military officer. I saw the benefits while I was an officer of what it meant to be disciplined, to create a plan of action and then to execute upon that plan. To say that I'm going to do something, then actually do that thing. That just frankly was missing in the entrepreneurship world. I mean people were hardworking and they were passionate and they were doing their thing but they weren't disciplined and that gave me a huge heads up and allow me to take the podcasting world by storm and kind of bring a new angle and a new way of doing things to an industry that frankly you know, hadn't innovated in a really long time. That allowed me to kind of create the buzz and the momentum that I've kind of carried through to today and generated over now, as we sit and talk now, over 2017, over ten million dollars in gross revenue from a podcast that by the way didn't make any money in the first year. So in the last three years, I've generated ten million dollars in gross revenue and climbing because of how I've operated.

**TL:** Yeah. Let's go on the other side of that because every character has their flaws right? So maybe character flaws isn't the best way of

wording it, but what are some things, what's maybe one or two things about Veterans entering entrepreneurship that you see that they have a challenge with that's almost inherent because they're a Veteran? Does that make sense?

**JD:** It makes a lot of sense and I would say for sure as a soldier and as an officer and as people in the military, there's always somebody above you giving you orders. Like you're always following orders. You're definitely encouraged to take the initiative as an officer and be responsible and do your own thing on some level but at the same time, you're given directives, you're given orders. There's always somebody pointing you in some direction. They might say you know, 'Go that way and do whatever you want but go that way.' Now with entrepreneurship, there's not even anybody saying go that way or do that thing and that can be scary for military individuals and Veterans who have always kind of had that guidance of some kind from above, that chain of command so to speak. When you're an entrepreneur or a solopreneur, you are the chain of command, you are the top and the bottom. For some Veterans they have a hard time with that because they've never experience that before so that's one of the biggest struggles I see.

**TL:** Yeah. If you, let's see if I can word this question right. If you had to leave the podcasting industry and your place in business in general the same way you left the military, how do you think you'd be better prepared to handle that transition having seen, having already experienced leaving a culture like that before? Does that make sense?

**JD:** Ahh say that one more time.

**TL:** So like if you, I guess what I'm getting to is a lot of Veterans they get out and they're looking for purpose, they're looking for their new purpose. But you know, your purpose inside the military only lasted 4-8-12-20 years, you know it had to end. I think one thing we forget is that new found purpose outside of the military may not last as long, it's not the lifetime purpose. It may only last four to eight years. So the transition you had coming out of the military, maybe you're already applying it and you're like in pivoting in your own life, but if you left the

industry you're in now, how would you be able to better adjust for a new found purpose based on the experience you had with that original transition. Does that make sense? Did I get there?

**JD:** It does.

**TL:** Okay.

**JD:** You got there, you got there. So my original transition you know, one thing for me was I didn't realize the void that was going to exist by no longer being relevant, by no longer necessarily having a purpose when I woke up in the morning. So I just kind of jumped into that void blind, like, 'Okay I'm here.' Sleeping in in the morning, having the day for whatever I want to do, like not really thinking that I needed a plan, thinking that life was just going to unfold in front of me. So if I was to do it all over again or if I was to you know be completely transitioning industries, here in 2017 from what I've experienced, it would be with a plan in place. I know that I would want to have that reason for relevancy. That drive and desire to do something. You know, it might have no monetary value or gain because that's something that I'm fortunately able to look at as a possibility in life because I've been able to be financially successful for so many years and build up a savings where I would have that financial freedom to a certain degree to not have that plan to be how can I bring dollars in as soon as possible? It might be more of a passion play this time where I can just focus but it would be something that I was being relevant in the world, that I was being challenged by some kind of task and project that excited me. That's the big difference.

**TL:** John I want to get to, now, to how you use VA. So you used the VA medical center down there in Puerto Rico and you said it was one of the draws that you had to Puerto Rico. Can you sort of explain like your experience down there at the medical center and sort of the impression that it left on you?

**JD:** Yeah absolutely. I mean one of the greatest benefits I believe for me starting entrepreneurship was not having the worry of what can be an incredible expense of health care. You know, being a 10% disabled

Veteran and a priority three candidate, I was and am able to utilize the VA system for all my medical needs and that it huge. That allowed me the freedom to really boot strap and focus on my business and not worry too much about revenue right away and when I moved to Puerto Rico, before I moved one of the big things I did research on was what kind of VA system do they have on that island. Cause you know, it's a U.S. Territory, Puerto Ricans are very prevalent in the U.S. Army. To this day I think of people in my platoon that were from Puerto Rico. It's a great opportunity for a lot of Puerto Ricans to get off the island and to experience the world and to have a great job. Especially today where the economy is really in tatters through debt and mismanagement and etcetera. You know, of course being a Puerto Rican now, which I am, I'm an official Puerto Rican citizen, I'm crossing my fingers that our little island pulls it together but it's a huge opportunity. So because of that there's a lot of Veterans in Puerto Rico, like a lot. There's one great huge VA medical center, right south of San Juan and it's as good, equivalent to any that I've been to and I've been to a lot. I've been to La Jolla in San Diego VA, to the one in Augusta Maine, to the one in Boston. I've been to a lot of VA centers and this one is as good as any of them. Incredibly well run and I feel very great and comfortable walking in to it. Plus there is eight other outpatient clinics throughout the island. The San Juan is where I have to go for all my major things, like I have a Rheumatologist and if I need to get a like a sonogram or something but there is an outpatient one and that's about 50 minutes away but there is an outpatient one at Saba which is about a 25 minute drive and that's where my primary care doctor is so I can go there just for little checkups and stuff. It's been a great experience, I've really been impressed with the level of doctor care and just the overall quality of the VA experience in Puerto Rico.

**TL:** So even after all this success, why do you, why do you continue to go to the VA?

**JD:** I trust it. I trust the VA. Frankly, my trust in the VA is higher than it would be for any other medical facility whether I still be in San Diego or Maine or Boston, or anywhere else, I just trust the VA. I know that they pay their doctors and staff incredibly well. I know it's a very desired position and it shows. I honestly had initial trust in the VA system when

I got out because of my great experience with Tricare etcetera when I was in the military and they've done nothing to shake that trust. It's always been a great experience and I just feel very comfortable living in that world.

**TL:** Yeah absolutely. I know there's people in the audience that probably haven't had the best experience, maybe rolling their eyes. So I have to also ask, have you had an experience at VA that you, maybe not even an experience, is there anything through the VA process, the system that you wish could see improvement or run a little bit more effectively?

**JD:** Well you know, I definitely am the first to admit it's far from a perfect system.

**TL:** Yeah.

**JD:** But I'm very aware, I think you have to compare apples to apples, is that our medical system in general, civilian or not, is far from perfect. So I just know that the same problems and issues that people have in the VA system, they would have those exact same problems or issues in the civilian medical care system. So I'm very aware of that. So, yeah, I've had some situations that weren't the best. You know one thing that is kind of frustrating to me you know, being, frankly a fairly ignorant gringo in a lot of ways, is the Puerto Rican VA system doesn't have a lot of bilingual staff members. Which kind of blows me away and again that was just out of ignorance and out of naivety. But I figured Puerto Rico's been an American territory since 1898.

**TL:** Yeah.

**JD:** So like 120 years. Every Puerto Rican has to take English starting in kindergarten and you know, they're all Americans. So I just assumed that everybody would have on the island at least some grasp of English which is definitely not the case. Most people cannot speak English or at least are too scared to even try. But what was even more sad and disturbing for me was that within the VA system, which you know,

frankly, has a lot of gringo's because there's a lot of American you know people that are born in the United States that move to the beautiful Caribbean Island of Puerto Rico because it is beautiful and they want to get out of Minnesota or Maine or North Dakota and, you know, so there's a lot of gringo's I guess you know, I can refer to myself as that are in Puerto Rico. So I kind of expected at least the VA would make sure that there be that kind of person that can speak the language at least very coherently but not always the case and that's pretty frustrating. So that's been one of my biggest complaints about the Puerto Rico VA system.

**TL:** Yeah. John I really appreciate your time with us, talking to us about your time in the service, transitioning out, entrepreneurship among Veterans and how you use the VA. And most of all, John, of course, thank you for your service to our country.

**JD:** Thanks Tim.

[00:31:31] Music

**[00:31:34] PSA:**

**Man 1:** My grandfather served in World War II. Spending time with him were the best memories of my life. I became a physician at VA because of my grandfather so I could help others like him. I can't imagine working with better doctors or a more dedicated staff. I'm fulfilling my life's mission, with the help of my team and thanks to these Veterans. I'm proud to be a doctor at VA and proud to honor my grandfather every day. Search VA Careers to find out more.

[00:32:03] Music

**[00:32:06] CLOSING MONOLOGUE:**

**TL:** When John knew he was gonna go to Puerto Rico, he decided to look into the local medical center there, and this is something I encourage

everybody to do. If you're going to relocate, if you're moving, if you're looking into options, for something in life that is going to bring you elsewhere or just maybe, maybe you're moving on the other side of a city and want to see if there is a closer facility to you and stuff like that you can go to [va.gov/directory](https://va.gov/directory). You can browse by state to include Samoa, Guam, Philippines, and Puerto Rico and then of course the United States CONUS. You can see what facilities are there and you can filter by facilities. If you are currently not receiving care at the VA and have not enrolled yet, then I suggest that you file your claim for benefits and see what the nearest facility is to you. If you are like John and making a new step in the journey of life, call ahead to the facility that you believe is going to be closest to you when you move and let them know about your care and try to get an idea to see if that facility is going to work for you so that way you're sort of getting the ball running. By the time you've hit the ground, you're familiar with the facility and they've gotten to know you a little bit, or at least are preparing for your arrival. And that can make the whole transition process—moving is already a headache. That can ease it just a little bit so [va.gov/directory](https://va.gov/directory) [Link to online listings of VA facilities].

Today's Veteran of the Day is Marine Veteran Betty Mosley Brown. She served in the Marine Corps as admin. from 1978 to 1992. We caught up with her, and got a few remarks regarding her service.

**Betty Mosely-Brown (BB):** I always knew I wanted to join the military, but I didn't know the Marine recruiter would be the first one in the recruiting station. That's really how it happened. I walked through the door, and there was handsome Gunnery Sergeant Parks. Next thing I knew I was at Paris Island. I served in the Marines from 1978 to 1992. I enlisted with admin. as my focus but immediately volunteered for recruiting duty, which I loved. And so I had, I was admin., I was a recruiter, and I was a MEPs liaison. My first duty station was Kanoi Bay, Hawaii. Then I went to the Marine Corps recruit depot in San Diego, and then I was on recruiting duty in Baltimore. So, my whole time I've had great duties and always loved being in uniform. Well when I was out in San Diego, in 1992 they offered early outs, and I actually got money to get out of the Marine Corps. So, I took that and started working as a federal employee and got picked up by VA in San Diego. Then just happened to be here, get to Washington in 2004. There is nothing greater than having the title,



United States Marine. We wear it every day; we're once a Marine, always a Marine Oorah.

**TL:**

Oorah indeed, thank you so much for listening to today's show. I truly appreciate it, there are a lot of options out there for entertainment, and I thank you for taking the time to listen to This Week at VA. You can find us on Google Play, iTunes, Stitcher, and of course through the audio players at the blog. If you have any questions for us, tweet them to us either @[DeptVetAffairs](#) [Link to the VA Twitter page] or I'm @[TimLawson21](#) [Link to Tim's Twitter page] and use #VAPodcast so it's even easier for me to find. Ask your question through that, I'd like to address it on the show. If it's a nuanced question, it may be a little more difficult for me to get an answer to, but I will try. If it's a general question I definitely want to get the best information possible so anybody listening can benefit from it as well. You can also email us at [newmedia@va.gov](mailto:newmedia@va.gov). Thank you again for listening. I'm Timothy Lawson, signing off.

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