



**FOR RELEASE
19 JULY 2019**

Delaware Valley Veterans Consortium Holds Force Protection Seminar

Philadelphia— 19 JULY 2019 — At the Summer Quarterly Meeting of the Delaware Valley Veterans Consortium, held today at the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center, panelists warned of critical threats to Veteran identity and security.

One key theme emerged: report all scams, threats, and suspicious behavior to law enforcement as well as to agency staff.

“We’ve all played the game in the military,” said Eric Stetson, Program Chair, at Delaware Valley Veterans Consortium, “You have to think: ‘Who else needs to know?’”

Collective Impact

Mary E. Wozniak, RN, shared a variety of resources from the Consumer Issues Task Force, AARP Fraud Watch Network, to assist DVVC member organizations in understanding threats Veterans may face. Dangers includes “benefits buyout” schemes, fake government programs, offers to obtain records for a fee, and other financial scams and identity theft threats.

Many in the audience recognized the examples and shared others.

Wozniak recommended several protection and prevention strategies, especially related to online identity. Stetson noted that younger Veterans are likely to have received



Mary E. Wozniak, RN, waives a “red flag” to highlight the dangers posed by scammers as she presents information from the Consumer Issues Task Force, AARP Fraud Watch Network.

similar information as part of their Force Protection training while in service, but many older Veterans are not as aware of the dangers. He urged DVVC member organizations to share this information with Veterans they serve, to assist in protecting the entire community.

Real-World Threats

Raymond N. Sambor, Criminal Investigator Captain with the VA Police at the Crescenzo VA Medical Center, joined the meeting late, having been called to assist with an on-going investigation. He related stories of actual investigations – including one that resulted in the full recovery of lost funds and the apprehension of a sizable group of individuals.

Sambor also provided basic guidance for active shooter situations: run, hide, or fight. He strongly recommended identifying run or hide options based on actual surroundings. “If you’re going to fight,” he said, “you need to get your ninja on and really mean it.” And know that the authorities are on the way. He highlighted VA law enforcement cooperation with local authorities, reinforcing the collective nature of force protection for Veterans.

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The Delaware Valley Veterans Consortium serves as the Community Veteran Engagement Board for Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey. DVVC was established formally in 2015, following three years of significant efforts by The American Red Cross of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

DVVC now comprises more than 100 member organizations providing a wide variety of services for Veterans in the region. The DVVC mission is to unite military and veteran service organizations and advocates who share common goals to build programmatic capacity and increase services to clients under the umbrella of regional collaboration.

For more information, visit dvvc.org.