

April 14, 2015 the inaugural edition of Montgomery County’s Veterans Treatment Court (MCVTC) newsletter was published. I want to start by thanking the whole MCVTC staff and team for all of their hard work on behalf of our veterans. I especially want to recognize and thank Katelan Shartzer for envisioning and starting this newsletter. I hope you can take time to review them each month. Our goal is to keep you updated on our progress and educate as many as possible about all of the services available to veterans in our community. I would also encourage you to pass them along to others that might be interested.

I have been an Army “Brat” my whole life (my dad retired as a 1SG and served in Vietnam). I have had the honor and pleasure of working with the military for the past 35 years either in a business capacity, on the Military Affairs Committee of the Chamber, through AUSA at the local and national level, and as presiding judge for the MCVTC for the last three years. I’m always awestruck by the level of commitment and sacrifice our service members are willing to endure in service to our nation.

Since 9/11 our service members have been in a constant state of deployment. It is hard for me to imagine (in many cases 6-7 deployments) how anyone can come home and function in what we consider a “normal” fashion. Many come home and manage to do just that, and some with PTSD and/or TBI seek out treatment, but others are haunted by PTSD and/or TBI and manage to hide it from the world. Then there are those who can no longer suppress these conditions and it manifests itself in the form of criminal behavior and they find themselves in the criminal justice system.

#### Veterans Treatment Courts started in 2008 in Buffalo, New York. Since then we have seen them established around the country. MCVTC was the first federally trained court in Tennessee. We have been the model for many established in Tennessee and Kentucky. As the name suggests, we are a treatment court not a get out jail free court. The reality is that most that go through the program will have it much harder than just going through the traditional court system. The distinction is that, if they successfully complete the program, the chance of them re-offending is considerably less because they received treatment for what got them there in the first place.

#### I encourage you to follow and support our progress. We meet every Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. in Division I court room on the second floor of the courthouse. You are welcome anytime. Our next Graduation is April, 21, at 1:00 p.m. in the same location. I hope you will try to attend. I promise you won’t be disappointed.

#### “Leave no veteran behind”

-Regards
Judge Kenneth R. Goble, Jr.