



U.S. PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE MILITARY ASSOCIATION

April 2020 – COVID-19 Edition



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The USPTO Military Association (UMA) is a USPTO affinity group and 501(c)(3) non-profit charity whose mission is to ***provide fellowship, mentorship, and support*** for military Veterans working at the USPTO, and to help educate others on the important contributions that Veterans have made—and continue to make—to the workforce and our nation. Membership is open to everyone and **prior military service is not required**. Contact the UMA for more information at uma@uspto.gov.

Message from the UMA President:

Good morning all,

I hope all of you and your families are safe and healthy. During times like these it helps us put our world into perspective and what really matters to us. It also brings out the best and worst in people—you see their true nature. But, this is where the UMA and its members shine. People around you hear the calmness in your voice and see the confidence in your eyes. You are the beacon of hope and reassurance they need to help them weather the storm.

So I say again, thank you for all that you are doing and stay true to your convictions. We will get through this and God bless.

Semper Fi

D. Roman Gray
UMA President

Message from the VA on COVID-19: If you have symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath, call your VA medical center before going to a clinic, urgent care center, or emergency room. Calling first helps us protect you, medical staff, and other patients.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the virus that causes COVID-19 is often spread when someone is in close contact with a person who sick, through droplets caused by a sneeze or cough.

Here are some ways you can prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Respect social distancing by remaining 6 feet away from people.
- Stay home when possible.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Avoid contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

Managing mental health: Disruptions in your life and the steady stream of pandemic news can cause stress, anxiety, anger and other negative emotions.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has a host of recommended ways people can support themselves during social distancing, quarantine and isolation:

- Connect with others: Call, text or email friends and family, or connect with them on social media. Talk "face to face" with Skype, FaceTime and other video chat apps.
- Understand the risk: Avoid watching or reading the news 24/7 and make sure you're getting information from credible sources.
- Be your own advocate: If you aren't in an area where delivery is available, work with officials to get groceries and toiletries that you need. Work with health care providers to get the medications you need.
- Educate yourself: Don't be afraid to ask questions, and get written information when available.
- Work with your employer, utilities to reduce financial stress: Give a clear explanation of why you're away from work if your employer questions it. Contact utilities, cable and Internet providers and other companies you get a monthly bill from to arrange alternative payment plans as needed.
- Talk to your doctor: Your provider may be able to schedule virtual appointments.
- Use practical ways to cope and relax: Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Pace yourself between difficult activities. It might help to talk about how you're feeling with loved ones and friends.
- Stay active at home

Fitness Tips from PTO Fitness Center General Manager Bill Hall: It's tough to keep our hips and back from becoming stiff and painful when you're stuck at home, working, and for some of us, home schooling our children. Check out this [short video](#) for home mobility. It only take a few minutes to complete one round of about 10 reps for each exercise. Make this a circuit of 3 sets of ten or throw in before a regular routine to warm up the core and prep for bigger, more challenging movements.

Video URL: https://drive.google.com/file/d/119n7nyHs_zSnfopkqF785vQ7RqpmNIGi/view?usp=sharing

Stay healthy! Stay Fit!

Bill Hall, PTO Fitness Center General Manager, NASM CPT, CES
Army Veteran

FREE Online Workouts: This temporary site allows free access to 100+ workouts during the COVID-19 disruptions. There is something for everyone from high intensity interval training designed to improve strength and fitness fast, dance fitness workouts, the martial arts inspired BODYCOMBAT Invincible program through to mindfulness practices to slow the stream of thoughts that can cause our stress. The BORN TO MOVE children's workouts will get everyone from 4 to 16 years moving, and our post-partum series will help new mothers get back to exercise safely.

URL: <https://watch.lesmillsondemand.com/at-home-workouts>

Tips for maintaining physical fitness: Becky Newcombe, certified personal trainer and group fitness instructor shares her top tips for maintaining physical fitness while respecting social distancing.

- Get outside: Neighborhoods, trails and parks are the cheapest way to stay physically active.
- Avoid public equipment: This includes playgrounds and other public facilities.
- Join virtual exercise groups: Enjoy a workout from the comfort of your home with the support of friends and instructors.
- Download a fitness app: These apps can provide workouts based on your needs and goals. The wide range of activity include yoga, running, strength training and more.

COVID-19 Websites:

- VA - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/index.asp>
- CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- DOC - <https://www.commerce.gov/covid19employeeupdates>
- USPTO - <https://www.uspto.gov/coronavirus>
- National Academy of Sports Medicine - <https://www.nasm.org/resources/personal-training-and-staying-healthy-during-covid19-coronavirus>

Tips and resources for working from home (from USPTO Weekly)

With over 12,000 teleworkers now logging in each day, make sure you know where to get telework resources and questions answered. Visit the [Telework Program Office Resource Site](#) for work-from-home resources, including policies, frequently asked questions, and tips. If you need IT help with WebEx, Skype, Cisco, and other collaboration tools, visit the [Collaboration Resource page](#).

Retiree Newsletters:

- Army Echoes. [Click here.](#)
- Navy Shift Colors. [Click here.](#)
- Air Force Afterburner. [Click here.](#)
- Marine Corps Semper Fidelis. [Click here.](#)
- Coast Guard Evening Colors. [Click here.](#)

Veterans: VA is here for you during COVID-19

VA has always been here for Veterans, and we will continue to be here for you during the COVID-19 crisis. We will see and treat any Veteran — even if you are not yet enrolled in VA health care — but please call us first. Here is a message from Dr. Richard Stone, Executive in Charge of the Veterans Health Administration and a former U.S. Army combat physician.

My name is Rich Stone, and I have the honor of serving as the Executive in Charge of the Veterans health care system. My message today is for America’s Veterans.

We know that this is a time of great concern, and for many of you that are in communities that may not get all of your health care from us — that go to community physicians — some of your community physicians are not available.

We want you to call us. Even if you haven’t come in to get care from us for the condition you’re concerned about, call us. We’re here. We will continue to be here every day. And we will work to make sure that your health care needs are taken care of. And if we need to see you, our doors are open. We will be happy to see you. For those Veterans that haven’t enrolled in care yet: if you are in need of care, come in and see us. Call us first, but come in and see us and we’ll work on your enrollment after we take care of your acute health care need. This COVID crisis can create a lot of anxiety, and one of the things we’re trying to do is to take down that anxiety by making sure you know that across this nation, that we are here for every Veteran that needs us.

Thank you,

Dr, Richard Stone

Department of Veteran Affairs

Reference: <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/73421/veterans-va-covid-19-call-us/>

UMA Members Respond

What are you doing to maintain your mental and physical health during the current crisis?



Fred Steckler. I try to focus on three things. First, I try to maintain as much contact with everyone as possible in a virtual environment. I like to start every Webex or conference call asking my colleagues how they are doing and take a little time up front just to check in. Second, I have added extra walks during the day with my greatest stress reliever, Sammi Jo (pic attached). She thinks this whole stay-in-place thing is a great idea ☺. Finally, I like to focus on all of the positive things in life and remind myself of how fortunate I am, always remembering those who are struggling.



Jamie Holcombe Jr. You can take the man out of the Army, but you can't take the Army out of the man! I'm still up at 5:30a where I exercise with calisthenics, free weights, my 30 year old Nordic Trak Cross Country Skier, and my stationary bike. In order to combat the isolation, I take frequent walks with my family and our dog as well as riding my motorcycle whenever the weather permits.

Greg Dodson. I spent the early part of my teleworking experience "building" my home office. Previously, I was a situational teleworker so I never really spent time making a comfortable workable space. During the COVID-19 situation, I knew I'd have to spend at least nine hours a day in a room so I did it right. I gathered up a couple of old monitors, an old keyboard, a mouse and other peripherals, and set about building my own Madison East. Now, I can enjoyably sit for hours on end and be productive.

To relax, I use my 5-year-old Labrador Retriever as a prop. That dog has gotten more neighborhood walks than in any time in his life. With my kids home too, he's constantly making the rounds. My grass is very nicely groomed as well. Normally it gets mowed about every week-and-a-half. Now every three or four days I drag out the mower and spend time with the grass. Like Nats Park, I vary the way I mow so each week the grass has a new look.

My boys and I work out regularly and we're definitely in better shape than before this started. All-in-all I'm very ready to get back to work – teleworking is definitely not my style. Stay healthy and safe!



Robin Hylton. During this time of sequester, I obviously travel less to the various meetings and events I would normally attend this time of year. I am keeping busy by attending online [Toastmasters](#) club meetings and speech contests, participating in an online book club, participating in other online meetings of various organizations, and insisting on a bi-weekly family game night. Since I cannot take a stroll around the USPTO concourse, I sometimes walk this beauty (Keogh).



Brian Simpkins. I had rotary cuff surgery on March 4. Still recovering. Had I known about corona, I would have waited. How do I maintain my mental health and physical health? Well, I take short walks around the house (inside and out), a daily stroll around the block, FaceTime with family, friends, and other veterans. I also feed my flowers and bird watch. Family activities include board games and cooking. We are also working on puzzles to pass the time.



Dean Dominique. I have been walking around the neighborhood with my wife, or finding ways to exercise in the house. For mental breaks, I have been spending a lot of my time in the evening fishing in a local lake and pond with my son and daughter (when she comes home for the weekends). It's a nice, leisurely walk to get to our fishing spots, and luckily the bass, bluegill, and catfish have been biting!



Nasir Ahmend. "Passed away". That was the message on my phone about possible death of my beloved classmate from junior high school. He, a practicing urologist in London, is on ventilator and in ICU since he contracted Corona Virus, SARS COVID 2. Then, there came another message contradicting the earlier message, he is still in ICU.



COVID 19 has changed our life. People are comparing it to a war like situation. We are under STAY HOME order to stop the spreading of the virus. We are stressed by the news of deaths. Still, amongst these, we are, as a social human being, developing "cabin fever". Domestic violence is on the rise.

Under the circumstances, with no driving to work or minimal driving elsewhere, I'm taking this opportunity to connect with others. We are all under stress, collective stress, and communicating to each other, even if for short conversation, would give us the strength to overcome this. This is like Dialectical Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (DCBT or DBT). Hopefully, the plateauing or slowing of the number of incidences will give us hope. At the end, we are blessed to be alive.

Did You Know? As of April 7th, nearly 22,000 Air and Army National Guard professionals are supporting the COVID-19 crisis response at the direction of their governors.
<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/coronavirus/2020/04/06/latest-guard-update-nearly-22000-troops-mobilized-for-covid-19-response-21-states-2-territories-and-dc-on-title-32-orders/>

WWII Veteran, Star of 'Gomer Pyle' Dies at 94 After Coronavirus Diagnosis

Military.com | By James Barber



Forrest Compton starred as Lt. Col. Edward Gray on "Gomer Pyle: U.S.M.C."

Forrest Compton, an Army veteran who earned his greatest fame playing Marine Lt. Col. Edward Gray on "Gomer Pyle: U.S.M.C.," has died at aged 94 from complications related to a COVID-19 diagnosis.

Compton's character, Gray, fought at Iwo Jima and always saw the qualities that made Gomer a good Marine. That, of course, meant he could see right through Gunnery Sgt. Vince Carter (awesomely played by Frank Sutton); Gray often chewed out the gunny for his refusal to see the big picture.

In real life, Compton served with the U.S. Army's 103rd Infantry Division in France during World War II and attended Swarthmore College and the Yale School of Drama after the war. He had a long run over a dozen years playing district attorney Mike Karr on the daytime soap opera "The Edge of Night." Compton, unlike many actors of his generation, seemed to embrace his career as a television actor. His dozens of credits include roles on "Mannix," "The F.B.I.," "Hogan's Heroes," "77 Sunset Strip" and "The Twilight Zone" but only two movies: Iwo Jima drama "The Outsider" (1961) and the Christopher Walken thriller "McBain" (1991). The actor retired in 2002 and spent the remainder of his life in Shelter Island, New York. He died there on April 6.

<https://www.military.com/off-duty/2020/04/06/wwii-veteran-star-gomer-pyle-dies-94-after-coronavirus-diagnosis.html>

Veteran Resources: Below are some resources that are available for Veterans. This is not an exhaustive list but we hope it will help provide a resource to help you.

- Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 – press 1
- [US Department of Veterans Affairs - Alexandria Clinic](#)
- [Employee Assistance Program](#) - It's free and confidential to help employees cope with problems that negatively affect their emotional well-being or their work performance or conduct. These problems may be marital, family, legal, or financial and may include substance abuse, emotional difficulties, health or behavioral issues, or child and elder care issues. The EAP provides assessment, counseling, referral, training and consultation to USPTO employees and their family members.
- [NAMI-Northern VA](#) - Where individuals living with a mental health condition, family members, youth and the Northern Virginia community find education, support and HOPE!
- [National Center for PTS](#) - The National Center for PTSD is dedicated to research and education on trauma and PTSD. We work to assure that the latest research findings help those exposed to trauma. Link for Veterans - <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/index.asp>
- [Loudoun Therapeutic Riding](#) which sponsors free horse-assisted activities and therapies for wounded military and veterans.
- [Mighty Oaks Warrior Programs](#) which assists our nations' military Warriors and families struggling with Post Traumatic Stress; Serve Our Willing Warriors which provides a "home away from home" environment for our Nations wounded, ill and injured Warriors currently residing at military hospitals in the DC area.
- [Semper K9](#) which seeks to enhance the quality of life for wounded, critically-ill and injured members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families by providing them assistance dogs.
- [Make the Connection](#) – Effects of Traumatic Brain Injury
- [Top 10 Charities that Support Veterans](#) from CNBC
- [Charity Watch](#) is also a good resource. You may search "Veterans" in the search box for a listing of Veteran-related charities that could help you.

How to build a duck-bill mask which has the effectiveness of the N95 mask. by Darren Schwartz

My design is based on the duck-bill mask (see below as example) which fits the faces of me & my family and has the effectiveness of the N95 mask.



Since we are saving true N95 masks for the professionals, we can use the same design to develop our own.

Requires 3M Filtrete filter (anti-viral) that is FREE of fiberglass, cotton T-shirt or melt-blown fabric material for inner lining, cordage that can fit around the face twice (shoe laces, parachute cord, elastic banding), self-adhesive fasteners or pipe-cleaners for the nose bridge, heavy-duty stapler. Sewing machine and/or glue gun are required.

The template design is a trapezoid with bases 10" and 6". The Filtrete filter paper is carefully removed from the square filter. The filter paper and T-shirt material are cut into the trapezoid design. The t-shirt material makes-up the inner lining to absorb moisture from our breath.

I've tried to keep them connected and glued the two-halves together using a professional glue gun, but this can be sown as well. Duck-tape can be used to seal the edges further. The nose bridge is constructed using the self-adhesive fasteners or glue-gunning pipe-cleaners; the mask must be pressed against one's face in order to mold the metal according to the shape and size of the nose. Cordage must be stapled at both the top-left to the top-right and another bottom-left to the bottom-right which provides a tight and sealed fit.

Polypropylene fabric moistened in lemon juice or citric acid particulates provide a further anti-viral barrier and can be further wrapped around the duckbill mask to provide additional protection; each of the barriers is meant to increase the difficulty at which virions can penetrate the mask and is very close to what we will find in true N95 masks.

The main difficulty right now is finding all these materials; substitutions are certainly acceptable, but the most important component is the Filtrete filter paper (anti-viral). If necessary, just use the Filtrete filter paper, a stapler and rubber bands; it's superior than just cotton fabric or paper toweling.

***More home made, cloth face covering designs can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

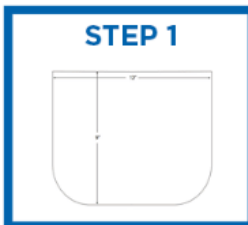
ACETATE FACE SHIELD

Here's what you'll need:

- Acetate sheets
- Elastic
- Stapler
- Scissors or a die-cutting machine
- 1" thick self-adhesive polyurethane foam strip
(Available from hardware and business supply retailers)

Here's how to make it:

- 1** Use a die-cutting machine to cut acetate sheets to 12" wide x 9" long with two curved corners at the bottom, OR use [this template](#) to cut the same shape with scissors.
- 2** Cut a 13" strip of elastic.
- 3** Staple the elastic to the top (non-curved) end of the acetate sheet to secure the mask to the wearer's head.
- 4** Cut a 6" strip of self-adhesive polyurethane foam.
- 5** Adhere foam to the inside top edge of the face shield to cushion the forehead. Be sure the foam cushion covers any staples.



Templates referenced above follow similar medical materials that are recommended for these items. Medical professionals receiving these items will decide how best to use them.

<https://www.michaels.com/shop-categories/diy-face-shields-and-masks/20000837>

UMA memberships is open to USPTO employees, contractors and general public. Prior military service is not required. If you know someone interested in joining, please visit our [website](#) for the membership forms.

The Scuttlebutt may include stories, links and references not directly connected to the USPTO Military Association, but which may be of interest to our Veteran community. If you have questions or comments about anything appearing (or not) in the UMA Scuttlebutt, please contact us at uma@uspto.gov.