

## Retired Army Major Discusses Long War With VA

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The Long

War: Retired Army major says VA problems are nothing new

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To see a slideshow with audio excerpts from an interview with Shovar, click on the link at the bottom of this article.

Ret. Major G. Phil Shovar is a pack rat. His Greeley home is littered with trinkets, collectibles and magazines he intends to read. Amidst the chaos is an old Army helmet, a picturesque painting of the Navy ship he served on, and almost 1,000 pages of documents on his veteran benefits.

Shovar spent 24 years as a soldier. As a nurse in Vietnam, he triaged dying soldiers during the horrific Tet offensive. But his longest battle has been with the Veterans Benefits Administration and the U.S. Army. For almost three decades, his copy machine has been his greatest weapon against a bureaucracy that denied his disabilities time and again.

Now Shovar is dying. He has stage three terminal cancer, acknowledged finally by the Veterans Administration in December as a permanent, service-connected disability. War also left him with diabetes, hearing loss, hypertension and post traumatic stress disorder. Yet it took him almost 30 years to force the government to admit these facts and pay for them.

<http://www.greeleytrib.com/article/20070422/NEWS/104210162>