

*Borne the Battle*

Episode #142

Carroll Harris – Marine Corps Veteran, Postal Inspector, Marine Corps Historian

<https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/59212/borne-the-battle-142-marine-veteran-postal-inspector-marine-corps-historian/>

(Text Transcript Follows)

[00:00:00] Music

## **[00:00:10] OPENING MONOLOGUE**

**Tanner Iskra (TI):** Let's get it. Wednesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019. *Borne the Battle* brought to you by the Department of Veterans' Affairs. I am your host, Marine Corps Veteran, Tanner Iskra. Another great day in podcast land. I hope you guys had a great – uh, I guess not week – past couple of days, cause you did get to see, hopefully, our bonus episode that was released on Monday, covering the Military and Military spouse networking event, Bourbiz, that was out – held and the MGM Grand at the National Harbor in DC. Uh, pop it in there, check it out, listen to it, and let me know if you'd like to hear more content from more events like that. A place that will be going is to the Mid Atlantic Air Museum's twenty-ninth anniversary World War II weekend, out there in Reading, Pennsylvania. Uh, they're gonna have a lot of special guests there. Uh, two of the Pearl Harbor survivors, um, an air show, an air drop – again, all in World War II garb – uh, they're gonna to assault through a French town. Um, lot of special guests out there. We got some Battle of the Bulge Veterans, we got some Battle of the Atlantic, Iwo Jima, uh someone – a Gen – a Veteran that was part of General Patton's third Army division, Marines that survived, uh, Okinawa and Peleliu and – and they're going to have some Veterans that survived Normandy. Overall, it's gonna be a great event. Um, we are gonna go and cover that for you. And I'm looking forward to getting interviews and bringing to you some of the panel discussions that will be going on there during that weekend. In addition to that, some of our other producers here at the digital engagement team for the VA will be producing video content and some blogs and things like that from the event. So, you're not gonna feel left out. We're gonna be bringing some great content to you after the June 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>. That is the World War II weekend at the Mid Atlantic Air Museum in Reading, Pennsylvania. Got one news release for you today. That is about the MISSION Act. It says for immediate release: VA's improvements to Veterans Community Care under MISSION Act on track for June 6<sup>th</sup> implementation. As the one-year anniversary of President Trump's signing of the VA Maintaining Internal

Systems and Strengthening Integrated – Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks. Otherwise known as the MISSION Act – mouthful – of twenty eight approaches on June 6<sup>th</sup>. The US Department of Veteran’s Affairs is making significant strides in implementing major improvements to community care for Veterans. So, it goes on with a couple of quotes and – and a couple of things talking about – um, some of the history of how the MISSION Act came to be. And then it says, a key aspect of the MISSION Act is the consolidation of VA’s Community Care programs which will make community care work better for Veterans and their families, providers, and VA employees. When this transition is complete, the following will occur: Veterans will have more options for community care; eligibility criteria for community care will be expanded, including new access standards; scheduling appointments will be easier; and care coordination between VA and community providers will be better. Eligible veterans will have access to a network of walk-in and urgent care facilities for minor injuries and illnesses. Um, and then the rest of this goes on, basically says it’s on track for a June 6<sup>th</sup> implementation. For more information, you can go to [blogs.va.gov](https://blogs.va.gov). I can tell you this – so, I understand that this – uh, news release is a very ten thousand foot – hey we’re on track view of what the MISSION Act is, so I tell you what I’m gonna do, I’m gonna take what – uh, our media relations team has put together in blogs on [blogs.va.gov](https://blogs.va.gov), and I will put them in the show notes at the bottom of my blog of this episode. So, if - you know, scroll down there, take a look, click on ‘em, and hopefully it can answer more questions for you about the MISSION Act. So next month has Memorial Day weekend and again, for us Veterans that’s a huge month and a huge weekend. To remember those that we have lost. And – um, for our National Cemetery Administration, it’s a – it’s a very large weekend to remember those – uh, to remember those heroes that they house. And from April 25<sup>th</sup> to May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the NCA is partnering with Carry the Load to honor the Veterans leading up to Memorial Day. Carry the Load’s mission is to provide active ways to honor and celebrate our Nation’s heroes by connecting Americans to the sacrifices made by Military Veterans, First Responders, and their families. They are will be hosting their annual National Relay. Uh, their National Relay is an awareness event which walks and cycles across the country, handing off an American flag every five miles for thirty-two consecutive days. The West Coast route begins in Seattle on April 25<sup>th</sup> and covers over forty-six hundred miles. The East Coast route is gonna begin on April 29<sup>th</sup>, in West Point, New York, and it covers over three thousand miles. The Mid-West route begins in Indianapolis, covering over thirty-nine hundred miles, and it – that will start after my next podcast on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. All three routes will cover over eleven thousand miles and will go through twenty-six VA national cemeteries and seventeen states. Each National Cemetery will

unveil a commemorative plaque, *A Tribute to the Fallen*, that honors Veteran and Gold Star families. So, if you want to know when Carry the Load is coming through your town, please look at [blogs.va.gov](https://blogs.va.gov), look at this blog about this episode, and I will have those links at the bottom of the page. In addition, we are gonna have the CEO of Carry the Load, Stephen Holley, a Navy Seal, on the show next episode, May 1<sup>st</sup>. And, we're gonna talk to him, and we're gonna dig deeper into Carry the Load, what their mission is, why they do it, some of the other things that they do. And, we're also going to talk about Stephen Holley and his transition, and everything else that we do here at *Borne the Battle*. So, getting back to this week, this week's guest is a Marine Veteran and US Postal Inspector. Now, when we're talking about alphabet departments here in the DC Beltway, you know, the FBI, the CIA, the AFT, the DEA, the USPIS is not an acronym that is normally – that normally comes up. However, the US Postal Inspection Service was founded almost a hundred years prior to the FBI, and almost a hundred and fifty years before the CIA. Their mission is to support and protect the US Postal Service, its employees, infrastructure, and customers by enforcing the laws that defend the Nation's mail system from illegal or dangerous use. So, we're gonna learn more about that today. Today's guest is the first guest to reach out and ask to be on the show, so he can get information out to Veterans. The USPIS is currently in Operation Protect Veterans. It is an effort by the Postal Inspection Service to prevent crimes and scams within the mail system that are targeting the Veteran population. We're gonna talk about that. In addition, he's an official Marine Corps historian in the Marine Corps Reserve. He is attached to the Marine Corps History Division and he's tasked with going on deployments to record Marine Corps history in times of conflict. So, without further ado, I bring to you Marine Corps Veteran, Carroll Harris.

[00:07:15] Music

## [00:07:21] INTERVIEW:

**Carroll Harris (CH):** I'm with the Postal Inspection Service, which is the law enforcement and security arm of the Postal Service.

**TI:** So, it's – it's almost like the Postal Service Police Force.

**CH:** It is. They – they're – a portion of the Postal Inspection Service is uniformed police.

TI: Oh, okay. Alright

CH: So, you'll see them in different – uh, areas around the country.

TI: Okay. What is – uh, what are some of the things they enforce?

CH: Well, there's over two hundred different Federal statutes that relate to the sanctity and security of American commerce as it flows through the Postal Service in the mail. That is what – uh, what we're working to make sure is – is flowing smoothly with the assuredness that's been there since the inception of the country. The Postal Service was started on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 1775. The Inspection Service started –

TI: Merica.

CH: Yeah, Merica. That's right. Started August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1775. So, since the very beginning – it was Ben Franklin who started the Postal Service – they've known they need a security element to any type of commerce or communications. And, that's why the Inspection Service is there.

TI: Okay. Very Cool. So, you – um, you work at the Postal Service now. You were – you were active duty in the Marine Corps. When did you join and why did you join?

CH: I joined the Marine Corps March 29<sup>th</sup> in 1990, because I met a very cool Marine – uh, on campus. I was in the Naval ROTC; I was raised by a sailor.

TI: Okay.

CH: My father did thirty years in the Navy. I went to school in Norfolk, Virginia. I was drawn to serve. Uh, had no intention of joining the Marine Corps, but I spent the summer working out with the Marine officer instructor.

TI: Okay.

CH: In Norfolk. Didn't know he was the Marine officer instructor and he didn't know I was in the Naval ROTC. But we were challenging each other, pushing each other all summer in the gym. And then, when school started, we saw each other in uniform. And my – uh, immediate question was, I really like the values this person's putting forward –

TI: Sure.

CH: And the energy coming from him. I'm now going to be a Marine option. So, I was drawn into the Marine Corps.

TI: Oh wow. Just – just from working out. What was his name?

CH: Jeff Coate, Major Jeff Coate.

TI: Major Jeff Coate. That's awesome. Um, while you were in, who was one mentor or best friend, that you had while you were in.

CH: Oh wow. I can tell you, I – there are so many in the Marine Corps. Big characters, right?

TI: Sure.

CH: Big characters every direction. I will never forget Colonel Dave Johnson. Uh, Lieutenant Colonel – he was the commander of a squadron I was in, and – uh, the reason he stands out for me is very bold leadership. There's a lot of bold people in the Marine Corps, but Lieutenant Colonel Johnson had – uh, a bravery about him. And, I – I don't mean the "I'm running into a hailstorm or bullets" bravery. I mean the intestinal fortitude that comes with doing something that's unpopular –

TI: Mmm.

CH: But, it's the right thing to do. And – and, he empowered his Marines, and I was a young lieutenant at the time – uh, to con – to pursue the right thing even when it was unpopular, and/or painful, but with a long-term vision in mind. I – he really inspired me, and I reflected on being in his – his command numerous times throughout my adult life and wanted to emulate that – that high standard – those – those high values –

TI: Gotcha.

CH: That I saw him emulate – and – and push out to us. So, I'll never forget Colonel Johnson, I'm still in touch with him on social media, and –

TI: That's awesome.

CH: It's fun to – that's the great thing about social media, right? I can follow these Marines that I served with, for, alongside, it's a great way to stay socially connected cause those bonds are so powerful.

TI: Mhmm.

CH: So, I – yeah.

TI: So, what's your – uh, what's your favorite social media? What do you use most?

CH: Uh, uh, I'm on a handful – uh, because of my day job in – in communications, but – uh, probably Facebook, as my – my boys will tell you, that you know, that's the one for the old folks.

TI: [Laughter]

CH: And, when they look at me, it's like they're looking at *Tales from the Crypt*, when – when I breathe, it's like they see dust coming out of my lungs – uh, cause I'm considered ancient in their world.

TI: Back in the day, back in those Myspace – back in those Myspace days.

CH: [Laughter] That's right.

TI: That's awesome. So, you were – we – we talked about your – a little bit of your Military life. You are still currently a Reservist?

CH: I am. I am – uh, twenty-nine years strong, I'm in my last year of service, as we speak. Thankful to still wear – still wear the cloth of our Nation, that – uh, that strong sense of heritage –

TI: Sure.

CH: When I walk onto the base down at Quantico. Uh, I still feel it. It's an incredible, intangible value, for – for me as an individual. So, I'll do one more year and the Marine Corps, in its infinite wisdom, will push me – uh, push me alongside to make room for – for future warriors. [Laughter]

TI: For that next generation – next generation of Instagram. Um, talk to me about the History Division. That – is that what you do now as a Reservist? Is that –

CH: It – it is, and it's really a unique unit within the Marine Corps. Um, I didn't even know it existed. Uh, I was – uh, in a communications unit in the Midwest, mobilized with that unit in '03, to go to Kuwait and do the surge to Bagdad –

TI: See, I didn't know that unit mobilized. I – I – as a Marine that was stationed at Quantico, as a combat videographer, I would go down to the History Division –

CH: Yeah.

TI: To get some footage and get audio and pictures, but I didn't know that actually deployed.

CH: Yeah, deployed all over the world. You name it. You name the theaters, we've been there. Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, you know, the – the more recent ones. But the – um –

TI: You personally, where'd – where'd they send you?

CH: I was mobilized with a comm unit to go to Iraq, and when we got there, they didn't want the senior leadership. And by that time, I was already a Major, so –

TI: Okay.

CH: I find myself within a few weeks of crossing the line of departure and not wanting to go home, wanting to be a part of that fight –

TI: Yeah.

CH: And they – they cut staff off and they were just gonna store us. And –

TI: Store you where?

CH: Well, we were in Kuwait at that time, that's where we were staging. So, word went out that there were some – some capable staff –

TI: Yeah.

CH: That weren't gonna cross the line and people started coming, and it was like the draft.

TI: [Laughter]

CH: People were coming, looking for people.

TI: [Laughter]

CH: That's how I learned about the History Division. I had just completed grad school, I had – uh, I had finished my first Master's in Business Administration –

TI: Oh wow, what were you doing before that? What was your MOS before that?

CH: Six thousand two. I – I kept airframes running.

TI: Oh wow! Wow!

CH: Yeah.

TI: And so, you went then to the History Division through –

CH: I did.

TI: Through the draft in Kuwait.

CH: Through – through, yeah. Through the unwritten draft rules in Kuwait.

TI: [Laughter]

CH: And, most of the – most of the History Division is PhD's. They – they teach at universities, they write the official monographs, so – uh, being a member of the History Division with two master's degrees and quite a bit of experience, I'm considered the knuckle dragger there. Cause, the –

TI: Oh wow.

CH: And I'm thankful for the opportunity to be with them and to serve with them. So, I got drafted to – to support the History Division, there weren't enough of them. It's a small unit. Um –

TI: I bet, yeah. I know – I didn't know any active duty – I didn't know it was for active – all I saw were some old civilians working there.

CH: And, there are. There are – uh –

TI: So, yeah, I didn't –

CH: Some civilian resources on the base that are the full time staff and then there's the Reserve Unit of field historians and in the event of major conflict, or continuing small conflicts, they will break the glass, deploy the historians into the field. And, the advantage of it is we come from all different MOS's, walks of life, experiences –

TI: Yeah.

CH: And, our experience in the civilian world gives us unique perspectives. We embed in the units and we capture the operation, we capture what happens. The form and the flavor, from the lowest Private, all the way up to the highest General. Belly to belly interviews, face to face, we do audio recordings, we capture the images, the sounds, the sights, and we create logs. We bring all of that back to Quantico, at the end of the deployment, and it goes into the official Marine Corps archive where it can then be used as institutional knowledge to write official monographs, or by other researchers, or people that are approved or vetted to have access to the files. So, it's a – it's a really rewarding experience to capture that, cause when you're with those Marines –

TI: Yeah.

CH: And, especially, in my experience was '03, so the surge up was a pretty significant event in Marine Corps history and to –

TI: Absolutely.

CH: To be part of that was a – a real honor. And to – to see the – uh, you know, the heroic acts of these Marines as we were going, whether that be First Marine Division or Third Marine Aircraft Wing, I was embedded with both elements.

TI: Hmm.

CH: Um, incredibly rewarding, good stories, I – uh, some of my best interviews were the young Marines –

TI: I'll bet.

CH: As well as the senior Marines. The young Marines are a little bit unfiltered.

TI: Absolutely.

CH: [Laughter]

TI: Absolutely.

CH: Which the Marine Corps prides itself on.

TI: Yeah.

CH: Um, they will – uh, they'll tell you what they're thinking, what they're feeling. The – um, so would senior Marines. It was going to the archives. And –

TI: You'd get a lot of top level from the senior Marines, I'm – I'm assuming that –

CH: Absolutely. You wanna cover the whole perspective, cause –

TI: Yeah, yep.

CH: You could be in the same exact spot –

TI: Yep.

CH: Twenty feet left or right from someone and recall or see it with a – a different feel.

TI: Different lens.

CH: Yes. The – the filter through which we're processing information, it varies wildly depending on who you are, where you're coming from –

TI: Yeah.

CH: And what your lay on the battlefield is. So, that was – uh, that was also interesting to see. Cause we – what I did in '03 and what the historians still do now, is when something's happening, they want to be there so that they can capture it. And it's not just – um, to get the oral histories, but it's also to capture the imagery and to – to understand it. To –

TI: Yeah.

CH: To observe what's happening with the staff and with the Marines –

TI: So – so, do you get trained at DINFOS too? Like, is it the Defense Information School, do they give you any kind of photography training, audio training? Like, how do you get trained to do this?

CH: Oh, I love that question. No. [Laughter]

TI: [Laughter]

CH: But – but, we did – um, I – I made use of combat camera, during my time.

TI: Good.

CH: Uh, I was able to – uh, grab some combat camera assets when – uh, went to certain places. Not always. Some of the imagery that – uh, I was able to capture was just me doing my best with –

TI: It is what it is.

CH: It is what it is. And, one of those – one of the best images I ever caught was one of those types of moments – uh, on a CASEVAC flight – flew a lot of casualty evacuation flights cause that could get me to where the conflict was.

TI: Yeah,

CH: I traveled the battlefield hook or crook, hitching rides, showing up unexpected, where the – the commands I would show up at had no expectation of my arrival in many instances, because –

TI: How was that received?

CH: Well, it depended on how I approached. It was usually received well but I had to go hat in hand in a humble manner. In – in some instances – rank matters, but really relationships matter more, especially in a dynamic kinetic environment.

TI: Absolutely.

CH: And, um, most of the time it worked out pretty good for me. But – uh, I would – I would jump on the CASEVACs knowing that's where the action was. I would fly in, capture what I could and – um, and try to hook or crook back out. Now – and, same thing with convoys. So, I was eating whatever MREs I could beg off of people, drinking water wherever I could –

TI: [Laughter]

CH: Sleeping on the ground, wherever I could. And – uh, good adventure, really good adventure. Um, so the – the CASEVACs would get me to the action and one of the best images I ever caught was off the back ramp of a CH-46.

TI: Yeah.

CH: Where, I think we were five or six miles outside of Bagdad, we hadn't penetrated Bagdad yet. And – uh, we – we had done this many times, it was a – the – it was a pretty good fight that day, so we're loading up everybody for evacuation –

TI: Yeah.

CH: I just ran off the back of the ramp, I can see the fight on the highway. We're – we're down the highway a bit, I can see the action, and we're – we're bringing the bodies on and I just – actually, they had been – a lot of the times I was running down the back ramp with a weapon because of where we were at.

TI: Sure.

CH: Uh, but I actually pulled up a camera and snapped a photo that day, and – um, when I came back it got quite a bit of recognition. The History Division used it quite a bit, cause it was a good – it was a – I just got lucky.

TI: Ah.

CH: It wasn't – I wasn't a DINFOS trained [laughter] combat camera –

TI: [Laughter]

CH: I got lucky on that photo.

TI: Oh wow. So, all this, this History Division journey, is pretty much as a Reservist, this is after you were active duty?

CH: Yeah. Yeah – it is –

TI: So, what – what prompted your end of service? Like to leave active service?

CH: Sure. So, I – I did a couple of tours of active – um, I knew I wanted to be a federal agent and – um, the way it – uh, is set up to be a federal agent, you have to get in before age of thirty-seven and I couldn't do a full Marine Corps career –

TI: Yeah.

CH: And do that –

TI: Yeah, that's thirty-eight at a minimum –

CH: So, I had to – I couldn't – yeah –

TI: Eighteen, Yeah, but as an officer probably even forty-one – forty-one.

CH: Well, I didn't commission until I was twenty-two, so –

TI: Yeah, so that – that was – that would be out of the question, if you were –

CH: It was out of the question. So, my only option was to get out, I could completely leave the Marine Corps, or I could go in the Reserve. I could – I wanted to finish –

TI: Yeah.

CH: And, obviously I'm still here twenty-nine years – uh, so I chose that option. And – uh, I'm glad I did. I – no regrets, whatsoever. Left the Marine Corps. Uh, I did a tour with the Drug Enforcement Administration as a special agent.

TI: Uh huh.

CH: I had an absolute wonderful adventure working Narcotics cases around the Midwest. Uh, followed them all the way back to the Southwest border, all over the place.

TI: Oh man, what years were those?

CH: Uh, I did that '04 to '08, and –

TI: Some pretty heavy years for Narcotics.

CH: Is – every year is a heavy year for Narcotics.

TI: [Laughter]

CH: And that – that hasn't changed. There will always be a demand for people to fill that void in their heart with something unhealthy.

TI: Yeah.

CH: And there will be some that are susceptible to doing it. So, after working Narcotics – if you work Narcotics three to five years, it's – uh, it's a lot of the – it's a lot of the – the same things over and over. It's – it's wonderful, valuable work – uh, and –

TI: And this is with the DEA, right?

CH: This is with the DEA.

TI: Yeah.

CH: Being there for a while, I'd done some cases with some Postal Inspectors. I didn't even know what a Postal Inspector was.

TI: Yeah, not many people do.

CH: Most people don't, so –

TI: [Laughter]

CH: Uh, so I meet the Postal Inspectors, and we're – we do some drug cases together and they told me about some of the other cases they were doing. It – one of them was, they were – there was a – a retirement home where the staff had targeted some of the older Americans and they were stealing their money. I thought, wow. That's sort of heart felt, true victims –

TI: Yeah.

CH: That, it – it – that just pulled my heart strings.

TI: Absolutely.

CH: Another Postal Inspector in the same office was working child exploitation cases.

TI: Mmm.

CH: The Postal Inspection Service, again, has over two hundred Federal statutes, so there's lots of opportunity, lots of different crimes, in addition to narcotics.

TI: Yeah.

CH: So, having been there for a while, pulled my heart strings and – uh, the inspectors I was working with said, hey Carroll, the – they're hiring. So, I came right over. It's the same pay and benefits across the board, wherever you're a federal agent, if you're a Postal Inspector, DEA, FBI, so it's –

TI: Is it – are they – are they drafted? Let's go back to the draft – are they – is – are federal agents drafted out of, like, the same pool of, like, one school? Or do you have to go – is there a certain school? Like how do you – how does one become a federal agent –

CH: Sure.

TI: And then, how do you filter into these different caveats, you know, whether it be DEA or Postal Inspector?

CH: It's – it's a great question and right now, across the nation a lot of federal agencies are recruiting heavily, to include the Postal Inspectors.

TI: Oh wow.

CH: Um, and a – so, the – to answer your question, they have federal law enforcement academies.

TI: Mhmm.

CH: So, when I went into the DEA –

TI: Like the FBI Academy.

CH: Yeah.

TI: Yeah, okay. There's more than one –

CH: The FBI Academy is at Quantico; the DEA Academy is at Quantico.

TI: Oh wow!

CH: So, I had to go through an academy there, as well. And you have to show some – some resilience, some grit, some mental toughness –

TI: Yeah.

CH: In these academies. They're gonna test you, they're gonna teach you federal law. Uh, and then – of course when you go to the field you'll have someone to help you as a training agent or officer until you're fully embedded. It's the same thing with the Postal Inspectors. Their – uh, their academy is here – uh, not far from here in Potomac, Maryland.

TI: Okay.

CH: It's a – it's a fully accredited law enforcement academy. You're gonna learn firearms, officer survival, defensive tactics, surveillance, all the – all the traditional law enforcement techniques. So, it's – what's important for any Veteran to know, that might be thinking about a career in federal law enforcement, is the – the basic – uh, requirements can vary slightly from organization to organization. Most of 'em –

TI: Okay

CH: Will required a Bachelor's – uh, and some of them are going to be looking for something specialized skills, depending on what the investigative focus is.

TI: Okay.

CH: With the Postal Inspection Service, we have a wide array of laws we're enforcing. So, a bachelor's is a minimal entry, many of them come in with master's degrees. We're looking for specialized – uh, language skills. We're also looking for experience, that experience could be as law enforcement, it could be – uh, a certified public accountant – uh, it could be IT skills.

TI: Yeah.

CH: A lot of our investigations are bathed in the art of navigating zeroes and ones.

TI: Yeah.

CH: Uh, and that is in – that's increasingly more important, so –

TI: Deep web – deep web, dark web stuff.

CH: Absolutely –

TI: Yeah.

CH: It – just about any scam or scheme, we can touch, we can get a nexus and – and we're gonna work that. We're gonna – we're gonna leverage that part – uh, of the dark web. We want criminals to know that just cause you're on the dark web doesn't mean you're anonymous.

TI: Yeah.

CH: We will go there. We will find you and we're gonna be your worst nightmare when we pull you out and shine a light on what you've done and bring you to court.

TI: Merica. [Laughter]

CH: [Laughter]

TI: Love – I love the passion in your voice when you talk about it, cause –

CH: [Laughter]

TI: I can tell that it – it actually means something to you. That you – you – you're – so you're going after scammers, you're going after people in the Postal Service. What are some of the cases that – that you've seen come up, and concerning Veterans?

CH: Well – so – yeah – which was the – the impetus for my wanting to come and visit, right?

TI: Yeah.

CH: We have a campaign, right now, that we're doing called Operation Protect Veterans. We started it – uh, November of '17. And, what we wanna do is we want to make sure that Veterans are aware that they are being targeted specifically because of their Veteran status. So, as an example, why would a criminal wanna do that? When you first called me and you told me about your experience in the Marine Corps, Tanner –

TI: Yeah.

CH: I immediately felt an endearment towards you or connection, because we had some similar experience and some overlap –

TI: Yeah.

CH: Which lowered my guard, and that's an affinity that Marines will share. Well, that affinity also goes across the other services –

TI: Sure.

CH: And within those services, especially if you've done similar work. So, criminals seek to leverage that affinity to remove barriers, lower people's guard and then use it to advance scams and schemes. Veterans are targeted and tw – literally in some cases, it's been determined through studies, twice as susceptible through these affinities, to fall for scams and schemes. Add on top of that, someone who has been in combat maybe is struggling –

TI: Yeah.

CH: With – uh, an adjustment or PTSD or other injuries, maybe they're young, maybe they're older Americans and their susceptible because when you age, you lose some of the ability to detect deception. Add all that together and you got a perfect storm to target Veterans. That's what's happening. So, we've learned through our studies, there's a handful of schemes that are going on, some of which relate directly to the Department of Veterans' Affairs. And I'd like to share a couple –

TI: Yeah, absolutely – show – share, absolutely, that's what the show's for.

CH: Absolutely. So, one of them is the VA loan scam. And basically, they'll approach a Veteran and they'll – they'll offer him a loan with a – in – incredibly unrealistic loan – loan rates that make no sense. And then, it's a scam to separate them from their money. But, a lot of times, again you can't detect deception –

TI: Yeah.

CH: They endear you and they've gotcha. And they're – they're off with your money. So that's – that's one to be aware of. Another one is –

TI: What – what are – what are the top – okay, before we get into that – give me some specifics on that VA loan scam. How are they gonna approach you, how are they gonna get to you?

CH: Well –

TI: Well, what are they – cause – I give you an – an incredible loan offer –

CH: Right.

TI: Uh, how can I detect that this is – uh, a scam versus, hey this might be legit? Like, is it – is there – are there some tells?

CH: Yes, and so they vary on how they approach, it depends, they use all different ways and mechanisms. They – they'll use any type of connection they can get. They'll use the internet, they'll use email, they'll use phone calls, they'll use direct marketing mail.

TI: Yeah.

CH: We've seen all of that used. So, you're gonna wanna vet any organization you're interacting with to make sure they're who they say they are. And there's multiple ways that you can vet these organizations. You can check with – um, National Foundation for Credit and Counseling, **Bet** – it's a Better Business Bureau related organization.

TI: Okay.

CH: And – uh, they – they can look that up online or they can call – there's a eight hundred number, it's 800-388-2227 –

TI: Okay.

CH: That's a way to vet –

TI: Okay.

CH: Right there, regardless of which –

TI: A little better than Google.

CH: A little bit – well – well, you can use Google to get to that, but I'm –

TI: Gotcha.

CH: Just giving it to 'em.

TI: Absolutely, absolutely.

CH: Um, so, any way, manner, shape, or form someone can be approached, they may approach them.

TI: Okay.

CH: And they'll just wrap the scheme in some different verbiage. And sometimes it's just a one-off variant. It – it depends.

TI: Mmm.

CH: So, loan scams is one. So, you're gonna wanna vet. Another one is updating your Veterans' Administration file scam. They'll – they'll reach out and offer to update your file and seek to charge you money for that. And – and you and I both know as we're sitting here in DC now that the Veterans' Administration is not going to charge you to update your Veterans' Administration file. [Laughter]

TI: Ab-so-lutely, not.

CH: But, if you're new to the game, and you – you – maybe you just transitioned, you – it's possible, you may not know this.

TI: Yeah.

CH: So, that's something that – uh, they're getting the Veterans with.

TI: Wow.

CH: A secret benefit scam. This one is enticing someone with the possibility that they rate something special and, in some cases, depending on where you are and your walk of life, you may want to believe it. So, what they're gonna do with that is they're gonna try to get fees from you or try to get your personal information and if they can get either the money or the personal information, then they can do things with the PII –

TI: They're cleaning out at that point.

CH: They can sell it off on dark web, they can use it for credit, there's all sorts of things that can happen there. And, of course, when they go there –

TI: You get in.

CH: That's when we come into play because if you've touched the mail, whether that's – it starts digital, but eventually it ends up physical and that's where a Postal Inspector comes in.

TI: Okay.

CH: Cause eventually, you need to move something of value, whether that's a physical good or a check. And they think they're anonymous on the dark web, but the reality is they're not cause we're consistently monitoring.

TI: [Laughter]

CH: We're out there.

TI: Gotcha.

CH: And we've got a hunting license and hunt – it's hunting season.  
[Laughter]

TI: [Laughter]

CH: And there's plenty of 'em. But I would much rather prevent a Veteran –

TI: Absolutely.

CH: From being a victim then to go solve the crime.

TI: Absolutely.

CH: Cause we know we can't arrest our way out of a problem.

TI: Yeah.

CH: We'd rather do prevention which is the – the impetus for the campaign for Operation Protect Veterans.

TI: You're trying to make – yeah, you're trying to alert – alert Veterans to beware. That's great – um –

CH: Yeah.

TI: So, they're – they're after your personal information, they're after your – they're after – uh, again, physical money that you send to them, but eventually, someday, you – you know, you might end up with a – a, you know, if your susceptible – if you end up getting in one of these scams, you – you might get a credit card statement for like ten thousand dollars or something like that.

CH: Right.

TI: That's kind of what they're going after.

CH: You – you may not even find out until you pull your credit report, and that's another good thing for Vets to know. There are three credit reporting agencies, and you can pull your credit report for free, once a year from every one of those. So, if you space that out over a year, you can get multiple hits and you can find out exactly what's happening with your credit. That's just whether you're a Veteran or not, that's a healthy thing to do. Pull your credit report and look and see what's going on. Has someone pulled a line of credit on you? That's what you want to know. So –

TI: Yeah, so you're looking at – that's Experian, what are the other two?

CH: Transunion, Experian – Oh, I'm gonna forget the other one –

TI: Oh my gosh

CH: But you – Google will save you. [Laughter]

TI: Well – well how about this, we'll put it – we'll put it in the show notes, after – afterwards. We'll – hey, at – at the end of every episode when we do a blog –

CH: Mhmm.

TI: I – I put show notes for additional links here, here, here, here. So, I'll make sure that –

CH: Yeah, and I can get it to you.

TI: Absolutely.

CH: There's a cou – there's a couple other things I can highlight that are –

TI: Absolutely.

CH: That are schemes that – that we've seen. One's pension poaching, and with that some Veterans that have served will rate – uh, a pension from the Department of Veterans' Affairs. And, the – the – those rates, as the – the Veterans will know out there, they can vary from a couple hundred dollars to more, depending on the significance of what – whatever that pension's related to.

TI: Yeah.

CH: Uh, there are scammers that will approach and offer a lump sum to the Veteran, which can sound really attractive. Hey, I'm gonna give you fifty grand, a hundred grand, now and I'll take the rights to all future income off your pension. Now, usually what's gonna happen there is the Veterans that they're targeting, sometimes they don't have sophisticated financial knowledge, they won't realize the income stream value for the future versus what they're being offered, and they'll get scammed out of the rights to their future pension. So that's a scam to watch out for. If –

TI: Is that legal, once you find out? Or is that something that you guys target, like –

CH: If they –

TI: If they sign the rights over, is it pretty much a done deal or is it something that you can still prosecute?

CH: Everything is – depends on the nuance of the situation so I can't give you a canned answer.

TI: Sure. Sure.

CH: Uh, depending on exactly how it – it goes down. But I can tell you that the preponderance of what we've seen is unethical and not in the interest of the Veteran.

TI: Good.

CH: It's – when someone's approaching you and they're offering you something and it seems like an unrealistic value, you gotta ask yourself, what's in it for this person? What's their drive, what's their motivation?

TI: Absolutely.

CH: And – um, again with some of the Veterans, depending on what's happened to 'em, they – their ability to detect the deception and – um, and to – to see the sinister is reduced through the affinity –

TI: Yeah.

CH: Which is why they're targeting these Veterans at twice the rate and some people have lost some money. So, we – we wanna avoid that. That's why we highlight it and we point it out to the – to the Veterans. So –

TI: Good.

CH: Those – those are the big ones, that are to watch out for. But there are so many other variances schemes that don't necessarily have to be Veteran specific –

TI: Mmm.

CH: That could impact someone that – that is a Veteran or someone that a Veteran loves or cares about, whether that's a family member, a neighbor, someone in their community. So, we do everything we can to include our Operation Protect Veterans to highlight these scams – these schemes, to make sure the public is aware of them, so that they have a greater resistance to them. We believe forewarned is forearmed, and that – you know, this ounce of prevention is way better than letting them, you know, fall victim and then we swoop in and we enforce the law.

TI: Yeah.

CH: I would love to have no – no criminals to arrest. I know that's never gonna happen, there'll always be a criminal to arrest.

TI: [Laughter]

CH: But we're – we're doing our best, it's a multipronged effort. We wanna do – we wanna provide the prevention and yes, we're gonna go out and we're going to target these criminals and we're gonna arrest them. We're gonna see that they get their day in court.

TI: Good. Good. Is there anything that you learned in service that you use in your job today, as a Postal Inspector?

CH: Uh, never give up. Keep – keep getting after it, every day. In – in the Marine Corps – um, that's something that you learn early on. You come in and you're immediately punished with –

TI: [Laughter]

CH: An incredible barrage of just too much to do, do it all now, you're in pain, you're uncomfortable, you could be cold, wet, hungry. Whatever, you name it, those things are gonna happen to you and you're gonna have to mentally process and you're gonna have to focus on the art of the possible and what you can do and you're gonna have to work that to the fullest of your ability. That's something that will live with me forever.

TI: I – I think the Marine Corps has conditioned – I don't know about – just me personally, it's conditioned to where if I am comfortable, I need to uncomfortable. Does that make sense?

CH: I'm not happy if I'm comfortable.

TI: Yeah.

CH: My comfort zone is uncomfortable. I wan – because that is where I know I'm having the adventure –

TI: Yeah.

CH: And it's the adventure that brings me joy. Being on the couch is not homeostasis. That's not happiness. It – being in the gym, learning something new, chasing down a criminal, meeting someone at the Department of Veterans' Affairs –

TI: Right.

CH: To get the message out to Veterans, those are the happy moments in life. So, just – just – just keep engaging, there is always another mountain top. Every time I crest a mountain, I see the next mountain top. And I wanna go get after that mountain. [Laughter]

TI: Motivation.

CH: [Laughter] Yeah.

TI: Here on *Borne the Battle*. So, obviously you had a – how – I mean we talked about you leaving the service and we talked about your transition, it seemed to be pretty smooth. How could – you know, do you have any advice for Veterans that are looking – that are looking at that transition?

CH: Uh, I can speak through the filter of my own experience. Uh, I knew I wanted to be a federal agent, and so I looked at government jobs. This is something I'll encourage any Veteran who's transitioning to consider. For me, personally, I'm not chasing dollars in life, I'm not a – a wealthy person, but I feel like I have a – a comfortable – uh, income.

TI: Yeah.

CH: And, so for me it was the adventure I was chasing. That's why I wanted to be a federal agent. I also wanted to continue that intangible reward of feeling like I was part of something larger than myself. An organization that served the community, that I could take a pride in. And, hence, that's why I chose this – the – the work environments I've been in.

TI: Yeah.

CH: And, I wouldn't look back. I would encourage anyone who's considering a transition, now whether that's after a full twenty- or thirty-year career or just, they did a – a tour and they're getting out, to consider serving in the government.

TI: I'll be honest, I – when I first got out, I didn't want to consider that at all. I wanted to be as far away from the government as possible –

CH: [Laughter]

TI: I wanted to – I wanted to, you know, I said okay, I tasted that life –

CH: Yeah.

TI: Um, I enjoyed it, was good adventure, now I wanted to go see what the private sector's all about cause I never – I never had anything to do with the private sector.

CH: Sure.

TI: But I did realize, eventually, as I was in the private sector, I was trying to mentor Marines. I was trying to bring them in, was trying to help them with their transition. I go, what am I doing. Um –

CH: Yeah.

TI: Uh, so you know, absolutely. I think the government – uh, the federal government – if you're – if you're looking for that comradery – uh, there's – there's pockets of it in the federal government that you can find, you know. That's really –

CH: It's – it's there. And depending on your individual outlook, I mean, everyone's form or flavor of service varies with them.

TI: Absolutely.

CH: The – uh, the journey I had wouldn't undo a thing. Even – even sometimes when I've – I've run into walls, and –

TI: Yeah.

CH: And – and gone directions I – I never would have predicted, I wouldn't undo a thing. So, that's what I would encourage –

TI: It's what makes you who you are, you know, at the end of the day. So –

CH: Absolutely. Absolutely. The – uh, and that’s within the Marines and outside of the Marines, they’re still in the Reserves, the – serving as a historian.

TI: Yeah.

CH: What an honor. Never – didn’t know it could happen until right before we went into Bagdad.

TI: Can – can anybody – any civilian or anybody, can they access any of the stuff that the History Division has produced?

CH: So, there’s a vetting process.

TI: Yeah.

CH: There – there could be some sensitivity so not just anyone can walk off the street. It’s usually gonna be researchers or – um, the students at the Command and Staff College, the Marine Corps War College – uh, of course they can access those files –

TI: What about journalists?

CH: Dep – depending on what they’re looking to do, they’ll have to –

TI: There’s a vetting process.

CH: There’s a vetting process. They would have to show what they’re looking to do, and journalists have gone in, and they – and non-military affiliated – uh, writers and researchers have access and they’ve written great stories.

TI: Yeah.

CH: And – and told the stories of our combatants.

TI: Yeah.

CH: So, yeah.

TI: Or books – people writing books or stuff like that.

CH: Absolutely.

TI: Where can they go to go look for that information to how to start that vetting process if they wanna go down that journey?

CH: So, they can – if – if they look up the Marine Corps University online, they can go and they can read all about the University and of course, the – the History Division –

TI: Yep.

CH: It has a – uh, a webpage within that and they – they’re also on social media –

TI: Are they?

CH: You can follow them, and they put out interesting – uh, tidbits on occasion. The – the – the history of the Marine Corps is very colorful –

TI: Absolutely.

CH: And so, some of the – the things that they’ll share – uh, even for someone who – almost thirty years, I get surprised sometimes by some of the things they’ll pull out. So, the – it’s such a depth –

TI: They do -they do, like “this day in history, check this out?”, random factoid?

CH: They – it’s – it’s not every day but they do put out some things. And –

TI: That’s good. That’s good. And, as far as the Postal Inspector, where can – where can people go to find more information on – on that aspect of your life?

CH: Yeah, so – to – if someone’s interested in being a federal agent, and I would encourage ‘em to – to consider the Postal Inspection Service, they can go to [uspis.gov](https://www.uspis.gov), United States Postal Inspection Service dot gov, and – uh, they can read about employment –

TI: Yeah.

CH: With the Postal Inspection Service, we have postal police officers that are uniformed, we have professional, technical, administrative employees, general analysts, intelligence analysts, every type of work you can imagine. We have our own forensic lab, not far from here in northern Virginia. We have, of course, similar to what I've done as a Postal Inspector which is the – the investigative arm where we look to illuminate what the criminals have done, fully identify the criminal conspiracies, and make sure they all get confronted, corralled up, and they get their day in court.

TI: Good.

CH: Which is also the great adventure. So, all on the web and available for anyone to go look at. Quick recollection, we had seized around a half million and – um, I had a couple agents with me, I'm getting out of a car in downtown Indianapolis, I'll never forget it cause I've got a bag with what I know is a half million dollars in it –

TI: Oh wow.

CH: And as I get out of the car – uh, a – [laughter] a homeless man comes right up to me, and looks me right in the eye and he says, hey can you spare a buck? [Laughter]

TI: [Laughter]

CH: I – I just remember thinking to myself, oh my gosh –

TI: If you only knew.

CH: Oh my gosh, it was the bad guys' money. I would have loved to have just handed him the bag. Of course, I couldn't.

TI: [Laughter]

CH: I said, I – I'm sorry, I –

TI: Yeah.

CH: I can't spare a dollar –

TI: Aww, man. That's – that's tough - If I could only –

CH: The – the irony of that one –

TI: If you only knew. If you only knew. During your transition out, did you utilize any services from the Veterans' Affairs? VHA or VVA or VA home loans, or anything like that?

CH: I did, I did, and I – I'm real – I'm real thankful for what the Department of Veterans' Affairs has done for me. Um, I used the Veteran Hospital Administration. I've had – I've – a series of surgeries done –

TI: Yeah.

CH: That – um, at the time they were doing them on me, they were cutting edge. And the VA was pioneering it and I was able to utilize that service. And – uh, and obviously I'm here, I'm still in the Marine Corps, I'm a federal agent, I'm healthy, and – uh, it's worked. And I'm super thankful for that.

TI: That's great.

CH: Um, the options back in the day, before the VA starting had doing this edge cutting procedure, were not very good options.

TI: [Laughter]

CH: And – um, at the time they offered –

TI: You either keep your leg or – or it goes away. [Laughter]

CH: [Laughter] Yeah. What they – what they offered and what they were able to do for me has – has given me a life that I didn't think was – uh, necessarily gonna be possible at the time.

TI: Oh wow.

CH: So, super thankful for what the hospital administration's done for me there. And – uh, continued to get checked on, on occasion, here at the – the local DC VA. So, thankful for that. The – the home loan program, my first home, I got my loan – uh, with the VA that helped me along. I – a young Marine –

TI: Yeah.

CH: Didn't have – uh, any money really and – uh –

TI: Yeah.

CH: They really helped me get out the gate and start building a – a nest egg to establish a – a life moving forward.

TI: That's great.

CH: So, I – I've appreciated that. Also, just the – the knowledge, the – the data that the Veterans' Administration has – has gathered over the years –

TI: Yeah.

CH: Is pretty immense. A lot of people don't think about the – the innovations and the data that – that has been gathered through all the work that this department's done. But it's a lot of good information. Uh, for – whether that be for your – your health or in other areas of life. So, super thankful for that. And, have used those resources online. And the other thing, when I – when I when to lo – contact Veteran's Affairs about Operation Protect Veterans, I looked online and I discovered your podcast, I thought what a – what a wonderful way to message – connect Veterans and – and share good stories of resiliency or how we can help each other with –

TI: Appreciate that.

CH: With this visit, you and I are doing, just being another caveat to it.

TI: Yeah.

CH: So, I am – I'm thankful for what – uh, the Office of Public Affairs is doing here to spread the word.

TI: I appreciate having another listener. You know, that's great.

CH: Yeah. [Laughter]

TI: Um, previous episodes I've talked about the VA home loan and I'm currently in my – uh, my second one. I bought – I bought my first house when I first got out, in Charlotte. And that was literally a year ago and then I decided to move up here for this job and I did not know that the VA home loan was – had a set price based on region. So, I'm actually able to still take advantage of the VA home loan program –

CH: Yeah?

TI: Because I didn't meet that max dollar amount so, I'm renting the house out in Charlotte, and I'm still able to do – do another VA home loan for my current residence here. So – uh, I am personally going through that myself and – and I'll be sharing that journey along, in – in the podcasts as well.

CH: When I did my transition out and I went through the separation course –

TI: Yeah.

CH: And I started to learn, I had no idea, right? I'd been a Marine for six years, I – I go to – go to grad school, get out and go get my – my next job. I had no idea.

TI: Yeah.

CH: It – it – it's a little bit overwhelming, actually, when you go, and you look at all the benefits that are there.

TI: Yeah, absolutely.

CH: Which is why some of the – the scams and schemes can happen, cause people can pray on that. Hey, I'll shepherd you through this, just trust me.

TI: Ha.

CH: And that's – that's a red flag, so –

TI: Gotcha. Carroll, is there anything that I haven't asked that you think it'd be important to share? Whether it be from your service or from – uh, your current role as a Postal Inspector?

CH: Uh, the – uh, as far as the – the Postal Inspection Service – uh, I appreciate you taking the messaging, what we have to share to warn Veterans and – and letting me share those – those scams and schemes so that –

TI: Absolutely.

CH: So, that your listeners and – and the people that your listeners know about and love and care about in their communities are less susceptible. So, that – that will be one thing. It's just a call to actual for your listeners.

TI: Yeah.

CH: If – if you've endured listening to – to me share these stories for this long, you've gotten a healthy dose of, watch out for these scams and schemes. And you've been told where you can go. You can read about 'em.

TI: Yeah.

CH: On – at [uspis.gov](https://www.uspis.gov) and about the – uh, how you can check your credit and just to be aware. So, I would encourage just, call to action for your listeners to – to take that message, to be ready, and to share it with someone they think might be susceptible. To warn ‘em. Cause there’s someone that they’re gonna care about that needs to know. And I just want them to pause and reflect on it. And the other thing is for those – if you’re looking for – uh, a great career for those Vet - Veterans getting out, the government service is an option and it’s been incredibly rewarding for me. You can have a family, you can have a good life, and depending on where you might want to go, you can get the incredible rewards that you might have re – felt, that – that strong pride and belonging you felt in the Military? You can feel that as a civil servant. I feel it as a Postal Inspector. There’s not a day I don’t get out of bed, my feet don’t hit the ground, the devil himself doesn’t go, oh no he’s up again, what’s he gonna do today in the Postal Inspection Service. Cause, we’re bringing it. And it feels good. Just like it does when I put on the Marine uniform. So, I would encourage ‘em to consider government service. May – maybe someone else can feel that same reward I do –

TI: Mmm.

CH: Uh, anywhere else in the government, certainly the Postal Inspectors is a unique place to do it. It’s – uh, I like to think of ‘em as – as humble agents of virtue, cause most people don’t know about our organization –

TI: Yeah.

CH: So, they don’t have a clue. So, it’s not like you would take this job so that you could be recognized at a cocktail party cause people don’t get it. They don’t – generally speaking, people aren’t familiar with us.

TI: CIA agent, FBI, Postal Inspection.

CH: Exactly.

TI: Yeah.

CH: But, if you want to do it because you care about people and you want to make sure that criminals get their day in court, and that you protect people in your community, the Postal Inspectors could be for you. That’s – that’s how it’s been for me. So –

TI: That's really great. That's really great. Cause, like I said – uh, I have a bleeding heart, I personally have a bleeding heart for the elderly – elderly and it seems like your organization probably protects the elderly more than I know – any other organization that I would know.

CH: It's a pillar of our external messaging. We're heavily focused on it. Our chief participates in – with the Elder Justice Coordinating Counsel. We have put a ton of energy into it. Something I didn't share that I should've, is for the past four years, we have had a crime prevention campaign called *The Inspectors*, which is basically a public service announcement that airs on CBS on Saturday mornings.

TI: Oh wow.

CH: It's a tv show. What we did was, we took our case files and we wrote those into a – a family friendly story. So, it's not gonna have – um, the violence and the explosions, it's not going to have that gratuitous vulgarity that you'll get on, you know, nighttime tv. Because that's not what it's about. It's about protecting people. It's on Saturday mornings, in the education information block. It's been there for four years and many markets – major metros, number one in its time slot, reaching over 1.2 to 1.3 million people every Saturday. Our organization did that.

TI: It's called what again?

CH: It's called *The Inspectors*.

TI: *The Inspectors*.

CH: It's a tv show.

TI: CBS, Saturday mornings.

CH: CBS, Saturday mornings, depending on where you're at. 10:00, 10:30, and um – family friendly.

TI: Noted.

**CH:** It's – uh, it's a crime case wrapped into a family friendly story and at the end of it, the Chief Postal Inspector provides a – a summary message to tell you what crime you just saw and what you can do to protect others. Again, call to action. So, that's a – that's an example of government being innovative.

**TI:** Yeah!

**CH:** Sort of like this podcast here is an innovative way to message. That's another example of our innovation and a lot of those scams and schemes that we've highlighted on that show are related to things that – when we've done Veteran specific shows and we've done shows that are targeting – uh, older Americans as well. Again, the – as we age, we become, in some cases, more susceptible because we lose our ability, in some cases, to detect the deception. So, thanks for giving me a prompt to reemphasize that and highlight that show. The – the staff I work with, I am so thankful for them. They – they did the show. I showed up in the – the communications shop after they'd already established it.

**TI:** Yeah.

**CH:** I just got the benefit of being able to tell the story of the good work they did. That is going to echo on for years beyond our time here –

**TI:** Yeah.

**CH:** As a hallmark element of what the Inspection Service has done. And a great way to keep Americans safe from criminals.

[00:51:48] Music

### **[00:51:54] PSA:**

**Woman 1:** I chose to be an outreach worker because of the fact that I've been there. I know what it is to be homeless. When I utilized my VI Bill to get my house, that was like, the biggest thing that ever happened to me in my whole life. Because they helped me get a piece of the American dream.

**Woman 2:** Choose VA today. For more information, visit [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov).

[00:52:25] Music

## [00:52:30] CLOSING MONOLOGUE:

TI: Wanna thank Carroll for coming on the show and explaining to us what Operation Protect Veterans is. Uh, for more information on Operation Protect Veterans or on the USPIIS, [postalinspectors.uspis.gov](https://postalinspectors.uspis.gov). And you can always find them on their social media channels. They have a Facebook [link to the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Postalinspectors>] and Twitter [link to the Twitter page: <https://twitter.com/USPISpressroom>] and Instagram [link to the Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/postalinspectors/>]. And don't forget they have a show! *The Inspectors*, Saturday mornings on CBS. As for the Marine Corps History Division, you can find them at [www.usmcu.edu/research/history-division](http://www.usmcu.edu/research/history-division). This week's Veteran of the week is Army Veteran, Ellen Ainsworth. Ellen served during World War II from 1942 to 1944. She was born in Glenwood City, Wisconsin. She graduated from the Minneapolis – I think it's pronounced Eitel Hospital School of Nursing in 1941 and joined the Army Nurse Corps in March of 1942. Her first duty station was at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas until 1943, when she was reassigned to the 56th Evacuation Hospital at Fort Sam Houston. The unit was deployed to Tunisia before being relocated to Anzio, Italy. On February 10, 1944, the Battle of Anzio reached the hospital where Ellen was on duty, and she sustained severe wounds from artillery fire. Ellen remained calm and began to move her patients to safety. Sadly, she died six days later due to her injuries and was buried at the Sicily American Cemetery in Italy. For her courageous service, Ellen was awarded the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, the American Campaign Medal, the Europe, Africa, and Middle East Campaign and the World War II Victory Medal. We honor your service, Ellen. That's it for this episode of *Borne the Battle*. Hope you enjoyed it. If you did, please email and let me know at [podcast@va.gov](mailto:podcast@va.gov). Also, if you didn't like it let me know. Uh, at – or if you have a question, reach out. Um, I'd like to read it out on the air and – and make sure you're not the only one that gets the answer to it. Again, this is your show and I always wanna make it better. Also, you can reach us on our blog by leaving a comment at [blogs.va.gov](http://blogs.va.gov) on any one of the podcast blogs. And you can always find the Department of Veterans' Affairs on Twitter [Link to the VA's Twitter page: [https://twitter.com/DeptVetAffairs?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/DeptVetAffairs?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)], Facebook [Link to the VA's Facebook page: [Facebook.com/VeteransAffairs](https://www.facebook.com/VeteransAffairs)], YouTube [Link to the VA's YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBvOzPLmbzjtpX-Htstp2vw>], Instagram [Link to the VA's Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/deptvetaffairs/?hl=en>]. Deptvetaffairs, US

Department of Veteran Affairs, you can always find us with that blue checkmark. Thank you again for listening. And we will see you next week.

[00:55:04] Music

(Text Transcript Ends)