

# RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH ENEWS



Have a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

**November/December 2022**



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members,

At the end of another busy year, I firstly want to thank all our staff and volunteers who contributed in any way to what we collectively achieved in the past 12 months. This includes those of you who are unable to actually volunteer, but who otherwise support our efforts, events, meetings and functions, or do something else that encourages others to keep up the good work.

The following photographs indicate several of the events we have held in the past three months or so. The first of these is the Christmas party that provided an outing for 83 members to enjoy some early festive cheer in excellent company. We also inducted two members into the *Order of Whatever It Is* (OOWII), in recognition of their contribution to our Sub-Branch over many years. Two other members, who were unable to attend this party, will be inducted in the new year. The main photo shows 18 other recipients of the OOWII including one of the inaugural members of this Order and former Sub-Branch, Bill Smith, who presided over the formalities.

While the photographs from the bus trips, the Veterans Health Week and the regular Coffee Catch Ups (CCUs), have been reported previously, they're repeated here to remind us all that we had some good fun in 2022 despite some of the challenges we faced individually and collectively during the year. We look forward to holding some more member-based activities as soon as we can in 2023.

We're also hoping to reinvigorate some events and activities, including The Eddison Day Club and the ANZAC and Peace Ceremony, as we gradually return to whatever the new normal might be as the COVID situation continues or eases. However, these will remain works-in-progress while we finalise the plans.

At the CCU last Friday, we welcomed a local artist, Sylvie Carter, who is planning to put her talents to good use to our mutual benefits and interest. Having spoken of her background and her interest in and connection to military history, Sylvie is seeking our advice as she prepares a portrait of CPL Ernie Corey. Hugh Poate presented a signed copy of his book, *“Failures of Command”*, to the Sub-Branch in recognition of the support we provide for veterans. Ross Smith, then, presented a beautiful tribute to those who, as POWs, worked, suffered and died, on the infamous Thai Burma railway, titled *“Railway of Death”* On behalf of all our members, I thank Sylvie, Hugh and Ross for the contribution they made to what was otherwise another excellent opportunity for about 24 members to socialise in an informal environment.

I also take this opportunity to thank Mick O'Donnell for organising the last CCU for 2022 and issuing the Warning Order the next one that is scheduled to be held in *The Corey Room* on 27 Jan 23.

In closing, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I hope this festive season provides time for all us to reflect on all sorts of things that warrant some reflection and that you all find some peace and good will.

However, if you or anyone you know might need some help or even some company, please let us know and we'll try to arrange something.

Jim Gilchrist

President



# RSL WV Sub-Branch Annual Christmas Lunch on Wednesday 7 December 2022.





## **Report on Bus Trips during October and November 2022**

We obtained a grant from the ACT Government early this year to enable the Sub-Branch to get people out of their homes and take them on a day out. They may have been on the three tours, maybe not. We conducted three tours in November of 2020. We were still suffering from COVID-19 restrictions. This time was a little easier.

### **Southern Highlands – Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

We used a 62-seat coach supplied once again by Deane's Coaches Group Pty. Ltd, a locally owned travel company. We were once again lucky to have Mr. Reece Campbell as our coach captain. He looked after us on the tours in late 2020. On the first tour this time we went to the Southern Highlands. We left the bus stop outside the Sub-Branch in Holder at 9.00am with 40 passengers. We journeyed along the Federal Highway to Goulburn where we stopped for morning tea in the park adjacent to the railway station. The morning tea was supplied by the coach company. After morning tea, we once again joined the bus to take us to Moss Vale Ex-Services Club. After being signed into the club we were seated at two long tables. People went to the bar to order a soft drink while others had something a little stronger. We were then served platters of assorted sandwiches, hot chips, assorted slices and cakes and platters of sliced fruit. There was plenty of food left over with some passengers taking "doggie-bags" home. We also were able to purchase tea and coffee. After lunch we were then seated on the coach and driven back through the beautiful town of Bowral. There we had free time to window shop or purchase items. Some people went to "Dirty Janes" which is a shop that retails unwanted household items on assignment. We left Bowral in the mid afternoon and set off on the journey back to Canberra. We had a comfort stop at the Wheatley VC rest area and had an opportunity to take some photos of the very full Lake George. Once again, we joined the coach for the short trip back to Holder. We said our farewells on arrival and made our way to our homes. It was a good day where people could catch up with friends or meet new ones.

### **Braidwood, Tarago and Bungendore – Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

We had 29 passengers for this coach tour to Braidwood, Tarago and Bungendore. Once again, we left the bus stop outside the Sub-Branch at 9.00am, journeyed to Braidwood and had morning tea in the beautiful recently renovated park adjacent to the main street. Some ladies provided some home-made cakes this time to supplement the biscuits provided by the coach company. Some free time was enjoyed in the historic town before we alighted the coach for the journey to the village of Tarago. Lunch had been ordered at the "Loaded Dog Hotel" which is named after a poem by Henry Lawson. We once again obtained a drink from the bar before being served a choice of Tempura Fish and Chips with Salad or Rissoles with Chips, and Salad. Gravy. Sweets were then served with a choice between Sticky Date Pudding with Ice Cream or Apple Danish with Ice Cream. Tea and coffee were then served by Tim and Alana Long and their friendly staff. After lunch, we journeyed back to Bungendore where we had free time to visit the shops in the village including the leather shop, the woodcraft shop as well as some boutiques and novelty shops. We then journeyed back to Holder where we all said farewell after another fantastic day out.

## **Cooma and district – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022.**

Our final tour this year was to the scenic town of Cooma. After leaving Holder we journeyed down Drakeford Drive and Isabella Drive to the Monaro Highway. On this trip we were fortunate enough to have Mr Winston Phillips with us to commentate throughout the day. He has recently moved to Canberra, joined the Sub- Branch, after living and working in and around Cooma in various roles over many years. His vast knowledge and research that he has done over time of the history and characters of the Monaro region was most interesting and informative to our passengers. His talks included the history of bushranging in the district and many of the historic buildings and properties of the Monaro. We had morning tea in the Memorial Park before a guided tours of the factory in Polo Flat where the linings for the tunnels for the Snowy 2.0 project are manufactured. After that we were driven to the recently renovated cattle and sheep saleyards. Following that we stopped at the memorial for the crash of the Southern Cloud aircraft disaster. We then went to the Cooma Ex-Services Club for lunch. After being signed in guests purchased a drink, before being seated for lunch. A self-serve buffet had previously been ordered through consultation with Ms Michaela Nielsen, the events and Marketing Coordinator at the Cooma Club. The menu comprised Roast Beef and Gravy; Honey Baked Double Smoked Ham with Gravy; Roast Mixed Vegetables; Greek Salad; Beer Battered Chips. Dessert was a Mixed Small Cake Platter and A Mixed sliced Fruit Platter. Self-Serve Coffee and Tea was also available. The meal was thoroughly enjoyed as there was little leftover. Three members of the local Sub-Branch joined us for lunch, thanked us for coming and told us of their future plans for the upgrade of some of the local memorials. We then went back to the Memorial Park for our passengers to see the commemoration wall of plaques to be installed to commemorate ex-Servicemen and organisation from the area who participated in all conflicts. There is one section containing a diorama and plaque to Cpl Earnest Albert Corey, Military Medal and three bars. He was a member of the Sub-Branch when we were under another name. This diorama is one project to receive an upgrade in the future.

Some more free time was available for people to go shopping before we journeyed back along the Monaro Highway. Mr Winston Phillips informed us of the points of interest and history, heritage buildings and farms along the way. Our passengers thanked Winston for his input, and also to Reece for being such a safe and informative coach captain. We arrived back at Holder at about 5.00pm and our passengers once again said farewell after another enjoyable day out.

### **Conclusion:**

These tours were a wonderful way to overcome the isolation following COVID-19. It also was a fantastic opportunity for members and partners to reconnect with others that may not have seen for some time and visit places that they may not have been to before.

Alyson Deane and Reece Campbell were most helpful with organising and conducting these tours.

Peter Sutton

5<sup>th</sup> December 2022

# Photos from the Bus Trip to Southern Highlands - 19<sup>th</sup> October.



Photos from the bus trip to Bungendore, Braidwood and Tarago on 27<sup>th</sup> October.





Photos from the bus trip on Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November to Michelago, Nimmitabel and Cooma.



## **Veterans' Health Week – October 2022**

The Woden Valley Sub-Branch received a small grant from the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) to conduct functions during the health week in early October. The theme for this year was "Eat Well."

The idea of having lunches was two-fold – firstly to encourage healthy eating and to get people out of their homes to socialise.

The three lunches were held in The Corey Room at our offices in Holder. They were held on three different days of the week to allow guests to attend on days that did not clash with other events in their lives. The Sub-Branch engaged the services of a local couple Daniel and Sarah Felstead. Both Sarah and Daniel spent time serving in the Australian Army. When Sarah was discharged from the Army, she established a small business, "Lazy Grazer" using the passion she had for catering and hospitalities.

The business grew rapidly from humble beginnings catering for small parties. When Daniel was also discharged from the Army, they expanded the business in corporate functions and the like. The business has since expanded even further. The Sub-Branch initially engaged them during the COVID-19 lockdown in April 2020 to deliver hampers to the homes of veterans in the Sub-Branch for ANZAC Day. When we required a business to cater for "Veteran's Health Week" we once again engaged the services of the "Lazy Grazer" The initial lunch was held on Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> October which attracted fourteen guests, both male and female. Daniel delivered the individually packed lunches. Before we ate, Daniel gave a short, informative talk about his change of lifestyle after he discharged from the Army. He was highly active whilst serving, eating smaller amounts and healthy food. Once he was discharged, he began 'snacking' causing weight gain. He realised that he needed to alter his diet.

Each pack contained a selection of sliced lean meats, cheeses, snack biscuits, and fresh fruit. He also brought packs for people who may require a special diet. Each pack contained adequate for a healthy, wholesome lunch.

The second luncheon attracted seventeen veterans both male and female guests. Daniel once again arrived promptly with a varied selection of meals, Daniel once again gave a short talk on healthy eating. The final luncheon was held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> October. Daniel once again delivered the meals, gave a short talk before we ate and talked.

A short report was prepared and forwarded to DVA in Sydney along with photos and the acquittal of the grant. DVA replied congratulating the Sub-Branch on our success. Daniel and Sarah were also thanked for their contribution. They also became members of the Sub-Branch after the first lunch.

Vice-President - Welfare

Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch

5<sup>th</sup> December 2022

# Photos from the Veterans' Health Week October 2022.



# Veterans' Health Week 2022 – Certificate of Appreciation

Dear Peter,

On behalf of the Department of Veterans' Affairs, we would like to thank you for hosting a Veterans' Health Week (VHW) event in 2022.

We greatly appreciate all the planning and effort your organisation provided to deliver a VHW event supporting the theme of Nutrition: Eat Well, for the benefit of the veteran community. Please find attached a certificate of appreciation for your organisation from the Repatriation Commissioner, Mr Don Spinks AM.

The date and themes for VHW 2023 will be advised widely once the details are finalised and we look forward to your organisation being involved in a VHW event again next year.

If you would like to discuss your event ideas and planning for next year, please don't hesitate to contact us.

*Kind regards*

## Community Support Advisory Team (NSW ACT)

Lived Experience and Community Strategy

Mental and Social Health Programs Branch | Mental Health & Wellbeing Services Division

Department of Veterans' Affairs

E: [csa.nsw.act@dva.gov.au](mailto:csa.nsw.act@dva.gov.au) | W: [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au)  
| W: [www.openarms.gov.au](http://www.openarms.gov.au)

DVA General Enquiries: 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)



Every Friday members and guests are coming for a chat and enjoy freshly brewed coffee & cake with former service mates.



Photos below: Coffee Catch up on Friday 18 November with a purpose. Packing the Christmas` The Serviceman edition.



**Photos below: The last this year Coffee Catch up on Friday 9 December.**





## RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH DIARY 2023

9 Jan	Office reopens	
17 Jan	WV SB Board Meeting	1330 Corey Room
26 Jan	Australia Day public holiday	Office closed
31 Jan	WV SB OGM	1400 Corey Room
14 Feb	WV SB Board Meeting	1330 Corey Room
03 Mar	<b>Eddison Day Club Birthday &amp; OGM Lunch</b>	<b>Irish Club</b>
13 Mar	Canberra Day public holiday	Office closed
14 Mar	WV SB Board Meeting	1330 Corey Room
28 Mar	WV SB OGM	1400 Corey Room
7 Apr	Good Friday public holiday	Office closed
10 Apr	Easter Monday public holiday	Office closed
11 Apr	WV SB Board Meeting	1330 Corey Room
24 Apr	<b>ANZAC Eve Dinner</b>	<b>1800 Orion Room CSCC</b>
25 Apr TBC	WV SB ANZAC Day Service	0830 Eddison Park TBC
25 Apr	ANZAC Day March AWM	1000 Sub-Branch Contingent
25 Apr	ANZAC DAY public holiday	Office closed
9 May	WV SB Board Meeting	1330 Corey Room
29 May	Reconciliation Day public holiday	Office closed
30 May	WV SB AGM/OGM	1400 Corey Room
12 June	Queen's birthday public holiday	Office closed
13 Jun	WV SB Board Meeting	TBA
27 Jun	<b>WV SB OGM Dinner</b>	<b>TBC</b>
11 Jul	WV SB Board Meeting	TBA
25 Jul	WV SB OGM	TBA
8 Aug	WV SB Board Meeting	TBA
29 Aug	WV SB OGM	TBA
12 Sep	WV SB Board Meeting	TBA
26 Sep	WV SB OGM	TBA
02 Oct	Labour Day public holiday	Office closed
10 Oct	WV SB Board Meeting	TBA
31 Oct	<b>WV OGM Dinner</b>	<b>TBC</b>
4-9 Nov	Remembrance Day Poppy Appeal	Canberra
14 Nov	WV SB Board Meeting	TBA
11 Nov	Remembrance Day Service	1030 at Australian War Memorial
28 Nov	WV SB OGM	TBA
12 Dec	WV SB Board Meeting	TBA
13 Dec TBC	WV SB Christmas lunch	1200 for 1230 CSCC TBA
15 Dec	Christmas closedown	From midday



**THE HON MATT KEOGH MP**  
MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE PERSONNEL

**THE HON MATT THISTLETHWAITE MP**  
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR DEFENCE  
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR THE REPUBLIC

MS22-000366

Mr John King  
National Vice President  
Returned and Services League of Australia  
president@actrsl.org.au

Dear Mr King,

#### **VETERANS' AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITIES**

As you may be aware, following the 2022 election, the Australian Government's Veterans' Affairs portfolio is the responsibility of the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs. We are writing to advise of the division of Veterans' Affairs portfolio responsibilities.

The Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs has responsibility for Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS) and Defence Service Homes Insurance (DSHI) scheme, Veterans' matters relating to Disaster Relief Australia, Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling, and the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway.

The Assistant Minister will assist the Minister for Veterans' Affairs in responding to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, and attending Office of Australian War Graves commemorative events.

All other Veterans' Affairs responsibilities will remain with the Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours faithfully,

**HON MATT KEOGH MP**

1 December 2022

**HON MATT THISTLETHWAITE MP**

1 December 2022



# DVA Deputy Commissioner NSW/ACT Update

It has been lovely to see many of you at various events over the past few weeks, including consultation forums in both the ACT and NSW and end of year functions. It has been wonderful to meet in person again and to hear how your local veteran and family community has been going.

On Monday 5 December, we saw the official opening of the **Nowra Veteran Wellbeing Centre** by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Matt Keogh MP. The event saw a number of dignitaries, veterans, families, current serving members and community members attend. Congratulations to RSL NSW and RSL LifeCare for their work on establishing the centre, which will form part of the Veterans' and Families' Hub network.

Below is an update on some of the latest news from DVA:

[Services during the holiday season](#)

[Prime Minister's Veteran Employment Awards](#)

[Latest DVA TV](#)

[Pre-Budget Submission](#)

I would also like to advise that I will be taking some leave from Thursday 15 December, returning Tuesday 3 January 2023. During this time, Sonia Gregory will be acting Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Secretary. My emails will continue to be monitored for any urgent matters.

Thank you for the work that you have done in supporting veterans and families throughout 2022, and I look forward to continuing that great work with you in 2023. I wish all of you a very happy and safe festive season.

Warm regards,

Victoria

## DVA and Open Arms services during the holiday season

As usual, some DVA services will be unavailable during the holiday period – Christmas Day to Monday 2 January inclusive. They are:

DVA's Veterans' Access Network (VAN) offices

DVA's General Enquiries phone line and email

DVA staff will be available to process transport requests for medical treatment on 28, 29 and 30 December.

Pension payment and incapacity payments dates will remain the same.

Claims processing delegates, Claims Support staff, and staff processing invoice payments and reimbursements will also be unavailable from 24 December to 2 January 2023 inclusive.

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling centres will be closed during the holiday period. However, the Open Arms counselling phone line will remain open 24 hours, seven days a week throughout the holiday period on [1800 011 046](tel:1800011046).

For full details on DVA's reduced services over the holiday period, please visit the [DVA website](#).

## Prime Minister's National Veterans' Employment Awards

The winners of the Prime Minister's National Veterans' Employment Awards were announced at a ceremony on 24 November in Canberra.

Bluerydge, a Canberra-based cyber security firm, was announced as the 2022 Outstanding Employer of the Year, and Ms Amanda McCue was recognised for her Outstanding Contribution to Veteran/ Partner Employment.

These awards recognise organisations that actively recruit, employ and support veterans, as well as celebrating individual veteran and partner employees and entrepreneurs who are excelling in the civilian workplace.

See [the program's website](#) for the full list of winners and more information about them.

## DVA TV recent videos now available for viewing

Remembrance Day 2022

Your First Point of Contact: The Veteran Access Network

Open Arms – 40 Years Supporting the Veteran Community

## Pre-Budget Submissions

On 5 December 2022, the Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Financial Services called for submissions from individuals, businesses and community groups on their views regarding priorities for the 2023-24 Budget.

Stakeholders are invited to share their submissions for the 2023-24 Budget by Friday 27 January 2023.

See <https://treasury.gov.au/consultation/2023-24-pre-budget-submissions>

### **Victoria Benz**

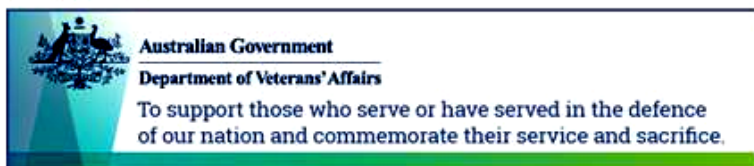
Deputy Commissioner, NSW & ACT

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Tel (02) 9213 7878 Ext 417878 Mobile 0417 654 347

[Victoria.benz@dva.gov.au](mailto:Victoria.benz@dva.gov.au) or [dc.nsw.and.act@dva.gov.au](mailto:dc.nsw.and.act@dva.gov.au)

[www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au)





Australian Government  
Department of Veterans' Affairs

# Get support for social wellbeing and employment



Join our trial program to help eligible veterans with tailored support for social wellbeing and employment.

## What's involved?

Veterans who participate will be allocated a professional consultant who will develop an activity plan that aligns with their individual goals and needs in their civilian life.

The activity plan will last for three to six months and can include support funded by DVA to:

- build new social connections in your local community
- become job-ready
- change careers or adjust to the civilian workforce
- get a Medicare Card or engage a suitable GP.



## Am I eligible?

You can join the program if you:

- feel you would benefit from the supports available
- have separated from the Australian Defence Force or are in the process of transitioning
- live in Australia
- have no accepted liability or you are waiting on the outcome of your first claim with DVA
- are not already participating in a DVA rehabilitation program
- your service is covered under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA)* or the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988 (DRCA)*.

## Find out more

To find out more, email [NLR@dva.gov.au](mailto:NLR@dva.gov.au), or call 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

We'll send you more information about the program, including what it covers and what it doesn't. We'll also send you a questionnaire to help us work out the types of support services that may suit you.

If you're accepted, your consultant will contact you to help you develop your personal plan.



# Free 12 Month Health and Fitness Program

- Returned Veterans, Peacekeepers & ADF Firefighter Scheme -

The Heart Health Program is fully funded by the DVA and aims to help you increase your physical health and general wellbeing through 12 months of practical exercise support and advice on healthy lifestyle information. The program's goal is to guide and assist participants in establishing positive and lifelong change leading to a healthier and more active lifestyle.

Group or individual programs available.

## How it works: Heart Health Program

The program runs for 12 months and includes regular physical activity sessions as part of a group of other eligible veterans, or if participating as an individual, a program provided exercise resource that provides you with the opportunity to increase or compliment your current level of activity plus the delivery of 12 healthy lifestyle education seminars or modules.

The program encourages a safe environment to allow all participants to improve their health and fitness at their own pace.

### The program covers a range of topics including:

- Setting healthy goals
- Nutrition and diet advice
- Advice on lowering alcohol consumption
- Developing better sleep patterns
- Stress management
- Managing diabetes
- Taking care of your body
- Managing your weight
- Maintaining a healthy heart

## Heart Health Program – Flexible Delivery

The program is offered in two formats. The Group Heart Health Program or the Individual Heart Health Program. The program caters for all age groups, genders and levels of fitness and or mobility.

### You may want to:

- Improve your general fitness
- Improve your knowledge on health and wellbeing
- Improve your social connections with other likeminded veterans

## Am I eligible?

Started over 20 years ago for those returned from Vietnam, the Heart Health Program is free and open to all veterans with operational service, peacekeepers and those covered under the ADF firefighters scheme who have not previously participated in the Heart Health Program before.

### To check your eligibility visit

<http://www.veteranshearthealth.com.au/eligibility>



## Registering Your Interest

Registering your interest or checking eligibility is easy.

Visit <http://www.veteranshearthealth.com.au/eligibility> and follow the steps.

Call the program phone number **1300 246 262** at any time to speak to one of our team.

## Heart Health Team - DVA Heart Health Program

Program proudly delivered on behalf of the DVA by:

**CHM Corporate Health Management Pty Ltd**

Toorak Place, 521 - 529 Toorak Road, Toorak VIC 3142

**Direct:** 1300 246 262

**Email:** [hearthealth@chm.com.au](mailto:hearthealth@chm.com.au)

**Web:** <http://www.veteranshearthealth.com.au>



## Christmas Close Down !!!

The RSL Woden Valley Sub-Branch office at Holder will close from noon Friday 16 December 2022 and will reopen on Monday 9 January 2023

Hi Folks. On Friday 9 December was our last gathering for 2022 as the office will close over the Christmas/New Year period. We will recommence our Coffee Catch Ups on Friday 27 January 2023 in the Corey room. It has been a remarkable year of friendships, conversations and collegiality, and I thank you for sharing it with each other. With every best wish and blessing for a happy and peaceful Christmas, and good health throughout the New Year,

Rev **Mick O'Donnell** ☕ 🎄 🌈 > [jeep1945@hotmail.com](mailto:jeep1945@hotmail.com)

PS. A special thanks to our Alex Solecka for her hospitality (and cake).

### Contact Us

Give us a call for more information or access to our services

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Visit us on the web at  
[www.rslwoden.org.au](http://www.rslwoden.org.au)

Office hours are  
9am-3pm Mon-Fri

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