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**Our prayers are with the families of the thirteen U.S. service members who died today in defense of our Constitution**

## **Message from John Rowan on VA Healthcare After Receiving Pacemaker at Manhattan VAMC**

**(Washington, D.C.)** – I am grateful to the staff of the Manhattan VA Medical Center as well as the medical team from New York University Medical School for the excellent care I received last week. On Wednesday, I was feeling dizzy and faint, so my wife, Mariann, drove me to the Emergency Room of the Manhattan VAMC on 23rd Street. I was seen immediately and given an EKG. As my BPM was under 30, I was rushed to the Intensive Care Unit, and with treatment, my pulse rose to 42 BPM. However, it was determined I needed a pacemaker.

On Friday morning, surgery was performed, and my pacemaker was implanted. When I woke up, I felt remarkably better. My BPM was up to 67, and after four hours in post-op, I was able to go home, with the welcomed good news that I can look forward to a complete recovery.

This operation comes four and a half years after I was given a new aortic valve at the Manhattan VAMC, which is associated with the NYU Medical School. As veterans, we have access to the best and most up-to-date medical care through the affiliated medical schools, while receiving the caring treatment from VA staff, many of whom are veterans. I urge all eligible veterans to consider using VA health facilities—outreach centers, community clinics, and medical centers, and to pay attention to their health.”

Ironically, while recuperating at home Friday, I found myself playing phone tag with VA Secretary Denis McDonough. He was reaching out to discuss the situation in Afghanistan, its effects on Vietnam veterans, and the VA’s response. Secretary McDonough was pleased to learn of my deep satisfaction with the VA’s healthcare operations, and he hopes to engage us in a conversation about how the VA can be there for veterans, in light of the current situation.

I urge each of you to take the time to care for your health.

*Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is the nation’s only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated to the needs of Vietnam-  
eraveteransand their families. VVA’s founding principle is “Never again will one generation of veterans aban-  
ndon another.*