

Clark forum on veteran suicide timely amid Fort Hood tragedy

By **HOWARD BUCK**
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The event was scheduled by Clark College weeks ago, to coincide with Veterans Day.

But now comes new urgency, given the mass shooting tragedy at Fort Hood in Texas.

"Operation SAVE: Saving Veterans' Lives," is the topic of an open forum from noon to 1 p.m. Monday at

Clark College, in the Penguin Student Lounge (fireplace room), on the west side of Gaiser Hall.

Guest speaker for the latest in Clark's "Mental Health Mondays" series — open and free to all — is Robert Tell, licensed social worker and suicide prevention coordinator at Portland's Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Tell will detail the scope of the problem of suicide among military

veterans, sort myths and misinformation and discuss how to identify a veteran at risk and to effectively gain assistance.

Operation SAVE is shorthand for: Signs of suicidal thinking; Ask questions; Validate the person's experience; Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help.

The Department of Veterans Affairs reports male veterans have suicide

rates twice that of civilians of either gender. As many as 1,000 suicides each year occur among veterans under VA care, and thousands more among all veterans.

Mental Health Mondays sessions are sponsored by the Clark College counseling center. For information, call 360-992-2902.

The Clark campus is at 1933 Fort Vancouver Way.