

# VETERANS JOURNAL



PUBLISHED BY  
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Fall 2015 Issue

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The information in this journal is being provided to make the veteran community aware of some current events, activities and veteran's issues that are of mutual concern. From time to time, we will include some relevant information important enough to be repeated to insure that veterans and their families are aware of the full range of benefits and entitlements available to them.



*I'm excited for  
Bright Leaves, Bonfires,  
Fuzzy Boots, Apple Pie,  
Pumpkin Carving,  
Comfy Sweaters,  
Hot Cocoa, Jeans,  
Plaid Shirts, Crisp Air,  
Football Games,  
Watching Stars,  
and Comfy Blankies.  
Hurry up Fall!!*



## “Ohio unveils special ‘Military Sacrifice’ license plates”



COLUMBUS, OHIO (June 9, 2015) – Ohio introduced a special license plate for immediate relatives of any member of the U.S. Armed Forces who died outside a combat zone while serving honorably in the military.

The “Military Sacrifice” plate was possible through a law that took effect in March.

It is being offered for spouses, children, parents, grandparents, and siblings of qualifying service members. The Bureau of Motor Vehicles says they’ll have to submit affidavits verifying those relationships and pay regular

registration fees to get the special plates.

The new design joins about 40 special license plates that the state offers to recognize veterans’ service and recipients of certain military medals.



The human toll – Military & Civilian casualties – of U.S. Military Operations over the past 14 years was 6,855 dead and 52,251 wounded, according to an August 2015 report compiled by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) from October 7, 2001 to July 28, 2015.





### “VA Launches Community-Based Employment Service for Homeless Veterans”

*Securing Stable, Long-term  
Employment A Key Step To End  
Veteran Homelessness*

WASHINGTON (June 10, 2015) – The new program, Homeless Veteran Community Employment Services (HVCES), relies on Community Employment Coordinators (CECs) who know their communities and can work with local employers to identify suitable jobs based on a Veteran’s skills and abilities.

Each VA medical Center (VAMC) will have a dedicated CEC who will be responsible for connecting homeless and at-risk Veterans to appropriate VA and community-based employment services. CECs also will work with existing VA employment programs and local workforce development organizations to identify other employment-related resources for this subset of the Veterans population. Employers who are interested in hiring a job-ready Veterans exiting homelessness should contact a local CEC who can work with them to find local Veteran candidates with applicable skillsets. Visit [www.va.gov/homeless/cec-](http://www.va.gov/homeless/cec-)

[contacts.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/cec-contacts.asp) for a list of the CECs in your local area.

More information about VA’s homeless programs is available at [www.va.gov/homeless](http://www.va.gov/homeless). If you know a Veteran who is homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless, refer him or her to a local VAMC, where homeless coordinators are ready to help. Veterans and their families can also call 1-877-4AID-VET to get connected to VA services.

### “VA Expands Disability Benefits for Air Force Personnel Exposed to Contaminated C-123 Aircraft”

WASHINGTON (June 18, 2015) – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) published a new regulation that expands eligibility for some benefits for a selected group of Air Force Veterans and Air Force Reserve personnel who were exposed to the herbicide Agent Orange through regular and repeated contact with contaminated C-123 aircraft that had been used in Vietnam as part of Operation Ranch Hand (ORH).

VA encourages reservists who were assigned to flight, ground, or medical crew duties at Lockbourne/Rickenbacker Air Force Base in Ohio (906<sup>th</sup> and 907<sup>th</sup> Tactical Air Groups or 355<sup>th</sup> and 356<sup>th</sup> Tactical Airlift Squadron), Westover Air Force Base in Massachusetts (731<sup>st</sup> Tactical Air Squadron and 74<sup>th</sup> Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron), or Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

International Airport (758<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron) during the period of 1969 to 1986, and developed an Agent Orange-related disability to file a disability compensation claim online through the joint VA-Department of Defense web portal, eBenefits at <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/>. Active duty who served in the regular USAF unit location where a contaminated C-123 was assigned and who had regular and repeated contact with aircraft through flight, ground, or medical duties and developed an Agent Orange-related disability are encouraged to apply also. For the full article and the steps in processing your claims go to <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/>. For the final rule go to [www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection](http://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection). For more information on applying for these benefits, including the affected units, Air Force Specialty Codes and dates of service for affected crew members, and a listing of Agent Orange-related conditions, visit [www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/agentorange-c123.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/agentorange-c123.asp).





### **“Same Sex Couples”**

MILITARYTIMES (June 29, 2015) – Same sex married couples will now be able to share veterans pensions, home loans, medical services, and similar benefits previously unavailable to them, department officials announce on June 29, 2015. On June 26, the Supreme Court ruled that same-sex couples have the right to marry in all states and that those unions must be recognized. There will be new guidance in coming weeks.

### **“VA-led Consortium Launches Brain Bank for Research on PTSD”**

WASHINGTON (July 2, 2015) – A consortium led by the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has launched the first brain tissue bio repository (also known as a “brain bank”) – to support research on the causes, progression and treatment of PTSD affecting Veterans.

The national brain bank will follow the health of enrolled participants during their lifetime. Participants in the brain bank will donate their brain and other body tissue after their death. The

donated tissue, along with each Veteran’s health information, will provide crucial information for use in research on PTSD and related disorders.

Participating sites are located at VA medical centers in Boston, Massachusetts – San Antonio, Texas – West Haven, Connecticut – and White River Junction, Vermont – along with the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences at Bethesda, Maryland (USUHS).

Veterans interested in learning more about enrolling in the brain bank are encouraged to call its toll-free number 1-800-762-6609 or visit its website [http://www.research.va.gov/programs/tissue\\_banking/PTSD/default.cfm](http://www.research.va.gov/programs/tissue_banking/PTSD/default.cfm).

### **“AFRC Garmisch (Europe) Update”**

MILITARYTIMES (July 29, 2015), Jowers, K. – Troops, retirees and their families living outside Europe no longer can directly book stays at the Edelweiss Lodge and Resort in Garmisch, Germany, following a recent review of the eligibility regulations. Under the rule change, the only way for individuals living outside Europe to stay at the Armed Forces Recreation Center resort is as a guest of an eligible person, or if they have been living in Europe – on temporary duty, for example – for at least 30 days and have verification of eligibility from German customs officials

before making reservations. The patrons of the resort are allowed to sponsor up to three rooms, and must be present during their guests’ stay. Military retirees living in Germany are authorized to use the resort once they have the proper tax authorizations from the German government.

### **“VA Expands Review of Chemical Exposure in Drinking Water at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune”**



WASHINGTON (August 3, 2015) – As part of VA’s ongoing commitment to provide care to Veterans and their families, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it will start the process of amending its regulations to establish presumptions of service connection for certain conditions resulting from exposure to contaminated drinking water at the U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune in North Carolina.

For more information, Veterans and family members should contact the nearest VA healthcare facility by calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387) or visit [www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune). For further information on Camp Lejeune: VHA Office of Public Health has a Website on Camp Lejeune historical water contamination at: [www.publichealth.va.gov/exposure/camp-lejeune/index.asp](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposure/camp-lejeune/index.asp).



**“VA Expands Review of  
Chemical Exposure in  
Drinking Water at Marine  
corps Base Camp Lejeune”**  
(Continued from Page 3)

The U.S. Marine Corps encourages all those who lived or worked at Camp Lejeune before 1987 to register for notifications regarding Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water at <https://clnr.hqi.usmc.mil/clwater>.

**“Dayton National Cemetery  
now offers full military  
funerals”**

DAYTON, Ohio (Aug. 4, 2015) – The Dayton National Cemetery is now offering full military funerals for veterans as part of the Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Association’s effort to become more involved in the western Ohio city.

**“VA Launces New No-Cost  
Training Programs”**

WASHINGTON (Aug. 5, 2015) – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) launched two new no-cost training programs, Accelerated Learning Programs (ALPs) and VA learning Hubs, to help transitioning Service members and Veterans from all eras learn skills, earn

credentials, and advance in civilian careers following separation from service.

ALPs and Learning Hubs are part of VA’s Veterans Economic Communities Initiative (VECI), promoting education and employment opportunities for Veterans through integrated networks of support in 50 cities.

For more information visit <http://benefits.va.gov/tap/alp.asp>. For more information about the VECI or to learn more about VA ALPs and Learning Hubs, contact [VeteranEmployment.vbaco@va.gov](mailto:VeteranEmployment.vbaco@va.gov).



**Newsorthy...**

~ **Soldier for Life** New Window Sticker Approved to promote the Soldier for Life program called the Department of the Army Label 180.

~ **Military Awards Replacement** Go to National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) for more information at the following website:

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/replace-medals.html>

~ **Veterans’ ID Card** President Obama signed into law in July a bill creating identification card for veterans. The VA will be issuing general purpose ID cards, regardless of eligibility for government benefits. There will be a modest fee. Look for more

information on the plans to issue the cards in the near future.

~ **IRS Forms Coming to Retirees** Reminder beginning January 2016, the Defense Finance And Accounting Service (DFAS) will provide the appropriate IRS Form 1095 to all retirees, annuitants, former spouses, and all other individuals having TRICARE coverage during tax year 2015 to prove they have minimal essential health care coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

~ **Army MWR Libraries** Available to retired solders online at <http://mylibraryus.armybiznet.com>.

~ **Vietnam Vet Radio** An internet only non-profit radio station dedicated to the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and their family and friends at the following website: <http://vietnamvetradio.com>

~ **The Ohio Veterans’ Memorial Park** There is a new Medal of Honor Memorial which honors those who have received the country’s highest military reward.

~ **VA Service Animals Rules** The VA has revised its regulation regarding the presence of animals on VA property.





~ **Medicare Choices** Original Medicare you may add a Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) policy to cover some of the costs not covered by Medicare. Retired Military, you will have access to TRICARE for Life, but to use that program you must still sign up for Medicare parts A & B. In either case, you will need suitable coverage for prescription drugs - either included as part of your Medicare Advantage plan or by enrolling in a separate Medicare prescription drug plan (Part D). Go to [www.Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov) for more information.

~ **Military Records** A fire in 1973 destroyed 80 percent of Army personnel records for soldiers discharged between 1 NOV 1912 to 1 JAN 1960 and 75 percent of the Air Force records of Airmen discharged between 25 SEP 1947 to 1 JAN 1964. Veterans whose records have been lost can download and fill out a specific form at the National Archives or VA website [www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/na-13055-info-2-reconstruct-](http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/na-13055-info-2-reconstruct-)

[medical -data.pdf](#) that authorizes the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) to search for other types of documents that would assist the veteran with their VA healthcare access or compensation claim, or for valuable research their family member's service history. For more information, visit the Department of Veteran Affairs website <http://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/NPRC1973Fire.asp>.

~ **Piano4Patriots (p4p)** Offers free private music lessons for kids of our active duty military families. For more information on the program go to the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Piano4Patriots/info?tab=overview>.



### Thankfulness

For my Family who are always there.  
Letting me know how much they care.  
For the Freedoms here in America though many take them for granted.  
For education which is the key, For the Caring person that I will be.



~ 500 Items left at The Wall can be seen at [www.vvmf.org/items](http://www.vvmf.org/items) ~



2015 Holiday Gift Card  
Pre-Registration  
Starts October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015  
from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday  
– Friday at the Franklin County  
Veterans Service Commission for  
more information see flyer below.

### Upcoming Events...

#### September

23<sup>rd</sup> – Veterans Career Workshop to help veterans find employment. From 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the Military Resource Center at 1395 E. Dublin-Granville Rd.

#### October

20<sup>th</sup> – Central Ohio Homeless Veterans Stand Down at the Greater Columbus Convention Center, Hall E from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., for more information go to [www.centralohiostanddown.org](http://www.centralohiostanddown.org).  
24<sup>th</sup> – MAPS Air Museum “Welcome Home Veterans” honoring Veterans who served between 1950 and 1975 at 1 p.m. Here is the form and information for the event which has limited space: <http://mapsairmuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2015-Veterans-Program-Form.jpg>



*Upcoming Events...*  
(Continued from Page 5)

*November*

5<sup>th</sup> – Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2015 Induction Ceremony at the Lincoln Theater in Columbus, Ohio at 11 a.m.

6<sup>th</sup> – Columbus Veterans Day Parade honoring the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of end of WWII.

12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> – National Symposium “Responsibility, Morality and the Costs of War: PTSD, Moral Injury and Beyond” on the Ohio State Campus. For more information on the event go to theatre.osu.edu.

*7 Programs to Help Heal*

*PTSD~*

1. *Starlight Military Program*
2. *Paws for Veterans*
3. *The Station House Retreat*
4. *Homecoming for Veterans*
5. *Omega Veterans Trauma & Resilience Program*
6. *Princeton House First Responder Program*
7. *Meghan’s Foundation*



“Congratulations”



**Michael L. Close**  
**United States Army**  
**Veteran**  
**Vietnam War**

FCVSC (September 30, 2015) – Michael L. Close will retire from the Franklin County Veterans Service Commission after serving from 2011 – 2015. As a chapter closes in your life and a new one starts for you may your years be filled with all the things you’re looking forward to! Thanks for your service to our Commission.

“Holiday Health and Safety Tips”

1. Wash your hands often.
2. Stay Warm.
3. Manage Stress.
4. Travel Safely.
5. Be smoke-free.
6. Get check-ups and vaccinations.
7. Watch the kids.
8. Prevent Injuries.
9. Handle and prepare food safely.
10. Eat healthy, and be active.

*Home* is where you *Learn*  
to *Laugh*, to *Share*, to *Live*, to *Love*  
to *Forgive*

NEARING YOUR 65<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY?

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**  
**REGARDING YOUR MEDICAL BENEFITS**

When you turn 65, your medical benefits will change. MEDICARE will become your primary medical coverage and TRICARE pays secondary to MEDICARE. You MUST enroll in MEDICARE PART B to retain your TRICARE coverage. If you are within 90 days of your 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, you should log on to <http://www.ssa.gov> or <http://www.medicare.gov> to enroll in MEDICARE PART B. Additional information can be found on TRICARE website at <http://www.tricare.mil/Plans/Eligibility/MedicareEligible.aspx>.

“Veterans Day”



*Standing* in front of mist  
and dirt they  
did not tremble  
Longing for their *families*  
did not make them fall  
For our *country*  
they stood  
So that we may have  
*comfort* in our sleep  
Remember in your *heart*  
And in those *tears* shed  
That these *heroes* fought  
To keep our lives *lit* ahead



You are invited to participate in our 2015 Veterans Holiday Meal Program



YOU MUST BE A ELIGIBLE VETERAN OR DEPENDENT AND A FRANKLIN COUNTY RESIDENT

Each qualified veteran or surviving spouse will receive a \$50.00 Kroger card to purchase a holiday meal. If you are in a shelter you will not be eligible for the holiday meal card.

You MUST have all these documents in hand to receive your card:

- Photo I.D.
DD 214
Household Income (award letter, current year tax return or current pay stub)
Marriage certificate (for spouses/surviving spouses)
Death certificate (for surviving spouses)

Saturday, November 14, 2015

Time: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Location: Veterans Memorial Building West Hall
280 East Broad St., 1st Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

NO MEAL CARDS WILL BE ISSUED BEFORE OR AFTER THE EVENT.

Income Guidelines (number in family)

Table with 8 columns representing family size (1-8) and corresponding income guidelines ranging from \$29,425 to \$102,225.



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