

VETERANS JOURNAL



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Summer 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.

SUMMER



Summer is finally here,
A day to get out in the sun,
A day to go to the beach,
And have a lot of fun.

It's time to go on vacation,
And just relax,
And then when it's all over,
You really don't want to come back.

It's time to drink lemonade,
And have picnics in the park,
And because the weather is so nice,
You can stay out way past dark.

So go enjoy the summer,
Because that's what it's all about,
Because in three months it will be all
over, and that is sure no doubt.

By Debbie Bongiovanni



“Vet Student Loans”

Devaney, T., The Hill, (May 28, 2015) – The Department of Justice (DOJ) has secured \$60 million in refunds for military veterans it contends were illegally charged too much interest rate on their students loans. The student loan service provider formerly known as Sallie Mae, which has since changed their name to Navient Corp., will begin issuing the refunds next month to 77,795 veterans who were overcharged for their education. The refunds will range from checks of \$10 to more than \$100,000. The average veteran will receive about \$770 back from Navient, the DOJ noted. This is the first time the federal government has sued a student loan company for charging military veterans too much interest.

“Vet Toxic Exposure~Ft. McClellan”

VFW Action Corps (April 17, 2015) – The VA launched a Web page in response to years of activism by some veterans who believe that toxic exposure at Fort McClellan made them ill. The VA posted the page April 7, providing a comprehensive list of information, but carefully noting that it's unlikely anyone could have developed serious health problems from serving at the former fort. The VA wants to ensure that veterans who suffer from deteriorating health conditions consistent with exposure to Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) are able to obtain the care and benefits they need. This announcement is a step toward recognizing that these



“Vet Toxic Exposure ~ Ft. McClellan”

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veterans may have long-lasting health effects that are a direct result of their service at Fort McClellan. The VFW will continue to push VA and Congress to ensure they receive the benefits and services they deserve. To read more, visit: <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/fort-mcclellan>.



⚓ SUMMER ⚓

Hair gets lighter.
Skin gets darker.
Water gets warmer.
Drinks get colder.
Music gets louder.
Nights get longer.
Life gets better.



“VA Begins Summer of Service to Bolster Volunteer Assistance for Veterans”

WASHINGTON (May 26, 2015) – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced a new nationwide initiative designed to build upon its existing partnerships to grow the number of individuals and organizations serving Veterans in their communities. The Department is renewing its

commitment to Veterans and embarking upon a “Summer of Service” that seeks the help of citizens across the country to honor the commitment. Volunteers can help to serve Veterans by visiting <http://www.volunteer.va.gov/> to find out the needs of your local VA facility.

“VA Launches Innovation Creation Series to Improve Quality of Life for Veterans”

WASHINGTON (May 15, 2015) – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has launched an Innovation Creation Series which will accept proposed solutions from designers, engineers, and problem solvers to help find creative ways to solve challenges that Veterans and civilian with disabilities face every day. For more information and to submit proposed solutions go to <http://www.innovation.va.gov/challenge/> through the end of June.

“Online Course Helps Healthcare Professionals Better Serve Veterans and Servicemembers”

WASHINGTON (April 27, 2015) – Veterans with a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Defense (DoD) have announced the launch of an online continuing education course aimed at helping health care professionals better treat

Veterans and Servicemembers.

The free course, *Military Culture: Core Competencies for Health Care Professionals* is being offered to community health care providers nationwide through the Veterans Health Administration’s (VHA) Training Finder Real-time Affiliated Integrated Network (TRAIN) which launched earlier this month. VHA TRAIN is part of TRAIN National, a comprehensive catalog of public health learning products.

The eight-hour, online course covers a variety of topics through interactive features, video vignettes, case examples and treatment planning scenarios. Each of the four modules within the course was developed using research, surveys and extensive interviews with Servicemembers and Veterans. For more information about the course, visit

<http://www.DeploymentPsych.org/Military-Culture>.

“Military Once Source Update”

Jowers, K., Military Times, (May 28, 2015) – Military One Source will offer peer support for troops and family members beginning this summer, expanding the military community’s option for confidential assistance. The move comes as DoD decided not to renew the contract for the



“Military Once Source Update”

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Vets4Warriors program, which provided peer-to-peer support for veterans, service members and families since December 2011. Contract for Vets4Warriors ends on August 15, 2015 and there is no word if they will continue with outside funding. Unlike Vets4Warriors, Military OneSource assistance is available only to retirees, veterans, and their families within 180 days after leaving the service. There should be more about this in the news at a later date.

“VA to Conduct Nationwide Series of Events to Celebrate Women Veterans”

WASHINGTON (June 6, 2015) – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will conduct a series of one-day events to raise awareness and celebrate the stories of women Veterans. The events, to be held in five locations across the country, will provide an overview of services and benefits available to women Veterans. Experts will be available to answer Veterans’ questions, and exhibitors will share information on their many resources. For more information about the VA’s Women Veterans Campaign

and VA’s commitment to women veterans, visit www.va.gov/womenvet.

“Divorce and SBP”

Impact on Survivor Benefit Plan

The Voice (May 2015) – Retirees who are enrolled in the Survivor Benefit Plan should notify the Defense Finance and Accounting Service of their divorce once it is finalized. Acting quickly after a divorce can avoid many pitfalls such as premiums being deducted beyond the date of divorce. If the divorce decree contains no language mandating the retiree’s need to elect former spouse coverage, it is vital that he or she notify DFAS as soon as the divorce is final so SBP spouse coverage can be suspended and SBP premiums stopped.

Retirees, within one year of divorce, must elect to convert spouse coverage to former spouse coverage when mandated by a court ordered divorce decree. If no court ordered requirement is imposed, the retiree may voluntarily cover the former spouse under the SBP. Failure to maintain SBP as instructed in the divorce decree may lead to contempt of court charges and require a lengthy Board for Corrections of Military Record review to correct. Retirees who have SBP coverage must be familiar with the rules. A lack of knowledge is rarely a justifiable defense should a dispute arise. Retirees with suspended spouse coverage who remarry may elect to

resume his/her prior level of SBP coverage, increase SBP coverage, or terminate spouse coverage for the new spouse within one year of the remarriage. Failure to notify DFAS of the new marriage within one year of remarriage will result in the prior level of coverage being automatically reinstated effective the date the new spouse becomes an eligible beneficiary. For more information with changing SBP coverage contact the SBP or casualty assistance representative at the nearest military base.

“TRICARE Alcohol Awareness Program”

TRICARE Communications (April 16, 2015) – If you find that your drinking has become a habit or that you need a drink to relax, relieve anxiety or go to sleep, you should reevaluate your drinking and talk to your doctor. To help beneficiaries deal with alcohol abuse, TRICARE has an alcohol awareness program that aims to prevent alcohol misuse and/or abuse, TRICARE’s “That Guy” campaign (<http://www.thatguy.com>) is a multi-media initiative, created specifically for the military community. That Guy encourages young enlisted personnel not to binge drink, by highlighting what’s at stake when they do. You can also get resource and help for alcohol abuse at TRICARE’s Alcohol Awareness page <http://www.tricare.mil/alcoholawareness>.





THE FOURTH OF JULY

By Ian Shields

I look to the ocean,
I look to the Sky
What do I see,
on the fourth of July

One flash of blue,
one flash of red
To honor survivors,
Along with the dead

They do what they can,
and did what they could
All of their deeds,
We honor and should

The strength of their arms,
The power of their fists
Reflected in new ways,
in happiness, and bliss

My smile, my laugh,
In more ways than one
Is how I repay those,
who's lives are done

It ends not here,
On this day of July
We'll Honor forever,
But forever we'll cry



“Library of Congress”

VFW Action Corps Weekly (May 29, 2015) – The Library of Congress has launched a new campaign that allows greater library access to those with vision and physical impairments. “That All May

Read” is a free library program of braille and audio materials circulated to enrolled patrons. People may be eligible for the program if they are blind, have a visual disability that prevents them from reading regular print, or have a physical disability that keeps them from being able to hold a book. For more information on the program, visit the following website: <http://www.loc.gov/ThatAllMayRead>

“World War 1 Memorial Update”

VFW Action Corps Weekly (May 15, 2015) – The World War 1 Centennial Commission is opening a design competition for the new nation memorial that will be built a block away from the White House in Pershing Park, which is along Pennsylvania Avenue between 14th and 15th streets. Officials have set up a two-stage competition and it is open to all. In the first stage, participants will submit narrative and graphic descriptions of a design concept responding to the competition's goals. Judges will select three to five submissions, and those entries will be further refined and developed in the second stage. The commission will have final decision on the selected design, based on the recommendation of a jury. The submission deadline is July 21, 2015, with the finalists to be announced on Aug. 4, 2015. The commission expects to

announce its selected design in January 2016. For more information on the competition go to <http://www.worldwar1centennial.org>.

“New VA Surviving Spouse Website”

The Voice (May 2015) – The Department of Veteran Affairs has created a new internet website for surviving spouses and dependents of military personnel who died on active duty and for survivors and dependents of veterans who died after leaving the service. The new website can be found at <http://www.vba.va.gov/survivors>.



“Summer Crises Programs”

~ Breathing Association (July 1st – August 31st) - For electric utility assistance only and is for households that include a person 60+ year, customers with household member who has a qualifying medical condition or households served by a non-regulated utility with disconnected notice. For more information go to <http://www.breathingassociation.org/heap/summer-crisis-program/>.

~ IMPACT – (July 1st – August 31st) – 3rd Annual “Beat the Heat” program. Through Summer Crisis Program (SCP), IMPACT, and



“Summer Crises Programs”

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the Ohio Development Service Agency a one-time benefit toward an electric utility bill if service is in threat of disconnection, is terminated, or if the service is being transferred. Households may utilize the SCP to obtain an air conditioner and/or fan to help residents beat the heat. For more information go to www.impactca.org.



Information...

~ Volunteers needed for Team Fisher House Charity Partner for the 2015 Air Force Marathon Race. For more information go to www.TeamFisherHouse.org/Volunteer_AFM.

~ The PDF for the Post-Vietnam Dioxin Exposure in Agent Orange-Contaminated C-123 Aircraft is available at http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=18848.



Free Financial Coaching for Veterans – Laura Orbash
[lorbash@afsc.com/](mailto:lorbash@afsc.com)
614-559-5066
COWIC, 1111 E. Broad St.
Columbus, Ohio

Summer Camp Information:

- 1) Military Children Camps
<http://www.operationwearehere.com/MilitaryChildrenCamps.html>
- 2) Camp Programs for CURRENT Guard, Reserve, or Active Duty Branch Members Only
http://www.ong.ohio.gov/frg/FRG_youthprograms.html
- 3) Camp Corral for children of wounded, disabled or fallen military service members
<http://www.campcorral.org/>
- 4) 2015 Columbus Parent Summer Camp Guide
<http://www.columbusparent.com/content/sections/guides/index.html>
- 5) CAP4Kids Columbus, OH – General Programs & Camps.
http://cap4kids.org/columbus/parent-handouts/after-school-camps/general-programs-and-camps/?doing_wp_cron=1397217139.6134099960327148437500
- 6) Franklin County Ohio 2015 Summer Camp Information.
<http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/ftp/slideshow/FCDJFS/D86E9B5F-B990-189F-3300423476C8191B.pdf>



CRISIS RESOURCES

Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255 and Press 1

Military Crisis Line

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

National Call Center for Homeless

Veterans

1-800-4AID.VET (424-3838)

VA Caregiver Support Line

1-855-260-3274

Wounded Warrior Resource

Center

1-800-342-9647



Upcoming Events....

June 2015:

May 25th – Sept. 11th - Dublin Arts Council displaying Eddie Adams: Vietnam collection for free in honor of the 50th Vietnam War Commemoration year. For more information and hours go to: <http://www.dublinarts.org/Events/Event/abid/132/ArticleId/143/Eddie-Adams-em-Vietnam-em.aspx>.

May 26th – Sept. 7th - More than 2,000 museums in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa are free to service members and their families (up to five members). For more information: arts.gov/bluestarmuseums or call museums directly to see if they are free or discounted. Not all museums have the special.

June 1st – Aug. 21st - Summer Food Program. For more information call 614-645-3642.

June 23rd – LifeCare Alliance coupon distribution event at 670 Harmon Ave at 7:30 a.m. Eligible seniors ages 60 and older who meet income criteria. For more information and an application call 614-278-3130.

June 23rd – Oct. 31st – Senior Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP). Eligible seniors ages 60 and older who meet income criteria. For more information call LifeCare Alliance at 614-437-2865.

June 7th - Founding Father’s 4th Annual Freedom Run. For more information go to <http://www.ovmp.org/calendar.htm>.

June 11th – Be A Hero for Military Kids 5K at Scioto Audubon Metro Park. For more information go to: <http://www.racepenguin.com/event/be-a-hero-for-military-kids/>

Stay *Positive*. Stay *Fighting*.
Stay *Brave*. Stay *Ambitious*.
Stay *Focused*. Stay *Strong*.
...Mentality is Everything.



June 12th – Spartan 7 Run (4 Mile run/walk) in celebration of the 240th birthday of the US Army at the Olentangy “Parklands” Park in Worthington, Ohio. Registration begins at 0630 with a start time at 0700.

June 14th – 11th Annual LCpl Daniel “Nate Deyarmin (USMC) Memorial Benefit Run and Car & Truck Show at Tallmadge Middle School in Tallmadge, Ohio. All proceeds benefitting Disabled/Disadvantaged American Veterans and their families. For more information go to www.dndfunds.org.

June 19th – 21st - 18th Annual Water Sports Weekend at the TAASC Adventure Center in Powell, Ohio. For more information and to register go to www.TAASC.org.

June 21st-26th – The 2015 National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Dallas, TX. For more information go to: www.wheelchairgames.org.

June 27th – Cpt. Nick Rozanski 3rd Annual Memorial Poker Run at the VFW Post 4719 in Gahanna, Ohio. All proceeds go to the Nick Rozanski Memorial Foundation.

June 27th – Rotary River Day for Vets at the Scioto Boat Club on Griggs Reservoir. The Rotary River Day will include wakeboarding, wake surfing, amputee waterskiing and boat rides. All activities are free of charge for participants and will include lunch. Only veterans are eligible to participate in the water sports events. For more information contact Johnny Dawson at johnny.dawson@edwardjones.com. To register for the events email Kathy Prosser at Kathy.prosser@edwardjones.com.

June 29th – July 5th – Military Free Dayz at the Columbus Zoo.

June 2015:

July 3rd – July 5th – Free Admission on Military Days – King Island. Also military personnel can purchase up to six (6) discount admission tickets for member of their immediate family for only \$29.99 at the front gate admissions windows on the day of the visit. Visit <https://www.visitkingisland.com> for more information on who is eligible.

July 11th – USO Discount Offer for the Quaker State 400. For more information visit www.KentuckySpeedway.com/tickets or call 1-859-578-2300. Code: USO.

July 18th – 4th Annual Military Appreciation Day. Free Admission at the Ohio History Center & Village from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Special Recognition Ceremony at 2pm honoring Warren E. Motts of Motts Military Museum.

July 30th – Columbus Veteran Job Fair. Recruit Military job fair will be at The Ohio Stadium from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. For more information and to register go to <https://events.recruitmilitary.com/events/columbus-veteran-job-fair-july-30-2015>.

August 2015:

August 8th – Annual Dedication Ceremony in the Memorial Brick Garden at Motts Military Museum. For more information: http://www.mottsmilitarymuseum.org/Memorial_Garden.html. Note the deadline to order a brick is July 1st, 2015.

August 15th – Lima Company 10 Year Reunion weekend. For more information: <http://www.momf.org/lima-company-10-year-reunionmemorial.html>.

August 21st – 22nd – 71st Anniversary of D-Day Conneaut, Ohio (1944 - 2015). For more information on events go to: www.ddayohio.us.



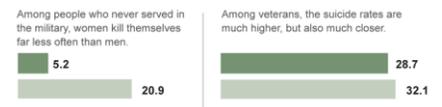
Suicide Rate of Female Military Veterans is Called ‘Staggering’

The suicide gap

Suicide rates vary by gender and veteran status, based on an analysis of nearly 174,000 suicides in 23 states between 2000 and 2010.

■ Women ■ Men

Annual number of suicides per 100,000 population



Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

@latimesgraphics

Zarembo, A., LA Times (June 8, 2015) – New government research shows that female military veterans commit suicide at nearly six times the rate of other women, a startling finding that experts say poses disturbing questions about the backgrounds and experiences of women who serve in the armed forces.

Their suicide rate is so high that it approaches that of male veterans, a finding that surprised researchers because men generally are far more likely than women to commit suicide.

The data include all 173,969 adult suicides – men and women, veterans and non-veterans – in 23 states between 2000 and 2010.



USO United through Reading Program for deployed service members. Please go to <http://www.unitedthroughreading.org/military-program/>





Daddy's Poem

Her hair was up in a ponytail, her favorite dress tied with a bow. Today was Daddy's Day at school, and she couldn't wait to go.

But her mommy tried to tell her, that she probably should stay home; why the kids might not understand, if she went to school alone.

But she was not afraid; she knew just what to say. What to tell her classmates of why he wasn't there today.

But still her mother worried, for her to face this day alone. And that was why, once again, she tried to keep her daughter home.

But the little girl went to school, Eager to tell them all. About a dad she never sees, a dad who never calls.

There were daddies along the wall in back, for everyone to meet. Children squirming impatiently, anxious in their seat.

One by one the teacher called on a student from the class to introduce their daddy, as seconds slowly passed.

At last the teacher called her name, every child turned to stare. Each of them was searching, A man who wasn't there.

"Where's her daddy at?" She heard a boy call out. "She probably doesn't have one," Another student dared to shout.

And from somewhere near the back, she heard a daddy say, "Looks like another deadbeat dad, too busy to waste his day."

The words did not offend her, as she smiled up at her Mom. And looked back at her teacher, who told her to go on...

And with hands behind her back, slowly she began to speak. And out from the mouth of a child, came words incredibly unique. "My Daddy couldn't be here, because he lives so far away. But I know he wishes he could be, since this is such a special day.

And though you cannot meet him, I wanted you to know all about my daddy, and how much he loves me so.

He loved to tell me stories, He taught me to ride my bike; He surprised me with pink roses, and taught me to fly a kite.

We used to share fudge sundaes, and ice cream in a cone and though you cannot see him. I'm not standing here alone.

'Cause my daddy's always with me, Even though we are apart; I know because he told me, He'll forever be in my heart"

With that, her little hand reached up, and lay across her chest feeling her own heartbeat, beneath her favorite dress.

And from somewhere there in the crowd of dads, her mother stood in tears. Proudly watching her daughter, who was wise beyond her years?

For she stood up for the love of a man not in her life, doing what was best for her, doing what was a right.

And when she dropped her hand back down, staring straight into the crowd. She finished with a voice so soft, But its message clear and loud.

"I love my daddy very much, he's my shining star. And if he could, he'd be here, but heaven's just too far.

You see he is an American Soldier and he died just this past year, when a roadside bomb hit his convoy and taught Americans to fear.

But sometimes when I close my eyes, it's like he never went away." And then she closed her eyes, and saw him there that day.

And to her mother's amazement, she witnessed with surprise, a room full of daddies and children, all starting to close their eyes. Who knows what they saw before them; who knows what they felt inside. Perhaps for merely a second, they saw him at her side.

"I know you're with me Daddy," to the silence she called out. And what happened next, made believers of those once filled with doubt.

Not one in that room could explain it, for each of their eyes had been closed. But there on the desk beside her, was a fragrant long-stemmed pink rose.

And a child was blessed, if only for a moment, by the love of her shining star and given the gift of believing, that heaven is never too far.

They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, but then an entire life to forget them.

Take the time....to live and love.

There must be many children in the same boat as this little girl, thanks to our servicemen and their families for the sacrifice they are making to keep our country free. The **ULTIMATE** sacrifice is being left behind. **Don't forget them.**



Have A Great Summer!!!!



**Franklin County
Veterans Service
Commission**



FRANKLIN COUNTY
VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION
280 EAST BROAD ST, 1st FLOOR
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