

# VETERANS JOURNAL



PUBLISHED BY  
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Winter 2014 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.



MERRY CHRISTMAS



&

Welcome 2015



*New is the year;*

*New are the hopes;*

*New is the resolution;*

*New are the spirits;*

*And new are my warm  
wishes just for you.*

*Have a promising  
and fulfilling New Year!*

*Happy New Year*

## Retirement

### Announcement...



**Director Douglas E. Lay**  
**Retiring after 35 Years of Service**  
**December 8, 2014**

Director Lay is a lifelong resident of Columbus, Ohio. Enlisted in the United States Army in 1965, serving in Korea, then volunteered for service in Vietnam 1967-1968, and a decorated, combat disabled veteran. For over 35 years he has been involved with administrating programs assisting veterans and their dependents. Since 2005 he has been the Director with the Franklin County Veterans Services.



*Dear Boss,*

*We are all sad to see you leave...  
With honesty and dedication, you  
pledged to protect and serve.  
Using courage and compassion,  
your community you did  
preserve. May the years of your  
retirement be rich, rewarding,  
and kind. And may there be no  
limit to the happiness you find...*

*As a chapter closes in your life,  
and a new one starts for you and  
your wife Karen by your side,  
your family, and friends too.  
Cherish every moment and have  
fun! Thanks for making our  
work life much easier and fun.  
We will cherish the knowledge  
you shared with us. May you get  
the best of everything in life.*

*Sincerely,  
Franklin County Veterans  
Services Staff*





### “Announcement”



Franklin County Veterans Service

Commission will be relocating sometime in December to Memorial Hall (280 E. Broad Street), the exact date TBA. For more information about updates on the move, check our website at <http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/vets/> and other county agencies.



### “Iraq Ohio Veterans Bonus Deadline to Apply December 31, 2014”



ODVS – Many Ohioans are looking ahead this month to Christmas, but veterans of the Armed Forces who served during the time of the Iraq War have a very important deadline falling just after the holiday – applications for the Ohio Veterans Bonus for Iraq era veterans must be submitted no later than December 31, 2014.

Veterans eligible to receive the Iraq War portion of the Ohio Veterans Bonus can have served anywhere in the world for at least 90 days active duty, not for training, between March 19, 2003 and December 31, 2011. The amount of the bonus is higher for service in the Iraq Theater. Eligible veterans must have been a resident of Ohio when they entered the military, and must be resident at the time they apply.

Veterans needing more information or who want to apply can call toll-free to 1-877-OHIO VET (1-877-644-6838) option 2, visit [www.veteransbonus.ohio.gov](http://www.veteransbonus.ohio.gov), or visit any county veterans service office (see [www.dvs.ohio.gov](http://www.dvs.ohio.gov) for an interactive map of the county offices). The department also provides information about the bonus through its social media and at veterans' events, and has advertised the program in print and broadcast media.



### “Candles In the Window During the Holidays”

A symbol of warmth and security of the family hearth and signals loyalty to family members and loved ones who are not present in the home.



### “Veterans in Piping (VIP) Program”

VA Office of Economic Opportunity (October 10, 2014) – VIP is open to *military personnel preparing to leave the service* and currently stationed at a participating base. Participants must be at least 18 years of age, have a high school diploma or equivalent, and be physically capable of performing work. For more information, visit <http://www.uavip.org/>.

### “Veterans Employment Center (VEC) and VA for Vets Update”

VA Office of Economic Opportunity (October 10, 2014) – The new VEC (<http://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/jobs>) is the single interagency site for Veterans employment. As such they have leveraged many of the tools that had and are on the VA for Vets website that are now incorporated into the VEC. Some

of those tools such as the Military Skills Translator, Resume Builder, and Federal Job Search functions will no longer be on the VA for Vets website as they are on the VEC site. All resumes, dashboards, skills assessments, etc., built on VA for Vets should be downloaded and stored on personal computers by December 1, 2014 as the information will no longer be available. Veterans are encouraged to visit the VEC in advance of the tools being removed from the VA for Vets to create a new profile and ensure their information is available to prospective employers on the VEC.

Veterans will continue to have access to the high-touch career readiness services provided by Veterans Employment Services Office's (VESO) staff, VA-specific job opportunities, information on the federal hiring process, training information, checklists, and guides on building resumes for federal occupations. Veterans will still use the same URL to access the VA for Vets site <http://vaforvets.va.gov/Pages/default.aspx> however; they will need to reestablish bookmarks/favorites to the URL. Veterans can always call 1-855-VA4Vets (1-855-824-8387) with questions regarding the information on the VA for Vets website or career readiness services. For a tutorial video on how to use the Veterans Employment Center, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWfhl-eSoWk>.

### “Tricare To Stop Mailing Paper Notification Letters”

Airforce Times (October 8, 2014) – Starting the month of October, Tricare will stop mailing letters to patients notifying them of changes to their health coverage or eligibility for military health programs.

Instead, the Defense Department will send postcards to patients informing them that there is a change, and then they will have to log into a Pentagon website, milConnect, or call their Tricare



## “Tricare To Stop Mailing Paper Notification Letters”

(Continued from Page 2)

regional contractor to find out the details.

However, if the Pentagon has an email address on file for the beneficiary, he or she will receive an email instead of a postcard notifying them to log into milConnect.

Tricare is encouraging beneficiaries to make sure they have a current email address in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System to ensure they receive timely electronic notifications of changes to their health benefits.

Those with a Common Access Card or DFAS pin number can log directly onto milConnect; spouses and dependents ages 18 or over who want to log on must first obtain a DoD Self-Service Logon, or DS Logon, to access the site.

They can get a DS Logon by going to [milconnect.dmdc.mil](http://milconnect.dmdc.mil) and clicking the “Sign Up Now” button.

On milConnect, all users can verify their personal information – name, address, and email addresses – as well as check information on medical, dental, and pharmacy benefits, education, identification cards, and more.

For more information about the new “Going Green” initiative by the Defense Manpower Data Center and the full article written by Airforce Times staff writer Patricia Kime go to <http://www.airforcetimes.com/article/20141008/BENEFITS06/31008005/7/Tricare-stop-mailing-paper-notification-letters>.

## “New Program Helping Families of Fallen Access Education Benefits”

Airforce Times (October 2, 2014) – Even with hundreds of millions of dollars in scholarship money and education benefits available for spouses and children of fallen service members, many of those families struggle to pay for college because they don't know the benefits exist, or have trouble accessing them.

So the group, the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, has announced its new program offering an online portal at [www.taps.org/edu/](http://www.taps.org/edu/) to help families identify scholarships and educational benefits, as well as get one-on-one guidance through the maze. The public-private partnership between TAPS, the Veterans Affairs Department, the 45 states that have educational benefits of some kind for the families of the fallen, private organizations providing scholarships, and companies that have contributed to the effort “will ensure all education resources available to these children are now fully accessed,” said Bonnie Carroll, who founded TAPS following the death of her husband, Army Big. Gen. Tom Carroll, in a 1992 military plane crash.

Of the 45 states that offer educational benefits of some kind for families of the fallen service members, two-thirds fully waive tuition and/or fees, and most of the others offer full or partial scholarships.

The TAPS program also informs families about federal benefits and to assist spouses and children of the fallen, such as the Marine Gunnery Sgt. John D. Fry Scholarship and the Survivors and Dependents' Education Assistance Program.

For more information about the full article written by Airforce Times staff writer Karren Jowers go to <http://www.airforcetimes.com/article/20141002/BENEFITS04/310130022/>.



## “Postal Services Issues Holiday Mail Deadlines”

Militarytimes.com (October 6, 2014) – Fewer troops may be deployed overseas that there were a few years ago, but those who are deployed do love their packages, cards, and letters especially during the holiday season.

The U.S. Postal Service has issued some mailing guidelines to ensure that gifts get to overseas military locations by Dec. 25. To get them there in time for the start of Hanukkah on Dec. 16, subtract nine days from these deadlines.

Other Mail Categories to the Contingency Areas:

- December 3, 2014 - First-Class Mail (letters and cards), Priority Mail, and Parcel Air Lift.
- November 26, 2014 – Space Available Mail.
- November 8, 2014 – Standard Post.

For all other APO/FPO Locations:

- December 17, 2014 – Priority Mail Express Military Service.
- December 10, 2014 – First-Class Mail and Priority Mail.
- December 3, 2014 – Parcel Air Lift.
- November 26, 2014 – Space Available Mail.
- November 8, 2014 – Standard Post.

## “New Veterans Memorial”

WASHINGTON D.C. – (October 5, 2014) – A new memorial has opened near the National Mall to honor disabled veterans dating back to the American Revolution. The American Veterans Disabled Veterans for Life Memorial was dedicated on October 5 by President Obama. In his remarks, the president said, “When our wounded veterans set out on that long road of recovery, we need to move heaven and earth to make sure they get every single benefit, every single bit of care that they have earned, that they deserve.”



Each moment in a day has its own value.

Morning brings **HOPE**,

Afternoon brings **FAITH**,

Evening brings **LOVE**,

Night brings **REST**,

Hope you will have all of them every day.





*Since Our Last  
Publication.....*

### **“New Housing Program Launched for Central Ohio Veterans”**

COLUMBUS, Ohio— (September 26, 2014) – Veterans in Central Ohio, who are on the brink of being homeless, are getting a helping hand. The Salvation Army has received a grant from the VA which is allowing them to give veterans a fresh start.

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) is a new program in Delaware, Madison, Marion, Morrow, and Union Counties. The goal of the program is to promote housing stability among very low-income veterans and their families. SSVF gives veterans first month's rent and the security deposit needed for an apartment. Case workers also work closely with clients to ensure their long-term housing needs are met.

To learn more about the program and qualification requirements call 740-363-9487.

### **“VA Develops Mobile Application “Concussion Coach” To Help Support Treatment for Veterans Who Suffer From Mild to Moderate Concussions”**

*App available to the public through VA National  
Center for PTSD and DOD*

WASHINGTON – (September 16, 2014) – To better meet the needs of Veterans and others who have suffered mild to moderate concussion associated with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has developed “Concussion Coach,” a mobile application (“app”) that provides portable tools to

recognize symptoms and to identify and make use of coping strategies.

The Concussion Coach app is designed to educate users about concussions, related symptoms, treatments and to enable users to recognize and assess symptoms. The app identifies resources for managing symptoms and planning tools to build resilience. It also provides access to crisis resources, including personal support contacts and ways in which the user can obtain professional health care. The application is a useful tool, and is not intended to replace professional diagnosis, medical treatment or rehabilitation therapies for those who need them.

Concussion Coach is available for mobile Apple devices (iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch) from the App Store and will be available to Google Play for Android devices later in 2014. For additional information, visit the following website [www.polytrauma.va.gov](http://www.polytrauma.va.gov) or for full article go to VA News Release.



### **“New Veterans Business Support Center Helps Employers Hire Veterans”**

COLUMBUS, OH (September 18, 2014) – Working in partnership with the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, the Ohio Department of Veterans Services and OhioMeansJobs, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) recently launched a new service to help match employers with veterans looking for work: a Veterans Business Support Center.

The Veterans Business Support Center offers employers online, over the phone or face-to-face help finding skilled veteran candidates for jobs. This assistance is provided by employment specialists who are veterans themselves. They understand the challenges veterans face, as well as the assets they bring to any workforce.

The specialist can help employers:

- Find qualified veteran candidates for job openings.
- Post jobs at [ohiomeansjobs.com](http://ohiomeansjobs.com).
- Screen resumes.
- Find career fairs, workshops and other hiring events in the area.
- Learn more about hiring incentive programs such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit.
- Learn more about the demographics of the veterans in their area, including their education levels, skills, and cities of residence.

“We often hear from employers that they would like to hire veterans but don't know where to find them,” said ODJFS Director Cynthia C. Dungey. “The Veterans Business Support Center bridges that gap. It gives employers easy access to a full range of specialized employment services, all of which are provided completely free of charge.”

To access the center's services online, employers simply visit [ohiomeansjobs.com](http://ohiomeansjobs.com) and click on icon that says “Veterans Business Support Center.” For over-the-phone or in-person help, employers should contact their local OhioMeansJobs Center or call 888-296-7541, option 5. To find the nearest OhioMeansJobs Center, visit [ohiomeansjobs.com](http://ohiomeansjobs.com) and click on the icon that says “OhioMeansJobs Centers.”

### **“Ohio Hospice Helping Veterans with PTSD Find Peace”**

Wilde, T. (Public News Service – Sandusky, Ohio) – (September 2014) – Stein Hospice in Sandusky is helping U.S. military veterans who served in World War II, and every military conflict since, deal with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, the effects of which some have held inside for more than half a century. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates up to 30 percent of vets suffer with PTSD.



**“Ohio Hospice Helping  
Veterans with PTSD Find  
Peace”**

(Continued from Page 4)

Scott Boros is a bereavement and grief counselor at Stein Hospice.

“There’s a lot of the World War II guys now, finally 60 or 70 years later, and the Korean guys, talking about stuff they would never talk about,” says Boros. “The other thing that occurred, which is very heartfelt, is a lot of these guys said they wouldn’t talk about stuff because they didn’t want to hurt their mothers.”

For many vets, the process of sharing the horrors of war helps them let go of the past and find peace in the present. Boros adds, Stein Hospice works with veterans of all ages suffering with PTSD. The Veterans Administration estimates 22 veterans commit suicide each day, and 69 percent of them are 50 and older.

Jacey Elliston is a veteran who served in the Persian Gulf War and is living with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. He says just talking about his war experiences through a VA-provided service is helping him cope. Elliston adds, more organizations such as Stein Hospice could make a huge impact on reaching out to the often-isolated veterans with PTSD. “There are a ton of services out there for veterans that they don’t know about,” says Elliston. “There needs to be a more coordinated effort in reaching out to veterans that don’t reach out themselves.”

Stein Hospice is featured in a forthcoming documentary titled “Go in Peace.” Director Karen van Vuuren says her father’s sharing of

his World War II experiences inspired the documentary.

“He was actually a Dutchman. His village was occupied in World War II. When he was dying he told me the story of strangling a German soldier from his village when he was 14 years old,” she says. “He never told me anything about the war and it just woke me up to what these people carry inside them.”

Van Vuuren hopes “Go in Peace” will become a free resource for anyone to use and help us better understand what military veterans can experience long after war ends. She says the documentary is nearly complete. For more information on the documentary on “Go in Peace” go to [goinpeace.myinstapage.com](http://goinpeace.myinstapage.com).

**“Up to 80,000 Vets eligible for  
Discharge Upgrades”**

Philpott, T. - Stars and Stripes – (September 18, 2014) – As many as 80,000 veterans who suffered from post-traumatic stress and received Other Than Honorable discharges can use evidence of their PTSD to petition service boards to upgrade the bad paper discharge. At stake for individuals is removal of lifelong stigmas that have scarred reputations, limited job prospects, and blocked critical veteran benefits. For the full article go to Stars and Stripes website.

**“Surviving Spouses Soon to get  
Tuition Benefit”**

Tritten, T.J. - Stars and Stripes – (October 21, 2014) – An overhaul of the troubled Department of Veterans Affairs means new education benefits will kick in next month for the spouses of service members who died since 9/11 in the line of duty, according to the department.

Surviving spouses will be eligible Nov. 4 for the Fry Scholarship – named Marine Gunnery Sgt. John David Fry, who was killed in Iraq in 2006 – which includes payment of tuition and fees, a housing allowance, and a stipend for books and school supplies. The benefit

was previously only been available to children of fallen troops.

The expansion of education benefits was tucked into a massive \$16.3 billion law passed over the summer and designed to fix the VA health care system following a nationwide scandal over wait times and records manipulation.

Some spouses may be eligible for the Dependents Education Assistance program and must choose between the two programs by Jan. 1.

More information is available through the VA call center at 888-442-4551 (888-GIBILL-1) or at [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/).



**“Winter Heating Season”**



*“Winter Reconnect Order can help consumers during heating season”*

COLUMBUS (September 16, 2014) - Ohio utility consumers who have been disconnected or face disconnection can have service restored or maintained under the annual Winter Reconnection Order issued by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO).

Customers can use the program between October 20, 2014 and April 15, 2015 by paying the amount owed or \$175, whichever is less. More than 274,000 customers used the reconnect program last winter. There is no income eligibility requirement.

There are several other state and federal programs available to assist those who qualify. The PUCO suggests that customers explore all options including PIPP Plus, HEAP, and the Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP). More information about these programs and additional ways to save on home heating bills this winter is available at Ohio’s Winter



## “Winter Heating Season” (Continued from Page 5)

Heating Resource website  
[www.winterheat.ohio.gov](http://www.winterheat.ohio.gov).

Visitors to this site will also find information about budget billing, energy choice, and energy conservation. And [www.occ.ohio.gov](http://www.occ.ohio.gov), the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) has information about other federal, state, and utility-funded assistance programs available to assist consumers with their energy bills.

And for questions about the PUCO winter heating season reconnect program go to [www.PUCO.ohio.gov](http://www.PUCO.ohio.gov), click on the link to Docketing Information System and enter the case number 14-1371-GE-UNC.

**“PUCO advises to arrange for propane supply early” – COLUMBUS, OH (October 7, 2014)** - The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) joins the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC) in encouraging Ohio consumers to consider the following steps to proactively prepare for the coming winter heating season.

1. Check your current propane supply. Make sure that you are aware of your current supply to decide your needs to get through the heating season.
2. Call your provider. Get in touch with the propane provider that issued your tank. Begin a good working relationship and develop a plan for your propane supply including refills, automatic refills, and payment programs to make sure your tank stays full.
4. Make sure your home or business is running efficiently. Have a technician check your appliances and propane system, look for energy efficient upgrades

like programmable thermostats, let the sun naturally heat your home by opening curtains and set your water heater no higher than 120 degrees. 5. Explore the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). HEAP is available to income-eligible customers in Ohio. For more information visit [www.winterheat.ohio.gov](http://www.winterheat.ohio.gov). For more propane-related information, the PERC directs customers to [www.propanecomfort.com](http://www.propanecomfort.com). The website has information on the propane industry, a quiz to see if you are prepared, and safety and efficiency tips.



### “Winter Warming Stations

#### During Traditional Operating Hours”

Dodge, 667 Sullivant Ave.

Gillie, 4625 Morse Centre

Martin Janis, 600 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Ave.

Lazelle Woods, 8140 Sancus

Marion Franklin, 2801 Lockbourne

Whetstone, 3923 N. High Street

**Overnight stays call 888-474-3587**



### “Energy Assistance for Military Personnel and their Families”

**The Patriot Plan** - A program providing protections and benefits to military personnel and their families can assist qualifying customers with maintaining utility service while serving on active duty. Under the plan, Ohio's natural gas and electric utilities cannot disconnect the residential utility service of any military reservist or National Guardsman deployed on active duty for nonpayment.

Upon return from active duty, utility companies must offer customers a period of time equal to the length of their deployment to pay any arrearages that may have accumulated. Additional time may

be requested by a customer if the amount in arrearages presents a hardship. Utility companies are also prohibited from charging any late payment fees or interest to qualifying customer during the period of time.

The Patriot Plan does not apply to career active-duty military personnel serving their regular tour of duty. For additional information regarding this benefit, contact your local utility company or the PUCO at (800) 686-PUCO (7826).

## “The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame”



COLUMBUS - On November 6, 2014 at the Lincoln Theater in Columbus, Ohio, 20 Ohio Veterans will be inducted into the Hall of Fame Class of 2014. The bronze plaques representing each of the classes inducted are permanently on display at the Vern Riffe Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor located at 77 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame is administered and sponsored by the Ohio Department of Veterans Services. The Hall of Fame is not a military hall of fame. Those selected for the honor of induction are veterans who have honorably served their country through military service and continue to serve and inspire their fellow citizens with their deeds and accomplishments throughout their lifetime.

The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame was established in 1992 by former Gov. George Voinovich to recognize the post-military achievements of outstanding veterans. Charter members of the Hall's Class of 1993 included the six Ohio military veterans who were elected President of the United States and all Medal of Honor recipients from Ohio. Honorees of the past 19 years include astronauts, government officials,



## “The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame”

(Continued from Page 6)

police officers, community leaders, and veterans’ advocates.

The Hall of Fame Executive Committee, comprised entirely of veterans, serves as advisors for the Hall of Fame and selects no more than 20 inductees annually from nominations provided by all citizens of Ohio. Men and women chosen for induction into the Hall come from all eras, all branches of service and all walks of life.

Additional information and profiles of past inductees are available at: [http://dvs.ohio.gov/veterans\\_hall\\_of\\_fame.aspx](http://dvs.ohio.gov/veterans_hall_of_fame.aspx).

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### ~Congratulations~

#### Class of 2014:

James F. Albright  
John F. Bankowitz  
Michael J. Bennett  
James P. Bowes  
David R. Cooper  
Louis J. DeLoss  
Richard Gandarilla  
Ruby C. Gilliam  
Lewis J. Gottfried  
Mary Louise Gruber  
Herbert M. Heilbrun  
Elaine M. Tisdell Herrick  
Brian V. Jarvis  
Robert A. Kincses  
James J. Leach (deceased)  
Ruben J. “Jerry” Lemons  
Charles A. Lococo  
Howard W. Osterkamp  
Jose R. “Rafi” Rodriguez  
DeFord R. Schwall



### “Wreaths Across America Day”



December 13, 2014

**REMEMBER** those killed in action

**HONOR** all Veterans, Military and their Families

**TEACH** the next generation about the cost of freedom

*As taps mournfully sound  
at end of this solemn day,  
Close your eyes and  
envision the awe inspiring array;  
Red velvet ribbons draping  
green evergreen boughs.  
Remember them ever in reverence  
of twilight vows!*



### “PRECAUTIONS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF FLU”



- Avoid people who are sick.
- Clean hands often.
- Keep hands away from your face.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Stay at home when you are sick.

#### Columbus VA ambulatory Care Center

VA and Walgreen are making getting flu shot easier and more convenient. Veterans enrolled in VA care can now receive their flu shot at any Walgreens and the information will be automatically added to your health record. No need for extra paperwork and readily available at your neighborhood Walgreens. Shots are still available at your local VA Health Care Facility. Walgreens accepts most insurance

plans, including Medicare. However, there may be a cost to a VA patient for the flu shot.

To find your closest Walgreens location, go to [Walgreens.com/findstore](http://Walgreens.com/findstore). To learn more, go to [www.publichealth.va.gov/vaccines.asp](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/vaccines.asp).



### “The Christmas Message” By Barbara Cox

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There’s a chill in the air  
and the sweet smell of pine  
Friends coming together it’s Christmas time  
Children playing with sleds on the new fallen snow  
Toys in store windows have their eyes all aglow  
  
Chapel bells ringing from the old town square  
Decorations on Main Street being put up with care  
Christmas shoppers beginning to fill the malls  
Where trees are adorned with garland and balls

Out Christmas shopping I spotted a sign  
Santa’s Work Shop, with children in line  
I walked up closer so that I could hear  
What the children wanted from Santa this year

When from in line I saw a young lad  
By the look on his face, I could tell he was sad  
I walked up closer so that I could see  
As he took his turn upon Santa’s Knee

Santa, I don’t want toys under the tree  
All I want is my Daddy, here with Mommy and me  
It’s been so long since he’s been gone  
When he left the grass was still green on the lawn

You see, We’re in the Military and he had to go  
And Mommy and I miss him, more than you know  
When I’m in bed and she thinks I’m asleep  
She reads over his letters and starts to weep

But, if you can’t do it, I’ll understand  
Since Daddy’s been gone, I’m Mom’s little man  
As you deliver your presents,  
give a message from me  
We gave up Christmas with Daddy,  
So children stay free!





## “Legislation”



~ **H.R. 3230**, will improve access to care for veterans seeking medical care from the Department of Veteran Affairs.

**Public Law 113-146**  
(Signed 8/7/2014)

~ **H.R. 5404**, would authorize a cost-of-living adjustment for disabled veterans receiving disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs and other compensation for survivors of veterans who have died as a result of their service to our country.

**Public Law 113-181**  
(Signed 9/26/2014)

## “News & Events”

~ For those that are retired from the military - 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 the TRICARE web site at [http://www.tricare.mil/Welcome/Eligibility/MedicareEligible.aspx?sc\\_database=web](http://www.tricare.mil/Welcome/Eligibility/MedicareEligible.aspx?sc_database=web) or by telephone at: 1-866-773-0404. You may also call the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) at 800-538-9552.

~ Medicare 2015 Premiums. Next year's standard Medicare Part B

monthly premium and deductible will remain the same as the last two years.

For the approximately 49 million Americans enrolled in Medicare Part B, premiums and deductibles will remain unchanged in 2015 at \$104.90 and \$147.00, respectively.

~ September 2014 – April 2015, Standing Together: Ohio Veterans Oral History Project – The Ohio Humanities Council (OHC), in partnership with the Ohio National Guard (ONG), has launched a campaign to capture and preserve the contributions of Ohio Service members who have served during the War on Terrorism (WOT). The OHC has received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to record these histories which will ultimately be preserved in the state archives at the Ohio History Connection. Soldiers and Airman who have deployed in support of the WOT, with the ONG or while a member of another branch or component of the Armed Forces, are sought for this project.

~ The Columbus VA Ambulatory Care Center has a program called SAFE (Supportive and Family Education) is an educational support group for family members and friends of Veterans living with behavioral health, PTSD, and/or addiction services. To learn more about SAFE, go to <http://www.columbus.va.gov/features/SAFE.asp>.

~ Youngstown State University opened a brand new Veterans Resource Center on campus. The facility contains a veteran's lounge equipped with a large screen TV, gaming systems, and comfortable furniture as well as a modern computer lab, community room, vending machines, and kitchenette. The Center will also house the Office of Veterans Affairs. YSU will be the only university in Ohio to offer a dedicated building for its veteran and military student population.

## “Holiday Events & Charities”

~ **Wildlights at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium** - November 17 – January 4, 2015, Sundays – Thursdays 5PM – 9PM; Fridays & Saturdays 5PM – 10PM. Closed November 27, December 24 & 25. Regular admission rates apply. Free to Columbus Zoo and Aquarium members.

~ **Charity Newsies** – 100% for Charity – Each year on Drive Day, the second Saturday in December, the Charity Newsies' Paper Sale raises money for clothing for children in need. For more information on this organization and how to donate or contribute go to <http://www.charitynewsies.com/>.

~ **The Salvation Army of Central Ohio** – Has two programs:

1. Christmas Cheer – Provides food and toys to nearly 80,000 families in need over a two-day period.

Families must register to receive assistance. Call 614-221-6561, ext. 600 for detailed information on registration Nov. 18 – Dec. 2, 2014.

2. Adopt A Family – pairs families with corporate sponsors, church groups, and families who “adopt” the family and fulfil their holiday wish list. For enrollment - Families must be identified through their case workers.

For more information on these programs with The Salvation Army go to <http://co.salvationarmy.org/CentralOhio/Christmas>.

~ **Marine Toys For Tots Foundation** – Drop-off location sign up, October 1 – November 30; Toys for Tots Warehouse, Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> – Dec. 5 last day for Drop-off locations to deliver toys to warehouse, Dec. 8 – Dec. 9 – Distribute toys to registered Non-Profits. For more information go to <http://columbus-oh.toysfortots.org/local-coordinator-sites/co-sites/default.aspx>.





~In Memory~



Both killed in the same suicide car bomb  
explosion in Afghanistan

*Psalms 144:1.*

*Praise be to the Lord, my rock, who trains  
my hands for war, my fingers for battle.*

Maj. Michael J. Donahue

~ age 41 ~ Columbus, Ohio

September 16, 2014

Major Michael J. Donahue, a decorated  
paratrooper and career military officer with  
three combat tours of duty under his belt.

Assigned to the Headquarters and  
Headquarters Battalion, XVIII Airborne Corps,  
Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He was a Native of  
Massachusetts.

&

Stephen Byus

~ age 39 ~ Reynoldsburg, Ohio

September 16, 2014

Stephen Byus, a member of the Defense  
Logistics Agency Land and Maritime in  
Columbus, Ohio, working as a supply  
specialist, and assigned to the Combined  
Security Transition Command Afghanistan  
while deployed as a civilian contractor. Also, a  
member of the U.S. Naval Reserve, but was  
not serving in that capacity when he was killed.

**Sunset Cemetery  
Columbus, Ohio**

Dignity Memorial

“Four Final Life Lessons”

*Nobody Told Veterans...Until*

*Now*

By Deborah Grassman

**Lesson Number One**

Recognize that courage is not about  
covering up or “grinning and  
bearing it” nor is it about “being  
strong” by hiding behind stoic walls.  
Serious illness changes everything.

Consider using different coping  
mechanisms now to deal with this  
new situation. Rather than erecting  
a stoic walls. Serious illness  
changes everything. Consider  
using different coping mechanisms  
now to deal with this new situation.  
Rather than erecting a stoic wall  
that might shut you off from others  
(and even yourself), consider using  
stoicism like a door that you can  
open or close at will and as often as  
you want. At first, this may go  
against you military grain, but it will  
get easier with practice, especially  
as you discover the vitality and  
emotional intimacy that ensues as  
you let go of the need to hide your  
real self. Realize that there is no  
shame in being human, and there is  
freedom in being able to  
acknowledge it and fully experience  
it, especially the grief that you may  
feel right now. This is not a  
weakness; rather it requires  
strength and courage.

Consider asking for help. You’ve  
given to your family; you’ve given  
to your community. Now is the  
cycle in your life that allows others  
to give to you. Think of it like this:  
You have a new job. Your new job  
is to become a receiver. Not only  
that, you are to receive without  
protest! In other words, your new  
job is to learn how to become a  
gracious receiver. Are you willing  
to learn how to do that? If so, your  
family and professional caregivers  
will thank you. Your inward self will  
also be liberated, and you will  
discover this will make things much  
easier for you.

DANGEROUS DUTY MILITARY ASSIGNMENTS

Stoicism permeates military culture,  
whether you served in combat or  
not. For those who have served in  
combat or other dangerous-duty  
assignments, you may have been  
left with traumatic memories. For  
some, the memories crystallize into  
a constellation of symptoms known  
as posttraumatic stress disorder  
(PTSD). On the other hand, you  
may be a veteran who has suffered  
PTSD without really integrating it.  
Maybe you compartmentalized the  
trauma, banishing it into  
unconsciousness or possibly you  
used a stoic wall to shield you from  
the symptoms. The symptoms,

however, usually leak out anyway:  
hollowness, aloofness,  
workaholicism, or its opposite (job-  
hopping or joblessness), or  
addictions. Unfortunately, as you  
age, it may be harder to try to  
“white knuckle” the symptoms.

War robs people of many things;  
but possibly the most significant is a  
young person’s hopes and dreams.

*This Four Part Series will be continued  
in the next upcoming publications.*

For more information about Dignity  
Memorial go to  
[DIGNITYMEMORIAL.COM](http://DIGNITYMEMORIAL.COM)



**“How Veterans Can  
Live to 100”  
by [veteransprograms.com](http://veteransprograms.com)**

Outside of the incredible advances in medical  
science, the biggest factor that determines how  
well you age is not your genes but how well  
you live.

**Don’t Retire.** “Evidence shows that in societies  
where people stop working abruptly, the incidence  
of obesity and chronic disease skyrockets after  
retirement.

**Floss Every Day.** That may help keep your  
arteries healthy.

**Move Around.** “Exercise is the only real fountain  
of youth that exists,” says S. Jay Olshansky, Ph.D.  
It’s like the oil and lube job for your car. You  
don’t have to do it, but your car will definitely run  
better.

**Eat a fiber-rich Cereal for Breakfast.** Getting a  
serving of whole grains, especially in the morning,  
appears to help older folks maintain stable blood  
sugars throughout the day. Those who do this  
have lower incidences of diabetes.

**Get as least six hours of shut-eye.** Those who  
reach the century mark make sleep a top priority.

**Consume whole foods, not supplements.**  
Strong evidence suggests that people who have  
high blood levels of certain nutrients age much  
better and have a slower rate of cognitive decline.

**Be less neurotic.** Centenarians tend not to  
internalize things or dwell on their troubles. They  
are great at rolling with the punches.

**Live like a Seventh Day Adventist.** Which  
means no smoking, alcohol abuse, or overindulging  
in sweets. Followers typically to a vegetarian diet  
based on fruits, vegetables, beans, and nuts, and  
also get plenty of exercise.



**“How Veterans Can  
Live to 100”  
by veteransprograms.com  
(Continued from Page 9)**

**Be a creature of habit.** Centenarians tend to live by strict routines. Going to bed and waking up at the same time each day is another good habit to keep your body in the steady equilibrium that can be easily disrupted as you get on in years.

**Stay connected.** Having regular social contacts with friends and loved ones is key to avoiding depression, which can lead to premature death.



**December 2014**

- ~  5<sup>th</sup> - *Last Day of Chanukah*
- ~  7<sup>th</sup> - *Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day*
- ~  13<sup>th</sup> - *Birthday of the National Guard ~1936~ 377 years*
- ~  17<sup>th</sup> - *Wright Brothers Day*
- ~  24<sup>th</sup> - *Christmas Eve*
- ~  25<sup>th</sup> - *Christmas Day*
- ~  26<sup>th</sup> - *Kwanzaa (until Jan 1)*
- ~  31<sup>st</sup> - *New Year's Eve*

**January 2014**

- ~  1<sup>st</sup> - *New Year's Day*
- ~  19<sup>th</sup> - *Martin Luther King Day*

**February 2015**



- ~  2<sup>nd</sup> - *Ground Hog Day*
- ~  4<sup>th</sup> - *USO's Birthday*
- ~  14<sup>th</sup> - *Valentine's Day*
- ~  16<sup>th</sup> - *President's Day*
- ~  17<sup>th</sup> - *Mardi Gras*
- ~  19<sup>th</sup> - *Chinese New Year*



**“Holiday Survival Tips During a  
Time of Grieving”**

1. Plan in advance how you are going to spend the holidays and be able to say no if you need to.
2. Take a break from holiday traditions that are too painful – create new traditions.
3. Connect with others.
4. Share stories of past holidays and spend time reflecting back. Keep your loved one's memory alive for those who were too young to remember the person.
5. Include memories of your loved one in you celebration (e.g., light a candle, display pictures, and make a toast in honor of the person)



**Holiday Shopping Guide**

- Set Reasonable Expectations
- Plan, Budget, and Save
- Keep the Big Picture in Mind
- Look for Ways to Save
- Watch out for Costly Surprises
- Avoid Holiday Debt Traps



SOMETIMES LIFE  
WILL KICK YOU  
AROUND, BUT  
SOONER OR LATER,  
YOU REALIZE  
YOU'RE NOT JUST A  
SURVIVOR YOU ARE  
A WARRIOR, AND  
YOU'RE STRONGER  
THAN ANYTHING  
LIFE THROWS YOUR  
WAY!  
~UNKNOWN~



*Another Day, another Month,  
another Year, another Smile,  
another Tear, another Winter,  
A Summer too, But there will  
never  
be Another You!*

*May Lovely, Happy Times  
Decorate this Time of the  
Season.*

*May Warm, Special Memories  
brighten your New Year,  
may the Wonder of Christmas be  
with you Forever.*

***Have a Safe & Happy New  
Year!***

***Franklin County Veterans  
Service Commission Staff***





FRANKLIN COUNTY  
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