



Ohio Department of Veterans Services

★ *Monthly Update* ★

October 2011

On November 10th, twenty veterans from our great state will be inducted into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame, joining over 400 past honorees.

Here are a few select photos from last year's ceremony:



Questions about veterans benefits?

Call 1-877-OHIOVET
(1-877-644-6838)

Welcome to the seventh edition of the Ohio Department of Veterans Service e-newsletter! The newsletter is a key source of information about issues of interest to our community of veterans in Ohio.

We thank you for your service to our country. Because you're a veteran, you've earned a number of benefits that you may not be aware of. Most of these benefits originate at the federal level with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Based on the time you served, you may be eligible for compensation for injuries, health care, educational assistance, home loans or many other benefits. There are also a number of state benefits available to Ohio veterans, to include the Ohio Veterans Bonus as well as direct financial assistance from the county to veterans in need.

The place to find out what you've earned and to apply is your county veterans service office. You can locate yours in the interactive map on our department home page, dvs.ohio.gov, or by calling 1-877-OHIO-VET (1-877-644-6838).

We will continue to provide you this newsletter each month. We hope it's of value to you and your family.

"Armed Forces" Stamp on Driver's License Could Get Veterans a Retail Discount

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles offers Ohio veterans an "Armed Forces" designation stamp for their driver's license or state ID. This proof of service may entitle a veteran to a discount at retail establishments in the state.

The stamp, placed on the lower right of the license or ID, is provided at no additional cost when requested at the time a license or ID is renewed, but normal driver's license fees still apply.

A number of retailers in Ohio will offer a military or veterans discount, either periodically during major holidays, or at all times. Retailers generally require that some form of photo ID is produced to receive the discount, either a current military active duty or retired ID card, an ID from the National Guard or Reserve, or an ID showing enrollment in health care from the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA). But veterans who served limited terms of service are generally not issued such documentation.

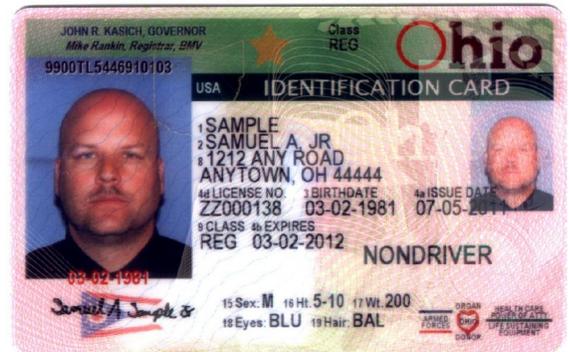


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The “Armed Forces” stamp, which has been in existence since December 2009, enables these veterans to have a photo ID as a sign of their service. Whether a discount is granted, however, is solely dependent upon each individual retailer’s policy.

To be eligible to receive the stamp, at no extra cost, veterans must provide to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles a copy of their DD 214 or DD 215 when they renew their driver’s license or military ID. Other forms of identification acceptable to receive the stamp include a VA ID, a current military ID, a leave and earnings statement, or a copy of orders.



Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame Coming Up...

The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame will induct the Class of 2012 in a ceremony at 10 a.m. November 10 at Veterans Memorial Auditorium on West Broad Street in Columbus. Twenty Ohioans from all walks of life will join 408 others who are enshrined in the Hall.

The Hall is dedicated to recognizing Ohio veterans who, after their military service, put their skills and abilities to work in their local communities – and by their continued service and positive accomplishments, inspired their fellow citizens. Honorees of the past 19 years include astronauts, government officials, police officers, community leaders, and veterans’ advocates.

For more on the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame and brief biographies of this year’s class, see <http://dvs.ohio.gov/Portals/0/library/odvs/news/OhioVeteransHallofFameInductees-Release.pdf>



2011 Women’s Conference Celebrates Contributions...

If you missed the 2011 Ohio Women Veterans Conference at the Aladdin Shrine Center in Columbus on October 8, you missed a great time of sharing and celebration.

Over 500 women attended, and heard from a cast of dynamic speakers that included Lieutenant Governor Mary Taylor and Ohio Department of Veterans Services Chief Operating Officer Tim Espich to nationally-known motivational speaker retired Lt. Col. Janis Nark,



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Jefferson County Veterans Service Officer Schelley Brooks and Ohio Army National Guard Col. Maria Kelly. Vendors from VA health care, institutions of higher learning, and veterans organizations were also on hand.

Veterans of all eras were reminded of the many significant contributions that women have made – and continue to make every day – in service to our nation. They shared a great time of fellowship and made connections for friendships and professional associations.

Of course, the conference would not have been possible without a tremendous amount of hard work from the women's committee, numerous volunteers, and the many sponsors. Thanks to you all.

Be looking for future information on the 2013 conference.

But for now, take a look at photos from the conference:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ohioveteransservices/>



Ohio Department of Veterans Services Assistant Director Jason Dominguez, who served in Iraq as a Marine squad leader in Lima Company.

Proud Heritage of Hispanic Veterans....

The nation celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month this year from September 15 – October 15.

Hispanic Americans have served with distinction in every war the U.S. has fought. Today, 1.3 million living Hispanic Americans have worn the uniform of our Armed Forces at some point in their lives. These numbers include 11,000 Ohioans.

Twenty-seven Hispanic Americans have been awarded the Medal of Honor.

These heroes include Army SGT Jose M. Lopez, who on December 17, 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge near Krinkelt, Belgium, carried a heavy machine gun from one flank to the other of his company and maintained a heavy volume of fire that kept his unit from being overrun. He was credited with killing at least 100 enemy soldiers and allowing his company to withdraw safely while enabling other troops to establish a line of defense.

More recently, Marine Cpl. Marco Martinez became the first Latino to be awarded the Navy Cross when, during the invasion of Iraq in 2003, he led a devastating attack against Saddam Hussein's elite



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Fedayeen and Republican Guard troops. He eventually ended the firefight by singlehandedly entering a building alone and lobbing a grenade.

To all the men and women who make up the 1.3 million Hispanic American veterans, we salute you!

Getting to Work....

Veterans have what employers are looking for: a solid work ethic, the ability to work effectively with others to accomplish any task, and hands-on experience in a number of different fields.

But that's preaching to the choir, because veterans and their families already know that. What veterans need is help with the job search, how to tell employers what they've done in a way that translates to what the employer needs.

The state, a veterans' organization and private employers have resources to help. The Ohio National Guard has partnered with AMVETS to create a web site with job postings for veterans:

<http://ohiovetscan.com/>

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services provides a site with resources to help translate experience that also includes links to veteran-friendly employers as well as other resources:

<http://my.ohiomeansjobs.monster.com/VetCenter/InfoCenter.aspx>

Information on federal jobs for veterans is at:

<http://www.fedshirevets.gov/>

Getting That Ohio Veterans Bonus...

If you've gotten your bonus, you may wonder why you're still reading about it...but believe it or not, there are eligible veterans in Ohio who still haven't gotten the word. They and their families are missing out on some tax-free money that can make a no-kidding real difference in their lives.





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Please review the information below. If you're eligible, take the time to apply! If you've gotten yours, then please share this with other veterans who need to know.

What veterans really need to know is –

If you're an Ohio resident who served honorably in the military for more than 90 days of active duty during the period Aug. 2, 1990 through March 3, 1991, or since Oct. 7, 2001, you may be eligible to receive the Ohio Veterans Bonus.

The bonus is \$100 a month to veterans who served during the eligible periods in the Persian Gulf theater, or in the Iraq or Afghanistan theaters, up to a maximum of \$1,000. For veterans who served in other parts of the world during these times, the payment is \$50 a month up to a \$500 maximum. Veterans who were medically discharged as a result of combat service can receive \$1,000, regardless of how much time they spent in theater, plus up to \$500 for months of service elsewhere. Family members of those killed in action or who died from disease as a result of their in-theater service can receive a bonus of \$5,000 plus whatever the service member was eligible for, up to a total of \$6,500.

Application instructions and a list of the documentation required is at:

https://veteransbonus.ohio.gov/odvs_web/Default.aspx.

For more info, call 1-877-OHIO-VET (1-877-644-6838) or visit your County Veterans Service Office.

DoD Re-evaluating Medical Separations for Some Veterans...

If you were medically separated between September 11, 2001 and December 31, 2009, you may be able to get your disability rating reviewed.

The DoD Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR) is re-evaluating Medical Evaluation Board (MEB) and Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) disability ratings for some veterans medically separated between September 11, 2001, and December 31, 2009, to ensure a correct disability retirement determination was made. Veterans who received a combined disability rating of 20 percent or less and were not found eligible for retirement can apply to have their MEB/PEB disability rating reviewed for fairness, consistency, and accuracy. Former reserve members with





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greater than 20 years of total federal military service but fewer than 20 years of active duty, who meet the above criteria, are also eligible to apply.

The PDBR uses medical information provided by the VA and the appropriate branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. Once a review is complete, the PDBR forwards a recommendation to the secretary of the respective branch of the armed services. However, it is still up to the individual service branch to make the final determination on whether to change the original disability determination.

More information, and application instructions, are at:

http://www.health.mil/About_MHS/Organizations/MHS_Offices_and_Programs/PDBR.aspx

Questions on the PDBR can be sent to: PDBRPA@afncr.af.mil



Help Prevent Breast Cancer...

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The VA is urging all female veterans to speak with their health care providers, VA or otherwise, about appropriate breast cancer screenings, such as regular mammograms.

Please take the time and get the screening that you need – and make sure that your wife, mother, sister and daughter do the same.

Remember, a little time spent in prevention can save your, or a loved one's, life.

For more info, see <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2182>

Military Community and Family Weekly Newsletter...

Active duty military families have the base community to turn to for support, while Guard and Reserve families have to rely on their own support groups with less resources to help. But whatever their situation, all military families have a common bond in needing information about the services available to them.

The U.S. Department of Defense is working to fill that void. It provides military families with a weekly blog and online newsletter from Robert L. Gordon III, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Community and Family Policy. These media inform families of policy updates and other items of interest. There are also helpful tips for navigating through the Defense community.