



Ohio Department of Veterans Services

★ *Monthly Update* ★

April 2012



**We Remember
Our Fallen Heroes.**

**Questions about
veterans benefits?**

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

Welcome to the thirteenth edition of the Ohio Department of Veterans Services 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.

In Memoriam to Our Fallen Heroes...

The Ohio military and veterans' community was shocked and deeply saddened April 5 by the news of the loss of three Ohio National Guardsmen in a suicide bomb attack in Afghanistan the previous day. We lost SFC Shawn T. Hannon, 44, of Grove City, CPT Nicholas J. Rozanski, 36, of Dublin, and SFC Jeffrey J. Rieck, 46, of Columbus. Five Guardsmen were also wounded in this same attack, but are recovering at various hospitals. This closely followed news of the loss in Afghanistan on April 3 of SSG Christopher L. Brown, 26, a native of Columbus who was serving on active duty in a unit based at Fort Carson, Colorado.



The Ohio Department of Veterans Services lost one of its own in the attack on the Guard: Shawn Hannon was our Chief Legal Counsel. We lost a colleague, friend, and unfailing advocate for Ohio's veterans. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Jamie, and his nine-month-old son, Evan.

Top to bottom:
SFC Hannon, CPT Rozanski,
and SFC Rieck.
On right: SSG Brown



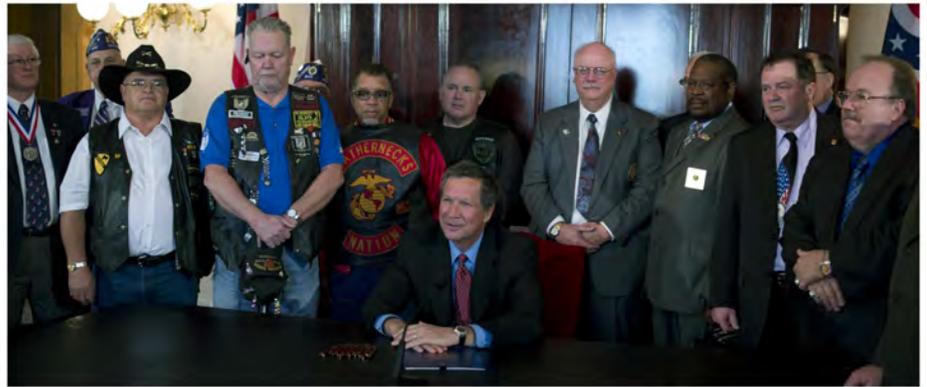
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We remember the lives of these brave soldiers who are now lost to us. Our hearts go out with deepest sympathies to all their families. These tragic losses remind us that the price of freedom is indeed dear – but in the midst of our grief, we may also take some comfort that our country has many brave men and women who are willing to bear the burden of defending our nation, and if necessary, to pay that price.

Vietnam Veterans Get Their Day...

Ohio veterans of the Vietnam War now have a day to be formally thanked for their service with the March 30 signature of Governor John Kasich on Senate Bill 134, which sets aside every March 30 as Vietnam Veterans Day.



The Governor signed the bill in a ceremony in his Statehouse office, surrounded by Vietnam veterans and representatives of veterans' organizations. The bill was unanimously passed by the Ohio Senate on March 15 and the Ohio House on March 28.

"Everybody who served is, in one way or another, a hero," Governor Kasich said at the ceremony. "And those that put their lives on the line are the ones who wear the biggest crowns in the world yet to come."

Ohio Department of Veterans Services Director Tom Moe, an Air Force combat pilot in Vietnam who spent over five years in a North Vietnamese POW camp, said the bill provided honor to veterans who have never received the respect they earned.

"Today, though, is a day to heal, to close up those wounds, to leave the divisions in the past and to come together with one purpose — to say thanks to those of us who put our lives and futures in jeopardy to serve our country in Southeast Asia," Director Moe said. "Today is our day when we can finally say we are welcomed back home."

Director Moe concluded his remarks by tapping out, in the code used by POWs in North Vietnam, the letters "GBU." These letters stand both, he said, for "God bless you" and "God bless America."

The date of March 30 represents the first day in 1973, after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, when all U.S. combat troops were out of the country. At least 18 other states currently recognize March 30, and others have similar bills pending.



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Ohio Means Jobs for Veterans...



When someone leaves the military, it's likely that their next mission is to find a job. As anyone who has spent time in the job market knows, finding work definitely takes work. But in Ohio there's some very concrete assistance for veterans looking to successfully accomplish their new mission.

The greatest aid is a mouse click away – it's the enhanced state jobs web site that puts veterans at the front of the line. We're talking about "Ohio Means Jobs," a joint venture between the state and Monster.com:

<https://ohiomeansjobs.com/omj/>

Go to the "Job Seekers" part of the site, and a world of opportunity opens up. Veterans need to post their resume and indicate that they are a veteran. What this does is present veterans' resumes first for any job that matches the qualifications they've posted in their resume. The resume should be reviewed every month and electronically "updated" – whether any additional information is added or not – to keep it refreshed and at the front of the line for jobs.

There's also a searchable data base of thousands of jobs across Ohio, with private business, federal, state and local government, and schools. While it's still advisable to check local ads in the places in Ohio you'd like to be, the Monster.com system will capture the great majority of employment ads from throughout the state.

There's also a military widget on Ohiomeansjobs.com that will automatically link you to additional information for veterans. This includes resources to help build a resume by translating military experience to civilian terms. It also includes links to veteran-friendly employers – companies that have made a commitment to hire veterans – as well as other resources:

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

What if you need additional help in translating what you did in the military into terms civilians will understand? The military has already gotten into that business. The Army and the Navy have developed online "cool" web sites that help veterans translate their military skills into terms civilian employers can understand. The sites, which stand for "credentialing opportunities online," allow a veteran to select their



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military skill code and then see the types of jobs their training and experience translates to, as well as any certifications that are needed. There are no Air Force, Marine, or Coast Guard “cool” sites. However, the Air Force does offer similar resources on its Community College of the Air Force site, at the Credentialing and Education Research Tool (CERT) page; Marine skills are similar to those found in the Army and Air Force; and Coast Guard skills are similar to those found in the Navy.

Check out these sites below:

<https://www.cool.army.mil/index.htm>

<https://www.cool.navy.mil/overview.htm>

<https://augateway.maxwell.af.mil/ccaf/certifications/programs/>

We'd be very remiss to not include in this information a group of people who are working every day to find work for veterans. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services is in an active partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor to operate Job Centers in each county, usually centrally located in the county seat; contact information is easily accessible by searching online or in the phone book. The Job Centers are open to all residents, but are also staffed with counselors who specifically assist veterans. Periodically, the Job Centers work with local partners to host regional job fairs across the state, which we'll tell you about here.

The Ohio National Guard is also heavily involved in the issue of veteran employment. The Guard has partnered with AMVETS to create this web site, which features job postings for veterans:

<http://ohiovetscan.com/>

But remember, before you go to any job fair or other job-seeking event, there are certain common skills that you must master if you're going to be successful.

First, are you physically prepared for your job search? Whatever type of employment you're looking for, there are some common tips to remember:

- Do you have a current resume?
- Do you have a cover letter that's geared to the type of job you're looking for?
- Do you go to an interview or a job fair and present a professional appearance, e.g., suit and tie, or dress/skirt or pantsuit?



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Women Veterans Hold Panel...

Women veterans of five different wartime eras recounted their experiences in a panel discussion March 16 at the Statehouse Museum Crypt. The event marking Women's History Month was sponsored by the Ohio Department of Veterans Services.

Each panelist answered questions about their personal experiences, what it was like to be a woman serving in their era, and how these affected their service careers

and later lives. The panelists were: Ilene Hall, who served overseas in World War II; Laura Williams Dunlop, who served during the time of the Korean War, Margaret Jean Madden, who served during the Vietnam War era; Margaret De-Lillo Storey, who was deployed to Desert Storm; and Candace Jones, who served in Iraq during the war there.

The stories of their lives provided a personal history of women's military service for most of the 20th Century and the early part of the 21st. The discussion was candid, lively and often humorous, and appeared to be both enjoyed and appreciated by the large crowd on hand. Governor John Kasich also briefly addressed the participants at the end of the program.

Women have served in every military conflict beginning with the American Revolutionary War to the current wars. Right now, over 214,000 women serve on active duty, comprising 14.6 percent of today's military. They serve in all branches of the military, and are often under fire. Women have been injured and killed in battle, as well as decorated for heroic actions.

A video of the event is available at:

<http://www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=134795>

VA Gulf War Task Force Report Released...

Following the direction of VA Secretary Eric Shinseki in 2009, the VA has released the second in a series of annual reports from its Gulf War Veterans Illnesses Task Force.





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These reports outline how the department will address the concerns of veterans who deployed during the Persian Gulf War of 1990-1991.

The report focuses on efforts to improve the delivery of health care for this group of veterans, including the launch of a prototype clinical care model that is designed specifically for Persian Gulf War veterans.

You can read the complete report here:

http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/2011_GWVI-TF_Report.pdf

Getting Out the Vote...

As we're all aware, 2012 is a Presidential election year, as well as an election year for federal representatives, one Senator, and many state legislators and local officials. Ohioans serving on active duty out of state, or National Guard and Reserve service members who are deployed outside Ohio, deserve to make their voices heard and their votes count.

Some currently serving military may have registered and automatically received an absentee ballot in the past, but now, this is not the case. A federal law enacted in 2010 changed the procedures to require that a new military voter registration form (FPCA) is completed each calendar year.



Remember, an absentee ballot will not be received without submitting a new FPCA. The Ohio Secretary of State, as part of the Military Ready to Vote initiative, has created a special web page for military voters that walks them through the procedures and provides a link to the FPCA. That page is:

<http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/elections/overseas/applyUOCAVA.aspx>

To ensure eligibility to vote this fall, Ohio military service members who need an absentee ballot should submit their military voter registration form now to be sure that they receive it in time. This also holds true for military spouses and dependent children who are eligible to vote.



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Completed and signed forms can be made into attachments and e-mailed to the Ohio Secretary of State at:

omv@ohiosecretaryofstate.gov

Or, snail-mailed to: Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted, PO Box 2828, Columbus, Ohio 43216-2828.

Get Out the Bonus...



If you're a veteran of the Persian Gulf War era or of the era of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and you haven't applied for the Ohio Veterans Bonus, you could be costing yourself and your family some serious money.

So if you haven't applied, get to it! But if you have, then please pass this information along to other veterans. If you're a veteran of any era, please share this information with today's veterans. Many won't apply unless they hear about it from another vet.

To be eligible for the bonus, you must be –

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.

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.

This bonus is not subject to either federal or state taxes.

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

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



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For more information, call 1-877-OHIO-VET (1-877-644-6838) or, you can visit your County Veterans Service Office to apply. To find your local office, see the Ohio map at: <http://dvs.ohio.gov/>

Get the Benefits You've Earned...

If you served any time at all in the U.S. Armed Forces, please receive the following message Lima Charlie – your service may be worth more than you think.

Veterans of every era qualify for some type of benefit. As a veteran, you may be eligible for health care, aid for education, a loan for a new home, compensation for a service-connected injury that's now causing health problems, pensions for low-income veterans, and much more, both federal and state. Ohio's counties even have direct financial assistance for veterans in need.

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services wants to get you connected to what you've earned. The place to do that is at your local County Veterans Service Office where you can receive help applying for your benefits. Studies have shown that the veteran who gets assistance in applying for benefits receives about 40 percent more than they otherwise would have.

To get started, contact the County Veterans Service Network at 1-877-OHIO VET (1-877-644-6838) or find your county on the interactive Ohio map at dvs.ohio.gov.

Get the 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.



See the latest edition at:

<http://apps.mhf.dod.mil/mcfp/weekly>