



Ohio Department of Veterans Services

★ *Monthly Update* ★

April 2013



The Ohio Department of Veterans Services and the Buckeye State Council, Vietnam Veterans of America, joined with volunteers from veterans organizations, private individuals, and federal, state, and local government to host a four-day Vietnam Veterans Commemoration from March 26-29. Events were held at the Ohio History Center and at the Statehouse.

Read more about the commemoration in this newsletter.

Questions about veterans benefits?

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

Welcome to the twenty-fifth 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, www.ohiovet.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.

Vietnam Commemoration Honors Special Group of Veterans...

Vietnam Veterans Day in Ohio was commemorated from March 26-29 with events at the Ohio History Center and the Statehouse. In spite of chilly weather, more than 4,063 people visited The Wall That Heals, a 1/2-size replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall, or heard the panel discussions at the Ohio History Center. Over 250 people attended a Statehouse Atrium dinner during the commemoration.

The week marked the first state-level commemoration of the day enacted by the Ohio General Assembly and signed by Governor John Kasich last year, designating March 30 as Vietnam Veterans Day in Ohio. The date signifies the day in 1973 that American combat troops returned to the U.S. after withdrawing from Vietnam on March 29. The commemoration was held March 26-29 due to the Easter holiday on March 31.



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Panel discussions during the week focused on the experiences of Vietnam War combat veterans, prisoners of war, and women veterans. The final discussion looked at the aftermath of the war from the experiences of a veteran, a veteran who is also an author and academic, a Vietnamese veteran of the war, and a VA nurse.

Veterans also had the opportunity to participate in living history interviews at the Ohio History Center. The Statehouse Museum Gallery hosted special exhibits from Mott's Military Museum in Groveport and the Miami Valley Military Museum of artifacts donated by veterans.

Opening and closing ceremonies were held at the History Center and the Statehouse. A final ceremony on March 29 at The Wall That Heals officially retired the Wall and honored all of the lives lost in the war, both military and civilian.

The commemoration was made even more meaningful by the constantly scrolling names inside the Ohio History Center of all 3,097 Ohioans lost during the Vietnam War. These lives were also represented by 3,097 crosses on a hill in front of the Ohio History Center.

Throughout the week, Vietnam veterans gathered at the venues to remember, to talk to each other, and to talk to volunteers about their experiences and the war's effects on their lives. Hearing their words, and seeing the emotional reactions of so many of the visitors to The Wall That Heals, left no doubt that this commemoration helped make up for the lack of a formal homecoming for veterans 40 years ago.

"It's important that we establish Vietnam Veteran's Day so that the people of Ohio can unite in one voice and say that they are grateful and proud of the veterans of that conflict," Ohio Department of Veterans Services Director Tom Moe said prior to the event. "It is a voice that is finally saying to them, 'welcome home.' "

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services (ODVS) and the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), Buckeye State Council, joined to sponsor the commemoration. A volunteer committee of veterans'



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organizations and local officials spent months working together to bring the event to life. The Ohio Veterans and Fraternal Charitable Coalition graciously underwrote a significant portion of the commemoration's costs.

You can view pictures of the commemoration, as well as a special video tribute to Ohio's Vietnam veterans, at:



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ohioveteransservices/collections/72157633152186506/>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0kLqshqc8U>

Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame is Looking for Deserving Veterans...

Nominations are due Sunday, June 30 for this year's class of the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame.

"There are a lot of great Ohio veterans out there who've made a real difference to the people in their communities, and we want to be sure that they get the recognition they deserve for what they've accomplished at home," said Ohio Department of Veterans Services Director Tom Moe, a 2009 Inductee of the Hall.

"They're our neighbors, and our friends, the ones who step up and make sure that what needs to be done gets done. Take the time to honor them by sending in their nomination for the Hall of Fame."

The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame does not recognize veterans for their military rank or deeds. Rather, its purpose is to honor 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.





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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 20 years include astronauts, government officials, police officers, community leaders, and veterans' advocates.

The Hall of Fame Executive Committee, made up of veterans, serves as advisors for the Hall of Fame and selects not 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. The members of the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame are honored in a permanent display on the second floor of the Riffe Center in downtown Columbus.

Additional info, nomination guidelines and forms, as well stories of past inductees, are available at:

http://dvs.ohio.gov/veterans_hall_of_fame.aspx

Veterans and Jobs in Ohio...



Please read below for the latest information on jobs for Ohio veterans. If you're in search of employment, even if you've read much of this information before, it's still a valuable guide. Please share this information with other veterans.

Job Events Upcoming in Youngstown and Cincinnati:

Two significant job events for Ohio veterans are coming up in April and May.

The first is in Youngstown, and focuses on jobs in the emerging shale oil and gas industry – a natural fit for many veterans. It's a special training and employment fair for oil and gas jobs, to be held in Youngstown at the end of this month.

The event will take place on Monday, April 29, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Holiday Inn in Boardman. The address is 7410 South Avenue, Youngstown, OH 44512.



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The fair is sponsored by U.S. Senator Rob Portman, the Ohio Oil & Gas Association and the Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber. For more information, see:

<http://www.portman.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/energy-jobs-fair>

The second event is in mid-May in Cincinnati. Sponsored by the company Recruit Military in partnership with the American Legion, it will be held on Thursday, May 16, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Paul Brown Stadium, where the Cincinnati Bengals play.

More than 60 employers are slated to be on-hand, including Home Depot, General Electric, Prudential Financial, Norfolk Southern, Cincinnati Bell, and the VA Medical Center. For more information, see:

<https://events.recruitmilitary.com/events/cincinnati-veteran-job-fair-may-16-2013>

For a Job Fair, or any Employment Event, Be Prepared for Interviews, and Know Your Skills:

Before you attend any job fair or visit any employer, remember these common tips:

- Have a current resume;
- Have a cover letter that's geared to the type of job being sought;
- Present a professional appearance, e.g., suit and tie, or dress/skirt or pantsuit.

To prepare an effective resume, you have to be able to translate military experience to civilian experience. 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 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 is no Air Force, Marine, or Coast Guard "cool" site. However, the Air Force does offer similar resources in 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.

The "cool" sites are below:

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

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

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



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Online Job Assistance: You can also look for jobs online. “Ohio Means Jobs” is the state’s primary job web site, listing the vast majority of both private sector and public jobs open in Ohio. But the real key to this site for veterans is that it gets you to the front of the line to be considered for the available jobs.

This site is a partnership between Ohio and Monster.com. Once on the site – at <https://ohiomeansjobs.com/omj/>, or simply type in “Ohiomeansjobs.com” – go to the “Job Seekers” area to find the opportunities for veterans.

But first, 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.

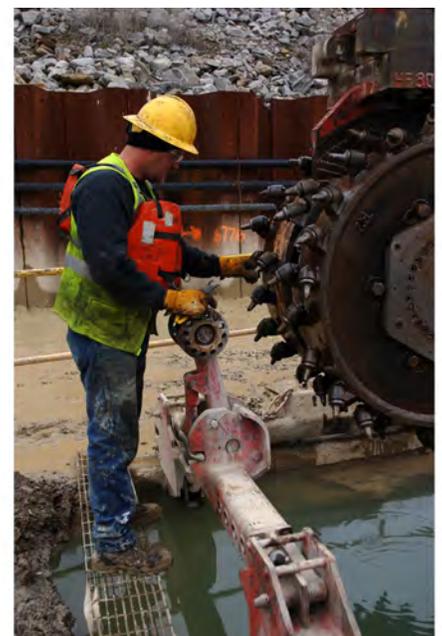
This site has a searchable data base of thousands of jobs across Ohio, with private business, federal, state and local government, and schools. While it’s still advisable to check local ads in the places in Ohio you’d like to be, the Monster.com system will capture the great majority of employment ads from throughout the state. The link is below:

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

In-Person Job Assistance: If you want to start a face-to-face job search, there’s employment assistance available not far home. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (JFS) 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.

While the Job Centers are open to all residents, but are also staffed with counselors who specifically assist veterans. Their primary clients are veterans with barriers to employment, of which long-term unemployment definitely qualifies. Counselors can also assist with skills translation and resume preparation. The Job Centers also have resources to assist disabled veterans with qualifying for, finding and keeping meaningful employment.

Periodically, the Job Centers work with local partners to host regional job fairs across the state, which we’ll tell you about here and in our social media.





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Ohio Veterans Bonus is Running Out for Gulf War Veterans...

If you served on active duty in 1991 during the time of the Persian Gulf War, you're rapidly running out of time to apply for the tax-free Ohio Veterans Bonus. **The deadline for applications for veterans of the Gulf War era is December 31, 2013.**

The law that implemented the Ohio Veterans Bonus set a deadline of December 31, 2013 for Persian Gulf War era veterans to apply. Even though it sounds like a long time away, it will get here faster than you think – so don't delay, if you served during this time, get busy and apply for the Bonus.



Other provisions of the same law that authorized the Bonus resulted in a December 31, 2014 application deadline for Iraq War veterans. This is because the law set the deadline for Iraq War era veterans as the third year following a date determined by the President as the end of the conflict. This date is the termination date of the Iraq Campaign Medal, which was December 31, 2011 – making the deadline for Bonus application for service in Iraq December 31, 2014. No deadline has yet been announced for the Afghanistan War.

The Ohio Veterans Bonus is available to veterans who served more than 90 days active duty, not for training, during the periods of the Persian Gulf War and the conflicts in

Afghanistan and Iraq. For the Persian Gulf, the eligible period is from August 2, 1990 through March 3, 1991; for Afghanistan, from October 7, 2001 through a date to be determined by the President, and for Iraq, from March 19, 2003 to December 31, 2011. Payment can also be received for 90 days or more of active duty service, not for training, anywhere in the world during these periods. However, the Bonus is higher for veterans who served in the Persian Gulf or in Afghanistan or Iraq. Eligible veterans must have been Ohio residents at the time of their entry into the service, and must be Ohio residents currently.

The bonus pays \$100 a month to veterans who served in the Persian Gulf theater, or in the countries of Afghanistan or Iraq, up to a maximum of \$1,000. For veterans who served elsewhere, the payment is \$50 a month up to a \$500 maximum. Veterans medically discharged due to injuries sustained in combat can receive \$1,000, plus up to \$500 for months of service elsewhere.



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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.

Over 64,600 Ohio veterans and family members have received more than \$54.5 million in payments from the Ohio Veterans Bonus.

Anyone needing more information or who want to apply can call toll-free to 1-877-OHIO VET (1-877-644-6838) option 2, or see:

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

Veterans can also apply for the Bonus at their local Veterans Service Office in their home county. To find the location of your county office, see the Ohio map and select the appropriate county at:

<http://dvs.ohio.gov/>

Your County Veterans Service Office can also help you determine what other federal and state benefits you're eligible for and help you apply for them.