



September 2013



Veteran Newsletter



The Ohio Veterans Bonus is a thank you from the citizens of Ohio to our state's veterans during the time of the Persian Gulf War and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It's a tax-free payment for serving voluntarily in a time of war, anywhere in the world.

But it won't be around forever – the Ohio Veterans Bonus ends this year for veterans of the Persian Gulf War era. Find out more about the Bonus and how to apply in this month's feature story.

Welcome to 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.

Ohio Veterans Bonus Ends This Year for Gulf War Era Vets...

The Ohio Veterans Bonus is available for veterans who served during the time of the Persian Gulf War or the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. But time is running short for one group of veterans -- **the deadline for applications for veterans of the Persian Gulf War era is December 31, 2013.**

The Ohio Veterans Bonus is available to veterans who served anywhere in the world during the eligible periods. Service must have been for more than 90 days active duty, not for training. Eligibility periods and deadlines are as follows:

Have questions about veterans benefits? Call 1-877-OHIOVET (1-877-644-6838)

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- Persian Gulf: eligible period is from August 2, 1990 through March 3, 1991 (**deadline to apply is December 31, 2013**);
- Afghanistan: eligible period is from October 7, 2001 through a date to be determined by the President; and for
- Iraq: eligible period is from March 19, 2003 to December 31, 2011 (**deadline to apply is December 31, 2014**).
- 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 anywhere else in the world during the eligible periods, 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. 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.

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.



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September is Suicide Prevention Month...

The U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) is highlighting prevention of service members and veterans taking their own lives this month as part of the nation's Suicide Prevention Month.

Experiences, the kind undergone by military and safety forces and many individuals as well, can be triggers to consider taking one's life. These trigger experiences are primarily traumatic in nature, and often result in PTSD from the experience itself. Put these factors together, and someone can definitely be at higher risk.

But the VA has a very important resource so that service members and veterans at risk – and also their families – can access on any time of day or night. The Veterans Crisis Line is open 24/7, and is staffed by trained counselors, many of whom are combat veterans. We ask that everyone in our Ohio veterans' community encourage those in crisis, or just suffering in silence, to reach out, connect to this line, talk through their issues, and get the help they need.



The number of the Veterans Crisis Line is: **1-800-273-8255, press 1.**

VA Student Veteran Program Extends to Ohio Campuses...

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced this month that it is expanding the availability of services through its VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) program to two Ohio schools this fall, as well as 60 other locations around the country.

The new Ohio schools are Ohio State University and the University of Cincinnati. A VSOC program was already in place at Cleveland State University. The new additions bring the total number of schools with a VSOC in place to 94.



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What is VSOC? According to VA Undersecretary for Benefits Allison Hickey, it's a program to help veterans navigate what is often a difficult transition from military service to academic life. It places experienced VA counselors on the participating college campuses with the goal of helping veterans succeed in both their educational and career goals through the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill and other federal educational programs.

These counselors maintain close relationships with local VA medical facilities and VA Vet Centers, which address mental health needs. They will refer student veterans to medical and counseling services, and also provide assistance for them to enroll in or apply for VA medical or non-medical benefits.

According to the VA, there are currently over 22,000 Ohio veterans and family members are attending colleges and universities in Ohio through VA educational benefits.

Job Information for Ohio Veterans...

The latest information on job-seeking strategies for Ohio veterans is below. Even though we share a lot of this same information each month, we believe it's valuable to all veterans in search of employment. Please share this information with other veterans.

Upcoming Cincinnati-Area Job Fair: Cincinnati's Paul Brown Stadium plays host to a job fair on Thursday, Oct. 3 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., hosted by RecruitMilitary in cooperation with the American Legion. Employers on hand include Prudential Financial, General Electric, C.R. England, Inc. and Quest Diagnostics.

For more information and to register, go to:



<https://events.recruitmilitary.com/events/cincinnati-veteran-job-fair-october-3-2013#registration>



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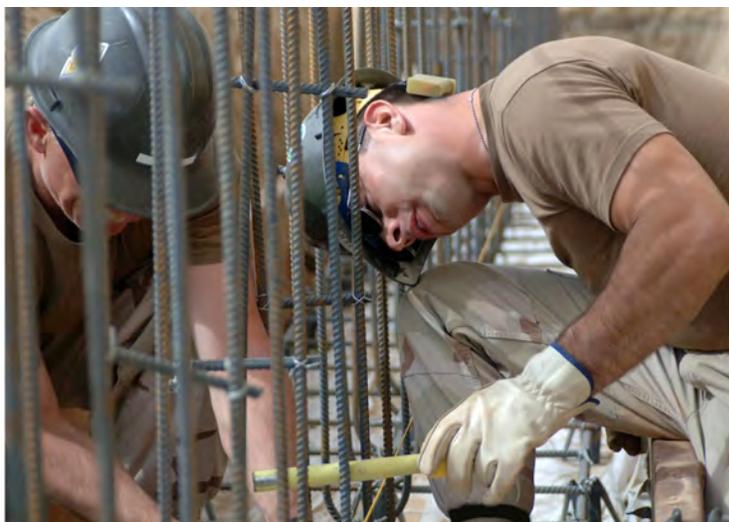


Companies Looking to Hire Veterans: Veterans across Ohio can benefit from a surge of goodwill among national and local employers who are looking for opportunities to hire those who've served in the Armed Forces.

For example, Ohio's insurance industry currently has over 17,000 new jobs, and a consortium of companies in the state believe that veterans are the ones best qualified to fill these vacancies. Find out more at:

<http://insurancecareers.org/veterans>

A number of other national companies with operations in Ohio have announced commitments this year to hire veterans. They include AT&T, Chase Bank, GE, Home Depot, Walmart, Verizon, Xerox, and Ohio's insurance companies. Information is available on the individual company web sites; go to www.google.com to search by company name.



Finding Jobs Online: 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 which are open in Ohio. It also gets veterans to the head of the line to be considered for the available jobs.

You can reach this site at <https://ohiomeansjobs.com/omj/> , or simply type in "Ohiomeansjobs.com." The available jobs are posted in the "Job Seekers" area.

Before you look for a job, take the time to get yourself to the head of the line. Post your resume on the site and indicate that they *are* a veteran. The site automatically posts veterans' resumes first for any job that matches the qualifications they've stated in their resume – so employers who go to the site will see veterans' resumes before they see anyone else's. 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 head 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.



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This web site also has an area with other resources for veterans, to include translation of military to civilian skills and frequently asked questions about the process. The link is below:

<http://www.ohiomeansveteranjobs.com/infocenter>

Finding Jobs In-Person: If you want to start a face-to-face job search, there's in-person assistance available in every county. 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 – and they know where the jobs are locally. The Job Centers also have resources to assist disabled veterans with qualifying for, finding and keeping meaningful employment.



Schools and Companies Offering Job Training:

Job training that could lead to employment in the emerging shale industry and in manufacturing is available throughout Ohio. Stark State College and Eastern Gateway Community College offer training targeted to shale jobs. Cincinnati State College offers training aimed at industrial jobs. Siemens Corporation offers training geared to engineering manufacturing jobs. Find out more at the schools' and company's web sites; conduct your search using www.google.com.

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.



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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/>



Two Significant Events Bookend September....

September has two events near its beginning and its end of special significance to serving military, veterans and their families.

September 11 is Patriot’s Day, commemorating the 12th year since the attacks on America of September 11, 2001. Ceremonies were held across Ohio and the U.S. to mark the events of that day. The most emotional remembrances were held where the events occurred – the site of the World Trade Centers in New York City, the Pentagon, and the crash site of Flight 93 in Shanksville, Pa.



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These attacks led us into a still-ongoing war, heightened security and surveillance, and spawned smaller-scale attacks both across the globe and occasionally here at home. But despite their continuing efforts, the terrorists have not won. The United States of America endures.

September 20 is POW/MIA Day. Our state and our nation paused to remember those held prisoner and those who are missing, and renewed the call for a full accounting of their fates. An astounding 383,344 Americans remain missing and unaccounted for from all the wars of the 20th and 21st centuries. This number includes 1,645 missing from the Vietnam War, including 77 from Ohio.

Americans have been captured and held as prisoners of war in all conflicts. Today, one man holds that status – Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, who has been a prisoner of the Taliban in either Afghanistan or Pakistan since June 2009. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel said at a September 20 ceremony that the U.S. is continuing efforts on military, intelligence and diplomatic levels to secure his release.

Efforts to bring closure to the families of the missing continue. The U.S. Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command searches in Southeast Asia, Asia, Europe and other locations for the remains of American service members, conducting more than 35 search missions each year. The command says they will continue this mission “until they are home.”

Veteran Newsletter Puzzle...

We hope you enjoyed the challenge of last month's [Korean War Puzzle](#) and were able to find the phrase it contained. (See solution to the right.) We've got a new kind of brain-twisting challenge for you this month that's different from traditional crossword puzzles. See the instructions and puzzle on the following page, and good luck!

Korean War Puzzle

Answers to the randomly listed clues below will fit into one of the eight columns of the grid. Once you've filled the grid with the answers, the circled letters (when read left to right and top to bottom) will reveal the solution to this month's puzzle, a phrase pertaining to the Korean War.

Clues

Entered the Korean War in 1950, forcing Allied Forces to retreat behind the 38th Parallel

Aided the North Korean-Chinese who were engaged in combat with UN Forces

Site of the Battle of Taejon

Ridgway's rank

Straight that Truman sent the Seventh Fleet to protect

Quartermaster training for the Korean War happened here

First president of South Korea

Where Marines began the 35 mile fight out from the Chosin Reservoir

1	F	O	R	M	O	S	A
2	C	H	I	N	E	S	E
3	D	A	E	J	E	O	N
4	Y	U	D	A	M	N	I
5	S	Y	N	G	M	A	N
6	S	O	V	I	E	T	S
7	F	O	R	T	L	E	E
8	G	E	N	E	R	A	L

SOLUTION: "Freedom is not free."

