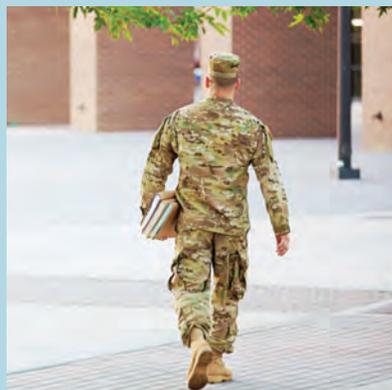




September 2015



# Veteran Newsletter



## Governor Kasich Names Col. Chip Tansill to Lead Department of Veterans Services

Gov. John R. Kasich announced Col. Chip Tansill (U.S. Army, retired) will lead the Ohio Department of Veteran Services beginning September 21, 2015. Tansill served as executive director of the Franklin County Veterans Services Commission and replaces Col. Tim Gorrell, who recently stepped down as director.

*Welcome to the Ohio Department of Veterans Services e-newsletter.*

To learn about the benefits you've earned, visit your County Veterans Service Office, [www.ohiovet.gov](http://www.ohiovet.gov) or call 1-877-OHIO-VET

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*and more...*



Governor John Kasich shakes Col. Tansill's hand after swearing him in as the director of the Ohio Department of Veterans Services. Assistant Adjutant General John Harris, a close friend, is holding the Bible.

"We are grateful to our veterans for their service and the more we work to improve opportunities for them, the stronger our state becomes," said Kasich. "I'm grateful to Col. Tansill for taking on this important new challenge and value Col. Gorrell's service and passionate advocacy for those who have served our country. We look forward to continued work with Col. Gorrell to serve our state."

**Have questions about veterans benefits? Call 1-877-OHIOVET or visit [www.ohiovet.gov](http://www.ohiovet.gov)**



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Tansill began his military career in 1982 when he joined the United States Army Reserve. Tansill was deployed to the Persian Gulf in 1990. In 2011, he was named chief of staff for the Ohio National Guard. His awards and decorations include Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal with five oak leaf clusters, and the Army Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters. Tansill retired from military service earlier this year.

Tansill received a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice from Fairmont State College. He holds master’s degrees from Trident University and the U.S. Army War College.

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services works to actively identify, connect with, and advocate for veterans and their families. Ohio law gives the department the responsibility to partner with county veteran service commissions and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, in order to “serve those who have served.”

## A Farewell from Tim Gorrell

Fellow Veterans, families and colleagues,

Ohio believes in empowering the veteran and military community to lead better lives through services, support and economic opportunity. It has been an honor and a privilege to work in this capacity for the past two years. Now the time has come to pursue new opportunities in state government.

I am grateful for the opportunity I’ve had to serve and advocate for Ohio Veterans.

I appreciate the strong partnership we have with our 88 county Veteran service offices and Ohio’s great Veteran service organizations. I am immeasurably in awe of the superb work you are doing connecting Ohio Veterans to the federal VA benefits they have earned.



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The reforms we have implemented under the leadership of Governor Kasich, Lieutenant Governor Taylor and the General Assembly are helping Veterans to fast track to new careers, education and training. Working with our state partners – Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Ohio Department of Higher Education, The Adjutant General, Ohio Means Jobs and the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation--Ohio is now truly the best in the nation in connecting Veterans with the job training and tools they need to compete for today’s in-demand jobs. For employers Ohio is better positioned to assist businesses in identifying and connecting with qualified job-seeking Veterans than it has been at any time.

The mission of the organization remains fixed; the dedication and devotion of the staff constant; and a new director will build on our successes taking the organization to even greater heights.

In the end it is about serving Ohio’s 877,000 Veterans, from World War II to the present day, to the fullest extent. Our message within Ohio and nationwide is that Ohio unwaveringly values Veterans. All the new improved resources and opportunities Ohio offers Veterans makes our state the most attractive option for Veterans and their families to live, work, thrive and call home.



Yours in service,

Tim Gorrell

## 920 Students Awarded more than \$6.8 million in Ohio War Orphans Scholarships

The Ohio War Orphans Scholarship Board unanimously approved scholarship awards to 920 students totaling more than \$6.8 million for academic year 2015-2016. For the first time in several years, War Orphan students at Ohio’s public colleges and universities will be receiving full 100% tuition.

The War Orphans Scholarship fund for the children of wartime disabled or deceased veterans saw a nearly 30 percent increase the state budget. This is especially important as we see an increase in applicants from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.



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Fulfilling this promise of education for children of those who have sacrificed so much in service to our country was a collaborative effort of the Department of Higher Education, the General Assembly, Governor John Kasich’s Office, the War Orphan Scholarship Board, and the Ohio Department of Veterans Services.

*Our son maintains a 3.9 GPA and is applying to medical schools.... It is comforting to know that the service my husband gave to America while serving in the Army during Vietnam has been recognized through this scholarship. ~ student’s mom*

## Conference Brings Together, Honors Ohio’s Women Veterans

*Photos and Story by Staff Sgt. Kimberly Hill, 196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

Hundreds of women pour into the narrow hallway from the hotel lobby. Some are using canes and wheelchairs to make their way through the crowded space, while others, barely in their 20s, almost skip down the aisles. Some wear high heels and business attire, while others favor jeans and sneakers.

They stop and talk to the vendors at the booths set up along the walls, as well as each other. Their voices and laughter soon fill the hallway as strangers are introduced and old friends are reunited. Although they all seem to come from different backgrounds and generations, they share not only smiles and laughter, but also one unifying experience.

They are all veterans.

More than 500 female veterans attended the Ohio Department of Veterans Services Women Veterans Conference Sept. 12, 2015, at the Hilton Columbus at Easton.

“It’s great to see all these female veterans, walking in I felt so energized and proud,” said Megan Grudzinski, an Army veteran and Cleveland native.



One of the largest women’s veterans conferences in the country, the event brings women vets together from all over the state of Ohio and provides information on benefits, resources, employment and networking opportunities for attendees.



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The Ohio National Guard, Ohio Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Advisory Committee on Women Veterans and the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs supported the biennial event this year.

“A lot of female veterans, just like male veterans, are unaware of what benefits and resources are available to them, and we want to get the word out and let them know we appreciate their service,” said Karen Kish, the women veterans program coordinator for the Ohio DVS.

This is especially important in a state like Ohio, which has a population of more than 67,000 female veterans, and is home to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, near Dayton, one of the largest Air Force installations in the country, she said.

The event included an all-female color guard from the Ohio Army National Guard and several keynote speakers including Lt. Col. Ann-Maria Coghlin, commander of the Ohio Air National Guard’s 178th Mission Support Group, and Dr. Betty Moseley Brown, associate director of the VA’s Center for Women Veterans.

Women from all eras and services who attended the event gained not only information about benefits and opportunities available to them, but were also recognized for their service and the sacrifices they’ve made for their nation.

Depending on the era these women served, this conference may mark the first time that some have even considered themselves veterans, Kish said.

“The hardest part about being a female veteran is a lack of acknowledgement over the years,” said Mary Holiway, an Army veteran and a Cleveland native.

Kish, a veteran herself who retired from the Ohio Army National Guard in 2003, is well aware of not only the challenges female veterans face, but also that their struggle may go unseen.

“The first thing out of some of these women’s mouths is ‘Oh, I didn’t serve overseas’ or ‘I didn’t know I was a vet,’ and that’s something that needs to be addressed,” Kish said.



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“Many women are so modest and humble about their service, that they are unaware of the benefits that are available to them, and they also need to receive the recognition they deserve,” she added.

This is a thought echoed by Moseley Brown, herself a Marine Corps veteran.

“We want to raise awareness to treat all women with dignity and respect,” she said.

The conference also addressed legislative policy, which included the announcement of a new female veteran license plate that would be available for purchase from the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles sometime later this year.

While attendees gained important information regarding their benefits, many veterans feel they gained something even more valuable from the conference.

“When I returned from Afghanistan, I felt so isolated, I didn’t have any female support, none of my friends were veterans, and my Reserve unit was in Illinois,” Grudzinski said. “I had no one to share my experiences with or talk to.”

Grudzinski, who suffered from PTSD after her deployment, attended the event with the aid of her service dog, Harley. “It’s a big step for me being around this many people, but being around all these female vets has definitely been worth it,” she added with a smile.

See images from the event here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ohioveteransservices/albums/72157658204116960>



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## More than 200 Faculty & Staff attend Training on Translating Military Experience into College Credit

The Ohio Values Veterans Initiative continues to grow! The OVV regional workshops held back in April and May helped to train more than 200 faculty and staff from Ohio’s Public Institutions. It was a fantastic partnership with the American Council on Education with assistance from the Ohio Military Strategic Implementation Team that helped make the events a success. Those workshops helped faculty and staff credit evaluators understand military credit, the ACE faculty review process, and gave them the chance to try to map a few military courses to their own institutional offerings.

With a focus on sustainability, the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) created a Train-The-Trainer event to make sure each of Ohio’s public institutions has the ability to train their own current and future staff about military credit and expand the knowledge base in Ohio. The event will take place on September 23rd and October 21st. Institutional teams of 1-3 people will help craft a program that will be used across the state as well as on the Ohio Values Veterans Toolkit webpage, which is used across Ohio and the Nation!

The training session will cover military credit resources, such as ACE, the Joint Services Transcript, Community College of the Air Force transcript and information, Military Transfer Assurance Guides, etc., in a manner that will help the individual or team teach the information to their respective institution.

After the Train the Trainer Program, the next military initiative event will be the first ever gathering of the House Bill 488 single points of contact. Ohio HB488 required the board of trustees of each of Ohio’s public institutions to designate at least one person employed by the institution to serve as the contact person for veterans and service member affairs.

The ODHE and ODVS will be hosting the first ever convening of the HB488 single points of contact. Not only will this group be beneficial to the state of Ohio, but it will also allow for networking and sharing of best practices. We hope it will give everyone valuable information as to what is going on around the state at the campus level as well as any potential veteran issues that might arise.



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## New Project HERO (Healing Exercise Rehabilitation Opportunity) launched in Ohio

Former ODVS Director Tim Gorrell and U.S. Senator Rob Portman announced a new Project HERO (Healing Exercise Rehabilitation Opportunity) between Ride 2 Recovery (R2R) and General Electric (GE) to provide to provide veterans an outlet through cycling and other activities.

“I am thrilled that this Project HERO Ohio has partnered with GE to build the first of many regional community Project HERO programs that feature regularly scheduled bicycle rides throughout the week led by expert staff and volunteers,” said COL Barbara Springer (USA Ret), National Director Project HERO. “This Project HERO/GE program, headquartered in Cincinnati, OH will save lives by restoring hope and purpose with vets helping vets providing a way for life.”



The program is highly successful because:

- Project HERO provides expertise, training, events and site location support to promote recovery and rehabilitation.
- R2R expert staff customize to suit individuals’ needs, making it possible for almost everyone to participate in the program.
- R2R designs and builds custom-adapted bicycles, trikes and hand cycles for any injury.
- Cycling is an activity in which almost all patients with physical and psychological disabilities can participate.
- 62% of R2R Project HERO participants report a decrease or elimination of prescription drug use

## Ohio Hosts National Association of State Veterans Homes Conference

The Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky recently hosted the National Association of State Veterans Homes (NASVH) Summer Conference. NASVH consists of 152 state veterans homes across the country. This annual event invites directors and admins to participate in educational sessions and visit with exhibitors from companies that service and supply our homes.





Monthly Update



“The conference was a tremendous success,” said NASHV President William Peterson. “The venue was outstanding and the Ohio team did a fantastic job of welcoming the membership and providing opportunities to explore the Sandusky area. Once again, the Educational and Conference Committee members provided the best in networking and educational opportunities.”

## Christmas in July at the Ohio Veterans Homes

Department of Ohio AMVETS, AMVETS Auxiliary and Sons of AMVETS celebrated their 10th anniversary of hosting “Christmas in July Because We Care” on Sunday, July 26 in the Veterans Hall Great Room at the Sandusky Veterans Home. Their combined efforts included more than \$1,000 in bingo prizes and door prizes, along with all the pizza the more than 125 residents who attended could eat. Additionally, the Sons of AMVETS collected donations and brought in over \$6,000 which was donated to the TV fund with the intent of helping provide each nursing home resident with a standard size flat screen television.

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Military Peer Support Unit also treated the residents at both the Georgetown and Sandusky Ohio Veterans Homes with Christmas in July. Residents enjoyed music, bingo, cookies, gifts and visits from the DRC Military Peer Support Unit veterans.

Thank you to the AMVETS and DRC for providing such a special treat this summer.



Director Gorrell and State Representative Terry Johnson Chair of the Ohio House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee visit with resident leaders at the Ohio Veterans Home at Georgetown. State Representative Doug Green sang the national anthem.



Christmas in July celebration in Sandusky.

## 70th Anniversary of Victory over Japan Day celebrated by 162 WWII veterans and their families

On the 70th anniversary of Victory Over Japan Day, Colonel Timothy C. Gorrell, director of the Ohio Department of Veterans Services (ODVS) presented 162 Ohio World War II veterans living in the Ohio Veterans Home-Sandusky with military challenge coins in honor of their service during WWII.



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Seventy years ago the Japanese publicly announced the acceptance of the terms of unconditional surrender, which signaled the end of WWII.

“On the 70th anniversary of V-J Day, I am especially humbled to be in the presence of so many of our greatest heroes and their families,” said Col. Gorrell. “Each and every day it is an honor and a privilege to serve these brave men and women who sacrificed so much for our nation and the world.”

During the celebration, Col. Gorrell (U.S. Army, retired) and uniformed representatives from the Ohio National Air Guard, the United States Navy and the United States Coast Guard presented challenge coins to the veterans and thanked them for their service. Challenge coins have a long standing history in the military. Members of the U.S. Armed Services carry challenge coins that symbolize unit identity and brotherhood. Each piece usually bears unit symbols or mottos that identify the group they represent. The coins presented during the OVH ceremony said “*Served with American Pride.*”

The celebration continued with refreshments and entertainment from the *Andrews Sisters* band.

The Ohio Veterans Home in Georgetown will hold their WWII celebration soon.

The Ohio Soldiers and Sailors Home opened in 1888 to serve veterans from the Civil War. Today, the Ohio Veterans Homes continue the tradition of “Serving those who Served”





by providing independent living and long term care services to Ohio's war-time veterans from all branches of the military. The Homes are located in Sandusky and Georgetown Ohio. To learn more visit [http://dvs.ohio.gov/VETERANS\\_HOMES](http://dvs.ohio.gov/VETERANS_HOMES) or call 1-866-OhioVet.



### Veterans at the Ohio Veterans Home in Georgetown Welcome Children and Families with the Addition of a Playground

The new pirate ship playground is conveniently located in direct view of the picnic pavilion and adjacent to the wooded walking path. It is a wonderful spot for veterans to gather with friends and family while the children play. Plans are also underway to continue the fun indoors with a children's area in the new multipurpose room that is expected to open this fall.

### American Legion Legacy Run stopped at Ohio Veterans Home in Georgetown

More than 460 veterans and motorcycle riders participating in the American Legion Legacy Run stopped at the Ohio Veterans Home in Georgetown August 23 on the way to their national convention in Baltimore. The American Legion members visited with the residents and enjoyed a cook-out in the pavilion.





# Veteran Newsletter

## Connecting with Veterans and Military Families at the Ohio State Fair

Ohio State Fair manager Virgil Strickler said 982,305 people attended the 12-day Ohio State Fair this year. ODVS hosted a welcome table for Veterans Day at the Ohio State Fair on Aug. 2, a day when all veterans and active military members receive free admission to the fair. ODVS employees and our partners at the Franklin County Veterans Service Office and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Disabled Veteran Outreach Program also had a booth in the Marketplace building throughout the fair. More than 3,000 veteran resource guides were distributed to veterans and military families at this year's fair. The guides outline all the state, federal and county benefits available to Ohio veterans. A downloadable PDF of the guide is available at: <http://dvs.ohio.gov/Portals/0/library/odvs/benefits/BenefitsGuide-2015.pdf>



## New Registry of Community-based Behavioral Health Providers with Military Culture Training

The new registry of community-based behavioral health providers with military culture training is now live. It is a great resource for Ohio veterans and military families, especially those with post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury. The registry serves as a valuable resource for service members, families, and referring professionals in and outside the military. To locate providers in communities throughout Ohio, access the registry by visiting [www.starproviders.org](http://www.starproviders.org).

Star Behavioral Health Providers (SBHP) is a new initiative in Ohio launched this year through a collaboration with the Ohio National Guard, Ohio Department of Veterans Services, Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, The Ohio State University, American Red Cross, OhioCares, the Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University and the Center for Deployment Psychology. Star Behavioral Health Providers is a training, dissemination and referral system aimed at expanding access to behavioral health providers for servicemembers, veterans and their families.



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Behavioral health providers can receive specific evidence-based training and eligible licensed providers who have completed this training can be included in a comprehensive provider registry. It is an excellent chance for providers to increase knowledge, obtain CEUs and gain an increased ability to serve those who have served our country.

SBHP collaborators are pleased to offer two additional Tier One training opportunities this fall (Cambridge, October 7 and Cleveland, October 20). Tier One provides an introduction to military culture, information about the deployment cycle and the effect of the deployment on service members and their families. The training is free to participants and continuing education units (CEUs) may be earned at no cost. Providers can register for training at [www.starproviders.org](http://www.starproviders.org).

## THE OHIO VETERANS HOMES

- Work in a community of care that honors our veterans service and sacrifice
- State retirement & excellent benefits
- We're veterans committed to hiring veterans
- We offer competitive wages
- We provide educational reimbursement to encourage upward mobility  
*move from STNA to LPN to RN to Nurse Manager*



[www.ohiovet.gov](http://www.ohiovet.gov)

"SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED."

1-866-OHIOVET



Monthly Update



# Veteran Newsletter

CALL FOR

## MILITARY MEMORABILIA

from Ohio service men and women

Help preserve Ohio's military heritage for future generations.

### Donate items from your time in the military or from a family member's military service.

#### Examples of the types of items we are looking for:

- ★ Mementos from service that carry personal significance or objects used during service and after returning home that carry personal significance
- ★ Items related to the role of women in military service
- ★ Objects representing all military branches
- ★ Special items that reflect life after returning home and the experience of being a veteran
- ★ Audio and video recordings as well as letters to and from home
- ★ Photographs taken during service
- ★ Items used to communicate during active duty, like walkie-talkies
- ★ Military items from service members from all of Ohio's 88 counties and under-represented groups

We are especially in need of items from the **Korean War, Vietnam War** and recent conflicts in the **Persian Gulf, Iraq and Afghanistan**.

*Generous donations from caring individuals make it possible for us to preserve and share the story of Ohio's military history with present and future citizens.*



In partnership with Ohio Department of Veterans Services and Franklin County Veterans Services Commission.



[veterans@ohiohistory.org](mailto:veterans@ohiohistory.org) - 614.297.2535  
800 E. 17th Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43211-2474  
[ohiohistory.org/militarycall](http://ohiohistory.org/militarycall)

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