



Veterans Serving Veterans



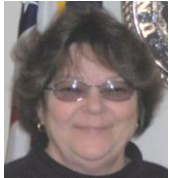
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GREENE COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE OFFICE

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From the Director: The Greene County Veterans' Service Commission and the staff of the Veterans' Service Office are honored and humbled to serve those who have served our great country in the United States Military.

Our main focus is to ensure that the veterans of Greene County have access to all of the benefits they may be entitled to receive as well as their dependents and that they are treated with respect and dignity.

We hope this newsletter is a helpful tool in providing information concerning veterans' benefits, legislation concerning veterans' issues at the local, state and national level and upcoming events in Greene County. We welcome your comments and feedback and if you have suggestions, please feel free to contact our office.

Once again, thank you for allowing us to serve you.

This newsletter contains the following articles:

1. Flag Presentation [01] ----- (Aesthetic Guidelines)
2. Stop-loss Pay [02] ----- (Processing Delyas)
3. Stolen Valor Website ----- (New Fraud Tool)
4. DFAS Tax Statements ----- (2009)
5. Agent Orange Record of Neglect ----- (Cost Factor)
6. Vietnam Service Medal ----- (Overview)
7. Dependents & Survivors Benefits ----- (Summary)
8. Have You Heard? ----- (Why I like Retirement)

FLAG PRESENTATION Update 01: Medal of Honor (MOH) recipient retired Army Col. Van T. Barfoot refused to comply with his Richmond, VA neighborhood homeowners association regulations on displaying the flag in hope that common sense might prevail. On 9 DEC, the homeowners association dropped a threat of legal action and Col Barfoot was “allowed to keep” the 21-foot flagpole in his front yard. Prior to that decision, the association had threatened to take Barfoot to court if he failed to remove the pole from his suburban Richmond home by 11 DEC. It had said the pole violated the neighborhood's aesthetic guidelines. Virginia Senators Mark Warner and Jim Webb had rallied behind Barfoot, a World War II, Korean and Vietnam veteran. In a letter, Sen. Webb urged the association to "consider the exceptional nature of Col. Barfoot's service when considering his pride and determination in honoring our flag." Additionally, Rep. “Buck” McKeon (R-CA), Ranking Member on the House Armed Services Committee, has introduced a bill to allow any Medal of Honor winner to properly display a flag at their home in any way they might choose. Col. Barfoot was awarded the Medal of Honor for actions while his platoon was under German assault near Carano, Italy, in May 1944. He was credited with standing up to three German tanks with a bazooka and stopping their advance. He also won the Purple Heart and other decorations, and served in Korea and Vietnam before retiring from the service in 1974.

STOP-LOSS PAY Update 02: After an initial delay caused by software and manpower issues, the first retroactive payments will be disbursed late DEC to soldiers who were retained on active duty involuntarily under the so-called "Stop Loss" program. Army Maj. Roy Whitley, program manager for the Army's Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay program, acknowledged problems over the program's first 50 days and said officials are working to reduce the current backlog for the thousands more who are expected to file their claims over the next year. "We are going to plow through the backlog as quickly as we can," said Whitley, who spoke with bloggers and online journalists 10 DEC during an Army bloggers roundtable. "We lost time [by] improving the claims end early on.

For every day we spent working the claims, we knew we were losing a day on development and case management. We are building it out [and] improving software. [That is] the reason why you are seeing some delay." he said

Parts of the initial Web-based claims program, launched 1 OCT, lacked complete functionality, and many of the claims were processed manually, Whitley said. However, he added, the case-management software is expected to be finalized this week, closing at least 1,000 cases. Those cases will then be forwarded to Defense Finance and Accounting Service for payment. "The latest enhancement gives us the ability to close the cases," Whitley said, and will allow Army claims managers to advise claimants on the status of their claims. He added that he is working on adding more claims managers to his staff of 14. "We saw the volume coming forward," he said, "and we knew we had to make some changes both on software and personnel." As soon as the software changes are tested and finalized, he added, his staff will be better able to ease the backlog. "We are hoping this will knock down on the anxiety caused by our backlog and e-mails," Whitley said. "We are really working through those and trying to focus exclusively on claims clearing."

This means that probably the majority of members due will not see any money until next year. The deadline to submit Stop Loss pay claims is 21 OCT 2010. If you still have not applied use the below to make your application:

- Army: <https://www.stoplosspay.army.mil>
- Navy: Email to NXAG_N132C@navy.mil
- Marine Corps: <https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/stoploss>
- Air Force: www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/stoploss

STOLEN VALOR WEBSITE: A leading veterans group has launched a special Web site aimed at raising awareness about the growing number of false claims of military service, medals and awards, and helping the general public

report such claims to authorities and the media. “We’ve seen the news stories, and we have a lot of anecdotal evidence — people calling us and asking us about the issue,” said Jay Agg, national communications director for American Veterans Association (AMVETS). “ ‘What is it? How do I report it? What are the punishments? What constitutes a violation of the Stolen Valor Act?’ That is really ... the genesis of this project”. Duane Miskulin, AMVETS national commander said, “Veterans have a special place in American society. The brave men and women who answered our nation’s call to serve are revered for their tremendous self-sacrifice and courage in the face of daunting odds. Stolen valor is a serious offense — one that cuts into the core of what it means to be a veteran.” Miskulin said the 2005 Stolen Valor Act, which makes even false claims of an undeserved medal a federal misdemeanor punishable by up to year in prison and a \$100,000 fine, has not stemmed what he said is a rise, even in recent months, of such false claims.

The new Web site <http://reportstolenvvalor.org> provides contact information for the FBI, U.S. Attorneys’ offices, inspector general hotlines for the military services, and the Veterans Affairs Department and various media outlets, as well as a sample form letter. It also links to the Military Times Web site, Hall of Valor, created by private watchdog Doug Sterner. The verified, ever-growing searchable database contains more than 26,100 valor award citations ranging from the Medal of Honor to the Air Force Achievement Medal with Combat “V.” It is searchable by service member, award, conflict and keyword. That effort would at least be complemented in some manner by a federal database called for by the Military Valor Roll of Honor Act, which AMVETS also boosts on its new site. The bill, sponsored by Rep. John Salazar, D-Colo., would require the establishment of a searchable public database listing the names of those awarded the Medal of Honor or any other medal authorized by Congress. The legislation now has 48 co-sponsors. The Hall of Valor database “is what has been developed instead, in a void, because the government isn’t maintaining these records,” Agg said. “I think it’s proper that the government should keep an accounting of its

American heroes, of its war heroes. It should track military service in general, not just acts of valor.”

DFAS TAX STATEMENTS: Military service members, military retirees and annuitants, and federal civilian employees paid by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) can expect to receive their 2009 tax statements beginning in DEC 09. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) forms W-2, 1099R and 1099-INT, along with retiree and annuitant annual account statements for DFAS customers are projected to be distributed by the dates below. The first date shown is the date it is available on myPay and the second is the date they will be mailed via the U.S. Post Office:

- Retiree Annual Statement (RAS): 3 DEC 09 16-31 DEC 09
- Retiree 1099R: 14 DEC 09 16-31 DEC 09
- Annuitant Account: 14 DEC 09 16-31 DEC 09
- Annuitant 1099R: 14 DEC 09 16-31 DEC 09
- VSI/SSB W-2: Not available via myPay 16-31 DEC 09

Tax statements available through myPay are approved for use by the IRS and have several added benefits for myPay users. As long as a user has their log in information, they will never lose their current year tax statements. The statements remain on-line to allow customers to view and print whenever it is convenient for them. Should they need copies later in the year, they are still available. The use of "*restricted access PINs*" allows users to have other family members, tax preparers or other trusted individuals view and print their tax statements without the ability to change any pay account information. This can be of particular interest to military members deployed overseas, retirees, annuitants, or anyone who uses commercial tax preparation services. The restricted access PIN can be established after logging into a customer's myPay account. For those not familiar with the DFAS myPay system the following is germane:

- myPay is a secure Web-based pay information system. One of the many benefits of this system is avoiding risks associated with identity theft.
- myPay has a series of security measures with layers of defense against identity theft. The secure technology provided to myPay customers meets or exceeds security requirements in private industry worldwide.
- Using myPay to access tax statements eliminates the preparation and mailing costs incurred with the traditional distribution methods. Combined with the earlier availability of statements on-line, this makes myPay a better option for many DFAS customers and the Department of Defense.
- If customers have forgotten their personal identification number (PIN) or wish to open a myPay account can do so on the myPay Web site.

Most tax statements are posted to your myPay account. Simply log in and print. Some tax statements, such as replacements and corrections, may not be available on myPay. Replacements and corrections must be requested at your local finance and accounting office, finance and disbursing office, customer service rep or via telephone. These tax statements may apply to military and civilian permanent change of station (PCS) and Do-It-Yourself (DITY) moves. The below info will help you get the tax statement you need, answer questions, and make sure you have all the information you need to file your tax return:

W-2s

- Active Duty, Reserves & National Guard (Army, Navy, Air Force) and Marine Corps members (Active, Retired or Reserve) call 1-888-332-7411 or On-line via myPay .
- Army Student Loan Repayment Program call 1-888-332-7411
- Voluntary Separation Incentive/Special Separation Benefit call 1-800-321-1080
- Civilian employees On-line myPay or SmartDocs
- DFAS & Air Force call 1-800-538-9043 (DFAS-Indianapolis)
- Army call 1-800-538-9043 (DFAS-Indianapolis)

- OCONUS Army, Navy: Fax - 850-473-6450 (DFAS-Charleston - please include your name, SSN, W-2 pay year, your day time phone number & signature)
- Civilian Permanent Change of Station (PCS) and Relocations Income Tax Allowance (RITA) for DFAS, DECA, DLA, DCMA, DRMO call 1-800-756-4571 (DFAS-Columbus)

1099-Rs

- Retired Military and Reserves & National Guard call 1-800-321-1080 or 216-522-5955 (DFAS-Cleveland, Retired/Annuitant Contact Center) or On-line via myPay or SmartDocs
- Retired Coast Guard call 1-866-772-8724
- Retired Civil Service Employees Only call 1-888-767-6738 (Retired Civil Service employees OPM Help Line)
- Vendor Pay (Other)
- Settlements (EEO-MSBP, Grievance, Labor, Mediation): 614-693-0982 or 614-693-1310
- Thrift Saving Plan (TSP) for Military and Civilian call 1-877-968-3778 (TSP Thrift Help Line)
- 1099-INTs Saving Deposit Program call 1-888-332-7411 (DFAS - Cleveland)

AGENT ORANGE RECORD of NEGLECT: Dioxins, a group of defoliant chemicals now considered the most toxic ever created by man, are linked to a higher risk of multiple cancers, birth defects and other conditions that are contributing to a dramatic increase in financial compensation for U.S. veterans and their families. Service-related disability payments to Vietnam veterans have surged 60% since 2003, reaching \$13.7 billion last year, and now account for more than half of such payments the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides to veterans of all wars. The average compensation payment for Vietnam

vets is 41% higher than that for World War II veterans and 35% higher than for those who served in Korea. Those disability checks do not include the billions spent on health care for Vietnam veterans. The price tag is only expected to escalate as scientists learn more about the effects of dioxin, as veterans are stricken late in life and as the children of veterans discover they are sick. In SEP 09, three more diseases were added to the list of illnesses for which the VA provides compensation -- an expansion the agency estimates will affect roughly 200,000 veterans and cost billions of dollars annually. Meanwhile, untold numbers of Vietnamese -- including many who weren't even alive during the war -- also suffer from maladies associated with the defoliants. Tens of thousands more are at risk today from dioxin that remains in the environment at dozens of former U.S. military bases. Yet in the 30 years since Agent Orange (AO) was recognized publicly as a potential health threat, the federal government has established a record of neglect.

For Vietnam veterans, the ongoing drama over Agent Orange can be broken into three acts. In the first, soldiers are totally unaware of the dangers posed by dioxin-laced defoliants sprayed in Vietnam. With the second comes outrage at the belated discovery of harm. And the third act is frustration with the maddening bureaucracy set up to help veterans seeking compensation for their illnesses which delays adjudication of their claims. As long-dormant effects of Agent Orange begin to surface in many Vietnam War veterans, the backlog of disability claims has been growing fast, despite the VA's adding more than 3,000 employees to handle the traffic jam. "They're overwhelmed," said Joe Moore, a former VA attorney who now represents veterans in cases against the agency. "They simply can't do the decision-making fast enough." A DEC 08 lawsuit, filed by the Vietnam Veterans of America and Veterans of Modern Warfare in U.S. District Court Washington, argues that "thousands of veterans die each year" before the VA acts on their disability claims. The lawsuit alleges the VA takes at least six months to consider an initial request, and appeals can drag on for years.

In response the government acknowledged that "certain diseases for Vietnam-era veterans" are contributing to the backup.

In Vietnam, children sing songs of the devastation caused by Agent Orange and government officials wonder how the U.S. can avoid fully addressing the health and environmental havoc wreaked by the chemicals, even as the two nations foster stronger trade and military ties. Since the countries normalized relations in 1995, Congress has allocated just \$6 million for herbicide-related issues in Vietnam, even though Vietnamese officials say addressing them will take tens of millions. The Ford Foundation, a philanthropic organization that has made Agent Orange a focus, has provided \$11.7 million. With assistance from the Fund for Investigative Journalism, the Chicago Tribune spent a month traveling to eight provinces throughout Vietnam, conducting nearly two dozen interviews with civilians and former soldiers who say they were exposed to the defoliants. The newspaper used a database of every spraying mission, mapping software and a GPS device to help corroborate their stories. And in the U.S., the paper researched thousands of pages of government documents and traveled to the homes of veterans to gauge the impact and measure the cost in both dollars and human misery. Their findings support the link between Agent Orange and illnesses of those exposed.

The Operation Ranch Hand study, named for the defoliation effort, has long been criticized for underestimating the impact of the chemicals. More recently, new information has emerged showing that some herbicides used in the war contained even more dioxin than was once thought. Scientists who worked on the study say re-examining the rich data in this light could bring crucial new insights. Last year, Congress directed the VA to provide funding to do just that. So far the money has not been made available. Some scientists remain skeptical that Agent Orange and other defoliants directly cause diseases. But with hundreds of independent studies completed in the years since the war ended, there is strong evidence that people exposed to the herbicides have a higher risk of contracting

illnesses such as soft tissue sarcoma and non- Hodgkin's lymphoma. The number of medical conditions linked to the defoliants continues to grow. The lingering controversy over the herbicides on both sides of the Pacific Ocean provides a sobering reminder of the often unforeseen consequences of war at a time when the country is fighting protracted conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. "We do not know the answer to the question: What happened to Vietnam veterans?" said Jeanne Stellman, an epidemiologist who has spent decades studying Agent Orange for the American Legion and the National Academy of Sciences. "The government doesn't want to study this because of international liability and issues surrounding chemical warfare. And they're going to win because they're bigger and everybody's getting old and there are new wars to worry about.

VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL: The Vietnam Service Medal was established by Executive Order 11231, dated 8 JUL 65, and the policy for award was promulgated by DOD Directive 1348.15, dated 1 OCT 65. It was awarded to all members of the Armed Forces of the United States serving in Vietnam and contiguous waters or airspace thereover, after 3 JUL 65 through 28 MAR 73. Members of the Armed Forces of the United States in Thailand, Laos, or Cambodia, or the airspace thereover, during the same period and serving in direct support of operations in Vietnam are also eligible for this award. To be eligible for award of the medal, individual must- -

- (1) Be attached to or regularly serve for one or more days with an organization participating in or directly supporting military operations; or
- (2) Be attached to or regularly serve for one or more days aboard a naval vessel directly supporting military operations; or
- (3) Actually participate as a crewmember in one or more aerial flights into airspace above Vietnam and contiguous waters directly supporting military operations; or

- (4) Serve on temporary duty for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days in Vietnam or contiguous areas, except that the time limit may be waived for personnel participating in actual combat operations.

Individuals qualified for the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for service in Vietnam between 1 JUL 58 and 3 JUL 65 shall remain qualified for the medal. Upon request, the individual may be awarded the Vietnam Service Medal in lieu of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal. In such instances, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal will be deleted from the list of authorized medals in the individual's personnel records. No person shall be entitled to both awards for Vietnam Service. Soldiers receiving the Vietnam Service Medal are authorized to wear a bronze star to indicate each campaign. There are 17 designated campaigns during the period of 15 MAR 62 through 28 JAN 73. Units which receive campaign credit for any of the campaigns would display a streamer with inscription as shown on the unit's lineage and honors. The designated campaigns are:

- Vietnam Advisory 1962-1965
- Vietnam Defense 1965
- Vietnam Counteroffensive 1965-1966
- Vietnam Phase II 1966 - 1967
- Vietnam Counteroffensive Phase III 1967-1968
- Tet Counteroffensive 1968
- Vietnam Counteroffensive Phase IV 1968
- Vietnam Counteroffensive Phase V 1968
- Vietnam Counteroffensive Phase VI 1968-1969
- Tet 69 Counteroffensive 1969
- Vietnam Summer-Fall 1969
- Vietnam Winter-Spring 1970
- Sanctuary Counteroffensive 1970
- Vietnam Counteroffensive Phase VII 1970-1971

- Consolidation I 1971
- Consolidation II 1971-1972
- Vietnam Cease-Fire 1972-1973

DEPENDENTS & SURVIVORS BENEFITS: The below are available to veteran dependents and survivors who meet the required criteria. For detailed information about all VA benefits and services, please call your County Veteran Service Office at 937-562-6020.

- **DIC:** Dependency and Indemnity Compensation is payable to certain survivors of servicemembers who died during active service, veterans who died from service-related disabilities, and certain veterans who were being paid 100% VA disability compensation at time of death. DIC is payable to some surviving parents. The benefit is based on financial need.
- **Pension:** Death Pension is payable to some surviving spouses and children of deceased wartime Veterans. The benefit is based on financial need.
- **CHAMPVA:** VA Civilian Health and Medical Program shares the cost of medical services for eligible dependents and survivors of certain Veterans.
- **Education & Training:** Some family members of disabled or deceased Veterans are eligible for education and training benefits.
- **Home Loans:** Certain surviving spouses may be eligible for this benefit.
- **Time Limits:** For education and training benefits, spouses and surviving spouses have 10 years from the date VA first finds them eligible, and surviving spouses of servicemembers who died while on active duty have 20 years. Children are eligible from age 18 to 26. These time limits can sometimes be extended. There are no time limits to apply for the other benefits described above.

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Why I Like Retirement

- Number of days in a week: 6 Saturdays, 1 Sunday
- Bedtime: Three hours after falling asleep on the couch.
- Biggest gripe: There is not enough time to get everything done.
- Benefit of being called a senior: The term comes with a 10% discount.
- What is considered formal attire: Tied shoes.
- Why do retirees count pennies: They are the only ones who have the time.
- Common term for someone who enjoys work and refuses to retire: NUTS!
- Reason retirees are so slow to clean out the basement, attic or garage: They know that as soon as they do, one of their kids will want to store stuff there.
- What retirees call a long lunch: Normal .
- Best way to describe retirement: The never ending Coffee Break.
- Biggest advantage of going back to school: If you cut classes, no one calls your parents.
- What do retirees do all week: Monday through Friday, NOTHING. Saturday & Sunday they rest.
- Why doing nothing is hard work: You never know when you're done.

A HAPPY
NEW YEAR



BRONZE STAR MEDAL – WWII VETERANS




After General Omar Bradley became Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, he let it be known that he felt combat infantrymen and combat medics of WWII deserved something more than a simple “job well done.” As a result, U.S. Army regulations were changed so that combat infantrymen and combat medics from WWII who had been awarded the Combat Infantryman’s Badge – (CIB) or the Combat Medic Badge (CMB) and served between December 7, 1941 and September 3, 1945 were also eligible for the Bronze Star Medal.

We are looking for WWII veterans that were awarded the Combat Infantryman’s Badge or the Combat Medic Badge as a result of service in World War II during the dates listed above or their next-of-kin and did not receive the Bronze Star Medal. If you qualify, **please contact the Greene County Veterans’ Service Commission at (937) 562-6020.**

Remember, this award only applies to U.S. Army infantrymen and medics from the World War II era, December 7, 1941 through September 3, 1945.



The k of the
Greene County
Veteran Service
Van.

NEW VAN POLICIES:

EFFECTIVE 5-18-2009. Due to our economic situation, it has become necessary to make the following changes to our transportation program. We do not want to implement pick-up points for our veterans, so we ask that you try to adhere to the following:

- If at all possible, we ask that your medical appointments at the Dayton VAMC be morning appointments.
- Appointments **MUST** be coordinated with the Transportation Department at least 48 hours prior to your scheduled appointment.
- Transportation **MUST** be coordinated by calling Ben Beekman or Gene Palm at the following numbers:
 - Ben Beekman: 937-562-6026
 - Gene Palm: 937-562-6027
- The van will **ONLY** make 1 (one) trip to the VAMC in the morning and will return when all morning appointments have been completed.
- A limited number of afternoon appointments will be accepted. We will be utilizing our County Vehicle (Ford Crown Victoria) for afternoon appts. **SPACE IS LIMITED**, so please try and make your appointments morning appointments.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN GREENE COUNTY:

**Greene County Fair, County Fair Grounds, Xenia
The Dayton 100-100 Lap Late Model Race, Kil-Kare Speedway, Xenia
Yellow Springs Book Fair, Mills Lawn Elementary School
Annual Sweet Corn Festival, Community Park, Fairborn
Cedarfest, call 937-766-5851 for times, Cedarville
Popcorn Festival, Dayton-Xenia Road, Beavercreek**

**9/11 Memorial Ceremony, Downtown Fairborn
Old Fashioned Days Festival, Shawnee Park, Xenia
U.S. Air Force Band of Flight Concert, USAF Museum
Beavercreek Heritage and Herb Days, Wartinger Park, Beavercreek
Bean Festival, Downtown Jamestown
Potato Festival, Main Street, Spring Valley
Street Fair, Yellow Springs**

**Greene County Veteran Service Office
571 Ledbetter Road
Xenia, Ohio 45385**