Special Events

- **Winter Clothing Program**: the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission is again providing winter clothing for eligible Veterans and dependents. Verification for eligibility requires County residency for 90 days; DD214; verifiable financial need; social security card; and, photo identification.

  Registration for the program that begins Oct 2, 2017 can be made at the downtown Cleveland office at 1849 Prospect Avenue, VAMC Wade Park and Parma CBOC. For information, call 216.698.2600.

- **First annual VFW Auxiliary #2533 Holiday Crafts, Vendor and Bake Sale**: Scheduled for Saturday, November 4, 2017 10 AM – 4 PM at the VFW post at 3791 W. 150 Cleveland, OH. Please call 440-759-6032 to join us as a vendor or for more information. All table rental fees go towards supporting of VFW and our Veterans.

- **Annual Veterans Day Ceremony and Parade**

  The City of Cleveland will partner and host the annual Veterans Day ceremony and Parade at 11 AM Friday, November 10, 2017 in the Rotunda of Cleveland City Hall. A limited number of display tables are available to Veteran support groups interesting in displaying or presenting information to the attendees. Please contact Marty Flask at telephone 216.420.7606 or MFlask@city.cleveland.oh.us to reserve a spot. First come, first served. Note: The Red Cross, VA Medical Center, USO, Homeless Veterans Outreach, Court of Common Pleas Mentor Program and VA Vet Center have already reserved a table.

  The Veterans Day Parade will step off from the steps of City Hall at approximately 12:30 PM, immediately following the ceremony.
Parade Registration: The deadline for entering your organization, vehicle or float is 1 PM Wednesday, November 7, 2017. For more information, contact Paul Tuggle at telephone 216.952.2884.

- **Cleveland Military Ball**

  The Cleveland Military Ball will be held November 18th, 2017, 6 - 11 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza at 5300 Rockside Road, Independence, OH

  For additional information and tickets: [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cleveland-vfw-military-ball-tickets-38531848797#add-to-calendar-modal](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cleveland-vfw-military-ball-tickets-38531848797#add-to-calendar-modal)

News

**Local Veteran Rick DeChant nominated and selected for the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame**

We are proud to announce that Executive Director of the Veterans' Initiative for Cuyahoga Community College Richard DeChant, Jr. was nominated and selected for the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame. Richard lives in Fairview Park and served in the U.S. Coast Guard including tours in the Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Under his leadership, the Cuyahoga Community College was recognized as a Military Friendly Institution in 2017, marking eight consecutive years with this distinction.

He was chair of a White House Council on Strong Cities/Strong Communities seeking best practices in developing a seamless transition for veterans looking for employment and employers looking for veterans. During his tenure with the TSA Operations for Northeast Ohio, he received both the Department Homeland Security Heroism Award and the Cleveland Police Department 2006 Citizen Heroism Award for helping to subdue an armed gunman at Cleveland Hopkins Airport.

He is the co-chair of the Northeast Ohio Veterans Community Task Force, focusing on leveraging VA resources. He also is active in the Greater Cleveland Fisher House, the Ohio Values Veterans Military Committee and Hospice of the Western Reserve among many other organizations. He co-authored Ohio House Bill 488, which requires all state colleges to establish veteran service offices and review military training for college credit. He also helped create national legislation that established the first standard Military Training Transcript for use by colleges through the 2012 Defense Re-Authorization Act.

Cuyahoga County Suicide Postvention Response Team: the team responds with the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner’s Office to those most immediately affected by suicide loss. Sadly, many of these cases include veterans as well. Our primary goal is to let families and loved ones know that they are not alone during this difficult time. The Team provides:

- Timely response to survivors of suicide loss
- A listening ear
- Information about local resources available to survivors

Additionally, the team also offers cutting-edge, practical training courses to the community. The list currently includes:

**Introduction to Suicidology: Prevention, Intervention and Postvention**
Every 12 minutes someone dies by suicide in our country; every 13 minutes someone is left behind to make sense of it. Improved education results in improved risk assessment and intervention. This course presents basic data and practical information that will help you better understand the enigma of suicide via exploration of its three sub-disciplines.

**Talk Saves Lives: A Brief Introduction to Suicide Prevention**
This is a community-based presentation that covers the general scope of suicide, the research on prevention, and what people can do to fight suicide. Attendees learn the risk and warning signs of suicide, what suicide is, who it affects, what we know about it, and what can be done to prevent it.

**The Power of Forgiveness: Helping People Heal**
The ability to move on is critical in the recovery or spiritual growth process. Once you fully understand the benefits of, and challenges to, forgiveness, you will be equipped with proven, effective techniques that are vital in the process. You will familiarize yourself with recent research that challenges conventional views and points to new methodologies and creative techniques that transcend traditional approaches. This landmark course has been highly-rated by clinicians, caregivers and laypersons in over 30 cities nationwide.

**Self-Forgiveness: Piecing the Puzzle Together**
Why is self-forgiveness so hard? Why are there different views on this issue? Is it an event, or a process? Is self-forgiveness really possible in the long run? What about the shame and anger that still arises? How come I still don’t feel like I've forgiven myself? Is it possible to be sure I've forgiven myself? We’ll tackle all of these tough questions in this one-of-a-kind seminar.

All of these courses are proven, high-end, energizing presentations. The focus is always on innovative, empowering tools that can be used immediately. Each course is outcome-based and carefully designed for the specific audience. Trainees have included veterans, clinicians, crisis workers, law enforcement, first responders, physicians, educators,
university students, clergy, laity, numerous community service providers and virtually all ranks of caregivers.

For additional information, contact Coordinator Pete Bliss of the Cuyahoga County Suicide Postvention Response Team at 216-509-3594 or suicide_response@outlook.com

A POW twice: VA physical therapist discovers remarkable connection

A VA physical therapist discovers the remarkable connection while treating Veteran patient. The physical therapists' grandfather saved the patient's life when they were prisoners of war together in Vietnam. Read it here http://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/42205/a-pow-twice/

Veterans Day Deals and Discounts

http://www.military.com/veterans-day/veterans-day-military-discounts.html

New VA hospital rankings: The worst still the worst

WASHINGTON — Many of the worst VA hospitals in the country last year remain among the worst this year, according to internal rankings released Wednesday by the Department of Veterans Affairs. https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2017/10/25/new-va-hospital-star-rankings-worst-still-worst/800303001/

Navy christens Expeditionary Sea Base Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4)

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- The Navy christened the Expeditionary Sea Base future USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4) during a 10 a.m. PDT ceremony Saturday, Oct. 21, at General Dynamics NASSCO, San Diego.

The Hershel "Woody" Williams is the first ship to bear the name of Marine Corps Chief Warrant Officer Hershel Woodrow Williams, the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient recognized for heroism at the Battle of Iwo Jima during World War II.

Maj. Gen. Eric M. Smith, commanding general, 1st Marine Division, will deliver the ceremony's principal address. Williams's daughters, Tracie Jean Ross and Tracie Jane Ross, who serve as the ship's sponsors, will break a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow to formally christen the ship, a time-honored Navy tradition.
"This ship honors a man who dedicated his life to service-heroic service as a Marine and continued service to his fellow veterans," said the Honorable Richard V. Spencer, secretary of the Navy. "This dedication will live on in USNS Hershel Woody Williams as the ship is deployed around the world bringing additional capability to our growing fleet. The ceremony on Saturday


**DOD mulls more money for reservists who travel a long way to serve**

U.S. military reservists who travel a long way to serve — and in some cases spend their drill pay to do so — may see their expenses reduced by as much as two-thirds as the Pentagon considers changes to the reserve travel policy as a retention tool.

But despite the Defense Department’s long-standing concerns that reservists are incurring more out-of-pocket travel expenses to perform their duties, a new Government Accountability Office report says the Pentagon needs more data before making changes.

One official said that in extreme cases, the cost of attending monthly training may exceed drill pay, effectively requiring that reservists pay to perform military service, according to the report.


**Federal Court Decision Orders Removal of 90-Year-Old Veterans Memorial**

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit today declared unconstitutional the historic cross-shaped Bladensburg World War I Veterans Memorial, which has stood since 1925 in honor of 49 Bladensburg-area men who gave their lives during WWI. Law firms of Jones Day and First Liberty Institute represent the American Legion. “Today’s decision sets dangerous precedent by completely ignoring history, and it threatens removal and destruction of veterans memorials across America,” said Hiram Sasser, Deputy Chief Counsel for First Liberty.

Lorain County Community College hosts Veterans Recognition Ceremony

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Veterans and their families are invited to a free luncheon and recognition ceremony hosted by Lorain County Community College (LCCC) in collaboration with Hospice of the Western Reserve and HMC Hospice of Medina County.

VA releases plans for sweeping health care overhaul

WASHINGTON — Veterans Affairs officials on Monday presented Congress with their formal plan to ease rules concerning veterans seeking medical appointments outside the VA system at government expense, potentially sending tens of thousands of new veterans into the private sector for care.

The proposal once again raises questions about the long-term goals of the VA medical system and potential privatization of veterans care, issues that have already caused infighting among some veterans groups and Capitol Hill lawmakers.

'Lest we forget': WWI monuments being restored nationwide

The 100th anniversary this year of America's involvement in the "Great War" has drawn attention to the state of the monuments to its soldiers and galvanized efforts to fix them. Many were forgotten about over time, or no one took responsibility for their care. Some were looked after, but they're in need of repairs, too, after being outside for so long.

Cleveland VA Calendar

Volunteerism
Here are some great opportunities to put your military experiences to work benefiting others in need.

- **Project GreenCare for Troops**: a national 10-year old program that provides free lawn, landscape and snow removal services for military families and veterans with a service-related disability needs your support. There are more than 225,000 military personnel deployed in 150 countries and 3.6 million veterans with a service-related disability needing day-to-day household and lifestyle assistance.

  Project EverGreen’s GreenCare for Troops and SnowCare for Troops provides complimentary basic year maintenance, and snow and ice removal services to military families and disable Veterans. For more information contact Ki Matsko at 888.611.2955 or kmatsko@projectevergreen.org

- **The American Red Cross’** unwavering commitment to members of the U.S. military, its veterans and their families continues to grow and develop more than a century after Clara Barton first recruited nurses to support the U.S. Army. Today, the Red Cross is meeting the needs of a changing military and expanding services to veterans. Red Cross support of military members and their families enhances morale and contributes to increased operational capability in several ways. New volunteers: visit https://redcross.org/neo Click on “volunteer” tab.

- **Cleveland Municipal Court’s Veterans Treatment Docket** needs volunteers – preferably military veterans to help Veterans transition to a successful life. If you are interested in volunteering to help our veterans successfully re-enter civilian life, please contact Derek Moore at (216) 664-4712 or via email at moored@cmcoh.org for additional information.

- **Needed: ‘A few good mentors’**: The Cuyahoga Common Pleas Veteran Treatment Court (VTC) is a judge-monitored treatment program for military veterans. A key component of the program is volunteer Veteran Mentors who volunteer their time to help veterans re-adapt to civilian life. For more information visit: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1NiwCZ_V-9fTF8wYXhqcE4yWm8/view?usp=sharing

**Employment Opportunities / Links**

City of Cleveland
http://www.city.cleveland.oh.us/CityofCleveland/Home/Community/CareerCenter

Veteran Job Search Assistance: If you know a Veteran or Military Spouse who could benefit from FREE, UNLIMITED job search coaching, please have them visit www.gunnyret.com to schedule a “First Call”.

Ohio National Guard Employment Enhancement Support: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6KQApfHm1pGbnByRGITNEhyUlU/view?usp=sharing

Free, Unlimited Military Veteran Job Search Coaching: provided by www.gunnyret.com

VA JOBS Home: http://www.va.gov/jobs/

Ohio.gov: http://agency.governmentjobs.com/ohio/default.cfm?clearSearch=1

Cleveland: http://www.city.cleveland.oh.us/CityofCleveland/Home/Government/CityAgencies/HumanResources/OpenPositions

USAJobs: https://www.usajobs.gov/Veterans


Stars and Stripes; Veteran Job Center: http://veteranjobs.stripes.com/

USERRA: The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protects service members’ reemployment rights when returning from a period of service in the uniformed services, including those called up from the reserves or National Guard, and prohibits employer discrimination based on military service or obligation. The U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) Veterans’ Employment and Training Service (VETS) administers USERRA

- Link to DOJ USERRA website: http://www.justice.gov/crt/military/statute.htm
- Link to the DOJ website: http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/userra_fs.htm

Information Links

USS COD Submarine Memorial: opened for daily public tours May 1, 2017 10 AM – 5 PM http://USSCOD.org

Vietnam Wall http://thewall-usa.com/names.asp

Ohio Western Reserve Military Cemetery https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/ohiowesternreserve.asp

National Cemetery Administration Gravesite Locator http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/
Military Veteran Service Records  https://www.archives.gov/veterans


Welcome to MyVA.COM . . . getting it right from the start

Enrolling for VA care is a life-changing decision for Veterans. Choosing your health care provider is a leap of faith that will impact your entire life. “Welcome to MyVA” (W2MyVA) starts that relationship right with a welcoming call from an informed, service-oriented VA representative.

http://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/30277/welcome-myva-getting-right-start/

Dental Care Resources for Veterans:  https://www.emergencydentistsusa.com/dental-care-resources-for-veterans/

Cleveland American Veterans Association:  http://www.cava4vets.org/

Veteran Service Commission Meetings – are open to the public. The Commissioners encourage members of the Veteran Community to come and see how the Cuyahoga County Veteran Commission works and the benefits available to our Veterans. The meetings are held at the Commission offices at 1849 Prospect Avenue, Suite 150, Cleveland, Ohio 44115 at 9:30 AM the first and third Wednesday of each month.

Free Parking: The Veterans Service Commission reserved parking spaces in the lot just East of our building (on Prospect Avenue). The lot has signs posted noting they belong to the Veterans Service Commission. This will allow veterans to park for free.

Peer Advisors for Veteran Education: Representatives from more than 40 colleges and universities have come together to learn ways to support student Veterans who face two significant changes simultaneously: transitioning from the military to civilian life and the transition from the military to academia. Neither of these is easy. Read more at www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/29879/new-va-partnership-expands-power-of-peer-support-among-student-veterans/

Get connected with V.E.T.S Program: The Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland is sponsoring a series of job preparedness, career development, financial literacy and computer training workshops. The program is designed to help veterans overcome barriers in order to transition from military life, prepare to compete for jobs in the civilian labor force.
The VETS Program is in collaboration with the Manufacturing Advocacy & Growth Network (MAGNET), Cuyahoga Valley Careers Center, and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Veterans Program.

Read it here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1NiwCZ_V-9iQzJERUUwdThPaG8/view?usp=sharing

VAntage Point: the official blog of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: http://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/subscribe/

311VET - new app answers general VA benefits questions

Cuyahoga Community College Veteran Upward Bound Program: Since 1973, VUB has provided comprehensive educational support services to eligible U.S. military veterans interested in pursuing a college degree or certificate. Services include academic enrichment classes, math and English tutors, assistance with applying for federal student aid, and transition into a college or university of their choice. All services are no cost to the veteran. For information call 216-987-4938 or visit www.Tri-C.edu/vub

Amputee Recreational Support Group of Central Ohio: http://www.arsgcoh.org/ regularly schedules recreational activities for amputees – Veterans and non-Veterans, including Yoga for Amputees, shooting events, and recreational swimming. For more information, contact Robert Hass at (614) 288-5105 or Amputee@columbus.rr.com

Department of Defense Media Center: http://www.dma.mil/

Veterans Business Support Center: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1NiwCZ_V-9iS0NiUjQ3cnFLTE0/view?usp=sharing

Ohio National Guard Employer Advisory Council: The ONG Employer Advisory Council was developed to provide military-friendly employers with useful resources and guidance to help them success with military retention and recruitment initiatives. https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1NiwCZ_V-9tbUN0OGo2S2gybWc/view?usp=sharing

Columbus Honor Flight: www.honorflightcolumbus.org

Honor Flight Cleveland: www.honorflightcleveland.com

Veterans Crisis Line: 1 800 273 8255

Women of Hope, Inc: www.womenofhopeoh.org
Cold War Recognition Certificate: The Cold War Recognition Certificate is a recognition certificate awarded by the Secretary of Defense to all U.S. Armed Forces personnel and qualified federal government civilian personnel who faithfully and honorably served the United States anytime during the Cold War era, which is defined as September 2, 1945 to December 26, 1991. Anyone who served in the military or the Federal Government during this period is authorized to receive the certificate.


Veteran Resources: http://www.veteransresources.org/

Cleveland VA Regional Benefit Office: http://www.benefits.va.gov/cleveland/


Joint Veterans Council of Cuyahoga County: www.jvcoc.org

Equal Honor for All: www.equalhonor.org

Greater Cleveland Fisher House: The Goal of the Greater Cleveland Fisher House Organization is to raise $7,000,000 for the construction of a Fisher House (there are currently 62 houses in operation across the US, Germany, and England) that will be located on the grounds of the Louis Stokes VA Hospital in Cleveland, the third largest VA hospital in the US. http://greaterclevelandfisherhouse.org/

Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center: http://www.cleveland.va.gov/?wvsessionid=fe802c6620da402454b74ac24a5f1650

Greater Cleveland Veterans (GCVM) Memorial: www.clevelandvetsmemorial.org
GCVM Honor Roll: The Citizens of Cuyahoga County have served the nation well, and paid a heavy price. When America needed defenders the men and women of Greater Cleveland have answered the call. From 1899 to 2014, a span of 115 years, 5,552 patriots of the county have fallen in military service during time of war. Search the honor roll: http://www.clevelandvetsmemorial.org/GCVM-honor-roll-search.asp

My HealtheVet: www.myhealth.va.gov

Rewards for Justice Website: The Rewards for Justice program continues to be one of the most valuable U.S. Government assets in the fight against international terrorism. Established by the 1984 Act to Combat International Terrorism, Public Law 98-533, the Program is administered by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security. http://www.rewardsforjustice.net/english/most-wanted/all-regions.html

Locating Veterans and Service Members: http://www.archives.gov/veterans/locate-service-members.html


Military News: www.military.com

The American Legion: http://www.legion.org/

Veterans of Foreign Wars USA: http://www.vfw.org/

Stars and Stripes Veterans Link: http://www.stripes.com/news/veterans

Air Force Times: http://www.airforcetimes.com/

Army Times: http://www.armytimes.com/

Marine Corps Times: http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/

Navy Times: http://www.navytimes.com/


Veterans Benefits Administration: http://www.vba.va.gov/

GI Bill website: http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/

Veteran Resources: http://www.veteransresources.org/

Explore VA Benefits: www.explore.VA.gov
