



Butler County Veterans Service Commission

Veterans Serving Veterans

Volume 1, Issue 3
November 1, 2017



From the Executive Director:

As 2017 comes to a close, I am very excited about what a successful year we have had and the momentum that we have as we enter 2018.

During 2017, we participated in 20 outreach events within the community. Our major events included: Butler County Fair Veterans Day, Ohio Challenge, 38th National Veterans Wheelchair Games, Hero's Ride, and a joint event with the Warren County Veterans Service Commission to recognize National Purple Heart Day.

In addition to the community outreach, we are also involved in outreach that not many people are aware of or see on a daily basis. One outreach that is so important is our involvement with the Veterans Court Dockets. Many people are not aware that our staff is intricately involved with three different Veterans Court dockets in Butler County: Hamilton Municipal Veterans Court, administered by Judge Gattermeyer, Middletown Municipal Veterans Court, presided by Judge Melinda Cook-Howard, and the Common Pleas

Veterans Court, conducted by Judge Michael Oster. The veterans courts are gaining popularity not only in the state of Ohio, but nationwide as a beneficial tool for the criminal justice system to help veterans get back on track and to heal their mental health or substance abuse challenges. The Veterans Service Commission teams with the local courts as well as the Cincinnati and Dayton VA Medical Centers, Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists to provide services and connect the participating veterans with their VA benefits. We are grateful that we have the opportunity to work with our community partners on this important effort!

Since 2015, we have made a concerted effort to reach more veterans in Butler County. We do this through the outreach events as well as radio advertising, advertising in the Journal News and on social media. We want to ensure that every veteran has the opportunity to find out about their veteran benefits and then make the choice to pursue those benefits.

After three years of being with the Veterans Service Commission, I still meet veterans of all ages and from all eras of service that do not know they are eligible for VA benefits as well as other county and state VA benefits.

We will be holding our Veterans Day event on Friday, November 10, 2017 @ 8:30 a.m. Coffee and doughnuts will be start at 8:00 a.m. Our guest speaker will be State Representative George Lang. We will also be awarding our Butler County Veteran of the Year award to XXXXXXXX. We hope that all veterans and their families will be able to join us!

In closing, from our staff, the Board of Commissioners, we would like to wish you a Happy Thanksgiving and cheer for the holiday season.

Sincerely,
Caroline A. Bier
CWO3, USMC, Retired
Executive Director

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Upcoming Events

- November 6—11: Miami University Regional Campus' Hero's Week
- November 10: Butler County Veterans Service Commission Veterans Day Program, Veterans Park, Hamilton

Get a Veterans I.D. Card at the County Recorders Office!!

Veteran ID cards are being issued at the Butler County Recorders Office, 130 High Street, 2nd Floor, Hamilton, OH.

Veteran ID cards will be issued to honorably discharged veterans who have presented their DD214 (Armed Forces Dis-

charge Record) to the Butler County Recorder for recording.

There is a \$1.00 fee for a veteran ID Card.

Veterans must provide 2 forms of current and valid identification, at least 1 must bear a photograph of the individual.

Veteran ID Cards expire 10 years after issuance.

For more information, contact the Recorders office 513-887-3192



PRESIDENT TRUMP SIGNS HARRY W. COLMERY VETERANS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT INTO LAW



The Harry Colmery Veterans Education Assistance Act was introduced by U. S. Senator John Tester, and introduces many education benefit changes, most notably it eliminates the 15-year window for veterans to use their G.I. Bill education benefits.

The new law also invests in student veterans pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering or math fields, as well as those students who are pursuing technical or vocational careers.

Highlights of the bill include:

-Allows reservists receiving treatment as a result of their service to count this time towards accruing education benefits.

-Restores benefits to student veterans who received credits or training from certain educational institutions that close.

-Reinstates the Reserve Educational Assistance Program for Reservists.

-Prorates licensing and certification benefits instead of chagrining

veterans a month's worth of benefits.

-Extends full education benefits to recipients of the Purple Heart.

The legislation is part of an effort to better prepare veterans to return to life after active duty in an always changing job market.

The full Act can be found at: <https://benefits.va.gov/gibill/forevergibill.asp>

NEW VA CLAIMS PROCESS INTRODUCED PROMISING DECISIONS WITHIN THIRTY DAYS



VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced a new disability claims process, saying that the goal is to provide decisions within 30 days, which as it stands now would take months of wait time for many veterans. However, this doesn't factor into the equation the advance work veterans need to do on their own in terms of collecting medical tests and service documents. Also, the process as of right now is only available to veterans who

want to upgrade their existing disability claims, NOT VETERANS WITH NEW CASES.

Despite the potential shortcomings, VA officials say the Decision Ready Claims (DRC) initiative could reduce wait times and frustration for veterans, many of whom are currently waiting more than the average of 100 days for a decision.

According to VA Secretary, David Shulkin, the effort is a

collaboration between the VA and VSOs to help veterans. The DRC program has been in pilot phase since May and it requires veterans to work closely with veterans service organizations.

The 30-day promise that's the premise of the program applies to when a claim is filed with the VA, not when veterans first contact a veterans service group.

(Continue on Page 4)

Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2017 Announced



The Ohio Department of Veterans Services announced the members of the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2017.

Twenty outstanding inductees will be honored for their accomplishments and achievements at the 25th Anniversary Induction Ceremony in November. Nineteen inductees will be honored for their post-military service and one for receiving the Medal of Honor from President

Obama. This stellar class of candidates represents 15 Ohio counties and all five military branches.

The general public is invited and Ohio Veterans are encouraged to attend the Induction Ceremony on November 9, 2017.

The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame was established in 1992 by former Governor George Voinovich to recognize the post-

military achievements of outstanding Ohio veterans. The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame is administered by the Ohio Department of Veterans Services in collaboration with the Hall of Fame Executive Committee.

More information can be found at: <http://dvs.ohio.gov/main/library/newsrelease/OhioVeteransHallofFameClassof2017Announced.pdf>



FOCUS ON VSC SERVICES: SERVICE WORK

The Butler County Veterans Service Commission employs a staff of Ohio Department of Veterans Services Certified / Nationally Accredited Service Officers who work as advocates for the veterans and veteran family members of Butler County.

We are not the VA. The Veterans Service Commission is a county agency funded by local tax dollars and was created by Ohio law to assist veterans in receiving all benefits possible.

It is recommended that all veterans and/or family members schedule an appointment with a Service Officer to discuss specific

benefits and eligibility requirements.

VA Medical Care — we can help you register to receive VA Medical Care through the VA Medical Centers. This includes your choice of VAMC facilities located in Dayton or Cincinnati, as well as any of the Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC) located in Hamilton and Middletown.

Service Connected Compensation — Disability compensation is a monetary benefit paid to veterans who are disabled by injury or disease incurred or aggravated during active military service that you still suffer from

now. The service of the veteran must have been terminated through separation or discharge under conditions that were other than Dishonorable.

Non-Service Connected Disability Pension — Veterans with low incomes who are permanently or totally disabled may be eligible for monetary support if they have 90 days or more of active military service, at least one day of which was during a period of war.

Survivor's Pension—The VA provides a small pension to eligible survivors of deceased veterans. The program is based on the (Cont. on Page 4)



Focus on Staff: Executive Assistant, Anna O'Neill

Anna joined the Veterans Service Commission in November 2006 as the Office Manager. Anna is a Oxford native and Cold War veteran, serving in the Army from 1984—1988. Upon graduation from The Ohio State University, Anna enlisted in the Army as a Satellite Communications Technician. Anna attended training at Fort Gordon, GA with subsequent assignment to the 327th Signal Company, Satellite Detachment in Landstuhl,

Germany.

Since joining the Veterans Service Commission, Anna has served as the Office Manager and Executive Assistant. Anna also served for an extended period as the Assistant Director and kept the Commission ship upright during staff turnover and transition. Anna is a vital piece in keeping our veterans supported and maintaining the financial accounting for the Commission.

Anna is the “behind the scenes” employee. She ensures that things are scheduled and prepared for the outreach events and the operations of the Commission.

Anna says the best part of her job is being able to help her fellow veterans in Butler County.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!

Do you have a question about VA Benefits or the Services that the Veterans Service Commission provides? We would like to hear from the veterans of Butler County about specific questions, comments, and concerns that we may be able to address.

A different question will be addressed in each newsletter. If you have a question that you would like for us to answer, please send an email to:

vsc@butlercountyohio.org





**Veterans Serving
Veterans**

315 High Street, 1st Floor
Hamilton, OH 45011

78 North Breiel Boulevard
Middletown, OH 45042

Phone: 513-887-3600 (Hamilton)
513-425-8600 (Middletown)
Fax: 513-887-3519 (Hamilton)
513-217-4846 (Middletown)

We're on the web! www.bcvets.org

Like us on Facebook @ Butler County OH
Veterans Service Commission



The Butler County Veterans Service Commission is an agency that provides veterans and their dependents reliable and professional service in providing advocacy and assistance in obtaining veterans benefits, temporary financial assistance, and transportation to VA appointments. The Butler County Veterans Service Commission works closely with our community partners to best meet the needs of the veteran families that we service, thus helping to improve the lives of veterans and their families residing within Butler County.

**NEW VA CLAIMS PROCESS INTRODUCED
PROMISING DECISIONS WITHIN THIRTY
DAYS (Cont. from Page 2)**

The Butler County Veterans Service Commission can help you with the Decision Ready Claims process for any upgraded claims!

For more information go to:

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/DRC.asp>

**FOCUS ON VSC
SERVICES: SERVICE
WORK (Cont. from Page
2)**

Veterans period of service, income, and net worth.

Our Service Officers are also able to assist with **Discharge Upgrades, Grave Markers, Certificates of Eligibility, education benefits, and Service Documentation and Medal Requests.**

Additional information regarding VA benefits is available at: <https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/>

CALL FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY!!



VA | U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs