



Butler County Veterans Service Commission

Veterans Serving Veterans

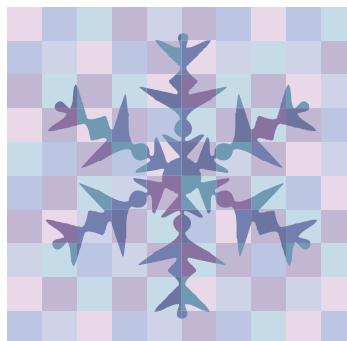
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Happy New Year!

Happy New Year is a phrase that we send out to one another as kind of a good luck wish for the upcoming year; one number higher than the previous year, and hopefully followed by many more. When considering this, I initially wondered about the origin of the New Year holiday. How or where did it originate?

Observance of the New Year is the oldest and most universally celebrated holiday among all cultures worldwide. Considering the holiday's origin, we should understand that holidays are based on the values or important events found in a culture; for example: Independence Day or Memorial Day in our nation. Yet, a New Year observance is found worldwide, virtually in all cultures. Indeed, it is quite universal.

The New Year observance has not always been in January. The celebration time has varied among many communities around the globe. Then why January? We can thank the Roman calendar for that. Janus was a Roman god who represented the beginning and end. Janus was depicted as having two faces, each facing in opposite directions, representing an intersection of past and future. So how does this



Translate to the values assigned to the New Year holiday?

In cultures throughout the world, many view the past as an instructive episode of time, preparing us to face the future using experience and knowledge acquired from previous years. We view the New Year as a kind of reset, to start over and do better, (Cont on Page 4)

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Upcoming Events

March 13—Council on Aging

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN UPDATED

The partial government shutdown ended Friday, January 25, 2019. The partial shutdown did not affect the Department of Veteran Affairs or our agency. The VA is fully funded for 2019 and our agency is funded by a property tax millage, so operations never ceased. Thank you to everyone

who checked in with us during the shutdown.





News from the Department of Veterans Affairs



VA awards Community Care Network contracts to increase health care access (December 28, 2018)

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) awarded contracts Dec. 28 to manage provider networks for [Regions 1, 2 and 3](#) of VA's new [Community Care Network \(CCN\)](#), the department's direct link with community providers that will ensure VA provides the right care at the right time to Veterans.

"These contract awards reflect our ongoing commitment to increasing Veterans' access to care," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "As part of VA's modernization efforts, we designed the new network based on feedback from Veterans and other stakeholders, along with lessons learned from the [Veterans Choice Program](#). We are confident this new network will greatly improve customer service for Veterans and timeliness of payments to community providers."

The network will be the standard contract vehicle allowing VA to purchase care for Veterans from community health care providers using industry-standard approaches and guidelines in support of the [VA MISSION Act of 2018](#) to administer services and manage the network to its full potential. VA will provide care coordination under this new contract. TriWest Healthcare Alliance has expanded its network to support Veteran and provider care coordination across the nation until CCN is fully implemented.

Contracts were awarded to the following firm:

- Region 1 – Optum Public Sector Solutions, Inc.
- Region 2 – Optum Public Sector Solutions, Inc.
- Region 3 – Optum Public Sector Solutions, Inc.

The contract award for Region 4 is expected by early April 2019. Contract award for Regions 5 and 6 are expected by end of calendar year 2019.

Region 1 includes VA medical centers in Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and West Virginia.

Region 2 covers Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Region 3 will serve Veterans in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

VA is committed to delivering efficient, safe, timely and quality health care to all Veterans across the nation.

2019 Veterans Compensation Benefits Rates Tables— Effective 12/1/18 are available @

https://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/resources_comp01.asp



Community Partners — Military Veteran Resource Center

The Veterans Service Commission works with multiple community resources to provide services and assistance to the veterans of Butler County. One of our biggest partners is the Military Veteran Resource Center (MVRC).

MVRC has multiple locations throughout the state of Ohio, that include: Chillicothe, Columbus, Dayton, and our local office in Hamilton. The Hamilton office is staffed by Army veteran Dan Dunaway. Dan provides multiple services to local veterans. At the Hamilton location, veterans can access a food pantry, employment assistance, job

fairs, and tax preparation assistance.

Many times MVRC fills the gaps for areas of assistance in which the Commission cannot provide. The Veterans Service Commission communicates regularly with Dan Dunaway at MVRC on helping veterans. For those veterans who are requesting financial assistance from our agency, we always refer them to MVRC and the assistance that they can provide.

If you would like more information on MVRC and the services they provide, please call 513-252-2395 or email dan.dunaway@milvetsrc.org.



Focus on Staff: Commissioner David Smith

A native of northwestern Ohio, Dave has a long history of service to our country including eight years in the US Army progressing from enlisted status to Field Artillery officer. He served two years in Viet Nam. In 1967 he was an artillery forward observer/searchlight platoon leader. In 1970, after completing The Artillery Officer's Advanced Course, he was redeployed to Viet Nam to participate in the planning and execution of the South Vietnamese incursion into Laos with 10,000+ men. As the war wound down, the Army began downsizing by a Reduction in Force for non-degreed officers. His inclusion in this program allowed him to return to civilian life to concentrate on

a new career, his family and his education. He relocated his family to Dallas, Texas where he completed his undergraduate and graduate Business Degrees while working full time.

After graduation, Dave began his General Electric career and joined the US Coast Guard to teach sailing and boating classes both of which spanned 25 years until he retired. Other opportunities to serve. He joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars and became their Color Guard Commander and was also selected to serve as a Commissioner of the Butler County Veterans Service Com-

mission.

Dave and his wife of 52 years reside in West Chester and have raised 2 adult children who have given them 4 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild.

It is my pleasure to be associated with the group of dedicated professional veterans who comprise the Butler County Veteran's Service Commission and to assist them in maintaining their continued success helping Butler County VETS and their families.



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





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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.

Happy New Year (Cont.)

By lessons learned from the past through our success and failures. Like Janus, we designate this time to look to the past and to the future with renewed optimism and resolve to establish and meet fresh objectives designed to better the lives of the people depending on us to meet our goals.

That brings us to the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019. As we consider the old year, we may note many successes and some failures—where we did well, what we learned, and what we could have done to produce better results. We use the “reset” of a new year to face the future with optimism and resolve to employ our experiences and lessons learned from the past, combined with our talents, to make a greater impact on behalf of our client-veterans.

The Veterans Service Commission consists of people who, through life’s training, understand the needs of the client-veterans we serve. Thus, we should look to the New Year from the dual standpoints as individuals and as a work group. Ask yourself the following: how was your performance and goal achievement in 2018? What aspect of your performance might be improved in 2019? As a unit, how did the Commission perform? Finally, what steps might we take, as part of the whole, to further extend our benefits to those client veterans needing our help?

These questions may sound rhetorical, but they are part and parcel of the true meaning of the New Year. I ask you to consider our successes, our failures, our goals, our veteran client needs, and how we will continue to extend helping hands to the 25,000 veterans living under our umbrella. A new year is upon us. We have the experience, knowledge, and know-how to make a difference in the lives of our client-veterans. Sincerely, Chuck Weber. Commissioner