



Butler County Veterans Service Commission

Veterans Serving Veterans

Volume 1, Issue 7
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Taking a Breath Before the Holidays

As we approach the end of 2018, I wanted to take the opportunity to comment on our accomplishments during 2018 and the outstanding work of our hardworking staff.

In April 2017, we re-opened a Middletown satellite office. The opening of this office has shown to be fruitful, as we have recorded an average of over 100 veterans a month requesting services in Middletown. With a staff of two full time employees and a trainee from Vantage (formerly Mature Services), they stay gainfully employed with both scheduled appointments and walk in customers.

Overall, our agency is seeing monthly average of 523 clients through September 2018. This is an average increase of 5% per month compared to 2017. In 2015, the Veterans Service Commission, Board of Commissioners, embarked on a journey of increased advertisements in order to get more veterans and family members through our doors. This has proved to be fruitful during 2017 and 2018. The momentum is going, but we still have more work to do.

Our staff has been involved in multiple outreach

New Pension Rules Effective 10/18/2018

Effective 10/18/2018, the VA is instituting new pension rules for anyone applying for non-service connected pension and/or widows pension (survivors pension).

New rules effective for applications received 10/18/2018 and forward:

-3 year look back period for asset transfers. The look back

period will not include any date prior to 10/18/2018. This prevents claimant from transferring assets to qualify for a pension. If the VA discovers an inappropriate transfer, they can institute up to a 5 year penalty.

-There is no longer a separate asset and threshold limit, but it will be combined as a net

worth threshold of \$123,600. This limit will increase by the same % as social security if there is a COLA increase for social security.

These changes are new to us as well as to the VA and will know more once it is put into practice.



events this year, connecting with veterans and talking to them about their benefits. We are always looking for new outreach opportunities to tell veterans and their families about our services and possible benefits that they could receive.

(Cont. on Page 4)

Inside this issue:

<i>World War I Centennial Commemoration</i>	2
<i>Legislation (cont)</i>	3
<i>Focus on Staff</i>	3
<i>We Want to Hear From You</i>	3
<i>Contact Info</i>	4

Upcoming Events

November 7—Hospice of Middletown Veterans Appreciation Luncheon, Crosspointe Church of Christ, Franklin, OH

November 12—Agency Veterans Day event, Colli-gan Lodge, Hamilton, OH



WORLD WAR I CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION (<https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/armistice>)

NOV. 11, 1918

Armistice on the Western Front

On Nov. 11, 1918, after more than four years of horrific fighting and the loss of millions of lives, the guns on the Western Front fell silent. Although fighting continued elsewhere, the armistice between Germany and the Allies was the first step to ending World War I. The global reaction was one of mixed emotions: relief, celebration, disbelief and a profound sense of loss. The armistice centennial offers the chance to look back and assess its continued significance today.

“And this is the end of it. In three hours the war will be over. It seems incredible even as I write it. I suppose I ought to be thrilled and cheering. Instead I am merely apathetic and incredulous ... There is some cheering across the river—occasional bursts of it as the news is carried to the advanced lines. For the most part, though, we are in silence ... With all is a feeling that it can’t be true. For months we have slept under the guns ... We cannot comprehend the stillness.”

— **Robert Casey, Battery C, 124th Field Artillery Regiment, 33rd Division, November 11, 1918.**

When World War I began in August 1914, few expected the conflict to last beyond Christmas. Over the course of the next few months, however, it was clear this would not come to pass. The conflict, already expanded beyond Europe, included great movements of imperial colonies in Africa and Asia. As it progressed, further independent nations like Bulgaria, Romania, Italy, the Ottoman Empire, China and Japan joined the fighting. Not until 1918 would the war’s end be in sight. In October of that year, an armistice between the Ottoman Empire and the Allies ended fighting in the Middle East. Only days later, the disintegrating Austro-Hungarian Empire signed an armistice with Italy.

“You bet we were happy yesterday morning to be awoken at 3 o’clock by whistles blowing, guns firing and every kind of noise you could think of announcing the surrender of Germany. It was sure a happy day here because we thought you were happy. I suspect you will not come right home but whenever you come back to the States come to see Ida Clara and myself. Now I want you to be sure to do that for we will just have a great time rejoicing together.”

— **Nannie (Nancy) Howard of Kansas City to her brother, November 12, 1918.**

In the west, the German Army’s imminent collapse led Germany to pursue an armistice. The Allied delegation, led by Supreme Allied Commander Marshal Ferdinand Foch, largely ignored United States President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points for Peace and left no room for negotiation. The German delegation was given 72 hours to accept the terms, which were purposefully severe to prevent Germany from resuming fighting. These included complete demilitarization, the evacuation of France, Belgium and Alsace-Lorraine (a territory that had been annexed by Germany in 1871 following the Franco-Prussian War), and the immediate release of Allied prisoners of war and interned civilians.

“Dearest Mother and Dad: If only you all could see how glad everyone in this place is! Never in my life have I ever seen such happy people, for the eleventh of November meant the biggest thing possible to them all. Fighting stopped; at last the German people have awakened from their horrible dream. It’s taken a long time, four years and half of the sort of thing that France has been through is tremendous, and now that it is all over, why it is almost too much for them to believe. The good folk are so happy the tears stand in their eyes, and they make no efforts to hide them. Even those who have lost their dear ones.

“I was talking last night with a mother who gave her two boys and her husband and now is all alone who told me ‘Why should not I be glad? My two boys and my good man are gone it is true, but there are so many others. The war, it is finished, thanks to the good God.’ The whole town is decorated with flags and paper banners and streamers, quite gayly, and at night, lanterns shine at every window and door.”

— **James E. (Ned) Henschel, November 11, 1918.**

On Nov. 10, the Germans received word that Kaiser Wilhelm II had abdicated and instructions from the new government that they should sign the armistice. At 5 a.m. on Nov. 11, the armistice was agreed upon. Marshal Foch sent word to Allied commanders that “Hostilities will be stopped on the entire front beginning at 11 o’clock, November 11th (French hour). The Allied troops will not go beyond the line reached at that hour on that date until further orders.” The war on the Western Front had finally come to an end. Though one of several armistices signed in 1918, it is the armistice of Nov. 11 that left a lasting global legacy.



Funeral Home Director Luncheon

On October 2, the Veterans Service Commission hosted a luncheon for the Directors of funeral homes located in Butler County.

The luncheon was a great opportunity to gather together and discuss the services that the agency provides in addition to explaining the documents that are required from the funeral homes to assist families of veterans in obtaining their burial and funeral benefits.

Communication is key in ensuring that veterans and their families are supported throughout and after the funeral planning process. The primary goal of the luncheon was to reinforce the

communication that has already been established with some funeral homes as well as starting new communications with other homes.

If your group or organization would ever like for our agency to come and discuss the services that we provide, please call our office and speak to the Executive Director.



Focus on Staff: Service Officer, Ed Snyder

Ed Snyder is originally from Benton, PA but has lived in Butler County since 2012.

Ed retired from the Air Force in 1999 after serving 20 years. During his career, Ed held the specialty of an Aircraft Structural Maintenance Craftsman. He also served four years as a recruiter in Hamilton.

Ed served at various locations throughout his career including: Dyess Air Force Base, TX; Wright Patterson Air Force

Base, OH; Hill Air Force Base, Utah; and Gianacis, Egypt.

Upon joining the Commission in April 2013, Ed assumed the duties of Veteran Benefit Coordinator (VBC). During his time as a VBC, Ed processed financial assistance applications for hundreds of veterans and their families. In June 2015, Ed was promoted to Veteran Service Officer.

Ed shared that his work as a

VBC and a Service Officer are the best jobs that he has had since retiring from the Air Force. He enjoys helping veterans and their families navigate the VA system to obtain their benefits. Additionally, he enjoys working with his fellow staff members because everyone is focused on the same mission.

Thank you for your service Ed!



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)

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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.

Taking a Breath Before the Holidays

(Cont. from Page 1) In 2018, the Veterans Service Commission, Board of Commissioners instituted an Employee Recognition Program for the agency. During 2018, we have recognized three employees for their outstanding service and commitment to the veterans of Butler County and the mission of the Commission: Karen Lovell, Mike Farmer, and Ed Snyder. All of our staff members do so much behind the scenes work to get veterans connected with their county, state, and federal veteran benefits. It is imperative that they are thanked and recognized for their work.

Finally, as we enter November, I send a sincere THANK YOU to all veterans in Butler County! Your service is appreciated and our agency will continue to work for you and advocate on your behalf to the VA for your benefits. I ask ALL VETERANS to help us in connecting our services with those veterans who have not applied for their benefits, to send them our way. Our services are FREE OF CHARGE and have changed the lives of many veterans.

Have a safe and healthy Veterans Day and holiday season!

Sincerely,

Caroline A. Bier

Executive Director

USMC (Retired)



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This is Butler Tech.

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- Montgomery GI Bill®
- Post 9/11 GI Bill®
- Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)
- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment

For Veterans Benefit information, visit Benefits.VA.gov/GIBill or call the Department of Veterans Affairs Education Customer Service at **888.442.4551**.

Thank you for your service!

Butler Tech offers the following programs approved by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for Veterans Education benefits:

- Basic Police Academy
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- Emergency Medical Technician
- Fire Rescue Academy
- Firefighter I & II
- Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration (HVAC/R)
- Industrial Maintenance Technology
- Industrial Welding
- Medical Assisting
- Medical Billing & Coding
- Paramedic Academy
- Phlebotomy
- Licensed Practical Nurse
- State Tested Nurse Aide

To learn more about our Adult Education Programs visit ButlerTech.org or call **513.645.8200**

 **Butler Tech**
Adult Education