

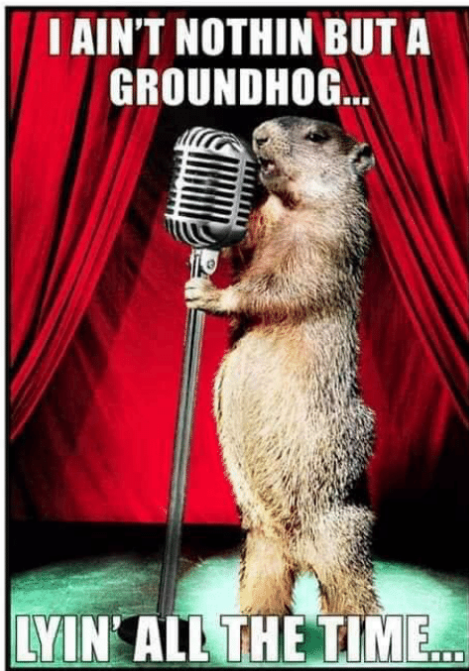


Butler County Veterans Service Commission

Veterans Serving Veterans

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Spring is here!



While the weather this past winter was up and down like a roller-coaster, warmer weather is here and looks like it's here to stay! Thank goodness! Along with changes in weather is also changes within our agency. On March 15, 2019, Ed Snyder, completed his last day as a Service Officer and retired. He was a valued and respected member of our team and always gave 110% when servicing the Veterans and their dependents of Butler County. We are truly saddened by his departure and wish him all the best in his future endeavors!

With Spring comes a time for barbecues, picnics, and spending time with family and friends. But during this beautiful season also comes time for remembrance.

Memorial Day is May 27th and is often mistaken amongst the population for being a holiday that every veteran gets told "Thank you for

your service". But this is not what the holiday is about.

Memorial day is a holiday for remembering and honoring those individuals who have paid the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the United States Armed Forces. It is a time of mourning and a day to remember and honor the Service Members who have shown the greatest love a person can offer another, laying his life down for another.

This Spring, let us not forget those who paid the ultimate sacrifice so we can enjoy the barbecues, picnics and freedom that are sometimes take for granted.



Christian Jacobs, 4, of Hertford, North Carolina, lies on the grave of his father, Christian James Jacob, during a Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, on May 25, 2015.

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News from the Department of Veterans Affairs



President Trump signs executive order to empower Veterans and end Veterans Suicide

WASHINGTON — Today President Donald J. Trump signed an executive order titled “National Initiative to Empower Veterans and End Veterans Suicide,” which focuses on improving the quality of life

for America’s Veterans and ending the tragedy of Veteran suicide.

“As the largest integrated health care provider in the nation and a leader in developing innovative mental health and suicide prevention strategies, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is uniquely positioned to co-chair this effort with the White House,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie.

“Veterans suicide is a national public health issue that affects communities everywhere, and this executive order is a national call to action.”

The executive order mandates the establishment of the Veteran Wellness, Empowerment and Suicide Prevention Task Force. The task force will include the Secretaries of Defense, Health and Human Services, Energy, Homeland Security, Labor, Education and Housing and Urban Development, as well as the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Within 365 days of the date of the order and working with a variety of representatives from across both the public and private sectors, the task force shall:

- Develop a comprehensive national public health roadmap outlining the specific strategies needed to lower effectively the rate of Veteran suicide, with a focus on community engagement,
- Design and propose to Congress a program for making grants to local communities, which will increase their ability to collaborate with each other, integrate service delivery and coordinate resources to Veterans, and
- Develop a national research strategy to improve the coordination, monitoring, benchmarking and execution of research in the field of Veteran suicide prevention.

“We are committed to saving Veteran lives, but just as there is no single cause of suicide, no single organization can end Veteran suicide alone,”

Wilkie said. “We must work side by side with our partners at all levels of government — and in the private sector — to provide our Veterans with the mental health and suicide prevention services they need. This executive order advances the public health approach to suicide prevention further by identifying key integrations and connections across the federal government and communities that can be used to save Veterans’ lives.”

Learn more about VA’s suicide prevention resources and programs at www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention.



Secretary Wilkie testifies that VA will accelerate disability benefits claims processing for Purple Heart Medal recipients

WASHINGTON — Today at a congressional hearing VA Secretary Robert Wilkie announced that effective in April, it will provide priority disability benefits claims processing for the initial claims from discharged combat Veterans who have been awarded the Purple Heart Medal.



Secretary Wilkie announced his decision at a hearing before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies.

“Those who hold the Purple Heart, the recognition of wounds taken in battle, will now receive priority consideration when it comes to claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs,” said Secretary Wilkie.

The Veterans Benefits Administration will amend its priority processing categories to include initial claims received from Purple Heart recipients on or after April 1, 2019.

Purple Heart recipients are already treated on a priority basis at VA hospitals and are exempt from co-payments for their medical care.

The Purple Heart award is the oldest U.S. military decoration and is awarded to U.S. service members for wounds suffered at the hands of the enemy. General George Washington awarded the first purple-colored heart-shaped badges to soldiers who fought in the Continental Army during the American Revolution. In 1932, it was revived to commemorate Washington’s 200th birthday.



Did you know?

We often get asked “Where can I obtain a Veterans Identification (ID) Card? Did you know the Butler County Recorder’s Office can issue a Veteran’s ID card? In conjunction with our agency, Butler County Veterans will be able to obtain a Veteran ID Card through the Butler County Recorder office. This card displays a picture of the veteran as well as information regarding the veteran’s service to our country. In order to receive an identification card, a veteran must record their military discharge with the Butler County Recorder’s Office and show two forms of identification. The fee to receive a Veteran ID Card is \$1.00. Before stopping by to obtain your Veteran ID Card at the Recorder’s office, stop by our office to have your DD 214 certified by one of our Service Officers. This is necessary in obtaining the ID. The Recorder’s office is located at the following address:

Butler County Recorder
Administration Building
130 High St, 2nd Floor
Hamilton OH 45011

All ID Cards will be issued between the hours of 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday

Focus on Staff: Service Officer Willie Croxton



Willie K. Croxton, CVSO has a life dedicated to serving Community, State and Country. Will is a retired United States Marine; with extensive tour-of-duty assignments; that include with 2nd and 3rd Marine Corps Infantry Divisions along with assignments throughout the 4th Marine Corps Recruiting District.

His military decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Sea Service Deployment ribbon, Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal (x7), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (x2), Meritorious Unit Commendation, National Defense Service Medal and the Navy Unit Commendation.

As a public education professional with entrepreneurial spirit; after his retirement from service in 1997, Master Gunnery Sergeant Croxton continued to fulfill the role of servant-leader as both a Therapeutic Foster Parent for Beach Acres Parenting Center of Cincinnati, Ohio, while serving as Senior Instructor of Military Science for Great Oaks Technology & Career Development Center for 12 and a half years, where he was responsible for all aspects of operational management for the Junior Reserve Officer Training Program that included an average of 120 students per school year.

A native to Detroit, Michigan, MGYSGT Croxton earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in business Management from American Intercontinental University.

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.



Upcoming Events:

- June 7 - Cincinnati VA Medical Center Mental Health Summit
- July 19 and 20 - Ohio Challenge Balloon Festival
- July 24 - Veteran's Day at Butler County Fair

Honoring the Fallen:



Sergeant Cameron Meddock

26, of Spearman, Texas, died Jan. 17 in Landstuhl, Germany, of injuries sustained from small-arms fire Jan. 13 in Badghis Province, Afghanistan. Meddock was an Army Ranger serving with Company A, 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment based at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.

An Army Ranger wounded in northwest Afghanistan on Sunday has died. Sgt. Cameron Meddock, 26, died Thursday in Landstuhl, Germany, of injuries sustained from small-arms fire Jan. 13 in Badghis Province, Afghanistan.

This was his second deployment in support of NATO's Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan.

Meddock was an Army Ranger serving with Company A, 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment based at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. "Sergeant Cameron Meddock is one of America's precious sons. The entire nation should strive to emulate the warrior, patriot and husband that Cameron was," Col. Brandon Tegtmeyer, commander of the 75th Ranger Regiment, said in a statement. "The 75th Ranger Regiment will forever honor Sergeant Cameron Meddock, and his family will forever be a member of our Ranger family."

A native of Spearman, Texas, Meddock enlisted in the Army on Nov. 14, 2014.

He completed one-station unit training as an infantryman, the Basic Airborne Course and Ranger Assessment and Selection at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Following successful completion of RASP, Meddock was assigned to Company A, 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, where he served as a machine gunner, automatic rifleman, gun team leader and, most recently, as a fire team leader.

Meddock's awards and decorations include the Purple Heart, the Joint Service Commendation for Combat, the Army Achievement Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with campaign star, the Ranger Tab, the Parachutist Badge, the Expert Infantryman Badge and the Combat Infantryman Badge.