

Brigadier General (Ret) Jerry G. Beck Jr. Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans' Affairs

ODAG-VA Newsletter

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL - VETERANS AFFAIRS

June 2016

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Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center: www.qmvc.pa.gov

Hollidavsburg Veterans' Home: www.hvh.pa.gov

Pennsylvania Soldiers' and Sailors' Home: www.pssh.pa.gov

Southeastern Veterans' Center: www.sevc.pa.gov

Southwestern Veterans' Center: www.swvc.pa.gov

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DMVA Now Accepting Online Donations Benefiting The Pennsylvania Veterans' Memorial

The Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) has added a new opportunity for individuals or businesses to make an online donation to the Pennsylvania Veterans' Memorial Trust Fund. Donations via the online application at www.donate.dmva.pa.gov will be used to preserve the Pennsylvania Veterans' Memorial, located at the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery, Lebanon County.



Maintained by DMVA, the Pennsylvania Veterans Memorial stands 107 feet high and 360 feet long. Its design evokes "the ruins of a war-torn building centered in a land of solemnity." Designed by Cee Jay Frederick Associates, West Chester, PA, the granite, stone, and concrete composition was dedicated October 7, 2001 and cost \$6.2 million to construct. The Pennsylvania Veterans' Memorial is the first in the commonwealth to honor Veterans of all eras from the Revolutionary War forward and it is the largest Veterans' memorial located in any of the 133 national cemeteries operated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Since December 2015, donors have been able to make online donations to the Veterans' Trust Fund and the Military Family Relief Assistance Program. Additional funds benefitting Veterans will be added to the online application in the near future. All that is needed is internet access to make a donation and the online application, which features responsive design technology to make it accessible on mobile devices and computers, accepts MasterCard, Visa, Discover or American Express.

DMVA also makes available Pennsylvania Veterans' Memorial replicas for \$15 as well as in-ground cruciforms ranging from \$500 to \$2,000. One hundred percent of the purchase price goes to the PA Veterans' Memorial Trust Fund. Order forms for both may be found on the DMVA website.

Those interested in making a tax-deductible contribution to help preserve the Pennsylvania Veterans' Memorial can send a check or money order payable to "Pennsylvania Veterans' Memorial Trust Fund" and mail it to: DMVA Office of Veterans Affairs, Bldg 0-47, Fort Indiantown Gap, Annville, PA 17003.

Pennsylvania Department Of Foreign Wars' Loyalty Day



Brig. Gen. Tony Carrelli, acting adjutant general for the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, presented Governor Tom Wolf's proclamation during the Pennsylvania Department of Foreign Wars' Loyalty Day ceremony. Loyalty Day began as "Americanization Day" in 1921 to counter the Communists' May 1 celebration of the Russian Revolution. It evolved into Loyalty Day through a resolution in 1949 and Congress made it a permanent fixture on the nation's calendar in 1958. Loyalty Day celebrates freedom, democracy and open elections.

Erie VA Medical Center Hosts Welcome Home Event

The <u>Erie VA Medical Center</u> and Veterans Center invites all Veterans to join them for free at the <u>Erie Zoo</u> as they celebrate all Veterans of all eras, on Friday, July 8, 2016 from 6—9 p.m. Tickets are available now. The tickets are limited and are available on a first come, first serve basis. Tickets include entry to the zoo, a hot dog, chips and a drink. Children under 3 do not need a ticket.

This event is a one stop shop to connect with a number of program representatives and other Veteran-related community resources while offering fun for the whole family.

Call for or pick up your tickets at the Transition and Care Management office at the Erie VAMC (814) 860 –2567 or at the Vet Center located at 240 West 11th Street in Erie (814) 453-7955.



Governor Wolf Announces Veterans' Trust Fund Grant Recipients



Governor Tom Wolf announced today that 13 Pennsylvania County Departments of Veterans Affairs Offices will receive \$150,000 in grants and 18 charitable organizations and veterans' service organizations will receive \$400,000 in grants from the Pennsylvania Veterans' Trust Fund (VTF). The VTF is administered by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA).

"Those who have served and those families who have sacrificed to aid our country deserve our deepest gratitude and we must ensure we serve them after they did so much for us," Governor Wolf said. "These organizations are on the front-lines of ensuring Pennsylvania veterans are getting the support that they have earned."

These grants are funded by generous Pennsylvanians who voluntarily made a \$3 donation when applying for or renewing their driver's license or photo ID

and renewing a motor vehicle registration, as well as proceeds from the sale of the Honoring Our Veterans license plate. This is the third year that grants have been awarded from the Veterans' Trust Fund.

DMVA received 18 County Director of Veterans Affairs grant applications totaling \$249,199.35 and 87 charitable organizations and veterans' service organizations grant applications totaling \$3,068,517.39. Grant applicants slated to receive funding identified \$578,586 in matching funds to be used in conjunction with their grant request. Combined with the VTF grant funding, this will result in veterans' initiatives totaling \$1,128,586.00 over a period of up to 24 months.

"By awarding these grants we are able to fund a variety of worthwhile programs that assist and support Pennsylvania's approximately 916,000 veterans and their families thanks to the general public's support of the Veterans' Trust Fund," said Brig. Gen. Tony Carrelli, acting adjutant general for the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

Grants of up to \$150,000 were available for new, innovative and expanded programs operated by County Directors of Veterans Affairs or the Pennsylvania Association of County Directors of Veterans Affairs. The two areas of emphasis for these entities were veteran outreach initiatives and veterans' court initiatives within Pennsylvania at the community, county, regional or statewide level. Grants were awarded to:

- Bradford County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$15,000 to expand existing outreach services for veterans
- Bucks County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$10,000 to expand existing outreach and veterans treatment court services for veterans
- Cambria County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$15,000 to expand existing outreach services for veterans
- Centre County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$4,500 to expand existing outreach services for veterans
- Erie County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$4,900 to expand existing treatment court services for veterans
- Fayette County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$6,600 to expand existing outreach services for veterans
- Franklin County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$15,500 to expand their newly implemented outreach program to assist veterans
- Huntingdon County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$12,000 to expand existing outreach services for veterans

- Juniata/Mifflin (joint county application) Department of Veterans Affairs: \$24,300 to provide mobile outreach for veterans
- Northumberland County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$15,600 to provide additional outreach services to veterans
- Montgomery County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$15,000 to continue their transportation services for veterans
- Northumberland County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$15,600 to provide additional outreach services to veterans
- Venango County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$3,700 to provide an all-inclusive small business entrepreneur program for veterans
- Warren County Department of Veterans Affairs: \$7,900 to purchase computer equipment to expand their existing outreach services for veterans

The grant announcement identified up to \$400,000 in VTF funding available to veteran service organizations and 501(c)3 charitable organizations with a mission of serving Pennsylvania veterans. Funding priorities for this grant round included veterans' initiatives focused on homelessness, post-traumatic stress disorder, employment and workforce development initiatives and other programs that addressed newly identified, unmet or emerging needs of veterans and their families.

Grants are being awarded to:

- Community Hope, dba Hope for Veterans, Allentown (Lehigh County): \$25,000 to help veterans and their families overcome mental illness, addiction, homelessness and poverty
- David's Drive 831, Coatesville (Chester County): \$10,000 to improve the life of hospitalized and/or homeless veterans
- Dog T.A.G.S., Mechanicsburg (Cumberland County): \$25,000 to expand existing service dog training program for veterans
- Family Services of Western Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh (Allegheny County): \$19,000 to provide support to homeless veterans
- Fresh Start Foundation, Philadelphia (Philadelphia County): \$25,000 to continue and expand its mobile care coordination team to provide outreach services to veterans
- Human Engineering Research Laboratories University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh (Allegheny County): \$30,000 to assist wounded, injured and ill veterans into college science, technology, engineering, and mathematics programs
- Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living, Allentown (Lehigh County): \$25,000 to provide assistance to veterans in need of housing stability
- Northwest PA Eminent Community Institute, Oil City (Venango County): \$20,000 to match veterans with employment opportunities across the northwest region of Pennsylvania
- Operation Homefront PA/DE/NJ, Doylestown (Bucks County): \$10,000 to provide emergency financial assistance to Pennsylvania veterans in need
- Operation Troop Appreciation, McKeesport (Allegheny County): \$25,000 to provide emergency assistance to veterans
- Pennsylvania Wounded Warriors, Camp Hill (Cumberland County): \$25,000 to provide emergency financial assistance to veterans in need

- Project New Hope at Beacon Lodge Camp, Mount Union (Huntingdon County): \$20,000 to provide assistance to disabled veterans and their families
- Syracuse University/Institute for Veterans and Military Families, Pittsburgh (Allegheny County): \$25,000 to provide veterans with streamlined access to needed services through PAServes
- Veteran Community Initiatives, Johnstown (Cambria County): \$30,000 to provide veterans with job search assistance and other outreach services
- Veterans Helping Hand, York (York County): \$16,000 to support their existing outreach services and emergency funds for veterans in need
- Veterans Leadership Program of Western Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh (Allegheny): \$25,000 to partner with Allegheny County to provide treatment court services to veterans
- Veterans Multi-Service Center, Philadelphia (Philadelphia County): \$25,000 to provide outreach and awareness support to women veterans
- Veterans Multi-Service Center, Philadelphia (Philadelphia County): \$20,000 to provide services to homeless veterans
 All grants are contingent upon the completion of a fully executed grant agreement.

The VTF was established in 2012 and the PA Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is authorized to solicit and accept donations to the VTF on behalf of the commonwealth. Tax-deductible donations to the VTF can be made online at www.donate.dmva.pa.gov.

To learn more about the VTF, visit <u>www.vtf.pa.gov</u> or follow DMVA on Facebook at <u>www.facebook.com/padmva</u> or Twitter at www.twitter.com/padmva.

Department of Education and DMVA Announce New Veteran Friendly Policy

Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Pedro A. Rivera and acting adjutant general, Brigadier General Tony Carrelli announced a new policy that moves Veterans, active military personnel and their spouses to the front of the line when applying for a teacher license.

Under the new policy, which took affect in May, applications for teacher certification from Veterans, military members, and their spouses will receive expedited service and a reduced fee. This new policy will help military Veterans and spouses who were previously certified in the state when they return to Pennsylvania after serving elsewhere, as well as those applying for certification for the first time.

Rivera said, "These educators bring tremendous experience and energy into the classroom, and will be an asset in our education community."

Carrelli added, "What this program does is rightfully give those who have raised their right hand and taken an oath to serve our country and their spouse who have sacrificed much, a pass to the front of the line when applying for educator certification in Pennsylvania. By doing this, a military family planning a change of station or deciding where to settle down when they leave the service, have on less thing to worry about or be in flux for an extended period of time."

In order to qualify, a Veteran is an individual who served at least 180 days of active duty, other than for training, or was discharged after serving 30 days due to a service-connected disability in the US Armed Forces and was discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions.

Military, Veteran and spouse applicants can apply for the desired certification using the online <u>Teacher Information Management System</u>, TIMS.

More information is available at www.education.pa.gov.

Outreach Team Calendar Of Upcoming Events

Looking for available benefits, need help, or just want to talk to a Veterans Service Officer? Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Outreach team will be at the following events:

- Sheriff Klingler Honoring Memorial Day Event, Wednesday, June 1, 9 a.m.—3 p.m., Lebanon County Courthouse, 400 South Eighth Street, Lebanon, PA 17042
- State Representative James Santora's Veterans' Outreach Program, Friday, June 3, 9 a.m.—1 p.m., 6 South Springfield Road, Clifton Heights, PA 19018
- Browndale Fire Company Car Show, Saturday, June 4, 9 a.m.—5 p.m., 640 Marion Street, Route 247, Browndale, PA 18421
- Sons of the American Legion 5th Annual Veterans Appreciation, Saturday, June 4, 10 a.m.—5 p.m., 4774 Williamson Road, Greencastle, PA 17225



- Resource Fair, Wednesday, June 8, 8 a.m.—4 p.m., Cross Creek Resort, 3815 PA-8, Titusville, PA 16354
- Military Information Day, Saturday, June 11, 9:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m., The Home Depot, 2250 Easton Road Willow Grove, PA 19090
- Donald Jones Flag Memorial, Saturday, June 11, 10 a.m.—5 p.m., Falls Township Park, 9125 Mills Creek Road, Levittown, PA 19054
- Family and MWR Summerfest, Wednesday, June 15, 11 a.m.—7 p.m., Defense Distribution Center, 400, 5400 G Avenue, New Cumberland, PA 17070
- Centre County Veterans Affairs Office, Veterans Information Day, Saturday, June 18, 1 p.m.—4 p.m., American Legion, 112 Legion Lane, State College, PA 16801
- Veterans Services Fair, Saturday, June 25, 9:30 a.m.— 2 p.m., Calvary Lutheran Church, 208 Woods Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
- PTSD Community Awareness, Saturday June 25, 11 a.m.—3 p.m., First Baptist Church, 3235 Linden Street, Bethlehem, PA 18017
- Congressman Tom Marino's Senior Health Fair, Tuesday, June 28, 11 a.m.—2 p.m., Montrose Bible Conference, 218 Locust Street, Montrose, PA 18801

For a complete schedule of our events visit: http://www.dmva.pa.gov/Pages/Events-Calendar.aspx

Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission Meeting Slated

The public is invited to the next scheduled meeting of the Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission on Friday, June 3, at 10 a.m. at the Arrowheads Community Club, Building 9-65, Annville, PA 17003, to discuss issues related to Pennsylvania Veterans.

Office Of Veterans Affairs Hail And Farwell

No Photo Available



Philadelphia Field Office Supervisor:

Mr. Tom Keenan has announced his retirement effective July 16, 2016. Thank you for your service and we wish you the best!

Ms. Brett Anne Beatty (right) has accepted our offer to be promoted to the Eastern Field Office Supervisor effective July 17, 2016. Brett Anne will be working with Tom to ensure a smooth transition. Congratulations!





Persian Gulf Bonus Program:

Ms. Tracey Ditzler (left) has accepted a promotion to DMVA's Office for Facilities and Engineering. Thank you for your care and administration of the program. Our congratulations and best wishes!

Mr. Gary Hoffler (right) has been promoted as the Persian Gulf Bonus Program Manager. Gary is a retired Veteran from the U.S. Coast Guard and previously worked as the clerk for the program. Congratulations!

No Photo Available



Philadelphia Field Office VSO:

Mr. Johnny Parker has moved to the United Spinal Association. Thank you for your service and we wish you the best!

We have the pleasure of welcoming Mr. Daryl Northern (right). Daryl is a Navy Veteran and comes with a very strong healthcare background. Welcome aboard, Daryl!





Events Throughout DMVA's State Veterans' Homes

Thank you to Dana Nelson, pictured here with his wife, Donna, for completing a half-marathon and securing sponsors and donations in honor of the Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center. Dana is a Veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. After developing some health issues he joined the Scranton Running Company's walking program and has now participated in the Scranton Half Marathon.





Lil Bosh, Southwestern Veterans' Center Admissions and Marketing Coordinator, presents Joyce Driben with her Volunteer of the Year Award. She is assisted by John Ayers, SWVC Volunteer Coordinator, left, as her friend, Ed Reid, and guide dog, Tudor, look on.

The Scranton Community Corrections Center made a very generous donation of clothing and personal items to the Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center. Thank You!



2016 State Veterans Homes Week Highlights

Delaware Valley Veterans' Home:

- Saturday, June 11, 10 a.m., Flag Retirement Ceremony
- Saturday, June 11, 11:30 a.m., Picnic sponsored by Vietnam Veterans Motorcycles
- Sunday, June 12, 11:30 a.m., Picnic sponsored by Ancient Order of Hibernia
- Friday, June 17, 11:30 a.m., Picnic sponsored by Verizon Pioneers

Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center:

- Tuesday, June 14, 1:15 p.m., Flag Day Ceremony
- Tuesday, June 14, 2 p.m., Musical Program
- Friday, June 17, 2 p.m., Carnival

Hollidaysburg Veterans' Home

- Thursday, June 16, 10 a.m., Family Day Carnival
- Saturday, June 18, 1 p.m., Picnic sponsored by DAV Chapter#34

Pennsylvania Soldiers' and Sailors' Home

- Monday, June 13, 1 p.m., Community Day
- Thursday, June 16, 12 p.m., Luncheon
- Thursday, June 16, 1 p.m., Carnival Day

Southeastern Veterans' Center

- Tuesday, June 14, 7:15 p.m., Chester County Band
- Wednesday, June 15, 12 p.m., Picnic

Southwestern Veterans' Center

- Wednesday, June 15, 11:15 a.m., Father's Day Brunch
- Wednesday, June 15, 12 p.m., Annual Carnival

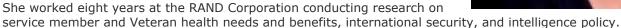


VA Selects New Director Of The Center For Women Veterans

Kayla M. Williams has assumed the duties of the Director of the Center For Women Veterans, serving as primary advisor to the Secretary on Department policies, programs and legislation that affect women Veterans.

"Kayla embodies everything it means to be a true advocate for women Veterans and I am proud to welcome her to VA in this leadership role," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. "This is an important time for VA as we prepare for the growing number of women we expect to take advantage of the VA services they have earned. I know Kayla will be tremendously helpful in improving services for female Veterans now and in future."

Williams is a member of the Army Education Advisory Committee, a former member of the VA Advisory Committee on Women Veterans, a 2013 White House Woman Veteran Champion of Change, and a 2015 Lincoln Award recipient.



Williams graduated cum laude with a BA in English Literature from Bowling Green State University and earned an MA in International Affairs with a focus on the Middle East from American University.

Williams is from Pittsburgh, PA with her husband, a combat-wounded veteran, and their two children.



Burial Honors Program

Veterans are eligible to receive military burial honors for their funerals. While the Funeral Director should discuss options with eligible Veterans and their families, Veterans Service Officers are located each County through the County Director of Veterans Affairs Office or by calling Veterans Organizations that serve on the State Veterans' Commission and they can also assist in planning and arranging burial honors through local Veterans Organizations.

<u>DMVA</u> offers a stipend program for Organizations that provide Burial Honors at the three active National Cemeteries located in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: <u>Indiantown Gap National Cemetery</u>; <u>National Cemetery of the Alleghenies</u>; and <u>Washington Crossing National Cemetery</u>. If your Veterans Organization is interested in providing Burial Honors at one of the three National Cemeteries please contact the Office of Veterans Affairs for further details regarding the Burial Honors Program.



Erie VA Medical Center Gets New Director



John A. Gennaro, the current Director of the <u>Cincinnati VA Medical Center</u>, has been selected to fill the vacant Director's position at the <u>Erie VA Medical Center</u> in Pennsylvania. In the new role, Mr. Gennaro will oversee a staff of more than 700 who provide health care services to 22,000 Veterans and a budget of \$144 million.

Mr. Gennaro brings extensive experience and leadership to the new post. Prior to the new assignment, he oversaw the delivery of health care to more than 43,000 Veterans, a staff of 2,000 and an annual budget of approximately \$387 million at the Cincinnati VA Medical Center. During his time there,

Mr. Gennaro led the facility through numerous improvements, most notably achieving a 5-star rating. Prior to that, he served in a similar capacity for <u>VA's Butler Healthcare</u>. He began his career with the Department of Veterans Affairs in the Research Foundation at the Cincinnati VA Medical Center. When he takes over duties in

Erie, he returns to that facility where he once served as its Associate Director.

The Erie VA Medical Center is a Joint Commission accredited, complexity level three facility serving Veterans in northwestern Pennsylvania and northeastern Ohio. The medical center's mission is to Provide Exceptional Health Care to Veterans. The two highest volume services provided include Primary Care and Behavioral Health. For more information about the Erie VA Medical Center, visit www.erie.va.gov.



Dauphin County Seeks Flag Donations

The <u>Dauphin County Office of Veterans Affairs</u> is requesting donations of internment flags to be used to pay tribute to fallen Veterans at the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery.

An internment flag is the American flag that's been draped over the casket during a funeral ceremony and is presented to the Veterans loved ones. These flags are 5 1/2 feet by 9 feet and must be in good condition.

The main entrance features nearly 525 flags that are placed along the main road and throughout the cemetery.

If you have a flag you would like to donate please contact the Dauphin County Veterans Affairs Office at (717) 780-6356.

Delaware Valley Vietnam Veterans To Host Flag Memorial



The Delaware Valley Vietnam Veterans 31st annual Donald W. Jones Flag Memorial will be held on Saturday and Sunday, June 11, 12, at the Falls Township Park, 9125 Mill Creek Road, Levittown, PA 19054.

There will be more than 65,000 flags in the shape and size of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C.

The event will kick off at noon on Saturday as a day of reflection with a free concert given by the Bensalem School of Music, Mikey Jr., Sister Blue, Witzend, Ambush, The Buicks and Big Whiskey.

Beginning at noon on Sunday there will be a motorcycle rally at the Bristol Township Veterans Memorial, 2501 Bath Road, Bristol, PA 19007, with a Memorial Service and Repatriation Ceremony starting at 1 p.m.

The group is looking for volunteers to assist with the placement and removal of the flags. If you are interested in volunteering or have questions regarding the event please contact Donnie Jones at (267) 566-2860 or Ed Sabol at (609) 847-1344.

DMVA's Outreach Team will also be there to assist and answer your questions.

The Moving Wall

Muhlenberg Township is hosting "The Moving Wall" from June 9 thru June 13, at the Jim Dietrich Park, 4899 Stoudts Ferry Bridge Road, Reading, PA 19605.

"The Moving Wall" is a half-size replica of the Vietnam Veteran Memorial located in Washington D.C. This is an opportunity for families to get together and educate youth about the Vietnam War in addition to remembering our fallen heroes.

This can be a very moving experience in honor of those that made the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam War.

There will be an opening ceremony on June 9, at 7 p.m. followed by a candlelight vigil at 8 p.m. The wall will be open to the public 24/7 during its stay in Muhlenberg.

Six Counties Join to Host Veteran Expo

Six counties in Northwestern Pennsylvania, (Clarion, Crawford, Forest, Mercer, Venango and Warren) will join forces to host a Military/Veteran Expo on June 8, from 2—6 p.m., at the <u>Cross Creek Resort</u>, 3815 Pa-8, Titusville, PA 16354.

The event is open to all Military, Veterans, service members and their families. There will be more than 30 organizations and agencies on hand to answer questions and offer support. Transportation is available for those who may need it by calling (814) 676-5840.

For all other questions please contact your County Director of Veterans Affairs.



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