

Coshocton County Veterans Service Office Newsletter

318 Main St., Coshocton, OH 43812

740-622-2313

coshoctoncounty.net/veterans

Vietnam Veteran Roger Hill stood in front of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial during the 2016 Veterans Day Ceremony in Coshocton.

Veterans Day ceremony another huge success

The tradition of conducting its annual Veterans Day ceremony was continued as hundreds of veterans, family members and children from Coshocton and Sacred Heart schools attended the gathering on the court square.

The event was held Friday, November 11th in conjunction with the Coshocton County Veterans Service Commission and County Veterans Council.

Featured speaker was Herb Tidrick, whose retirement after 14-plus years with the Veterans Office became official on Veterans Day.

Tidrick made a point to acknowledge that each and every veteran is special and each one has a story of their own to tell and encouraged family members and friends to ask about their service and listen to their stories.

Also speaking was Becky Bowden as she represented the Blue Star Mothers Chapter OH 59 of Coshocton.

Music was provided by the Walhonding Rube Band and TAPS was performed by local musician George Clark, also a veteran.

Members of the Coshocton County Honor Guard performed a rifle salute and dignitaries from the various local service organizations were recognized.

Veterans Day is an official United States federal holiday that is observed annually on November 11, honoring people who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

It coincides with other holidays including Armistice Day and Remembrance Day, which are celebrated in other parts of the world and also mark the anniversary of the end of World War I (major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, when the Armistice with Germany went into effect).

Zac Miller hired as new Assistant Service Officer

The Coshocton County Veterans Service Office said goodbye to one of its staff members and hello to another as Zac Miller was hired to replace Herb Tidrick, whose retirement was effective on November 11th, 2016.

Miller graduated from Ridgewood High School and was born and raised in the West Lafayette area. He is a lifelong resident of Coshocton County.



Zac Miller

"I am very pleased to have the opportunity to serve area Veterans as an Assistant Veterans Service Officer," Miller said. "My goals are to strive to help Veterans on a daily basis, while learning more about the benefits available to veterans and their families."

(See MILLER, page 5)

Green retiring from Veterans Commission; John Wright appointed

Another retirement will be taking place within the Coshocton County Veterans Service Commission as Jerry Green will step aside in January.

As the representative for the Disabled American Veterans, Green will have served his full five-year term, which expires on January 10, 2017. He was the organization's Secretary.



Jerry Green

John H. Wright has been selected as his replacement.

"It was his choice to retire and I support him in whatever he does," said his wife, Marty. "But it is a bittersweet thing. He's going to miss working with the veterans. It is something that he thoroughly

(See GREEN, page 5)

Veterans Service Commission

President

Jack Patterson—VFW

Vice President

David Dilly—AMVETS

Secretary

Jerry Green—DAV

Member

Gary Kilpatrick—American Legion

Member

John Dotson—KWVA

Service Officer

Jim Barstow

Executive Assistant

Patty Dilly

Assistant Service Officer

Zac Miller

Assistant Service Officer

Russell Hammond

The Coshocton County Veterans Service Commission meetings are at 4 p.m. on the first and third Thursday of each month.

County Veterans Council Officers

Commander

Jack Patterson

Adjutant

Jerry Green

Quartermaster

Jim Shivers

First Vice Commander

Jim Barstow

Second Vice Commander

Tom Apple

First Year Trustee

Herb Tidrick

Second Year Trustee

Jim Groves

Third Year Trustee

Jack Lipps

Chaplain

Gary Kilpatrick

Meetings are at 7 p.m. the second Thursday of each month at AMVETS Post #36. All county veterans are welcome to attend.



The Coshocton County Honor Guard members conducted Military Funerals during the months of November and December 2016.

November



James E. Darner

Peacetime



Daniel J. Cain

Vietnam



Ray E. Weyand

Korea



Alfred T. Gross

Peacetime



James V. Morrison

Peacetime

December



John M. Wilson

Peacetime



Frank M. Sharier

World War II



John J. Aron

World War II



Tabitha A. Davis

OIF/OEF



Jerry E. Slaughter

Peacetime

Guidelines for military funerals

The following is a list of criteria for deceased veterans being entitled to Military Funeral Honors conducted by the Coshocton County Veterans Council Honor Guard.

- Military members on active duty or in the Selected Reserve.
- Former military members who served on active duty and departed under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Former military members who completed at least one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service in the Selected Reserve and de-

parted under conditions other than dishonorable.

- Former military members discharged from the Selected Reserve due to a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

The preferred method of establishing eligibility is the DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty.

The basic Military Honors ceremony consists of the folding and presentation of the United States flag to the veterans' family, the Chaplain's Prayer, gun salute and the playing of Taps.

More information can be obtained by contacting the Veterans Service Office.

VA reports ratings for medical facilities

Most medical centers serving veterans across the country are improving, according to a once-withheld rating system just released by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Yet, the ratings show several facilities racked by scandal continue to struggle.

Of the 146 medical centers rated, 120 of them, or 82 percent, improved in the past year, according to the VA. But the Phoenix hospital, the epicenter of the 2014 wait-time scandal, was one of the worst rated, and the hospital in Tomah, Wisconsin – another one that has recently come under fire – saw a drop in performance this year.

The performance ratings were released to the public under pressure following an investigation by USA Today earlier this month that revealed the ratings were being held, undisclosed, within the VA.

The VA gave a one- to five-star rating to 146 VA medical centers across the country indicating their quality-of-care at the end of 2016. The information posted online also shows whether each hospital improved since the end of 2015.

Seventeen of the 146 medical centers earned 5-star ratings, the highest given, and 10 received one-star ratings.

Some of the best included the Boston VA medical center and hospitals in Minneapolis, Pittsburgh and Cleveland.

The worst-performing included Dallas, Los Angeles, Phoenix and all three Tennessee hospitals in Memphis, Nashville and Murfreesboro.

How Ohio's VA medical centers are rated:

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Status</u>
Cleveland	5	Greatly improved
Cincinnati	4	Stayed the same
Columbus	4	Stayed the same
Chillicothe	3	Greatly improved
Dayton	3	Stayed the same

Mighty Oaks Warrior Program finds new home at The Wilds

A Zanesville family has donated \$2 million to fund a project at the Wilds geared toward providing therapeutic treatment for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder.

The gift, directed by the J.W. and M.H. Straker Charitable Foundation, will be used to construct seven cabins and a lodge to accommodate the Mighty Oaks Warrior Program.

The program, headquartered in Temecula, California, was created five years ago in response to the reported veteran suicide rate of 23 deaths per day. The program is hosted in California, Virginia, Montana and Oklahoma.

Through classes, group work and recreational activities, the six-week program has seen more than 1,100 veterans graduate with a zero percent suicide rate, according to the program's executive director, Jeremy Stal-necker.

"The Midwest is an area we have not yet tapped into, and we are excited to have a facility in Ohio, which is near so many major cities. The Wilds fits our criteria perfectly."

Susan Holden, daughter of J.W. "Bill" Straker, said the idea was born from an article her father read last year about PTSD and the number of suicides among veterans.

"We wanted to invest in our community, we wanted to invest in the Wilds and we wanted to invest in the veterans," Holden said.

The Wilds is located approximately 40 miles south of Coshocton at 14000 International Road, Cumberland, OH, 43732.



Holiday food voucher program assisted 64 Veterans and families

A total of 64 Coshocton County Veterans were issued \$3,200.00 worth of food vouchers during the recent Holidays.

It was the fourth year that the Veterans Service Commission and Office

are provided the vouchers to eligible veterans.

Beginning November 14th and ending December 22nd, vouchers were available to veterans whose annual income did not exceed 200 percent of the 2016 Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Veterans had an option to redeem their vouchers at Aldi's Supermarket, Baker's IGA, Buehler's Food Market or Collins Meat Market.

Veterans Service Office Closings

January 2

(New Years Holiday)

January 16

(Martin Luther King Day)

February 20

(President's Day)

Meetings, Events & Observances

January 24

(VA Mobile Health Unit, Stark County Mobile Vet Center, TBA)

February 16

(Coshocton County Career Center Open House, 4:30-7 p.m.)

2017 Honor Flight schedule announced

Veterans wishing to experience a tour of honor and celebration to Washington D.C. will have six more opportunities as Honor Flight Columbus has announced its schedule for 2017.

Currently, these are the men and women who served during WWII and Korean War years. In addition, terminally ill veterans from any era are placed at the head of the line and plans are to begin Vietnam War veterans on regular flights in the spring of 2017.

Accordingly, WWII veterans will continue to have top priority, with Korean veterans next. Organizers will call Vietnam veterans in sequence by the dates of applications received.

It is the goal of Honor Flight Columbus to take Senior Veterans on this trip of celebration as long as donations from the public continue and volunteers are available.

The Honor Flight Guardian Coordinator will assign each veteran a trained volunteer guardian who may or may not be of the veteran's choosing. Guardians are selected depending on the needs of the veterans on a flight. Anyone who wants to be considered as a potential guardian must submit an application.

Last year, a total of 581 veterans participated in the flight, including 78 from the World War II era. One flight, which took place October 22nd, 96 Vietnam Purple Heart recipients had the opportunity to visit their memorial on Saturday October 22, 2016.

Applications are available at the County Veterans Service Office.

2017 Honor Flight Schedule

April 15

May 13

June 10

September 9

September 30

October 21

Plans dropped for requiring women to register for draft

Lawmakers have officially dropped plans to make women register for the draft, instead opting for a review of the ongoing need for the Selective Service System.

The controversial provision had been part of early drafts of the annual defense authorization bill, and narrowly passed a House Armed Services Committee vote last spring.

A Senate panel followed suit a few months later. But conservatives in both chambers objected to the provision and stripped it out of the final legislative draft unveiled in November.

Under current law, men ages 18 to 26 are required to register for possible involuntary military service with the Selective Service System.

Women have been exempt, and past legal challenges have pointed to combat restrictions placed on their military service as a reason for their exclusion.

Early this year, Defense Secretary Ash Carter removed those restrictions, opening combat posts to women for the first time. In response, a collection of military leaders and women's rights advocates said they would support requiring women to now register for the draft. Instead, the final authorization bill draft calls for a review of the entire Selective Service System, to see if the idea of a military draft is still realistic and cost-effective.

The system has an annual budget of about \$23 million, but watchdog groups have questioned whether the system could assemble a list of draftees if a national emergency were to arise. And military leaders have repeatedly insisted they have no desire to return to the draft to fill the ranks.

No Americans have been pressed into involuntary military service since the last draft ended in 1973.

President Obama supports requiring women to register for Selective Service when they turn 18 — becoming the first president to endorse universal draft registration since Jimmy Carter.

But the timing of Obama's support makes it mostly symbolic, coming in the final weeks of his presidency and the day before the House voted on a defense policy bill that strips a Senate-passed provision to add women to Selective Service.

Removing the ban on women in all combat roles opened more than 200,000 jobs to women, most of them in Army and Marine infantry units.

As a practical matter, women troops have been exposed to combat conditions for a long time. More than 280,000 women have served in Iraq and Afghanistan out of nearly 2.5 million troops. In those wars, 152 women have died in battle or from non-combat causes and more than 950 have been wounded in action.



Participants on the Vietnam Veterans Purple Heart Honor Flight from the Coshocton, Muskingum and Tuscarawas counties included (L-R) Denny Ross, Randall Larr, Larry McFarland, Ed Skerness, Dave Troendly, Mark Williams and Gary Howell. At far right is Dave Dilly, who helped organize the trip and assisted with hotel rooms and the Friday evening meal in Columbus.

Trump, aides weighing options for Veterans health care system

President-elect Donald Trump and aides have floated the idea of creating a new "public-private" system for veterans health care.

Amid a series of job interviews, Trump met with a group of health care professionals in a discussion that included talk of a system that would allow veterans to use the traditional VA system or opt for private medical facilities.

Trump has not yet named his choice to head the VA, an agency that has been rocked by scandal since it was revealed in 2014 that veterans were dying while waiting for long-delayed medical appointments.

The VA secretary was replaced and the agency has made a major emphasis on improving care, but USA TODAY earlier this month published documents showing that effort is achieving mixed results.

The group that met with Trump Wednesday included Cleveland Clinic CEO Delos "Toby" Cosgrove, rumored to be under consideration to be Trump's pick for VA secretary.

The official said it is possible the group could become a standing advisory committee on veterans health care, though that also has not been decided.

GREEN (cont. from pg. 1)

enjoyed and I'm certain he will continue being an advocate.

"I suppose that if he gets 'homesick' he can still stop in and visit with the Commission members and Office Staff."

Green is a US Army Retired SFC. He graduated from Forest High School, in Forest, OH.

He joined the US Army under the Army Reserve Act in 1955 and left for active duty in June of 1957. He served in the following duty stations: Ft. Knox, KY; Ft. Eustis, VA; Ft. Knox, KY; Alaska; Ft. Campbell, KY; Korea; Ft. George G Meade, MD; Vietnam; Ft. Benning, GA; Vietnam; Ft. Benning, GA; Germany; and Ft.

Benning, GA.

After retiring from the Army he worked for Jones Oil Inc. for 21 years and retired in 2001.

"Jerry has dedicated his life to the service," Marty added. "If every person took it like Jerry, it would be a wonderful world."

He is a member of the American Legion, the Coshocton County Veterans Council, and the Coshocton County Honor Guard. He is a life member of the DAV, AMVETS, VFW, and Coshocton County Vietnam Veterans.

A story highlighting John Wright will be published in the January-February edition of the Veterans Service Office Newsletter.

MILLER (cont. from pg. 1)

He began working in the Veterans Office on November 21st, 2016 as an Assistant Veterans Service Officer.

He enlisted in the Ohio Army National Guard in 2000. In 2004 he was deployed to Iraq with the 211th Maintenance Co. under the 101st Airborne at Camp Anaconda (Balad, Iraq).

In 2008 he was deployed again in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, this time as a Sergeant in the 37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

He is still serving in the Ohio Army National Guard as a Chief Warrant

Officer 2.

"Continued learning is a big part of this position," Miller added. "I am going to do all I can, to keep up with the most current and up to date regulations, and guidelines."

"I am also getting more involved with the local community and some local clubs and organizations. I am hoping to get some of the younger veterans in the community more involved with some of the activities Veterans groups are doing in the Coshocton area."

He is a member of the VFW Post #1330 and a member of the Coshocton County Honor Guard.

New hepatitis treatment a big success, VA says

A Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) database study shows that new drug regimens for hepatitis C have resulted in "remarkably high" cure rates among patients in VA's national health care system.

Of the more than 17,000 Veterans in the study, all chronically infected with the hepatitis C virus at baseline, 75 percent to 93 percent had no detectable levels of the disease in their blood for 12 or more weeks after the end of treatment. The therapy regimens lasted 8 to 24 weeks, depending on patient characteristics.

VA has long led the country in screening for and treating hepatitis C. As of mid-September 2016 alone, the Department treated more than 100,000 Veterans infected with the virus. More than 68,000 of these patients had been treated with these new highly effective antivirals.

The VA researchers analyzed data from four subgroups of patients infected with hepatitis C—genotypes 1, 2, 3, and 4—and found that genotype 1 patients showed the highest cure rates and genotype 3 the lowest. Genotype 1 was by far the most common type of infection among the four subgroups.

The study group of more than 17,000 Veterans included more than 11,000 patients with confirmed or likely cirrhosis, a liver disease that can result from hepatitis C, among other causes. The study team found "surprisingly high" response rates of around 87 percent in this group.

The overall results were consistent with those from earlier clinical trials that led to FDA approval of the three new drug regimens in the study: sofosbuvir (SOF), ledipasvir/sofosbuvir (LDV/SOF) and paritaprevir/ ritonavir/ ombitasvir and dasabuvir (PrOD).

The drugs, introduced in 2013 and 2014, have been credited with revolutionizing hepatitis C treatment, which means a cure is now in reach for the vast majority of patients infected with the virus. Previously, using earlier drug regimens, most patients could expect, at best, only a 50 percent chance of a cure.

VA announces new prescription copay rates in February

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is amending its regulation on copayments for Veterans' outpatient medications for non-service connected conditions.

VA currently charges non-exempt Veterans either \$8 or \$9 for each 30-day or less supply of outpatient medication, and under current regulations, a calculation based on the medication of the Medical Consumer Price Index (CPI-P) would be used to determine the copayment amount in future years.

The following copayment amounts will be effective February 27, 2017:

- \$5 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 1 outpatient medication
- \$8 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 2 outpatient medication
- \$11 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 3 outpatient medication

This new regulation eliminates the formula used to calculate future rate increases and establishes three classes of outpatient medications identified as Tier 1, Preferred Generics; Tier 2, Non-Preferred Generics including over-the-counter medications; and Tier 3, Brand Name.

Copayment amounts for each tier would be fixed and vary depending upon the class of outpatient medication in the tier.

These changes apply to Veterans without a service-connected condition, or Veterans with a disability rated less than 50 percent who are receiving outpatient treatment for a non-service connected condition, and whose annual income exceeds the limit set by law.

Medication copayments do not apply to former Prisoners of War, catastrophically disabled Veterans, or those covered by other exceptions as set by law. Copayments stop each calendar year for Veterans in Priority Groups 2-8 once a \$700 cap is reached.

VA study sheds new light on PTSD, TBI symptoms

A recent VA study points to a possible breakthrough in differentiating between post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI), otherwise known as a concussion.

The two disorders often carry similar symptoms, such as irritability, restlessness, hypersensitivity to stimulation, memory loss, fatigue and dizziness. Scientists have tried to distinguish between mTBI and PTSD in hopes of improving treatment options for Veterans, but many symptom-based studies have been inconclusive because the chronic effects of the two conditions are so similar. If someone is rating high on an mTBI scale, for example, that person may also rate high for PTSD symptoms.

The researchers used electroencephalogram, or EEG, a test that measures electrical activity in the brain. The size and direction of the brain waves can signal abnormalities.

Analyzing a large set of EEGs given to military personnel from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the researchers saw patterns of activity at different locations on the scalp for mTBI and PTSD. They saw brain waves moving slowly in opposite directions, likely coming from separate places in the brain.

The researchers emphasize that these effects don't pinpoint a region in the brain where the disorders differ. Rather, they show a pattern that distinguishes the disorders when the EEG results are averaged among a large group.

"When you're looking at an EEG, you can't easily tell where in the brain signals associated with TBI and PTSD are coming from," said Laura Manning Franke, Ph.D., the study's lead researcher and research psychologist at the Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Medical Center in Richmond, Virginia. "You get kind of a coarse measure – left, right, anterior, posterior. We had a different distribution, which

suggests that different parts of the brain are involved. In order to determine what patterns are tracking their TBI and PTSD, you need an average to do that," Franke added.

The study linked mTBI with *increases* in low-frequency waves, especially in the prefrontal and right temporal regions of the brain, and PTSD with *decreases* in low-frequency waves, notably in the right temporoparietal region.

The differences in the levels of the waves may explain some of the symptoms of the two disorders, suggesting a decline in responsiveness for someone with mTBI, for example, and more anxiety for someone with PTSD.

Franke also noted that more low-frequency power has also been linked to cognitive disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and less low-frequency power to problems such as drug addiction.

Additionally, spotting distinct patterns of mTBI and PTSD in separate parts of the brain is key for two reasons: the possibility these conditions can be confused with each other is reduced. That can help improve diagnosis and treatment and the patterns show that electrical activity appears to be affected long after combat-related mTBI, suggesting long-term changes in neural communication, the signaling between cells in the nervous system. "That could help, in part, explain the reason for persistent problems."

The study included 147 active-duty service members or Veterans who had been exposed to blasts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Of those, 115 had mTBI, which accounts for nearly 80 percent of all traumatic brain injuries. Forty of the participants had PTSD, and 35 had both conditions.

Despite the new findings, Franke and her team believe more work is needed to better explain the differences in the patterns of both conditions in the brain's electrical activity. Researchers need to analyze the differences in scans from larger numbers of patients.



2016 Veterans Day Services



(Top left) Spectators participate in the Veterans Day services. (Top right) featured speaker Herb Tidrick addresses those in attendance. (Middle left) School children mingle with folks from the older generation. (Middle right) Lawissa Tidrick, the wife of featured speaker Herb Tidrick records during his speech. (Lower left) Members of the Coshocton County Honor Guard line the Courthouse walkway during the services.

Coshocton County Veterans Organizations

VFW Post #1330

Commander: Wayne Hilliard
133 S. Sixth St.
Coshocton, Ohio 43812
740-622-6175

Meetings are the second Saturday
of each month at 11:00 a.m.

DAV Chapter #74

Commander: Ed Skerness
P.O. Box 116
Coshocton, Ohio 43812

Meetings are the first Tuesday
of each month at
the AMVETS Career Center at 6:00 p.m.

AMVETS Post #36

Commander: Stan Schmitt
986 Otsego Ave.
Coshocton, Ohio 43812
740-623-0538

Meetings are the third Monday of each
month at 6:00 p.m.

Army/Navy Garrison #628

Commander: Jim Groves
628 Walnut St.
Coshocton, Ohio 43812
740-622-9110

Meetings are the
second Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

American Legion Post #466

Commander: Jack Patterson
116 E. Main St.
West Lafayette, Ohio 43845
740-545-9773

Meetings are held on an as needed basis

Coshocton County Veterans Council

Commander: Jack Patterson
Meetings are the

second Thursday of each month at 7:00
p.m.

AMVETS Post #36
986 Otsego Ave.,
Coshocton, OH 43812



American Legion Post #634

Commander: Gerald Fox
26811 SR 60
Warsaw, OH 43844

Meetings are the third Wednesday
of each month at the Fire House
in Warsaw at 7:00 p.m.

American Legion Post #65

Commander: Jennifer Holz
652 Main St.
Coshocton, Ohio 43812
740-622-6106

Meetings are the
third Wednesday
of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Korean War

Veterans Association

President: Bob Jones
52650 TR 166

West Lafayette, OH 43845
Meetings are on an as-needed basis

Coshocton County

Vietnam Veterans

Commander: Dale Foster
P.O. Box 341

Coshocton, Ohio 43812
Meetings are the
second Saturday of each month
at Hardee's Restaurant, 325 S. Second St.,
Coshocton, at 9:00 a.m.

Blue Star Mothers OH59

President: Becky Bowden
P.O. Box 1655
Coshocton, OH 43812
740-327-2235

Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. on the
second Monday of each month at the
AMC Nazarene Church, 1030 Orange St.,
Coshocton, OH 43812