

# THE CENTURION

## DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

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*Ruth Ann Minner, Governor*

*James L. Thompson, Vice Chairman*

*Dr. Harriet Smith Windsor, Secretary of State*

*Antonio Davila, Executive Director*

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## AFRICAN AMERICAN MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS MEMORIAL SERVICE

The First State Medal of Honor Roundtable will be holding a Memorial Service at the African American Medal of Honor Recipients Memorial, located at 18<sup>th</sup> St. & Baynard Blvd., Wilmington, Delaware. The service will be held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, at 1:00pm. The service is open to the public; and if anyone would like to participate, please contact us. This service is dedicated to both the African American Medal of Honor Recipients and the Delaware Medal of Honor Recipients. This year we will be having a very special guest in attendance: Col Wesley J. Fox, USMC (Ret), a Medal of Honor Recipient from the Vietnam era. Col Fox served our country with more than forty years as a member of the United States Marine Corps. There will also be members of a new national organization called Family and Friends of the Congressional Medal of Honor participating. This organization was formed this past fall for family members and those who have an interest in the Congressional Medal of Honor. To find out more about the Memorial Service please contact Rick Loveless by calling (302) 992-9896, E-Mail [fsmohr@comcast.net](mailto:fsmohr@comcast.net). You can also find out about the First State Medal of Honor Roundtable by visiting our web site: [www.fsmohr.blogspot.com](http://www.fsmohr.blogspot.com). (*Rick Loveless, January 30, 2005*)

## THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER

*“When it comes to income tax, most of us would be willing to pay as we go if we could only catch up on where we’ve been”*

### VET CENTERS

Vet Centers – officially known as Readjustment Counseling Services – are counseling centers designed specifically to assist returning combat veterans and other veterans who suffered trauma while on active duty. Vet Centers are staffed by professionally trained counselors, with specific expertise in the treatment of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Individual counseling and group counseling are the chief modalities of treatment for PTSD. Vet Centers generally also provide education about PTSD to family members of returning combat veterans. Vet Center services are free and confidential. Vet Center staff urge veterans returning from a combat theatre of the Global War on Terror (GWOT), such as Iraq or Afghanistan, to enroll with their local Vet Center. We at the Wilmington Vet Center are dedicated to assisting our returning war veterans in all matters relating to readjustment to civilian life. (*Wilmington Vet Center, Bldg #3, 1601 Kirkwood Hwy, Wilmington, DE 19805 (302) 994-1660*)

### ATOMIC VETERANS

In the late forties, all through the fifties, and into the early sixties, the United States exploded many nuclear devices into our atmosphere. Information regarding these tests was formerly classified which made it difficult for many vets to pursue claims against the government. Much has now been declassified and is available. If you are a vet who has had even one exposure to atmospheric testing of nuclear devices you may be eligible for a service connected disability, or in some cases a lump sum settlement of \$75,000 from the Department of Justice. Macular degeneration has now been recognized as a possible cause and effect of ionizing radiation exposure. If you are an Atomic vet looking for advice on how to proceed with a claim, the following web sites can provide useful information on the subject:

- National Association of Atomic Veterans [www.naav.com](http://www.naav.com)
- Atomic Veterans of America [www.angelfire.com/tx/atomicveteran](http://www.angelfire.com/tx/atomicveteran)
- Atomic Veterans History Project [www.aracnet.com/~pdxavets](http://www.aracnet.com/~pdxavets)
- VA Ionizing Radiation Information [www.va.gov/IRAD](http://www.va.gov/IRAD)
- VA Project 112 [www.va.gov/SHAD/](http://www.va.gov/SHAD/)  
(*New Mexico e-Veterans News, January 2005*)

### DFAS 1099 R, RAS & W2 FOR 2004

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) has scheduled dates when Military members, retirees/annuitants and Department of Defense civilian employees can access their tax statements through myPay and when they can anticipate to receive the hardcopy delivery by mail. Personnel will once again have access to review, save and print their tax statements from myPay at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>. DFAS delivers personal pay information and provides the ability to process pay-related transactions timely, safely and securely to all its members through myPay. The Web-based system eliminates the risks associated with postal delivery by allowing members to access electronic tax statements and other financial information online. DFAS officials noted that myPay matches existing industry standards for the highest level of encryption and security. This prevents customer information from being accessed by others on the Internet. Tax statements will be available as follows with the first date being that when the statement is available for myPay access and the subsequent dates are when statements will be mailed:

- Retired Annual Statement – 12/04/04 (myPay) and 12/17/04 through 12/29/04 (mail);
- Retired 1099R – 12/13/04 (myPay) and 12/17 through 12/29/04;
- Annuitant Annual Statements – 12/13/04 (myPay) and 12/28 to 12/29/04;

- Annuitant 1099R – 12/14/04 (myPay) and 12/27 through 12/29/04
- Air Force, Army, & Navy Reserve W2s – 12/27/04 (myPay) and 01/04/05 through 01/05/05
- Civilian W2s – 01/06/05 (myPay) and 01/10/05 through 01/14/05
- Marine Corps Active & Reserve W2s – 01/10/05 (myPay) and 01/18/05
- Air Force, Army, & Navy Active W2 – 01/14/05 (myPay) and 01/18/05 through 01/24/05

Statements that are available by mail only are:

- Special Compensation for Severely Disabled 1099Rs: 12/17/04
- VSI/SSB W2s – 01/04/05 through 01/05/05
- Travel W2s – 01/10/05 through 01/11/05
- Saving Deposit 1099INTs – 01/10/05 through 01/11/05

Those individuals who have in the past received a myPay personal identification number and accessed myPay will not receive printed documents unless they notified DFAS by October 31 that they wanted printed versions. (*DFAS Press Release 0442, November 29, 2004*)

### **BUDGET SHORTFALLS BLAMED ON RETIREES**

The January 25, 2005 Wall Street Journal issue carried a front-page story “As Benefits for Veterans Climb, Military Spending Feels Freeze.” The story talks about the arguments made by Pentagon officials that military retirees are taking budget money that military leaders want to use to help troops fighting today. It noted the assertions of Dr. David Chu who is the Pentagon’s Undersecretary for Personnel and Readiness during their interview. He stated that the amounts have gotten to the point where they are hurtful. They are taking away from the nation’s ability to defend itself and improving retiree and survivor benefits does not affect active duty retention. The story asserts that Congress, feeling the pressure by veterans groups has boosted retiree and survivor benefits including TRICARE For Life, concurrent receipt, and SBP. It is difficult to believe that the words of Dr. Hue are the official position of the Pentagon or just a case of foot in mouth disease. However, after six days the

Pentagon’s public relations office has not made any news releases that commented on or disputed Dr. Chu’s assertions which have enraged veteran groups throughout the country. Issues about military benefits should be publicly aired, but assertions that increased spending on benefits for military retirees and widows is taking money from weapons or other active duty funding needs are off base. Congress over the past two years has passed legislation specifying that no money for TRICARE For Life or concurrent receipt is to come out of the DOD budget, but is to come from elsewhere in the Treasury. Regarding retention, the Joint Chiefs of Staff fought to repeal retirement cuts in the late 1990s after those cuts were found to be contributing to serious retention and readiness problems. The Joint Chiefs also told Congress at the time that they supported retiree health care fixes, because active duty troops know that they’ll be retired someday, too. The troops are smart and can see through a “give them bonuses now and cut their future benefits” philosophy; that’s exactly what gave rise to the retention and readiness crises of the late 1970s and late 1990s, after years of erosion of benefits. Congress has demonstrated time and again that it will provide funding to meet the needs of both our active duty forces and our military retirees and survivors. If any Administration chooses to impose internal funding limitations or budget trade-offs that is in direct conflict with the intent of statutes passed by Congress and signed into law that were written specifically to prevent that from happening. The WSJ article points out why the Military Coalition of fraternal organizations have a responsibility to help ensure that retention lessons learned under previous administrations aren’t lost as leadership changes, independent of any particular administrations aren’t lost as leadership changes, independent of any particular Administration’s budget-driven proposals. VADM Ryan’s (President of the MOAA) recently wrote an article on this issue in their magazine titled “Freedom Isn’t Free” which addresses precisely that point. It can be read at [www.moaa.org/Magazine/CurrentEdition/presidentspage.asp](http://www.moaa.org/Magazine/CurrentEdition/presidentspage.asp). The Wall street Journal Article can

be viewed at <http://webreprints.djreprints.com/1156160669825.html> (Various, January 2005)

### **DOD EXPANDS HEALTH ASSESSMENT PROGRAM FOLLOWING DEPLOYMENTS**

Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr., Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, announced the implementation of a new clinical program to assess the health of service members three to six months after redeployment, focusing on support to those needing assistance with post traumatic stress disorder, psychological and social readjustment issues. The program expands the range of care offered to service members through the pre- and post-deployment health assessments, begun a few years ago and expanded in 2003. These assessments are screening procedures to gather health information from deploying and returning service members that aid communication with a healthcare provider, and assist in evaluating a service member's health. "This new initiative is designed to assist service members who have returned from areas of combat operations to ensure their health and well being," Winkenwerder said. "The thrust is to bring them in and ask, 'How are you doing?' 'How is your family doing?' 'Are you having stress or adjustment issues?' 'How can we help you?'" Winkenwerder noted the need for such attention and support in the time period of weeks to months after return. The assessment will consider the overall health of the returning service member, with emphasis on mental health and readjustment. Current data show only a small percentage of individuals report problems immediately following deployment. "In some cases, service members may have concerns, but, understandably, want to go home," he said. "Some two to three months later or more may experience health issues and adjustment problems, but may be reluctant or not know how to seek help." "We have the capacity and the desire to manage these issues proactively," he said. "And, it is the right thing for us to do. With this new disciplined and caring process, we intend to remove stigma and reach those needing support. Importantly, we also will be implementing this program for members of the Reserves and Guard,

and expect that through our partnership with the VA, and our own Tricare program, we will be able to provide the services." Winkenwerder directed implementation of the program by early spring 2005. A working group is preparing policy and protocols for a smooth implementation. The working group includes representatives from the offices of the military services' surgeons general, family services teams, the National Guard Bureau, Reserve Affairs, the Armed Forces Epidemiological board and other military medical organizations. (Department of Defense, January 26, 2005)

### **VETERANS' NEW ID CARDS HELP BATTLE IDENTITY THEFT**

With identity theft as the major fraud reported by Americans in 2003, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has designed a new identity card for veterans that will safeguard confidential information. "The new identification card ensures veterans' personal information is protected," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi. "It also helps prevent the theft of important benefits and services from veterans that they earned by their service to our country." The card, formally known as the Veterans Identification Card (VIC), will have veterans' photos on the front and identify them as enrollees in the VA's health care system. The card includes the words "service connected" under the photo if the veteran has a service-connected disability. Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the nation. The Federal Trade Commission listed identity theft as the number one fraud reported by consumers in 2003. Requests from veterans and their congressional representatives were instrumental in bringing about these latest changes. "The new VIC ensures the security of veterans' personal information as well as ensuring that only eligible veterans receive the benefits and services they've earned," said Kristin Cunningham of the business office for VA's health care system. Veterans should request the new card at their local medical center. Processing will take five to seven days once eligibility is verified. VA hopes to complete the conversion to the new, safer card by mid-November. The existing cards will

remain valid until veterans receive their new cards. (*Department of Veterans Affairs News Release, November 4, 2004*)

### **VETERANS BENEFITS ACT 2004**

On 16 November 2004 the House passed the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004 which contains significant upgrades in VA health care access for wounded veterans, education, home loans, survivor benefits, and a range of other programs. The bill (S.2486) now goes to the President who is expected to approve it. Major elements of the bill are:

\* Education and Training. Among other things extends eligibility of survivors' and dependents' educational benefits for survivors of servicemembers who died on active duty to 20 years following death (vs. previous 10) and permits Selected Reserve members activated for two years to enroll in the Montgomery GI bill and have a year to pay the \$1,200 premium after deactivating.

\* Veterans Compensation and Survivor Benefits. Provides an additional transition allowance of \$250 per month in Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) for the first two years after a service member's service-connected death to any surviving spouse who has at least one child under age 18; excludes life insurance proceeds paid upon the death of a veteran from consideration as income for death pension benefits; codifies VA regulations establishing cancer of the bone, brain, colon, lung and ovary as diseases presumed to have been caused by exposure to ionizing radiation; permits a veteran or survivor who received compensation under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) to be eligible for VA compensation or DIC.

\* Rights and Protections under the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act (SCRA) and Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Increases from 18 to 24 months the maximum period of employer-sponsored health coverage that an employee covered by the USERRA reemployment cases; requires employers to provide notice of rights, benefits, and obligations under the

USERRA; clarifies that waivers of service members' rights and obligations under the USERRA; clarifies that waivers of servicemembers' rights and protections under the SCRA must be in writing; protects dependents as well as servicemembers under the SCRA must be in writing; protects dependents as well as servicemembers under the SCRA for residential and motor vehicle lease termination provisions on joint leases.

\* VA Home Loans and Housing. Increases the maximum VA home loan guaranty amount to \$333,700; reinstates VA-backed adjustable rate mortgages (ARMs) and extends the authority for hybrid ARMs through 2008; expands eligibility for specially adapted housing grants to veterans with permanent and total service-connected disabilities due to the loss, or loss of use, of both arms at or above the elbows. (*MOAA Legislative update November 19, 2004*)

### **CONCURRENT RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY**

In January, retirees receiving Concurrent Retirement and Disability Payments (CRDP) become eligible for the second step of a multi-year phase-out of the disability offset to military retired pay. The additional money will come in their February checks. The FY2004 Defense Authorization Act authorized a ten-year phase-in of CRDP to eliminate the offset of retired pay for VA disability compensation for retirees with 50% or higher disabilities. These payments started with flat-rate amounts in January 2004 and will increase every year until the retiree's disability offset is eliminated in 2014. Because the phasing plan is relatively front-loaded, 94% of the retired pay offset will be recovered within the next five years. Under the FY2005 Defense Authorization Act passed last October, retirees with disabilities rated at 100% will be removed from the phase-in plan and their full, service-based retired pay will be restored as of January 2005 (to be reflected in the February check). If you already received a preliminary projection of your 2005 retired pay from the Finance Center that did not fully reflect change in

your concurrent retirement and disability payments, you should receive an updated 2005 retired pay statement within a month or two. It may or may not come before you receive the money. The increases in retired pay will depend on the amount of retired pay waived for VA disability compensation. Amounts already restored in January 2004 were \$750 per month for 100% VA disability ratings; \$500 for 90%; \$350 for 80%; \$250 for 70%; \$125 for 60%; and \$100 for 50%. Subsequent annual increases each January will be based on a percentage of the remaining offset. The payment for January 2005 will restore another 10% of the retiree's remaining disability offset. In January 2006, eligible retirees will get back 20% of the remaining offset; then 30% of the remaining offset in January 2007, and so on until January 2014, when eligible members will achieve full restoration of the retired pay they earned by service. For eligible retirees who were retired for medical reasons (so-called "Chapter 61" disability retirees) with twenty years or more in service, the retired pay restoration amount will be based solely on the amount of retired pay they earned by service as if they had retired without any disability. To see examples of 2005 payment calculations, visit MOAA's web site at [www.moaa.org/Legislative/Retirement/CRDPCharts.asp](http://www.moaa.org/Legislative/Retirement/CRDPCharts.asp). (MOAA Legislative update, December 23, 2004)

## LEGISLATION OF INTEREST

With the start of the 109 Congress, a number of bills have already been introduced in the House and Senate. Here is a summary of those bills of interest. S. 11 (Sen. Levin, D-MI) is an omnibus bill that would increase Army and Marine Corps strengths, provide tax credits to employers of mobilized Guard/Reserve members, increase the military death gratuity to \$100,000, eliminate the DIC offset to SBP, accelerate the 2008 effective date of SBP, and provide additional health coverage options to all Selected Reserve members, among other provisions.

S. 13 A bill to overhaul veterans' health care benefits.

S. 42 (Sen. Allen, R-VA) and S. 44 (Sen. Hagel, R-NE) would both raise the death gratuity to \$100,000 for members killed on active duty since 9/11.

S. 43 (Sen. Hagel, R-NE) would end the \$1,200 enrollment fee for the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB), refund the fee to MGIB-participating members on active duty, and offer an new enrollment opportunity to all non-participating active duty members.

S. 77 (Sen. Sessions, R-AL) would increase maximum military life insurance coverage from \$250,000 to \$400,000 of which the first \$150,000 would be premium-free for members serving in combat zones and raise the military death gratuity to \$100,000 for servicemembers killed in combat.

S. 121 (Sen. DeWine, R-OH) would increase the death gratuity to \$100,000 for the surviving spouse plus \$25,000 for each surviving child, authorize free TRICARE Prime eligibility for surviving children until the age of 18 or 22 (if enrolled in school), double the education for surviving spouse plus \$750 per month for each surviving child.

S. 185, the Military Retiree Survivor Equity Act, would end the deduction of VA survivor benefits (paid when the member's death is caused by a service-connected condition) from the survivor's SBP annuity. It also would move up the 2008 effective date of 30-year paid-up SBP coverage to a 2005 implementation.

H.R. 97 (Rep. Sam Graves, R-MO) would limit interest rates to 36% for consumer credit extended to a service member or a service member's dependent. If passed, the measure would authorize a fine or up to one year imprisonment (or both) for lenders who violate the interest cap. The legislation was introduced in response to reports that some lending agencies target military personnel with promises of quick and easy loans and are able to charge interest rates as high as 390%. By contrast service members are able to obtain loans from credit unions with 18% interest.

H.R. 292 (Rep. Spencer Bauchus D-AL) would also increase the benefit paid to survivors to \$100,000. The measure is being considered by the House Armed Services Committee and currently has 157 cosponsors.

H.R. 303 (Rep. Bilirakis, R-FL) would eliminate the disability offset to military retired pay effective 1 January 2006 for all members with a service-connected disability who has sufficient service to retire independent of any disability.

H.R. 333 (Rep Lynch, D-MA) would protect education status and financial interest of servicemembers called to active duty while enrolled in college courses.

H.R. 377 (Rep Everett, R-AL) is the House companion bill to Sen. Sessions' S. 77

You can track cosponsorship, current status, and other information on selected bills of interest at: <http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/bills/>. You can also send your legislators suggested messages urging their support via this site by simply entering your ZIP code in the appropriate block. (*Various, January 2005*)

### **GOLD STAR MOTHERS AND GOLD STAR WIVES**

The membership of **American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.** is composed of American Mothers who lost a son or daughter during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Beirut, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Bosnia, Saudi Arabia, all Strategic Areas, or while in service to our country. The 150 chapters of Gold Star Mothers throughout the United States give many hours of work and personal service in hospitals for veterans and their families. For additional information, visit their website at [www.goldstarmoms.com](http://www.goldstarmoms.com).

The **Gold Star Wives of America** is a national, non-profit, military widow/widower organization, chartered by the US Congress. It provides support, information, and representation to spouses of those who died in the service of our country. Members appear before Congress on issues concerning survivor compensation, educational and health benefits and other important programs. For additional information, visit their website at [www.goldstarwives.com](http://www.goldstarwives.com).

**Gold Star Pin** - The Gold Star lapel button, approximately 16-mm in diameter, consists of a gold star on a purple circular background, bordered in gold and surrounded by gold laurel leaves. On the reverse is the inscription, "United States of America, Act of Congress, August 1947," with space for engraving the initials of the recipient. The Gold Star lapel button is furnished by the U.S. Government, without cost, to the widow or widower, to each of the parents, to each child, and to the brothers and sisters of a member of the Armed Forces who lost his or her life while in active military service. If you would like an application (DD Form 3), you may contact:

Gold Star Mothers, Inc.  
2128 Leroy Place NW  
Washington, DC 20008  
(202) 265-0991

or

National Personnel Records Center, NARA  
(Military Personnel Records)  
9700 Page Boulevard  
St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5199

### **NEW ELIGIBILITY WEBSITE**

The Chief Business Office (CBO) is pleased to announce that a new re-engineered health eligibility Internet website was launched on January 10, 2005. This site, which is located at [www.va.gov/health\\_eligibility](http://www.va.gov/health_eligibility), is the VA's authoritative source on the Internet for information on veterans' health benefits eligibility. Designed with the veteran in mind, the site provides easy access to VA's comprehensive health benefits, eligibility and enrollment information. Users attempting to access the current site, [www.va.gov/elig](http://www.va.gov/elig), will be provided the new URL and automatically redirected to the new address. However, we encourage the national Veteran Service Organizations to update their websites to link as well as communicate this news to your national representatives. Questions or concerns may be directed [lynne.harbin@med.va.gov](mailto:lynne.harbin@med.va.gov) or, [floretta.hardmon@med.va.gov](mailto:floretta.hardmon@med.va.gov).

## COMMISSARY COUPON USE

The Defense Commissary Agency (DECA) is making Internet coupon links available under a new section on the links page at [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com). Along with Web sites for military grocery coupons, the new section has a link for customers who prefer more traditional coupons. Another link offers commissary shoppers the opportunity to sign up for coupons. Another link offers commissary shoppers the opportunity to sign up for coupons by mail. The most common coupons offered are free-standing inserts (FSIs) typically inserted in newspapers or available at the commissary. But the use of Internet coupons has grown substantially, with redemption rates rivaling FSIs. Commissaries and other grocery retailers have stopped accepting home-printed coupons in September 2003 due to instances of fraud, but, despite the industry ban, consumer use of internet coupons flourished in general. All 273 commissaries worldwide now accept computer-generated Internet coupons as long as they have a bar code for scanning purposes, and do not offer a free product. (*Armed Forces New, October 22, 2004*)

## TELEMARKETING CALL ELIMINATION

E-mails circulating on the Internet and this newsletter recently warned that telemarketers would have the right to call "cell phone" numbers January 1 unless people listed with the federal do-not-call site by December 15. Also, that cell phone 411 directories would be established in 2005 that telemarketers could use. The do-not-call site got 905 million listings in the week of December 15, up from the usual 200,000. The e-mails as related to cell phones were erroneous. A Federal Communications Commission rule bars telemarketers from calling cell exchanges. That rule remains in effect. "Landline" phones are a different matter. You can get off the telemarketers' lists by signing up with the FTC. That site is: <https://www.donotcall.gov/default.aspx>. There is no December 15, 2004 deadline or any deadline at all for adding phone numbers to the list. It is true that the major wireless phone providers (with the

exception of Verizon) have announced their intention to establish a 411 directory of customers' cell phone numbers beginning in late 2005. It is not true that they plan to "publish" said directory for any and all to read. Participating companies say the numbers will be made available only with customer consent and only via telephone to users who dial directory assistance and pay a fee ([http://urbanlegends.about.com/od/internet/a/top\\_10\\_uls.htm](http://urbanlegends.about.com/od/internet/a/top_10_uls.htm), December 04)

## ELEVATED PREVALENCE OF HEPATITIS C INFECTION IN USERS OF US VETERANS MEDICAL CENTERS

Epidemiologic Research and Information Center, University of Washington School of Public Health, Seattle, WA. Several studies suggest veterans have a higher prevalence of hepatitis C virus infection than non-veterans, possibly because of military exposures. The purpose of this study was to estimate the prevalence of anti-hepatitis C antibody and evaluate factors associated with infection among users of Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers. Using a two-staged cluster sample, 1,288 of 3,863 randomly selected veterans completed a survey and underwent home-based phlebotomy for serological testing. Administrative and clinical data were used to correct the prevalence estimate for nonparticipation. The prevalence of anti-hepatitis C antibody among serology participants was 4.0% (95%CI, 2.6%-5.5%). The estimated prevalence in the population of Veterans Affairs medical center users was 5.4% (95% CI, 3.3%-7.5%) after correction for sociodemographic and clinical differences between participants and nonparticipants. Significant predictors of seropositivity included demographic factors, period of military service (e.g., Vietnam era), prior diagnoses, health care use, and lifestyle factors. At least one traditional risk factor (transfusion or intravenous drug use) was reported by 30.2% of all subjects. Among those testing positive for hepatitis C antibody, 78% either had a transfusion or had used injection drugs. Adjusting for injection drug use and nonparticipation, seropositivity was associated with tattoos and incarceration. Military-

related exposures were not found to be associated with infection in the adjusted analysis. In conclusion, the prevalence of hepatitis C in these subjects exceeds the estimate from the general US population by more than 2-fold, likely reflecting more exposure to traditional risk factors among these veterans. (*PubMed, National Library of Medicine, December 23, 2004*)

### **STATE REPOSITORY – DD FORM 214s**

The Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs is the State Repository for DD Forms 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty). If you served in the military between 1976 – 1986, we may not have your record on file. If you would like to bring a copy of your DD Form 214 to our office, it will be placed on microfilm for permanent record. A copy would be available to you or an authorized family member if required. Please call our office for additional information (800) 344-9900 or (302) 739-2792.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION TO DELAWARE VETERANS**

In January 1946, Walter W. Bacon, then elected Governor, authorized a state award to those who served in World War II. To honor this commitment to Delaware Veterans, Governor Ruth Ann Minner has announced that the State of Delaware will provide a “Certificate of Appreciation” to all Delaware residents who shall have served honorably in the Armed Forces of the United States during time of peace, conflict or war. To request a “Certificate of Appreciation” the veteran/spouse or next of kin must submit the enclosed application (see page 15) along with a copy of a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, (DD Form 214). DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL.

### **WWII VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT**

In support of Lt. Governor John C. Carney, Jr.’s and Secretary of State Harriet Smith Windsor’s WWII Veterans History Project, we are soliciting your participation and support in creating and preserving

a permanent record of your personal wartime experiences for future generations of Delawareans and other Americans to share and consult. The effort also will be used in support of the National Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress. Some questionnaires will be selected for a videotaped oral history, while all will be used to create a volume of written histories of WWII veterans from Delaware. Those selected for the videotaped portion of the project will be chosen based on the uniqueness of their questionnaire and the narrative they provide. If you are selected for the videotaped portion of this project, a Veterans History Project staff member will contact you to arrange for a personal interview. To participate in this preservation effort, please complete the attached questionnaire on pages 13/14 and return it to the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100, Dover, DE 19904. If you need assistance or further clarification on completing the questionnaire, please call 1-800-344-9900 or (302) 739-2792.

### **HUNTING, TRAPPING AND FISHING LICENSES**

The Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs (DCVA) in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), Division of Fish & Wildlife is now issuing Hunting, Trapping and Fishing ID cards for those Delaware veterans and members of the Armed Forces who meet the exceptions to requirements for licensing under Title 7, Chapter 5, Section 502 of the Delaware Code.

- Any veteran having at least a 60% service-connected disability (certified by the Veterans Administration);
- Or 65 years or older;
- Or blind

For more information, please call (302) 739-2792 or (800) 344-9900.

### **COMMISSION MEETINGS**

The Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs meets the fourth Tuesday of each month, 11:00 AM,

802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100, Dover, DE. The meeting schedule varies for June and December of each year. These meetings are open to the public. Any individual requiring special accommodations, shall contact this office one week prior to the meeting date. If you would like to attend, please call 1-800-344-9900 (in State) or (302) 739-2792.

**MOBILE VETERANS SERVICE CENTER**

Ms. White will be providing services for veterans from the mobile Service Center at the following locations:

FEB 16 Ocean View Town Hall  
 FEB 22 Bridgeville Town Hall  
 FEB 23 Bethany Beach Town Hall

MAR 01 Laurel Town Hall  
 MAR 02 Georgetown Service Center  
 MAR 08 Seaford Service Center  
 MAR 09 Georgetown Cheer Center  
 MAR 15 Bridgeville Town Hall  
 MAR 16 Ocean View Town Hall  
 MAR 22 Laurel Town Hall  
 MAR 23 Bethany Beach Town Hall

For more information, contact Ms. White at the Pyle State Service Center, (302) 732-9560.

**VETERAN SERVICE OFFICERS**

**Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs**

(Kent County) – Ms. Melanie E. Bronov - Dover office - may be reached Monday –Friday, 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM, (302) 739-2792 or (800) 344-9900 (in State). Please call for an appointment.

(Sussex County) - Ms. Laurie A. White - Pyle State Service Center located in Roxanna, DE, may be reached Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, (302) 732-9560. Please call for an appointment.

**American Legion**

Robert McBride, Dept. Service Officer, (302) 633-5323, will visit the following posts between 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM on the following dates:

FEB 11 Walter L Fox, Post 2 674-3922

FEB 04 Nanticoke Post #6 629-9915  
 FEB 18 Laurel Post #19 875-9948  
 FEB 25 David Harrison, Post 14 653-1711

MAR 04 Oak Orchard/Riverdale, 945-1673  
 Post 28 (8:00-12:00)

MAR 11 Walter L Fox, Post 2 674-3922

MAR 18 Laurel Post #19 875-9948

MAR 25 David Harrison, Post 14 653-1711

**Paralyzed Veterans of America (DE/MD PVA)**

Darrell Johnson, Sr., National Service Officer, VA Regional Office, 1601 Kirkwood Hwy, Room 26, Wilmington, DE 19805, (302) 633-5325 or (302) 633-5392. Mr. Johnson will make home visits upon request for vets who do not have transportation to the VA. He will be in the Oak Orchard area the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday, Dover the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, Frederica the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday and at the Home of the Brave on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month. In addition to our service officer at the Wilmington VA Regional Office, we also have a representative, David Timberman, National Liaison Service Officer, at the Home of the Brave on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM. The Home of the Brave is located at 6632 Sharps Rd, Milford, DE (302) 424-1681 or 1682.

**Disabled American Veterans (DAV)**

Jim Wyatt, National Service Officer (DAV) Regional Office, Wilm DE 19805 (302) 633-5324.  
 Paul Lardizzone, Dept. Service Officer (DAV).  
 Every Tuesday: DAV Headquarters Building  
 & Wednesday 183 South Street  
 (Kent) 8:00-12:00 Camden, DE 19934  
 (302) 697-9061  
 Every Thursday: Department of Labor  
 (Sussex) 8:00-12:00 Div. of Emp & Trng  
 (302) 856-5230 600 N. DuPont Hwy.  
 Georgetown, DE 19947

**Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)**

Richard Magner, National Service Officer, VA Regional Office, 1601 Kirkwood Hwy, Wilmington, DE 19805, (302) 633-5508.

**Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)**

Terry Baker, National Service Officer, VA Regional Office, 1601 Kirkwood Hwy, Wilmington, DE 19805, (302) 633-5357

**Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)**

James Withrow, Dept. Service Officer, VA Regional Office, 1601 Kirkwood Hwy, Room 21, Wilmington, DE 19805, (800) 461-8262 ext. 5326 or (302) 633-5326.

**1<sup>st</sup> Thursday**

Delaware DOL (633-5326) 8:00-11:00 AM  
Milford VFW (422-4412) 1:30-4:00 PM

**2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday**

Delaware DOL (633-5326) 8:00-11:00 AM  
Milton VFW (684-4975) 1:30-4:00 PM

**3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday**

Delaware DOL (633-5326) 8:00-11:00 AM  
Rehoboth VFW (227-3469) 1:30-4:00 PM

**4<sup>th</sup> Thursday**

Delaware DOL (633-5326) 8:00-11:00 AM  
Seaford VFW (629-3092) 1:30-4:00 PM

**5<sup>th</sup> Thursday**

Delaware DOL (633-5326) 8:00-11:00 AM

NOTE: All persons interested in Outreach Services should first call our office so that some advance information may be obtained to accelerate the application process. Kent & Sussex County residents may call 1-800-461-8262 ext 5326. New Castle County residents may call 633-5326.

NOTE: persons desiring assistance at the Thursday-downstate locations should be at the Delaware DOL no later than 9:00 AM or at the afternoon locations by 2:00 PM. The VFW provides services to veterans and their dependents without respect to veteran service organization affiliation; membership in the VFW is NOT required for service.

**VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS POC**

**Air Force Sergeants Association**

Tony Lee.....(302) 698-5144

**American Ex-Prisoners Of War**

Howard Melson.....(302) 539-1808

**American Legion**

Ed Phillips Jr.....(302) 628-5221

**AMVETS**

Michael Brown.....(302) 659-5111

**DE/MD Paralyzed Veterans of America**

Wayne Carter.....(302) 368-4898

**Disabled American Veterans**

Paul Lardizzone.....(302) 697-9061

Jim Wyatt.....(302) 633-5324

**Jewish War Veterans**

Barry Newstadt.....(302) 475-2820

**Korean War Veterans Association**

Dave Gillan.....(302) 737-2242

**Military Order of the Purple Heart**

Bill Carroll.....(302) 655-3820

**Military Order of the World Wars**

COL (Ret) Eugene A. Hebert.....(302) 335-0110

E-Mail [gene@hebert.net](mailto:gene@hebert.net)

**The Reserve Officers Association**

CWO John V. Hawkins, Sr. (Ret)...(302) 328-8115

**Veterans of Foreign Wars**

Paul Phillips Jr.....(302) 656-5022

**Vietnam Veterans of America**

Robert Corsa.....(302) 933-0119

**WAVES Nat'l**

Ruth Harden.....(302) 998-1373

**DELAWARE VETERANS  
MEMORIAL CEMETERY**

New Castle Co. Section (Bear, DE).....834-8046

Sussex Co. Section (Georgetown, DE).....934-5653

**VETERANS ADMINISTRATION**

**Claims, Benefits, Veterans Services**

(Regional Office).....1-800-827-1000

VA Hospital Scheduling.....1-800-461-8262

.....302-994-2511

**Veterans Outreach Center**

(New Castle County).....302-633-5360

(Kent and Sussex Counties).....302-422-8011

**EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

Al Barclift (Wilmington).....302-761-8093

Michael Companion (Wilmington).....302-761-8096

Ron Bythwood (Newark).....302-739-5473

Mike Wolanski (Newark).....302-739-5473  
 Steve Flaherty (Dover).....302-739-5473  
 Charley Roberson (Dover AFB).....302-677-6942  
 Norris Townsend (Georgetown).....302-856-5230  
 Cliff Rumph (Georgetown).....302-856-5230

**VETERANS UPWARD BOUND PROGRAM**

Lt. Col. Reginald W. Glasby, (USAR) Counselor/  
 Recruiter. Delaware State University, 1200 N  
 DuPont Highway, Dover DE 19901, (302) 857-  
 6135. E-mail rglasby@desu.edu

**RETIREE ACTIVITIES**

**Retired Activities Office**

Lt. Col Ken Smith, (USAF RET), Bldg 520, Room  
 105, Dover AFB, DE 19902, (302) 677-4612.

**Retired Navy Activities Affairs Office**

Leon Stajkowski, Naval & Marine Corps Reserve  
 Center, 3920 Kirkwood Hwy, Wilmington, DE  
 19808, (302) 998-5194.

**COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Commissioners may be reached by calling (800)  
 344-9900.

Jim Thompson (Vice Chairman).....MCL  
 Cornelius "Bill" Carroll.....MOPH  
 Richard Ennis.....KWVA  
 Ruth B. Harden..... WAVES NAT'L  
 Jesse Kitson..... VFW  
 Joseph "Joe" Lank.....MOWW  
 Lou Spitzfaden.....MOAA  
 Paul Lardizzone.....DAV  
 Richard M. Magner.....AMVETS  
 Gary "Mo" Morris.....AMERICAN LEGION  
 Barry Newstadt.....JWV  
 Reese Phillips.....40&8  
 David W. Timberman.....DE/MD PVA  
 Robert E. Wasson.....DELVETS  
 George Webb.....VVA

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 the following information below: (Articles should be submitted to the Commission Office directly)

**NAME/ORGANIZATION**\_\_\_\_\_

**STREET**\_\_\_\_\_

**CITY**\_\_\_\_\_ **STATE**\_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP**\_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL TO: DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
 802 SILVER LAKE BLVD, SUITE 100  
 DOVER, DE 19904**



# STATE OF DELAWARE

"Serving Delaware's Veterans"

**Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs  
Robbins Building  
802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100  
Dover, Delaware 19904**

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