



**Military Order of the Purple Heart**

*Department of Pennsylvania*

For Combat Wounded Veterans, "In War there is no substitute for Victory".



## *Department of Pennsylvania February 2011 News Bulletin*

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### **Alert: Cell Phones for Soldiers...**

[http://www.mophdepartmentpa.org/ALERT\\_Cell\\_Phones\\_4\\_Soldiers\\_MAJOR\\_CHANGES\\_in\\_Shipping\\_via\\_FedEX.pdf](http://www.mophdepartmentpa.org/ALERT_Cell_Phones_4_Soldiers_MAJOR_CHANGES_in_Shipping_via_FedEX.pdf)

*"Happy Valentine's Day"*



There have been some additions to our Website recently.

We've added a [Games Page](#) for all to enjoy!

*Send in your Favorites!*

Be sure to check out our [Webmasters Corner Page](#). Updates are posted periodically at, [http://www.mophdepartmentpa.org/pb/wp\\_0d83a39a/wp\\_0d83a39a.html](http://www.mophdepartmentpa.org/pb/wp_0d83a39a/wp_0d83a39a.html) .

Send in your Favorites and Links to Pages like,

Posted February 22, 2011

[http://www.mophdepartmentpa.org/174\\_Discounts\\_and\\_Services.pdf](http://www.mophdepartmentpa.org/174_Discounts_and_Services.pdf)

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## Chapter Membership Roster Lists

A reminder that the MOPH National Organization wants all Chapters to update their Membership Roster Lists. The following Websites are great ways to accomplish finding Deceased Status & Current Contact Information.

Social Security Death Index: <http://ssdi.rootsweb.ancestry.com>

VA Grave Locator: [http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL\\_v1](http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL_v1)

White Pages Online: <http://www.whitepages.com/>

Obituaries Finder: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries.asp?Page=OBITFINDERRESULTS>

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## NEWS ITEMS

### Agent Orange Korea Update

Veterans exposed to herbicides while serving along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) in Korea will have an easier path to access quality health care and benefits under a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) final regulation that will expand the dates when illnesses caused by herbicide exposure can be presumed to be related to Agent Orange. Under the final regulation published 25 JAN in the Federal Register, VA will presume herbicide exposure for any Veteran who served between April 1, 1968, and Aug. 31, 1971, in a unit determined by VA and the Department of Defense (DoD) to have operated in an area in or near the 13 Korean DMZ in which herbicides were applied. Previously, VA recognized that Agent Orange exposure could only be conceded to Veterans who served in certain units along the Korean DMZ between April 1968 and July 1969.

In practical terms, eligible Veterans who have specific illnesses VA presumes to be associated with herbicide exposure do not have to prove an association between their illness and their military service. This presumption simplifies and speeds up the application process for benefits and ensures that veterans receive the benefits they deserve. VA encourages veterans with covered service in Korea who have medical conditions that may be related to Agent Orange to submit their applications for access to VA health care and compensation as soon as possible so the agency can begin processing their claims.

### VA Disability Evaluation System Update

The OIG conducted an audit to determine whether Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) correctly assigned 100 percent disability evaluations as either permanent or temporary and effectively monitored and adjusted temporary 100 percent disability evaluations. It was determined that the staff at the VA Regional Offices (VARO) are not correctly evaluating and monitoring 100 percent disability evaluations. Approximately 239,000 veterans were identified who had at least one service-connected condition rated 100 percent disabling as of SEP 09. Approximately 58,000 veterans were eliminated from the review with conditions that indicated no likelihood of improvement, such as double

amputees. It is projected that of the remaining 181,000 veterans, VARO staff did not correctly process evaluations for about 27,500 (15 percent). It is further projected that since January 1993, VBA paid veterans a net amount of about \$943 million without adequate medical evidence. If VBA does not take timely corrective action, it will overpay veterans a projected \$1.1 billion over the next 5 years.

VBA also needs to ensure claims folders with temporary evaluations are kept at the VARO and each temporary evaluation has a future exam date entered in the electronic record. The Acting Under Secretary for Benefits did not agree with the findings, particularly as they relate to the projected overpayment amounts, but agreed to implement the recommendations and provided responsive implementation plans. OIG maintains that the primary message in their report is VBA paid veterans without adequate medical evidence and that their projection is a reasonable and conservative estimate of overpayments based upon our review of compensation records available. To review the report go to <http://www.utvet.com/VAoigAudit.pdf>.

## Medicare Part B Premiums Update

The Military Retiree Health Care Relief Act of 2011 (H.R.238), was introduced in the 112th Congress by Representative Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO-08). The bill would restore a long broken promise relating to free life time health care by amending the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a refundable credit to military retirees and their spouses/widows for premiums paid for coverage under Medicare Part B. Veterans are encouraged to contact their legislators and request they actively support this bill and urge their colleagues to do the same. One method to accomplish this is to access the USDR Action Alert site [http://capwiz.com/usdr/issues/alert/?alertid=23523796&queueid=\[capwiz:queue\\_id](http://capwiz.com/usdr/issues/alert/?alertid=23523796&queueid=[capwiz:queue_id) and forward the editable message provided to their representatives.

## DoD Retiree Pay Offset Update

The Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act Take Action(H.R.333) has been reintroduced by Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA -02) in the 112th Congress. If enacted it would correct several wrongs enacted with the original concurrent receipt legislation in 2004.

First, HR 333 would enable those 480,000 retired members of the Armed Forces with disability ratings less than 50% to draw their military retirement pay under CRDP (Concurrent Retirement Disability Pay, 10 US Code Section 1414) without offset by VA disability compensation awarded for service connected disability. If the disability was combat-related, these retirees were enfranchised for CRSC (Combat Related Special Compensation, 10 USC Section 1413a) with the 2008 NDAA.

Second, HR 333 would enable those 200,000 members (already contained within the 480,000 just discussed) of the Armed Forces retired for medical disability with less than 20 years service under 10 US Code, Chapter 61, to draw both their VA disability and their military retirement pay under CRDP. If the disability were combat-related, these retirees were enfranchised for CRSC with the 2008 NDAA.

Third, HR 333 would eliminate the 10-year phase-in of CRDP which is currently in the 6th year and is 88% restored. In 2011, restoration will be 95% complete. Distributing the remaining 5% over the next 4 years is not cost effective, because the cost of processing the payments exceeds the cost of the CRDP payments. In the last year of the phase-in, the average increment will be less than \$1 per month.

Fourth, HR 333 would cause the Department of Defense (DoD) to compute CRSC pay for Chapter 61 retirees as originally intended Congress. Basically, HR 333 would eliminate the "donut hole" into which some combat related retirees fall which awards them ZERO compensation.

As of 19 JAN the bill has gained 72 cosponsors. Veterans are encouraged to contact their legislators and request they actively support this bill and urge their colleagues to do the same. One method to accomplish this is to access the USDR Action Alert site

[http://capwiz.com/usdr/issues/alert/?alertid=23493506&queueid=\[capwiz:queue\\_id\]](http://capwiz.com/usdr/issues/alert/?alertid=23493506&queueid=[capwiz:queue_id])

## **Mobilized Reserve as of 25 JAN 2011**

The Department of Defense announced the current number of reservists on active duty as of 25 JAN 2011. The net collective result is 1,572 fewer reservists mobilized than last reported in the 15 JAN 2011 RAO Bulletin. At any given time, services may activate some units and individuals while deactivating others, making it possible for these figures to either increase or decrease. The total number currently on active duty from the Army National Guard and Army Reserve is 69,948; Navy Reserve 5,587; Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, 9,292; Marine Corps Reserve, 4,909; and the Coast Guard Reserve, 774. This brings the total National Guard and Reserve personnel who have been activated to 90,510 including both units and individual augmentees. A cumulative roster of all National Guard and Reserve personnel who are currently activated may be found at

<http://www.defense.gov/news/d20110125ngr.pdf>

## **DHS Opens New Veteran Opportunity Website**

The Department of Homeland Security has been working hard to hire more veterans and open up additional contract opportunities for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSBs). To date, DHS employs 48,130 veterans, a number that is well on track to meet Secretary Napolitano's employment objective of 50,000 veterans by the end of 2012. Another target is to award \$1 billion in contracts annually to veteran-owned small businesses. DHS actually awarded \$1.1 billion last year, plus they exceeded the 3% contract set-aside goal for SDVOSB firms by awarding 3.2%. For more information about job or contracting opportunities, visit the new DHS website at [www.dhs.gov/veterans](http://www.dhs.gov/veterans).

## National Caregiver Support Line Opens

The VA opened a toll-free National Caregiver Support Line this week at the Canandaigua VA Medical Center in New York to serve as a primary resource/referral center for caregivers, veterans and others seeking information to help our nation's veterans. Calls will be answered by VA employees who are licensed clinical social workers. The toll-free number is 1-855-260-3274, and is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m., and on Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern. More information is available online at [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov).

## Women in Combat

The Military Leadership Diversity Commission appears poised to recommend allowing female troops to serve in combat units without any restrictions, calling the current prohibition an out-of-date idea that unnecessarily discriminates against women. If approved by military officials, the move could open front-line posts to military women for the first time. Until now, either U.S. law or Pentagon policy has prohibited female troops from serving in any unit whose primary mission is direct ground combat, although they may serve in combat support roles.

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## Pets and U.S. Vets

[Pets and U.S. Vets](#)

<http://dogparty84.blogspot.com>

Contact: Suzi Smith, (412)217-9059 or [DogParty84@aol.com](mailto:DogParty84@aol.com)

Washington Area Humane Society: (724)222-7387  
1527 Route 136, Eighty Four, PA. 15330

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Click, 

*Click to follow the link.*

***Office Home and Student 2010  
"Military Appreciation Edition"***



***January Revenue Collection Data Released:*** This week the Department of Revenue released encouraging data regarding revenue collections for the month of January. Last month, the Commonwealth exceeded revenue collection forecasts by \$72.8 million, or 3.4 percent. This brings

the total fiscal year collections to \$13.7 billion, which is \$264 million, or 2 percent, above estimates. This is very good news considering the multi-billion dollar deficit with which the state is expected to end the 2010-11 fiscal year. Gov. Tom Corbett is expected to give his first budget address on March 8, at which time we will hear his plan for addressing the state's financial difficulties.

**Federal Surplus Now Open to Veterans Organizations:** The federal surplus property donation program, administered by the Pennsylvania Department of General Services, is now open to select veterans' organizations in the Commonwealth thanks to the federal "FOR VETS Act of 2010." Items in federal surplus range from air conditioners to barbecues and from coffee makers to computers.

The bills include a measure to provide whistleblower protections, legislation to increase penalties for lobbyists at odds with the Lobbyist Disclosure Act, a provision to make the Right-To-Know law applicable to public procurement contracts, and a bill to prohibit members of the General Assembly from creating or maintaining non-profits receiving public funds.

**Find out Eligibility Requirements, Online Application and the Application in PDF form at** [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/federal\\_surplus\\_property\\_program/1397/federal\\_surplus\\_property\\_eligibility/297740?utm\\_source=Listrak&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_term=http%3a%2f%2fwww.portal.state.pa.us%2fportal%2fserver.pt%2fcommunity%2ffederal\\_surplus\\_property\\_program%2f1397%2ffederal\\_surplus\\_property\\_eligibility%2f297740&utm\\_campaign=The+Weekly+Roundup%3a+The+Latest+News+From+the+State+Capitol](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/federal_surplus_property_program/1397/federal_surplus_property_eligibility/297740?utm_source=Listrak&utm_medium=Email&utm_term=http%3a%2f%2fwww.portal.state.pa.us%2fportal%2fserver.pt%2fcommunity%2ffederal_surplus_property_program%2f1397%2ffederal_surplus_property_eligibility%2f297740&utm_campaign=The+Weekly+Roundup%3a+The+Latest+News+From+the+State+Capitol).

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## New Air Force Camo Uniform

Airmen deploying to Afghanistan in 2011 will see a new uniform issued to them as part of their deployment gear beginning in March. The new uniform, called the Operation Enduring Freedom Camouflage Pattern, or OCP, is scientifically developed to blend in with Afghanistan's terrain and also contains a bug repellent. Individuals should not purchase their own uniforms as that could result in them receiving non-tested, non-compliant uniforms that ultimately could put lives at risk.

**Why MultiCam/OCP Works at,** <http://kitup.military.com/2011/02/why-multicamocp-works.html>

by [christian](#) on February 3, 2011.

## VA Conducts Homeless Vet Count

Week of February 07, 2011

On any given night, approximately 107,000 veterans across the country go to sleep on benches, in back alleys and under bridges. Roughly twice that number will experience homelessness at some point this year. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) partnered with the Department of Housing and Urban Development recently to conduct the point-in-time count of the nation's homeless. VA Deputy Secretary W. Scott Gould led a group of volunteer counters in downtown Washington, DC.

For more information on VA services for homeless veterans, visit the [Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\) Homeless Veterans webpage](#).

Veteran's Benefits Directory: To learn more about your state's veteran benefits, visit the Military.com [State Veteran's Benefits Directory](#).

Pennsylvania State Veterans Benefits at, <http://www.military.com/benefits/veteran-benefits/pennsylvania-state-veterans-benefits>.

Source: Military.com. Week of February 07, 2011

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## FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

### **Can Your Car Be Hacked?**

By Kim Boatman, Norton, Your Security Resource.

You might be behind the wheel, but increasingly, computers control your car's every function. Microprocessors direct braking, acceleration and even the horn these days. "Because they are hidden, people don't often understand that there can be anywhere from 30 to 40 microprocessors in most cars and even up to 100 different ones running different functions in some vehicles," says Stephan A. Tarnutzer, chief operating officer for DGE Inc., which provides electronic designs and consulting for auto manufacturers and suppliers.

But could a hacker compromise these systems? Recently, several news reports have raised the issue of car-hacking risks, including:

*Vehicle disablement.* After a disgruntled former employee took over a Web-based vehicle-immobilization system at an Austin, Texas, car sales center, more than 100 drivers found their vehicles had been disabled or their horns were honking out of control.

*Tire pressure system hacking.* Researchers from the University of South Carolina and Rutgers University were able to hack into tire pressure monitoring systems. Using readily available equipment and free software, the researchers triggered warning lights and remotely tracked a vehicle through its unique monitoring system.

*Disabling brakes.* Researchers at the University of Washington and University of San Diego created a program that would hack into onboard computers to disable brakes and stop the engine. The researchers connected to onboard computers through ports for the cars' diagnostic system.

#### *Is your car at risk?*

The potential for car hacking is real, although there may not be a financial incentive for hackers to focus on autos just yet, say the experts. "All the malware attacks consumers are faced with every day have financial motives behind them," says Ryan Smith, a principal researcher with Accuvant Labs who finds vulnerabilities in computer systems.

Most of the danger right now may come from hackers who want to demonstrate their prowess and enhance their reputations, says Tarnutzer. And the increased reliance on wireless systems - such as the tire pressure

monitoring system - makes your car more vulnerable to these attacks, says John Bambene, a security researcher with the Internet Storm Center, the global cooperative community that monitors cyberthreats.

### *Protect your car from hacking*

Security is largely in the hands of auto manufacturers, who are working to address concerns. In the meantime, you can take these steps to protect your vehicle:

*Ask about wireless systems.* Familiarize yourself with the wireless systems if you're purchasing a new car, advises Bambenek. For a car you already own, you can review your manual or check online. Find out if any of the systems can be operated remotely.

*Ask about remote shutdown.* If you're financing through the company from which you purchased the vehicle, ask about remote shutdown related to repossession. Make sure the seller has security measures in place that control access to the system.

*Go to reputable dealers and repair shops.* It's possible for unscrupulous garages to manipulate your car's computer systems, making it appear you need repairs that aren't actually warranted. Don't cut corners when it comes to choosing a dealer or repair shop.

*Protect your information.* Of course, locking your car is always wise. And if you use OnStar - the GM-owned auto security and information service - make sure you don't leave OnStar-related documents or your password in the car, says John Luludis, president and co-founder of Superior Tech Solutions, an IT provider, and a former car industry tech executive. Since OnStar can remotely shut off your engine if you report the vehicle stolen, there's the potential for mischief if your password falls in the wrong hands.

*Be cautious about after-market devices.* After-market car systems may not be as rigorously tested or designed, opening you to vulnerabilities, says Tarnutzer.

Luludis compares the use of computers in cars to the development in our use of personal computers. Hacking exploded when the Internet evolved, making it easy to access computers via networks. Wireless connections mean your car is no longer a closed system. "Once you have connection to vehicles, you have an entry point for people to try to access," says Luludis. "The only thing standing in their way now is a standardized piece of software. It's a concern we need to address."

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## **Top 5 Social Media Scams**

Find under Networking.

As social media websites have grown to attract people from all walks of life, they've also attracted criminal elements. Be aware of some of the tricks they use to scam you on social networking sites.

We're wired to be social creatures, and sites like Twitter and Facebook have capitalized on this to great success. According to its COO Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook draws 175 million logins every day. But with this tremendous popularity comes a dark side as well. Virus writers and other cybercriminals go where the numbers are - and that includes popular social media sites. To help you avoid a con or viral infection, we've put together this list of the top five social media scams.

### **1. Hidden URLs**

Beware of blindly clicking on shortened URLs. You'll see them everywhere on Twitter, but you never know where you're going to go since the URL ("Uniform Resource Locator," the Web address) hides the full location. Clicking on such a link could direct you to your intended site, or one that installs all sorts of malware on your computer.

URL shorteners can be quite useful. Just be aware of their potential pitfalls and make sure you have real-time protection against spyware and viruses.

Bottom line: Sites that attract a significant number of visitors are going to lure in a criminal element, too. If you take security precautions ahead of time, such as using antivirus and anti-spyware protection, you can defend yourself against these dangers and surf with confidence.

### **2. Phishing Requests**

"Somebody just put up these pictures of you drunk at this wild party! Check 'em out here!" Huh? Let me see that! Immediately, you click on the enclosed link, which takes you to your Twitter or Facebook login page. There, you enter your account info - and a cybercriminal now has your password, along with total control of your account.

How did this happen? Both the email and landing page were fake. That link you clicked took you to a page that only looked like your intended social site. It's called phishing, and you've just been had. To prevent this, make sure your Internet security includes antiphishing defenses. Many freeware programs don't include this essential protection.

### **3. Hidden Charges**

"What type of STAR WARS character are you? Find out with our quiz! All of your friends have taken it!" Hmm, this sounds interesting, so you enter your info and cell number, as instructed. After a few minutes, a text turns up. It turns out you're more Yoda than Darth Vader. Well, that's interesting ... but not as much as your next month's cell bill will be. You've also just unwittingly subscribed to some dubious service that charges \$9.95 every month.

As it turns out, that "free, fun service" is neither. Be wary of these bait-and-switch games. They tend to thrive on social sites.

### **4. Cash Grabs**

By their very nature, social media sites make it easy for us to stay in touch with friends, while reaching out to meet new ones. But how well do you really know these new acquaintances? That person with the attractive profile picture who just friended you - and suddenly needs money - is probably some cybercriminal looking for easy cash. Think twice before acting. In fact, the same advice applies even if you know the person.

Picture this: You just received an urgent request from one of your real friends who "lost his wallet on vacation and needs some cash to get home. " So, being the helpful person you are, you send some money right away, per his instructions. But there's a problem: Your friend never sent this request. In fact, he isn't even aware of it. His malware-infected computer grabbed all of his contacts and forwarded the bogus email to everyone, waiting to see who would bite.

Again, think before acting. Call your friend. Inform him of the request and see if it's true. Next, make sure your computer isn't infected as well.

### **5. Chain Letters**

You've likely seen this one before - the dreaded chain letter has returned. It may appear in the form of, "Retweet this and Bill Gates will donate \$5 million to charity!" But hold on, let's think about this. Bill Gates already does a lot for charity. Why would he wait for something like this to take action? Answer: He wouldn't. Both the cause and claim are fake. So why would someone post this? Good question. It could be some prankster looking for a laugh, or a spammer needing "friends" to hit up later. Many well-meaning people pass these fake claims onto others. Break the chain and inform them of the likely ruse. Copyright (c) 2010 Studio One Networks. All rights reserved.

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## **On the Lighter Side of Life...Bumper Stickers for Senior's:**

Cremation? Think outside the box.  
I'm Retired. I was tired yesterday, and I am tired again today.  
When I was younger all I wanted was a BMW. Now, I don't care about the W.  
We got married for better or worse. He couldn't do better and I couldn't do worse.  
I was always taught to respect my elders. Now I don't have anybody to respect.  
I asked my wife if old men wear Boxers or Briefs? She said Depends.  
I'm so old...I don't buy green bananas.  
The Snap, Crackle, Pop in the morning ain't my Rice Krispies.  
Sometimes I wake up grumpy...and some days I let him sleep.  
Senior Campbells. New Large Type, Alphabet Soup.  
The secret to staying young is to live honestly...eat slowly, and lie about your age.  
Retirement is the best medicine.  
Florida is God's waiting room.  
I'm so old that whenever I eat out, they ask me for the money up front.

Source: PA VFW News E-Update

Date: Mon, 7 Feb 2011



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