



Department of Pennsylvania January 2011 News Bulletin

“Have a Safe, Healthy, Productive and Happy New Year”

Medal of Honor

There have been a few videos on the latest Medal of Honor recipient, notice I did not say winner (you will find out why when you watch the video), but this one is different; worth the watch.

From Webmaster Scott: I cannot find this Ceremony in a completely unbiased form but think it is very important for you to see how the present government is treating those who GAVE SOME and those Families WHO GAVE ALL.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/claythe1?feature=mhum>

From and to view the complete 19 Page Article on the “MEDAL OF HONOR visit Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia at,

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medal_of_Honor .



From left, the Army, Navy/Marine Corps/Coast Guard, and Air Force Medals.

Another Patriot and True American Hero treated unfairly:

Tango Mike Mike

Tango Mike Mike is the story of Green Beret Roy P. Benavidez and his heroic action in Vietnam that earned him the Medal of Honor.

<http://biggeekdad.com/2010/01/tango-mike-mike/>

Philadelphia Court Offers Veterans a Second Chance

After less than a year in existence, the Philadelphia Veterans Court has nearly 200 participants and is linking Veterans with valuable VA services – helping them avoid jail time and a criminal record.



<http://pavementpieces.com/philadelphia-life-veterans-court-gives-a-second-chance-to-vets/>

Cross Ruled Unconstitutional

Week of January 17, 2011.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit has ruled that the Mt. Soledad Cross is unconstitutional. The 43-foot cross in the La Jolla neighborhood of San Diego, California was erected in 1954 in honor of Korean War veterans and has been the subject of near constant judicial back and forth since 1989. The American Legion called on the Justice Department to appeal the decision with the U.S. Supreme Court. For more information on and the history of the Mt. Soledad Cross. For more on the Mt. Soledad Cross visit the Wikipedia Site, “**Mount Soledad cross controversy**” at,

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Soledad_cross_controversy .

Source: <http://www.military.com/veterans-report/cross-ruled-unconstitutional?ESRC=vr.nl> .

New VA Homeless Program

A new Department of Veterans Affairs Homeless Prevention Program called the “[Supportive Services for Veterans Families](#)” will help community organizations to provide counseling, training, education assistance, child care, rent, utilities and other services to participating veterans and family members. In January, VA officials are sponsoring free Grant Writing Workshops for community organizations interested in applying for

funds under this program. Learn more about Homeless Veterans Benefits on the [VA Homeless Veterans Webpage](#). When the "Notice of Funds Availability" applications are available, they will be posted on the program's website. Community Organizations can contact the VA at 1-877-737-0111.

Homeless Grants 2/2/2

Eligible Veteran families include those who are residing in permanent housing, are homeless and scheduled to become residents of permanent housing within a specified time period, or who have left permanent housing and are seeking other housing that is responsive to such very low-income Veteran family's needs and preferences.

* The program is available for public viewing at <http://www.ofr.gov/>.



<http://www1.va.gov/HOMELESS/NationalCenter.asp>

Veterans Report: 2011 Pay Raise, TRICARE Expansion and Rate Protection Pass

Tuesday, December 28, 2010, Source: www.Military.com . Week of December 27, 2010,

<http://www.military.com/veterans-report/2011-military-pay-and-tricare-expansion-passes?ESRC=vr.nl> .

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 was passed by Congress and has been sent to the President for signature. Touted as the largest Defense budget since WWII, the bill authorizes \$725 billion for fiscal year 2011. The bill covers virtually every aspect of military spending including authorization for expanding TRICARE coverage to include dependents up to age 26, TRICARE fee protection, family support and care giver programs and a 1.4 percent across-the-board increase in military pay.

2ND Amendment Rights

Attorney General, Eric Holder, has already said this is one of his major issues. He **does not** believe the 2nd Amendment gives individuals the right to bear arms. This takes literally 2 clicks to complete. Please vote on this gun issue question with USA Today. *It will only take 2 Clicks a few seconds of your time.*

Hopefully these results will be published later this month. This upcoming year will become critical for gun owners with the Supreme Court's accepting the District of Columbia case against the right for individuals to bear arms.

Here's what you need to do. First - vote on this one. **Second** - launch it to other folks and have THEM vote - then we will see if the results get published.

The Question is; "Does the Second Amendment give individuals the right to bear arms?"

USATODAY.com - [Quick Question](#)

Military.com Buddy Finder: <http://www.military.com/buddy-finder/>



VETERANS LEGAL AID: <http://veteranslegalaid.org/> .



January 28, 2011: Update from the National Center for PTSD

From: "NCPTSD" NCPTSD@VA.GOV

Advancing Science and Promoting Understanding of Traumatic Stress

News relevant to the issues of trauma and PTSD

THIS MONTH'S FEATURE: MEDICATION FOR PTSD

Medications are often used to treat PTSD. Effective [Treatment of PTSD](#) includes therapy, medication, or a combination of therapy and drugs. New medications are better at relieving PTSD symptoms than some drugs prescribed in the past.

The only two FDA approved medications for PTSD are sertraline (Zoloft) and paroxetine (Paxil). Other medications are sometimes used for specific symptoms of PTSD, like sleep problems and nightmares. Prescription drugs can not eliminate PTSD completely, but they can reduce the symptoms. However, some drugs that may help in the short run can also prevent recovery or even prove harmful.

Effective medications

The drugs sertraline (Zoloft) and paroxetine (Paxil) can reduce symptoms of PTSD. Both are called SSRI's or Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors. SSRI's have been extensively tested. They work by regulating brain chemistry. For example, with depression, you may not have enough of a chemical called serotonin. SSRIs raise the level of serotonin in your brain to relieve symptoms. Other medications are effective for reducing symptoms of PTSD. Talk to your doctor about which medications are right for you.

Beware of medications for sleep and nightmares

Sleep and anti-anxiety medications can create the same problems as using alcohol and drugs to self-treat symptoms. These medications might help in the short term, but can have long term costs, such as serious addiction problems, misuse, and other medical issues.

Abuse of prescription medications, like abuse of drugs, is a problem that can occur. Benzodiazepines (for example, Valium, Xanax, or Klonopin) can be particularly problematic because they are prone to physical dependence. Other drugs like atypical antipsychotics such as quetiapine (Seroquel) also should be used with caution for side effect reasons. Importantly, benzodiazepines also may limit the effectiveness of talk therapy, which helps PTSD.

Non-drug therapies for PTSD

Medications can provide relief from PTSD symptoms. However, [Prolonged Exposure](#) therapy (PE) and [Cognitive Processing Therapy](#) (CPT) work better than medications alone in reducing PTSD symptoms. These therapies, among others, are best for effective [Treatment of PTSD](#) and may be combined with the use of medications. Talk to your doctor about which therapies are right for you.

FOR PROVIDERS

In the past, providers often prescribed benzodiazepines to help with PTSD symptoms. New research shows that this should be reconsidered. Benzodiazepines may actually prevent patients with PTSD who are receiving talk therapy from getting better.

The newly-updated [Clinician's Guide to Medications](#) for PTSD provides guidance on use of SSRI's, other antidepressants, anti-adrenergic agents, mood stabilizers, atypical antipsychotics, and benzodiazepines, and their use in conjunction with psychotherapy for treatment of PTSD.

Clinicians and other providers can learn more about medications and earn free CE's by taking the multimedia **course**: [Pharmacological Treatment of PTSD](#). Part of [PTSD 101](#), this online course by expert Dr. Matthew Friedman discusses the human stress system and current evidence on the effectiveness of different medications for PTSD.

Understanding the neurocircuitry of stress helps prescribers recommend the most effective medications. Read a short discussion of the neurobiology of PTSD: [Pharmacological Treatment of Acute Stress Reactions: A Neurobiological Systems Approach](#), or watch NCPTSD's video: [PTSD, Allostatic Load and Medical Illness](#) which explains how to tailor pharmacological and/or psychobiologically - based treatments to patients' needs and how chronic stress and PTSD affect and/or exacerbate medical illness.

Medications and treating co-morbidities

PTSD is highly co-morbid with other conditions, including traumatic brain injury (TBI), depression, and substance use disorders. Providers must take care to ensure that these co-morbidities are considered in treatment plans incorporating drug therapies.

For example, view the **course**: [Windows to the brain: Neuropsychiatry of TBI](#), which discusses biological and pharmacological implications of treating comorbid PTSD and TBI.

NEW: Just updated 12/2010

[VA/DoD PTSD Clinical Practice Guidelines](#) provide clear and comprehensive evidence - based recommendations incorporating current information and practices for practitioners throughout the DoD and VA Health Care systems.

FOR VA PROVIDERS

To support VA staff in providing our nation's Veterans with PTSD care, the National Center for PTSD runs a VA PTSD Mentoring Program and, this February, is launching a new VA PTSD Consultation Program (more info on vaww.ptsd.va.gov):

The **VA PTSD Mentoring Program** is for PTSD program administrators. Last year, the PTSD Mentoring Program sponsored a **Psychopharmacology Series** for VA providers. Several of these lectures are available on the VA's Learning Management System for CE credits:

[PTSD and Benzodiazepines](#)

[PTSD and Endocrinology October Live Meeting](#)

[PTSD and Immune Function](#)

[The Use of Antipsychotic Medications To Treat Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder](#)

The **VA PTSD Consultation Program**, scheduled to launch on February 1, 2011, will provide live phone-based, one-on-one consultation via a toll-free number to VA providers with questions about PTSD care. The Consultation Program will include direct clinical consultation by PTSD experts on therapy and medications.

RESEARCH AT NCPTSD

Some of the latest medication research at the Center includes CSP #504, "Risperidone Treatment for Military Service Related Chronic Posttraumatic Stress Disorder." This is a clinical trial of the drug risperidone, an atypical antipsychotic. The trial involves 400 Veterans with chronic PTSD who have not responded to antidepressants, long considered first-line drugs for PTSD treatment. Data collection has been completed and analyses are underway.

OTHER NEWS

Outside Magazine: PTSD among civilian first responders

The National Center's Executive Director, Dr. Matthew Friedman, was interviewed by journalist Hampton Sides for a compelling article on [PTSD in first responders \(electronic version\)](#), appearing in the January edition of Outside Magazine.

PTSD is now on YouTube

View: VA [PTSD Treatment Works](#). Learn about effective PTSD treatment at VA.

Expansion of G.I. Bill benefits for Veterans

President Obama expanded [GI Bill education benefits](#) to now include:

1. payment for on-the-job training,
2. crediting time spent in emergency response as contributing to qualifying for education benefits, and
3. reimbursement for tests like the SAT.

DoD gives PTSD help 'second life' in virtual reality

The Department of Defense launched a [computer-based virtual world](#) where Soldiers can anonymously learn about the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and where to get help.

Sincerely,

The staff of the National Center for PTSD

Unsubscribe: You may leave the list at any time. There are two easy ways to do so.

1. Send an email to LISTSERV@WWW.LISTSERV.VA.GOV with the words SIGNOFF NCPTSDANNOUNCE-L in the body of your message.
2. Go to Subscribers Corner link at www.listserv.va.gov, select the list you want to leave, and click on LEAVE NCPTSDANNOUNCE-L.

TAPS

A True Patriot Now Rests in Arlington Cemetery



PATRIOT TO REMEMBER

Patriot Alexander Kozich, a.k.a. “The Mad Russian,” died January 3, 2010.

He joined MOPH in 1990 and was with Chapter 0566, Florida. Al was taken prisoner on Corregidor in May 1942. He was an internee in both the Philippines and Japan for three and one-half years. In the Philippines, the Japanese assigned him to work the docks in the port area where he joined a group called “GG Harrison and his 40 thieves.” The group sabotaged and interrupted the enemy’s effort in any way they could.

Later, Al was transferred to Oyama, Japan where he worked in the enemy’s kitchen. He continued his mischief by causing “food poisoning” to about 500 Japanese troops. He also smuggled food to physically disabled comrades who were unable to stand in a chow line, and as you know, if they were not in line, they didn’t eat. For this behavior, Al was severely beaten. He was transferred to the nickel mines, where he labored under terrible conditions. Still, he adjusted his methods of destruction with some assistance from his comrades.

The brutal treatment, malnutrition, lack of medical care and those indignities each POW experienced took its toll in Al’s senior years.

He served 22 and one-half years in the Army, followed by 15 years with the VA. He earned 15 medals, including the Bronze Star and Purple Heart of which he was especially proud.

A true patriot, he now rests in Arlington Cemetery with many of his former comrades.

[Based on a letter from Al's wife, Eleanor Kozich]

Dick Winters, WWII hero of 'Band of Brothers,' dies at age 92.

Dick Winters, a highly decorated World War II hero who became a household name when his heroics were chronicled in [a Stephen Ambrose book](#) that later became the [HBO miniseries](#) "Band of Brothers," [has died](#).



Helpful Hints

Subject: FW: VICKS VapoRub – INTERESTING IF TRUE

During a lecture on Essential Oils, they told us how the foot soles can absorb oils.
Their example: Put garlic on your feet and within 20 Minutes you can 'taste' it.

Vicks VapoRub

Some of us have used Vicks VapoRub for years for everything from chapped lips to sore toes and many body parts in between. But I've never heard of this. And don't laugh, it works 100% of the time, although the scientists who discovered it aren't sure why.

To stop night time coughing in a child (or adult as found out personally), put Vicks VapoRub

generously on the soles of your feet, cover with socks, and the heavy, deep coughing will stop in about 5 minutes and stay stopped for many, many hours of relief. Works 100% of the time and is more effective in children than even very strong prescription cough medicines. In addition it is extremely soothing and comforting and they will sleep soundly.

Just happened to tune in A.M. Radio and picked up this guy talking about why cough medicines in kids often do more harm than good, due to the chemicals in them.

This method of using Vicks VapoRub on the soles of the feet was found to be more effective than prescribed medicines for children at bed time. In addition it seems to have a soothing and calming effect on sick children who then went on to sleep soundly.

My wife tried it on herself when she had a very deep constant and persistent cough a few weeks ago and it worked 100%!

She said that it felt like a warm blanket had enveloped her, coughing stopped in a few minutes. So she went from; every few seconds uncontrollable coughing, she slept cough-free for hours every night she used it.

Silica Gel Packets - Unusual Uses

SAVE YOUR ELECTRONICS

If you accidentally get water in your camera or cell phone, store it immediately in a plastic bag filled with silica gel packets, which will absorb the moisture and save the device in a matter of days.

PROTECT YOUR ELECTRONICS

Here's a secret that the photo-savvy know; Keep silica gel packets in your camera case at all times to prevent moisture-related problems. And if you're headed to the beach, pack a plastic zip-top bag with a silica gel pack inside, and use it to stash and seal up cell phones, cameras and other electronic equipment. When you open it to answer to phone or take a picture some moisture can get inside the bag. The silica gel will quickly wick away the moisture and protect the electronics.

PROTECT YOUR PHOTOS

Put silica gel packet in the boxes where you store your photos to keep them safe and dry.

PROTECT SILVER

Moisture can lead to tarnish and corrosion on silver and jewelry. Slip a silica gel packet in your silver chest or jewelry box to keep those items tarnish free and looking great!

PROTECT FISHING EQUIPMENT

If you're an outdoor sports enthusiast keep silica gel packets in tackle boxes, golf bags or with your climbing gear. The packets will prevent rust from forming on your equipment. This also works to protect your tools in the toolboxes or workshop.

PROTECT YOUR WARDROBE

If you live in a high humidity area, stash silica gel packets in with your clothes when you put them in storage for the winter and in your closets where you store coats and linens. They will wick away excess moisture and prevent mustiness.

Tip: If your silica gel packets don't seem to be working any more, put them on a cookie sheet in a 100 degree oven for an hour to recharge! When you're not using the packets, keep them in an airtight container to protect them from surrounding moisture.

For the Good of the Order:

“Checks for Vets”, Joseph Scott McCarthy

“Do you know a veteran or their spouse who doesn't have access to the internet and needs Aid & Attendance, is House Bound or has other needs like Medications, etc?

This Guidebook was designed with the help of Veterans Organizations and is available to help wartime service veterans and their surviving spouses receive Veterans Pensions to pay for long term care use.

<http://www.checksforvets.com/>

Scam:

"CLEAR" button - Very important!

Use the Clear Button when using your Credit/Debit Card

People are getting really desperate due to the constantly rising gas prices.

A friend just told me about something that happened to one of his coworkers.

She used her credit/debit card to purchase gas at the pump (like most of us do). She received her receipt like normal.

However, when she checked her statement, there were 2 - \$50.00 charges added in addition to her purchase.

Upon investigation, she found out that because **she did not press the 'clear' button** on the pump, the employee inside the store was able to use her card to purchase his/her own gas!

To keep this from happening, after you get your receipt, you must press the 'CLEAR' button or your information will be stored until the next customer inserts their card.

Be sure to tell all your friends/family so that this doesn't happen to them.

The Mayonnaise Jar and 2 CUPS OF COFFEE

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 Hours in a day is not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and 2 cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls.

He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly and the pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls.

He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else.

He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes."

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the Empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things - God, family, children, health, friends, and Favorite passions - things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, house, and car. The sand is everything else - the small stuff.

"If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls." The same goes for life.

If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you.

So,

Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness.

Play With your children.

Take time to get medical checkups.

Take your partner out to dinner.

Play another 18

There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal.

"Take care of the golf balls first - the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled.

"I'm glad you asked".

"It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend."

MOPH, Greater Pittsburgh Chapter No. 9 (Oakland VAMC), is inviting all Combat Wounded Veterans to attend its Next Regular Chapter Meeting on February 8, 2011.

Come and "Join Us" at 1 P.M. February 8, 2011 at the American Legion Post 701, 2813 Capitol Street, White Oak, PA. 15131.

Contact Chapter 9 Adjutant Scott Havelka for more information. (412)462-3195.

Face Book - Sharing Information and Fix

Many of you have heard of Face Book's new policy (Instant Personalization) which shares your and your friend's information with others on the Internet. It is automatically set to "Enabled" so you have to uncheck the box to disable it.

To Disable the Instant Personalization:

First you must go to your Face Book Page, Click on Account>Privacy Settings>Apps & Websites>Instant Personalization>Edit Settings & Uncheck the "Enabled Box". All must change this setting, if your friends don't do this, they'll be sharing information about you as well as themselves.



All Team Leaders who work with the **WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA PROGRAM** are encouraged to sign up your Cemeteries now...

Contact: Tobin Slaven at, info@wreathscrossamerica.org