



Department of Pennsylvania March 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%20Cell%20Phones%204%20Soldiers%20MAJOR%20CHANGES%20in%20Shipping%20via%20FedEX.pdf)

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 .

Chapter Membership Roster Lists

Just 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

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

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

NEWS ITEMS

Valley Forge Chapter 1777 Celebrates its 58TH Annual George Washington's Birthday Event

On February 20, 2011, Valley Forge Chapter 1777 celebrated its 58th annual "George Washington Dinner" at the Moose Lodge in Downingtown, PA. With over 80 Chapter Patriots, members of brother veteran organizations, and community leaders in attendance, awards were presented to two young athletes considered the most Outstanding Chester County 2010 Athletes and a national citation was presented to Leon O. Anderson, Jr. for his support of veterans.

A highlight of the dinner was a presentation made to honor the two remaining living founding Patriots of Valley Forge Chapter 1777, James Porreca and James Gehas. They were each presented with a framed copy of the original Chapter Charter.

Pictures:



DSC-0142, left to right. Commander Clarence "Buddy" Rhoades; Deputy Executive Committeeman Robert Weidner; Adjutant and Founding Charter Patriot James Porreca; Finance Officer William Englerth, III; Sr. Vice Commander Thomas Wise;(Patriot James Gehas was not available for the picture)



DSC-0129, left to right. Commander Clarence "Buddy" Rhoades presents the National Citation to Mr. Leon O. Anderson, Jr.

Bill Englerth, Finance Officer
Valley Forge Chapter 1777
610-383-1330

California Living - New Veterans Homes in California

Received: March 29, 2011

TYPE: Email

Gentlemen:

The following "good news" needs to be spread as widely as possible. There are two (2) newly-opened Veterans Homes of California at Lancaster, CA and Barstow, CA. These are unique facilities with the Lancaster site offering "**assisted living**" accommodations and also the accommodation for a veteran and spouse living together. The Barstow, CA site offers "**domiciliary**" and/or "**independent living**" and there are accommodation for a veteran and spouse living together. Furthermore, the application process is a 1-page affair.

This is a great opportunity for veterans. Please call your veteran friends or contact a veteran-friend, even if you think that there is only a "passing interest." This story is the second one down on the **left-hand column**.

For more information see: http://www.sandiegopurpleheart.com/veteran_unique_offers_information

Other updates: see Discounts by Automobile Dealers, Scion, Dodge and Toyota at the above site (**right-hand column**).

Update of Assoc. Member – Torin Petrini. See: http://www.sandiegopurpleheart.com/associate_membership

Respectfully,

Ulysses Miller, Jr.
Commander, Chapter 0049 ("**The Sunny Jones Chapter**")
Founded: 13 June 1936 by WWI Purple Heart veterans
San Diego, CA

VA Issues Homelessness Report,

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

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the VA recently published a study on the extent and nature of homelessness among America's veterans as a supplement to a previous 2009 report. The study found that veterans are three times more likely to be homeless than non-veterans. The full report, [Veteran Homelessness: A Supplement to the 2009 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress](#).

Another Report Takes Shot at TRICARE,

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

According to a recent report by the Center for American Progress, the cost of military health care will exceed \$52B in 2012. That's a 300 percent increase over the last decade. Like previous deficit-busting reports, the Center for American Progress's recommendations would not change health care services provided to active duty troops, but suggests changes that specifically target working-age retirees who choose TRICARE Prime over the more expensive employer provided commercial coverage option. The report also seeks an increase in TRICARE for Life fees and would index fees based on each retiree's income level.

Read more about this report in the [Military Advantage Blog](#).

Court Okays Extending Claim Deadlines

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

The Supreme Court's recent decision means that disabled veterans' appeals may now be considered after the 120-day filing deadline passes. In the ruling on Henderson v. Shinseki, the Supreme Court concluded that the 120-day limit was not intended to carry the harsh consequences of the "jurisdictional tag." For veterans, this means deadlines related to filing appeals and other claims have increased flexibility, in certain situations.

Read the [Military Advantage Blog](#) to learn more.

Servicemembers Save More With ASMBA

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

The Armed Services Mutual Benefit Association, established in 1963, provides comprehensive, affordable life insurance coverage to military personnel and their families. For example, you can get an extra \$100,000 worth of coverage for only \$19 a month. [Get more information](#).

VA Looking for Gulf War Photos

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

In honor of the 20th anniversary of the start of ground combat in the first Gulf War, and those veterans who served in the area during the 1990-1991 conflict, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is calling for submissions of Gulf War-era photos. If you are a Gulf War Veteran, take a look at VA Chief of Staff John Gingrich's reflections on the conflict at the [VA blog](#). If you have any photos of yourself during the war, submit them to newmedia@va.gov.

Veterans Tax Credit Ending

Week of March 14, 2011, Source: military.com

The Veteran's Home Buyer Tax Credit program will soon end. Under the program, veterans who served overseas in the past two years are probably eligible for an \$8,000 tax credit when purchasing a home. Under the extension passed late last year by Congress for veterans, a contract must be signed by April 30, 2011, but applicants have until June 30, 2011 to close the deal. Veterans should check with their professional tax preparer in regards to their eligibility. For more tips and important information on taxes, visit the [Military.com Tax Center](#).

Mild brain injury could soon rate Purple Heart

Source: By, Andrew de Grandpre and Richard Sandza - Staff writers

Posted: Tuesday Mar 15, 2011 19:06:33 EDT

More U.S. troops who sustain combat-related brain injuries could soon be eligible for the Purple Heart. Senior military leaders at the Pentagon are considering individual service proposals to change the guidelines for awarding the medal to troops who sustain mild traumatic brain injuries or concussions, Military Times has learned. The Purple Heart recognizes U.S. military personnel wounded or killed by enemy action. It's not immediately clear whether any new guidelines would allow for Purple Hearts to be awarded retroactively. Officials from all four services are scheduled to meet this week with Dr. Clifford Stanley, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, to discuss the recommended changes, said Army Lt. Col. Steve Warren, a spokesman for Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Chiarelli, who is leading the Army's initiative. "Up to now, he thinks soldiers have received concussions and not received Purple Hearts as they should," Warren said.

Marine Commandant Gen. Jim Amos ordered the Marine Corps' review to account for new research indicating the severity of a head wound is not necessarily linked to being knocked unconscious on the battlefield, as current Purple Heart criteria dictate, Marine officials said, noting that in some cases, the long-term effects can be far worse. The issue, Warren said, is "what is a concussion?" The regulation, he said, awards Purple Hearts for concussions, but "do you have to be knocked out? Does your head have to bleed?" Marine officials would not discuss details of their proposal.

Since 2000, more than 202,000 U.S. troops have been diagnosed with some form of TBI, according to Defense Department data. Most - more than 150,000 cases - were classified as "mild." Annual numbers have risen in step with the proliferation of improvised explosives as the weapon of choice among insurgents targeting U.S. troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. Nearly 31,000 suffered a brain injury last year alone.

Existing guidelines, in place since shortly after U.S. forces invaded Afghanistan in 2001, are based on the American Academy of Neurology's definitions for mild TBI and concussions, Marine officials said. Early on, head injuries were thought to be less serious if a soldier or Marine didn't black out as a result of the trauma he experienced. Plus, officials said, for the purposes of verifying an injury and subsequent eligibility for a Purple Heart, it's fairly easy to observe whether one of your squad mates was knocked out by the blast he encountered.

Along with post-traumatic stress disorder, TBI has been called a signature wound of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. It can cause mood swings, memory loss, depression and paranoia, among other symptoms. Initial detection, however, can be problematic - especially in instances where troops don't lose consciousness. At first, TBIs can appear to be symptom-free.

The Pentagon has stepped up its response as a result. Amos and Chiarelli, in particular, have advocated for enforcing better war-zone standards to identify head injuries as soon as they occur with hopes of reducing the chances they'll lead to long-term problems.

Since last summer, the military has required 24-hour rest for any personnel suffering even a mild concussion. After a second head injury, they're forced to spend seven days with no physical activity. A third head injury requires evaluation by a neurologist in theater. Amos has referred to this approach as "three strikes and you're in," meaning inside the wire.

The Purple Heart traces back to Gen. George Washington and the Continental Army, though it was not issued for more than 100 years after the American Revolution ended. More than 40,000 have been awarded to U.S. troops since the invasion of Afghanistan, according to records maintained by the Military Order of the Purple Heart, an organization of medal recipients.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

This is for Marines (DEVIL DOGS) Everywhere, [The Warriors Song](#).

DAR GOLF TOURNAMENT: Memorial Day, May 30, 2011



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FOR MORE INFORMATION & REGISTRATION, CONTACT - 412-323-8945 OR
FISHERHOUSEGOLFTOURNAMENT@GMAIL.COM

Introducing New Base Guide for San Diego

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

Looking for the best tacos in town or the perfect spot for a romantic dinner? Did you find a business that you think other service members should visit - or avoid? Our new [Base Guide San Diego](#) is your one-stop source for what you need to know about life on base and around the San Diego area. [Get the scoop before you relocate.](#)

Do you know a local U.S. Veteran who would enjoy having a new furry best friend?

The Known Health Benefits of Having a Pet

Pets Can Improve Your Mood: For those who love animals, it's virtually impossible to stay in a bad mood when a pair of loving dog eyes meets yours, or when a super-soft cat rubs up against your hand. Research supports the mood-enhancing benefits of pets.

Pets Control Blood Pressure Better Than Drugs: Yes it's true. While ACE inhibiting drugs can generally reduce blood pressure, they aren't as effective on controlling spikes in blood pressure due to stress and tension. However, in a [recent study](#), groups of hypertensive New York stockbrokers who got dogs or cats were found to have lower blood pressure and heart rates than those who didn't get pets. When they heard of the results, most of those in the non-pet group went out and got pets!

Pets Encourage You To Get Out And Exercise: Whether we walk our dogs because they need it, or are more likely to enjoy a walk when we have companionship, dog owners do [spend more time walking](#) than non-pet owners, at least if we live in an urban setting. Because [exercise is good for stress management](#) and overall health, owning a dog can be credited with increasing these benefits.

Pets Can Help With Social Support: When we're out walking, having a dog with us can make us more approachable and give people a reason to stop and talk, thereby increasing the number of [people we meet](#), giving us an opportunity to increase our network of friends and acquaintances, which also has great stress management benefits.

Pets Stave Off Loneliness and Provide Unconditional Love:

Pets can be there for you in ways that people can't. They can offer love and companionship, and can also enjoy comfortable silences, keep secrets and are excellent snugglers. And they could be the best antidote to loneliness. In fact, [research shows](#) that nursing home residents reported less loneliness when visited by dogs than when they spent time with other people! All these benefits can reduce the amount of stress people experience in response to feelings of social isolation and lack of social support from people.

Pets Can Reduce Stress—Sometimes More Than People:

While we all know the power of talking about your problems with a good friend who's also a [good listener](#), recent research shows that spending time with a pet may be even better! [Recent research](#) shows that, when conducting a task that's stressful, people actually experienced less stress when their pets were with them than when a supportive friend or even their spouse was present! (This may be partially due to the fact that pets don't judge us; they just love us.)

Note: It's important to realize that owning a pet isn't for everyone. Pets do come with [additional work and responsibility](#), which can bring its own stress. However, for most people, the benefits of having a pet outweigh the drawbacks. Having a furry best friend can reduce stress in your life and bring you support when times get tough.

Please consider adopting an orphaned pet, please? If you do not have room in your heart and home then please contribute to the "**PETS FOR US VETS**" drive so that our Veterans are able to reap the benefits above at no cost for protecting our freedoms.

Please mail a donation to:

WAHS
PETS FOR US VETS
PO Box 66
Eighty Four, PA 15330

Remember write PETS FOR US VETS on the memo line of your check. These funds are completely separate & cover the adoption fee for our Veterans only.

<http://dogparty84.blogspot.com/>

Suzi Smith, (412)217-9059 contact: DogParty84@aol.com

8 Most Germy Public Places

1. Have you ever seen anyone wash a menu? Probably not. A study in the Journal of Medical Virology reported that cold and flu viruses can survive for 18 hours on hard surfaces. If it's a popular restaurant, hundreds of people could be handling the menus - and passing their germs on to you. Never let a menu touch your plate or silverware, and be sure to wash your hands after you place your order.

2. According to a 2007 study in the Journal of Environmental Health, nearly 70 percent of the lemon wedges perched on the rims of restaurant glasses contain disease-causing microbes. When the researchers ordered drinks at 21 different restaurants, they found 25 different microorganisms lingering on the 76 lemons they secured, including E. coli and other fecal bacteria. Tell your server that you'd prefer your beverage sans fruit. Why risk it?

3. Its the rare eatery that regularly cleans its condiment containers. And the reality is that many people don't wash their hands before eating, says Kelly Reynolds, Ph.D., a germs specialist and public health professor at the University of Arizona. So while you may be diligent, the guy who poured the ketchup before you may not have been as diligent, which means his germs are now on your fingers and your fries. Squirt hand sanitizer on the outside of the condiment bottle or use a disinfectant wipe before you grab it.
4. Don't think you can escape the restroom without touching the door handle? Palm a spare paper towel after you wash up and use it to grasp the handle. Yes, other patrons may think you're a Germa-Phobe, but you'll never see them again, and you're the one who won't get sick.
5. About 25 percent of public restroom dispensers are contaminated with fecal bacteria. Soap that harbors bacteria may seem ironic, but that's exactly what a University of Arizona study found. "Most of these containers are never cleaned, so bacteria grow as the soap scum builds up," says microbiologist Charles Gerba, Ph.D., who directed the study. "And the bottoms are touched by dirty hands, so there's a continuous culture feeding millions of bacteria. "Be sure to scrub your hands thoroughly with plenty of hot water for 15 to 20 seconds - and if you happen to have an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, use that, too.
6. The handles of almost two-thirds of the shopping carts tested in a 2007 study at the University of Arizona were contaminated with fecal bacteria. In fact, the bacterial counts of the carts exceeded those of the average public restroom. To protect yourself: Swab the handle with a disinfectant wipe before grabbing hold (stores are starting to provide them, so look around for a dispenser). While you're wheeling around the supermarket, skip the free food samples, which are nothing more than communal hand-to-germ-to-mouth zones.
7. When microbiologist Charles Gerba, Ph.D., tested for microbes in the bathrooms of commercial jets, he found surfaces from faucets to doorknobs to be contaminated with E. coli. It's not surprising, then, that people often get sick after traveling by plane. Clean your hands thoroughly with a sanitizer and try not to directly touch the surfaces.
8. A doctor's office is not the place to be if you're trying to avoid germs. To limit your exposure: Bring your own books and magazines (and toys, if you have your children or grandchildren with you) and pack your own tissues and hand sanitizers, which should have an alcohol content of at least 60 percent. If possible, in the waiting room, leave at least two chairs between you and the other patients to reduce your chances of picking up their bugs. Germ droplets from coughing and sneezing can travel about 3 feet before falling to the floor.



GENERAL DISCLAIMER

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