



## MOPH October 2010 Department of Pennsylvania News Bulletin

### 2011 Wheelchair Games

**Important E-mail from Dept. Senior Vice Commander from Ch. 170, Chaplain Bruce Boice.**

PATRIOT SCOTT, CHAPTER COMMANDERS

PLEASE PUT THIS ON WEB SIGHT. CHAPTER 170 HAS 4 MEMBERS GOING TO HELP. IS THERE ANY OTHER CHAPTERS GETTING INVOLVED?

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for the 2011 Wheelchair Games! This will be a great opportunity for us to give back to our Veterans.

Our registration site is now available online. Please take a few minutes to fill out the registration. This will help the volunteer committee to make final assignments.

<http://www.shrs.pitt.edu/nvwg/>

Please include:

- Name
- Address
- Phone
- E-mail
- T-shirt size
- Dates available
- Times available
- Volunteer Choices

Rick Kiehn

Volunteer Coordinator, 2011 NVWG

(412) 954-4582

**SEMPER FI**

**PATRIOT BRUCE BOICE**

**VETERANS ADVOCATE**

**MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART**

**PA. SR. VICE COMMANDER**

**PA. FIRST RESPONDER CHAIRMAN**

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# Pennsylvania Veterans News

## Mechanicsburg Middle School Students Arrange "Honor Bus" For WWII Veterans.

In continuing coverage, the [Harrisburg \(PA\) Patriot-News](#) (10/23, Gilliland) reports, "In 2007 a group of 8th graders at Mechanicsburg Middle School were inspired by a news story they saw on television about a man in Ohio who started a non-profit to fly veterans to Washington to see the memorial. The students realized they were only 116 miles away. They didn't need an airplane; they could charter a bus. Thus the "Honor Bus" program was born. Saturday was the fifth such trip organized by students at the school."

## Subject: Check this out:

### The Pacific and Adjacent Theaters in WWII - Plug Photo BI

All I can say is WOW! What an incredible generation of Americans and the terror they faced.

<http://blogs.denverpost.com/captured/2010/03/18/captured-blog-the-pacific-and-adjacent-theaters/>

**FYI TO ALL.** From Chapter 455's James Lang.

Received from a very advanced programmer who does computer work for a living and has a high up status with Microsoft. He doesn't send these if they aren't real.

### **VIRUS COMING!**

I checked with Norton Anti-Virus and Snopes, this is REAL and they are gearing up for this virus. Get this E-mail message sent around to your contacts, friends & family members ASAP.

You should be alert during the next few days. Do not open any message with an attachment entitled, 'POSTCARD FROM HALLMARK,' regardless of who sent it to you. It is a virus which opens A POSTCARD IMAGE, which 'burns' the whole hard disc C of your computer.

This virus will be received from someone who has your e-mail address in his/her contact list. This is the reason why you need to send this e-mail to all your contacts. It is better to receive this message 25 times than to receive the virus and open it.

If you receive a mail called 'POSTCARD,' even though sent to you by a friend, do not open it! Shut down your computer immediately. This is the worst virus announced by CNN.

It has been classified by Microsoft as the most destructive virus ever. This virus was discovered by McAfee yesterday, and there is no repair yet for this kind of virus. This virus simply destroys the Zero Sector of the Hard Disc, where the vital information is kept.

**DO NOT OPEN ANY E-MAIL FROM POSTAL SERVICE OR UPS....**  
THEY ARE INFECTED WITH A VIRUS.

I checked it with Snopes and it is a real virus that started Sept. 2010.

**From:** VA Media Relations

**Sent:** Tuesday, October 12, 2010 2:42 PM

**Subject:** VA Video Outreach Message Aimed at New Veterans



**Department of  
Veterans Affairs**

Office of Public Affairs  
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7600  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

## **News Release**

### **VA Video Outreach Message Aimed at New Veterans**

#### *New TV Ad Encourages Veterans to Use Benefits*

WASHINGTON - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is launching a new television advertisement encouraging Veterans to take full advantage of the VA benefits and services they have earned. The ad is one step in a robust outreach effort aimed at welcoming returning Servicemembers and easing their transition from military to Veteran status.

“VA is committed to reaching all Veterans to say ‘thank you for your service’, and to let them know about the health care, benefits and services available to help them meet whatever challenges lie ahead,” said VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki. “Each day all across the United States, men and women in uniform return from military service, and we want to do our part to welcome them home.”

The 30-second ad, focuses on today’s generation of Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, and shows the path a Veteran might follow from boots on the battlefield to addressing possible health issues, going to college, finding employment and buying a home. The ad emphasizes the goal of a seamless transition between the Department of Defense and VA as military Service members hang up their uniforms and enroll with VA.

VA has targeted six cities to broadcast the ad based on the number of Veterans returning from service to those locations this fall. The cities are Norfolk , Va. , Raleigh , N.C. , Savannah , Ga. , Seattle , Wash. , Watertown , N.Y. and El Paso , Texas .

The actor in the ad is Operation Iraqi Freedom Veteran Robert Kugler - a former Marine currently pursuing an acting career in Los Angeles. The uniformed personnel in the background are also Veterans, as are the students, the father and husband walking out of the house, and the doctor/instructor—an Air Force Veteran who served in Vietnam .

This is the first of a series of broadcast and cable television ads to be produced and aired over the next several months to inform returning Veterans of the many benefits and services they have earned as a result of their military service.

Broadcast organizations interested in obtaining a broadcast quality copy of the 30-second spot to run as a Public Service Announcement may download a copy at <http://ftplac1.dgfastchannel.com/download/VAWLAO110-2H.mov>.

The video can be viewed on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJneXGf5GAc>.

For more information on VA benefits, visit <http://www.va.gov/MyVA>.

## **No COLA for Disabled Vets – Again, Veterans Report from [www.Military.com](http://www.Military.com)**

Week of October 18, 2010

Officials announced that the 2011 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for military retirees, disabled veterans, and social security recipients will be zero for the the second year in a row.

### **2011 COLA for Retired Pay**

**2011 COLA Watch:** The Federal Government announced that the 2011 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for military retirees, disabled veterans, and social security recipients will be zero for the second year in a row.

#### **COLA Explained**

Each year Military Retirement pay, VA Compensation and Pensions, and Social Security benefits are adjusted for the rate of inflation. This annual Cost of Living Adjustment is determined by the **Consumer Price Index** at [http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpifaq.htm#Question\\_1](http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpifaq.htm#Question_1) for the previous year. In a normal cycle the CPI for a given year is compared to the previous year to determine the actual rate of inflation. However, since 2008 was the last year the rate of inflation was positive, it is the baseline for determining the 2010 rate of inflation.

For example, the 2011 COLA will be based on the 2010 rate of inflation. The 2010 rate of inflation was -0.1% when compared to 2008, therefore there will be no COLA for Fiscal Year 2011.

**Note:** Retiree Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) differs from the [Active Duty Cost of Living Allowance](http://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/cost-of-living-allowance) at <http://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/cost-of-living-allowance> which is paid based on the cost of living in a given high-cost locality. This number will be released in late December.

*More on Retiree COLA from DFAS:*

Cost-of-Living Increases: Perhaps the most common change to retiree pay accounts are the Cost-of-Living (COLA) increases. Currently, federal law authorizes periodic increases to reflect rises in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). COLA increases impact your monthly gross pay, federal withholding tax, SBP premiums and annuities. While DFAS does not establish COLA increases, the agency does apply any authorized increases to your pay, SBP premiums and other account information.

COLA is applied depending on your date of entry into the armed forces and your date of retirement. If you entered service on or after Sept. 8, 1980, and became eligible for retired pay on or after Jan. 1, 1996, any authorized COLA will be decreased during your first calendar year of retirement. Full COLA increases will be applied for all subsequent years.

Retirees who entered military service on or after Aug. 1, 1986, will have any authorized COLA increases reduced by 1 percent.

## **VFW Washington Weekly**

October 15, 2010

In This Issue:

1. Host a Town Hall Meeting and Get Out to Vote
2. VA Ad Reaches New Veterans
3. Military Imposters Get Prison
4. Pentagon Halts DADT Procedures
5. MIA Issue Aids U.S.-Vietnam Relationship
6. Two Korean War MIAs Identified
7. WWII MIA Identified

**1. Host a Town Hall Meeting and Get Out to Vote:** With the 2010 mid-term elections fast approaching now is a great time to host a get out the vote drive or a town hall meeting. Why not consider hosting a "Meet Your Candidates for Congress Forum" to discuss critical veterans issues. Coordinate election events with the local VFW Posts and the Auxiliaries in your state. Provide those attending the tools they need to elect pro-veteran candidates. The key to electing pro-veteran candidates is through education and grassroots activism at the local level. We can affect real change by getting all veterans advocates to the polls to ensure that those elected share our concerns for America's veterans, active duty military and Guard and Reserve members. Together we can make a difference!

**2. VA Ad Reaches New Veterans:** The VA has launched a new public service announcement to encourage veterans to take full advantage of the VA benefits and services they have earned. The television ad is one step in a robust outreach effort to welcome home returning servicemembers from their wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and to help ease their transition from military to veteran status. Read the complete VA press release with link to the 30-second video at <http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1981>.

**3. Military Imposters Get Prison:** A convicted felon thief and a con-man deserter, who separately posed as Army combat veterans, were each sentenced to prison last month in a federal court in Alabama. Douglas Lee Weaver was sentenced to 30 months after pleading guilty to charges he wore unauthorized decorations, including the Distinguished Service Cross, and for illegally possessing a firearm. Skyler Tarquin Smith got 24 months for wearing an unearned Purple Heart and for trying to sell a \$13 cubic zirconia as a diamond. Smith pleaded guilty to fraud and Stolen Valor charges. Read the complete story at <http://www.navytimes.com/news/2010/10/army-fakers-sentenced-to-prison-100910w/>. In unrelated cases, a three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco and a federal district court in Denver ruled the Stolen Valor Law to be unconstitutional on First Amendment grounds. It is unknown if those rulings will affect the sentences handed down to Weaver and Smith.

**4. Pentagon Halts DADT Procedures:** On Tuesday, a federal judge in California ordered an immediate end to the Pentagon's enforcement of its ban on openly gay service members. U.S. District Judge Virginia Phillips' ruled "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" unconstitutional. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said that whether the law is repealed is a matter for Congress to decide, yet the Pentagon yesterday still issued a worldwide moratorium on investigations and separations to comply. The Obama administration is expected to appeal the ruling and also seek a stay of the judge's injunction.

**5. MIA Issue Aids U.S.-Vietnam Relationship:** America's Full Accounting Mission has helped to transform the U.S.-Vietnamese relationship. In a speech Monday at the Vietnam National University in Hanoi, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said, "A decade of conflict and bloodshed between our nations has given way to prosperous bilateral relations now marking their fifteenth year," he said. "It was our commitment to work together to find the missing from the war, and to address the traumas still felt by those in and near the conflict, that provided the first opportunity for our countries to engage." Read the complete DOD press release at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=61216>. Since 1991, the VFW remains the only veterans' organization to send its senior leadership to Vietnam every year to further the humanitarian aspect of the Full Accounting Mission to the Vietnamese government and with local veterans' groups.

**6. Two Korean War MIAs Identified:** The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced the identification of remains of two soldiers missing in action from the Korean War. They are Army Sgt. Donald M. LaForest, of Bay City, MI, and Master Sgt. John G. Linkowski, of Buffalo, NY. In early November 1950, the men were assigned to the 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, occupying a defensive position near the town of Unsan in the bend of the Kuryong River known as the "Camel's Head." Enemy attacks collapsed their perimeter and forced a fighting withdrawal. Almost 400 men were reported MIA or KIA from the battle. LaForest and Linkowski were among 10 Americans who were captured and taken into a field and shot. Read the full DPMO press release at [http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/news/news\\_releases/](http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/news/news_releases/).

**7. WWII MIA Identified:** The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office also announced the identification of Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Arthur F. Parkhurst, of Evansville, IN. On March 12, 1945, Parkhurst and five other crew members aboard a C-47A Skytrain departed Tanauan Airfield on Leyte, Philippines, on a resupply mission to guerilla troops. Once cleared for takeoff, there was no further communication between the aircrew and airfield operators. The aircraft failed to return, and after a thorough search, no evidence of the aircraft was found. The six men were presumed killed in action. In 1989, a Philippine national police officer contacted U.S. officials regarding a possible World War II-era aircraft crash near Leyte. Human remains, aircraft parts and artifacts -- including an identification tag belonging to Parkhurst -- were turned over to the local police, then to U.S. officials. Read the full DOD release at <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=13969>