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VETS FOR FULL REPRESENTATION

JULY 2016 ISSUE

Located at Veterans Crossing 39 Veto Road Little Hocking, Ohio 45742

www.vets4fullrepresentation.com

THE DYING VETERAN DILEMMA

In many previous newsletters inadequate representation was discussed. Also discussed was the VAs attempt to resolve the inadequate representation problems by creating new problems such as the conflict of interest problems between the attorney and the veteran because of the fee agreement which pertains to issues on appeal since 2008. Also there is another reason veterans should have a choice of representation from start to finish. "The Dying Veteran Dilemma."

New claims for a veteran can take up to two years before there is a decision to appeal. What if a veteran has a potential service connected claim that may be terminal within months. This is a reoccurring problem in non presumptive cancers due to radiation, Agent Orange, Gulf War poisonings, Camp Lejeune ground water, etc. More expertise may be needed than a traditional service officer in order to assist with medical opinions in these kinds of claims.

The VA may not have time to award service connection so the veteran may not benefit nor will the spouse benefit if service connection is not awarded before the veteran is deceased. Even some attorneys may not have the appropriate skills or the funding to do the job. Moreover, since attorneys cannot be paid for any new claims filed until on appeal it is very difficult for a veteran, in these kinds of claims, to find an attorney to assist him/her before he is deceased. That is a sad situation for the veteran and his family. Search around not just for an attorney, but for the best attorney around. Good luck until the VA changes the law.

The "Dying Veteran Dilemma" is another reason for advocating attorney's fees from start to finish. Free should stand on its own merits. It's sad that the ability to pay for a medical opinion and obtain a medical provider that is willing to provide that opinion is a veteran's last line of defense to protect his family. Please continue to inform the VA about the issue of the best representation for veterans to be in the veterans' best interest. It should be the veteran's choice so the veteran will not be caught in a situation such as the "Dying Veteran Dilemma".

Please call your congressman and legislator about this issue.

Special points of interest:

- Help us with our cause.
Encourage people to become members of VFFR.
- If you have a change of address please contact us.
- Check out VFFR Legislative Action Center on our website.

Inside this issue:

VETERANS ORGANIZATION ASSISTANCE	2
Veterans Crossing Report	3
Current Events	3
News From The Trenches	4
News From The Trenches	5
News From The Trenches	6
Gary Farris, Veterans Museum of Mid Ohio Valley / 2016 Jeep Raffle	7

VETERANS ORGANIZATION ASSISTANCE

There are many veterans organizations that can assist you with your VA claim. Pick and choose according to your needs. Here are some of the things you may want to know about these organizations. In order to be a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) you need to be a veteran that participated in war. American Legions are primarily veterans that were in the military during the time of a conflict or war. American Veterans (AMVETS) is more inclusive which includes all veterans. Disabled American Veterans (DAV) is veterans that have disabilities. Those disabilities do not need to be service connected to be a member. Then there is the Purple Heart Association. In order to be a member a veteran needs to have a purple heart as a result of combat. There are other veterans organizations that specialize in certain disabilities such as Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). Paralyzed Veterans of America specializes in spinal cord injuries. You do not have to be service connected to be a member. Blinded Veterans of America (BVA) specialize in visual impairment. A veteran doesn't have to be service connected for visual impairment to be a member.

All of these veterans organizations assist veterans with their claims. The organizations that specialize in disabilities are advocates for programs involving those disabilities and are specialist in the claims that they advocate. There are other veterans organizations that are not as well known that do veteran's claim work. Some of these are: The Marine Corp League, Vietnam Veterans of America and the Jewish War Veterans. Most of the just mentioned organizations have been around for decades. Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), came into existence after the Vietnam conflict. After the first Gulf War more veterans organizations were formed to serve the veterans of the Gulf War and the veterans of Iraqi Freedom and Afghanistan.

The focus of the new organizations such as the Wounded Warrior Project has changed from service officer work to helping veterans and their families to adjust. Some veterans organizations focus on the homeless veterans and drug/alcohol problems. Search the internet to find which organization fits your needs. The work these organizations do for veterans is free to the veteran. Free is always the best option so long as its service is equal to a for fee situation. It is up to you, as a veteran, to know what is out there on your behalf. Many of these local veteran organizations do have offices at the local regional offices.

You, as a veteran, may find a huge discrepancy of skills between one service officer and another. If you don't feel comfortable choose another service officer to represent you or choose an attorney for fee. If you choose an attorney for fee, if your claim warrants an attorney, you may want to read the articles on our website www.vets4fullrepresentation.com to understand this problem. You do not have to be a member of a veterans organization to be represented by an organization. In fact many veterans belong to more than one veterans organization. Being involved is one way to stay in the loop. Knowledge is always a defense.

VETERANS CROSSING REPORT

*VFFR continues to assist veterans in various ways at Veterans Crossing. Since the last newsletter VFFR has assisted 10 veterans.

*Construction is going on to get our theatre and restaurant open. There are many projects going on in hopes to get things up and running by fall.

*Veterans Crossing has a new addition, a Civil War cannon. It will be displayed out front of our building.

*The 3rd Saturday of each month we have Vet Life Journey breakfast meetings for veterans. They are held at Veterans Crossing in coordination with Decatur Chapel and Pastor Tim Lindsey. For more information please contact 740-989-2015.

*We are always looking for volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering contact Sheri Jarvis 740-989-2015.

*Judo classes are every Thursday 6:30pm—8:00pm

CURRENT EVENTS

July 10, 2016

Mid Ohio Valley Prayer Rally
for Veterans & Families

1:30pm—4:00pm

At the Parkersburg City Park
Large Pavilion

Contact: Larry Smith

304-488-5083

July 16, 2016

Ceremony at Veterans Crossing 6:00pm—10:00pm to honor Gary Farris, founder of Veterans Museum of Mid Ohio Valley. Music, food, raffles. All proceeds go to the Veterans Museum of Mid Ohio Valley. RSVP by July 8th 740-989-2015

September 3, 2016

VFFR will be celebrating its 1 year anniversary at Veterans Crossing. This will also be a new membership drive. Details to come at a later date.

News from the Trenches

Once again, in case you missed it, Vets for Full Representation has a new section on its website called the Legislative Action Center that allows you to follow national and state legislation that may be of interest to veterans and their supporters. This new section not only allows you to follow federal and state legislation, but to contact your federal and state elected officials informing them of your support or opposition to pending legislation.

The VFFR Legislative Action Center can be selected from the menu on the VFFR homepage; it is between the Home button and the Newsletter button on the left side of the screen.

The main page of the Legislative Action Center will have a summary of current issues affecting veterans, a section on key bills congress is working on, a section on state legislation that you may be interested in as well as a section to find your elected officials. One of the more interesting features is the ability to contact the media and create Letters to the Editor just like you can for your elected officials. You can find how your officials voted on legislation from the Votes page link which is located at the top of the page.

Visit the VFFR homepage at www.vets4fullrepresentation.com and checkout our Legislative Action Center.

Updates on Previous Featured Legislation

Arizona

Representative Lovas introduced House Bill 2105 reducing the requirements to receive complimentary licenses by disabled veterans from being 100 percent service connected to 25 percent service connected. In addition disabled Arizona veterans who have at least a 25 percent service connected disability would be entitled to a free state park pass.
- Failed to Pass

Colorado

Representatives Carver, Crowder, Melton and Todd Sponsored House Bill 16-1197 which would require that state agencies that regulate a profession or occupation to implement a program to streamline the granting of occupational credentials to

veterans based on military training.
- Sent to the governor on 5/5/16

Indiana

Senate Bill 304 would increase the assessed value limit for the property tax deduction for certain veterans with a disability by \$31,840. (Max of \$175,000)
Note: The percentage of the deduction is linked to the veteran's disability rating.
- Signed by the Governor on 3/22/16

Iowa

Senate Study Bill 3083 will allow veterans to have the word Veteran placed upon their license by presenting their discharge certification or DD Form 214.
- Sent to Governor on 4/29/16

Maryland

Senate Bill 775 introduced by Senator Simonaire would establish a recreational license donation program through the Department of Natural Resources where people could purchase license and stamps for hunting and fishing to be provided free of charge for disabled veterans, disabled members of the armed services or permanently disabled persons who require the use of a wheelchair.
- Signed by the Governor on 5/10/16

Oklahoma

Representatives Rousselot and Simpson introduced House Bill 2293 which reduces the requirement for issuing a Disabled Veterans license plate from being 50 percent service connected to 10 percent service connected.
- Died in Conference

States that have just ended their legislative sessions are:

Ala., Alaska, Ariz., Ark., Colo., Conn., Ill., Kan., Ky., Maine, Md., Minn., Miss., Mo., Neb., Okla., S.D. and Wis.

New Legislation

At the federal level some new bills have been introduced:

In the House HR 5262 the Care Veterans Deserve Act of 2016 provides for extending certain operating hours for pharmacies and medical facilities operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs as well as eliminating the sunset date for the Veterans Choice Program.

Also in the House HR 5229 the Improving Transition Programs for All Veterans Act was introduced by Representative Mark Takano. It would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a study to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, especially in regards to women veterans and minority veterans, in transitioning to civilian life.

In the Senate Senator John Isakson introduced S 2921 the Veterans First Act to improve the accountability of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs and improve health care and benefits for veterans.

Also in the Senate Senator Tammy Baldwin introduced S 2933 the Veterans ACCESS Act to prohibit certain health care providers from providing non-department health care services to veterans if they were fired by the Department of Veterans Affairs due to conduct that violated a policy of the department or fall under certain other valid reasons relating to the quality of medical care they have provided in the past.

In addition here is some legislation that is currently working its way through some of our state legislatures:

Illinois

Rep Mike Smiddy introduced House Bill 6123 requiring all members of the Illinois National Guard to be tested for depleted uranium before and after deployment until such a time that a federal law is established covering such testing.

Rep. Patricia R. Bellock & Linda Chapa LaVia introduced House Bill 6560 to modify the selection process of each county's Veterans Assistance Commission. Right now each post has the right to appoint one delegate and an alternate to the commission to represent the organization. This bill could shrink the size of commissions in counties where there are more than 1 post for an organization.

Senate Bill 3410 introduced by Senator John J. Cullerton which adds language to allow Veterans Assistance Commissions to assist

the Veterans/Servicemembers Court just like the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs in helping provide services for veterans or current service members under its jurisdiction.

Louisiana

Senate Bill 72 introduced by Senators Barrow Peacock, Regina Ashford Barrow and Troy Carter authorizes private employers to provide employment preferences for veterans.

Representatives Larry Bagley, Robert E. Billiot and Chad Brown sponsored House Bill 1141 which defines changes in the Veterans Court program clarifying the eligibility for veterans that may become involved with the program.

There have been two bills introduced in the Senate dealing

with 100 percent disabled veterans. Senate Bill 389 creates "100% DV" military honor license plates and was Sponsored by Representatives Troy E. Brown, Patrick Page Cortez, Sharon Hewitt and Gerald Long. While Senate Bill 444 provides for placing a "100% Disabled Veteran" designation on Louisiana driver's license and special identification cards and was sponsored by Representative Dale Erdey.

House Bill 304 was introduced by Representative Tanner Magee to exempt veterans from fees associated with concealed carry permits.

New Jersey

Senator Patrick J Diegnan Jr. introduced Senate Bill 2281 which would make the total property tax exemption for 100 percent disabled veterans retroactive to effective date of determination of total disability; it also requires state to reimburse municipalities for reimbursement of property taxes paid back to the veteran.

Senate Bill 1672 was introduced by Senators Jeff Van Drew and Christopher J Connors. It would grant priority course registration to military service members and veterans attending public institutions of higher learning if that institution offers priority registration for any part of its student population.

Senator Diegnan also introduced Senate Bill 2272 which requires each county to establish and maintain a veteran's service office.

Assembly Bill 145 introduced by Assemblywoman Cleopatra G Tucker and Assemblyman Bob Andrzejczak, adds the Vietnam Veterans of America to the list of organizations for which state, county and municipal employees will be given leave of absence to attend their state and national conventions.

Assemblymen Wayne P. DeAngelo and Joseph A. Lagana along with Assemblywomen Nancy J. Pinkin and Angela V. McKnight introduced

Assembly Bill 2228. This bill includes all disabled veterans in the NJT discount program for senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

Assembly Bill 3150 introduced by Assemblymen R. Bruce Land, Bob Andrzejczak, Jay Webber and Eric Houghtaling authorizes a veteran's property tax exemption for totally disabled veterans who did not serve in a theater of war.

Assemblymen Wayne P. DeAngelo and R. Bruce Land introduced Assembly Bill 3749 which would allow 100 percent disabled veterans to receive parking privileges reserved for persons with disability.

Senate Bill 1994 would adjust fee schedules for county and municipal golf courses for certain veterans and service members and was introduced by Senators James Beach and Anthony R. Bucco.

Senators Diane B Allen and James Beach introduced Senate Bill 2017 the New Jersey Housing Assistance for Veterans Act, which establishes a pilot program to assist certain veterans with housing modification and rehabilitation.

Pennsylvania

Senator Elder A Vogel Jr. introduced Senate Bill 1153 to designate a portion of state routes 108 and 551 in Lawrence County as the Battery B Memorial Highway this has passed both houses and is waiting to be signed.

House Bill 2061 was introduced to provide the veterans' real estate tax

exemption to surviving spouses of disabled veterans who died before being 100 percent service connected and would have been granted 100 percent service connection as well as surviving spouses of a veteran who was killed in the line of duty or during active military service.

Representative Peter Schweyer introduced House Bill 1960 which would establish the Veteran Suicide Prevention Grant Program.

Senator Robert M Tomlinson introduced Senate Bill 1167 amending the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission Act providing for reduced toll rates for disabled veterans.

Representative Joseph A Petrarca introduced House Bill 1950 that would designate a bridge on a portion of State Route 217 over the Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks and 2nd Street, in Derry Borough, Westmoreland County, as the Derry Veterans Memorial Bridge.

South Carolina

Assemblywoman Jenny Anderson Horne and Assemblyman Russell L. Ott introduced General Assembly Bill 5277 which would allow children of veterans who meet the guidelines free tuition at public colleges and technical education institutions.

Assemblyman Nikki G. Setzier introduced Senate Bill 1242 to remove the fee for Korean War Veterans special license plates that Korean War veterans are entitled to.

You can find more information on these and other legislation in our Legislative Action Center.

Vets For Full Representation cordially invites you to honor the Navy veteran, Gary Farris, founder of the Veterans Museum of Mid Ohio Valley, for his countless hours of unselfish work on behalf of the memorial and recognition of veterans for over a decade.

The honorary ceremony, for Gary Farris, will be held at Veterans Crossing 39 Veto Road Little Hocking, Ohio 45742 on July 16, 2016 from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm.

There will be music, refreshments and raffles to honor this great man. All funds raised will be for the sole purpose of supporting the Veterans Museum of Mid Ohio Valley.

RSVP by July 8th by calling Sheri Jarvis @ 740-989-2015 or email to freedom@veteranscrossing.com.

WIN THIS 2016 JEEP WRANGLER SPORT 4X4

Drawing will be July 16th, 2016 @ Veterans Crossing 39 Veto Rd Little Hocking, OH 45742



(DISPLAYED AT ASTORG DODGE CHRYLSER JEEP 13TH STREET PARKERSBURG, WV)

-FIRECRACKER RED -3.6L V6 ENGINE -5 SPEED AUTO TRANS

-CUSTOMER PREFERRED PACKAGE 245

-TRAILER TOW GROUP -3 PIECE HARD TOP -CLOTH SEATS

SPONSERED BY:

**VETS FOR FULL REPRESENTATION LOCATED AT VETERANS CROSSING
39 VETO ROAD LITTLE HOCKING, OH 45742 (740)989-2015**

**TICKETS ARE \$100/EACH AND CAN BE PURCHASED AT VETERANS CROSSING
ASTORG DODGE CHRYSLER JEEP 13TH STREET PARKERSBURG, WV
VETERANS MUSEUM OF MID OHIO VALLEY 1829 7TH STREET PARKERSBURG, WV**

VETS FOR FULL REPRESENTATION

A Constitutional Right

P.O. Box 8
Cutler, Ohio 45724