



THE EAGLE



THE MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS

www.pa-coc.org



NEWS AND VIEWS August 2013



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Thanks to the hard work by a succession of state councils, we have steadily gained recognition among our fellow VSOs as a valuable state asset to our veterans' community. Not only have we gained membership in the State Veterans Commission, but we've got a seat on the prestigious Legislative Committee of the PA War Veterans Council, which does most of the lobbying for veterans in our state.

A few weeks ago I spoke at the American Legion's state convention in Harrisburg, which I believe is the first time that MOAA has been invited.



My remarks were short and well received.

Our predatory payday loan lobbying effort, headed steadfastly by Bob Gray, has paid off in dividends since we have made a name for ourselves with the state's non-governmental organizations, our veterans communities and, most importantly, with legislators and their staffers on Capitol Hill. You have to know when to hold 'em and when to fold 'em, and Bob has put on his best poker face leading us in this fight to protect our older veterans. We can make a difference!

I'm happy to report that when Bob takes over next year he'll have a great team working with him, including Harold Cooney, who has agreed to accept the 2nd VP position. We're still looking for a treasurer since Harvie is moving out of state, so please contact Bob Kutulis if you are interested or know of anyone who would be.

Save the date - our convention next year will be held from 12-14 Sep at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh near the Meadow Lands race track in the Washington area, so we've got the momentum going to keep our member base engaged and to hopefully help us recruit new - and younger - members. Last year's convention earned the praise of our

national leadership, and our next one will be even better thanks to our co-hosting Pittsburgh and General Greene Chapters!

We also participated in the state's two regional VA Healthcare annual meetings, another first for us!

And a personal note since many of you know that my wonderful wife Susan suffered brain damage when she fell in early June. I've had to miss two Chapter meetings because of that but hope to make up for it in the last two quarters of my presidency since Susan is getting better every day. I hugely appreciate the kind emails, texts and cards that you've sent.

Our next council meeting will be held on Thursday, Sept. 26, from 1-3 pm during MOAA's regional symposium in Hershey.

I also want to thank our newsletter editor, Bob Broyles, for putting up with my missives. He's done a remarkable job putting *The Eagle* together. Please remember that this is YOUR newsletter so please feel free to submit articles to him.

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RETIRED BG APPOINTED DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS

Governor Tom Corbett has announced the appointment of a Lancaster County man as deputy adjutant general for veterans affairs in the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

Retired Brig. Gen. Jerry G. Beck Jr., of Denver, Pa., succeeds Brig. Gen. (PA) Michael Gould, who served as the department's deputy adjutant general for veterans affairs since June 2010.

"General Beck served 34 years in the Guard and was deployed twice. He served at every level from private to general and has commanded at all levels from squad to division," Maj. Gen. Wesley Craig, the state's adjutant general said.

"He has a wealth of military knowledge and experience, but what's most important is that he's keenly aware of the many issues facing veterans and he will work tirelessly to provide outstanding programs and services that benefit all of Pennsylvania's veterans and their families," Craig said.

Beck, who began his new duties on July 8, will serve as the administration's principal advisor on veterans' issues. He also will direct the activities of the DMVA's Office for Veterans Affairs.

Based at Fort Indiantown Gap, the Office for Veterans Affairs supervises the administration of veterans' assistance programs to Pennsylvania's nearly one million veterans and their dependents, as well as the operation of the state's six veterans' homes.

Beck began his extensive military career when he enlisted in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard as a private in 1977. He deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2002, and then to Kosovo as commanding general of the Multi-National Brigade where he led 3,500 soldiers from the U.S., Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, Armenia and Greece in 2003.

He retired as the Deputy Adjutant General - Army for the Pennsylvania Army National Guard in August 2011 and most recently served as the Deputy Garrison Commander for Fort Indiantown Gap in Lebanon County.

Beck holds a bachelor's degree in German from Millersville State College, a master's degree in instructional systems design from Pennsylvania State University, and a doctorate in organization and management with a concentration in leadership from Capella University. He is a member of several veterans and military-related organizations.

Craig praised Gould for his accomplishments during his three-year tenure as the deputy adjutant general for veterans affairs.

"General Gould expanded outreach programs to veterans and brought this vision to realization by the implementation of the

Veterans Trust Fund," Craig said. "This fund is a public and private partnership which provides monetary support to all veterans in need. It brings to the forefront and gives visibility on those issues impacting veterans."

For more information about veterans programs and services, visit the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs at www.dmva.state.pa.us

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REMAINING 2013 STATE COUNCIL MEETING DATES

September 26, Hershey
November 9, State College (Officer Elections)

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LEGISLATIVE REPORT Bob Gray

Pay Day Lending - SB 975

A new pay day lending bill was introduced on May 31, The Micro Loan Program, Senate Bill 975. It passed the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee on June 4th. It must be sent to the Appropriations Committee next, but they don't have the votes to move it, thanks to the lobbying of the Coalition to Stop Predatory Pay Day Lending of which the PA Council of Chapters is a vital part.

The PA War Veterans Council, the PA Dept. of the American Legion and, most recently, the PA State Veterans Commission, passed resolutions not to support any change to the state's strong usury laws that would allow pay day lending.

The PA Council of Chapters lobby team has been the voice of Pennsylvania's veterans at the capitol since May of 2012. The team consists of Council President Bill Harris and Nate Kline of the Lehigh Valley Chapter, Alicia Blessington of the Philadelphia Chapter and Bob Gray of the Keystone Capitol Chapter. Most of the team has been at the capitol a total of 13 days this year. Keep

calling and e-mailing your senators, they hear you and that is why we are successful.

Veteran's Legislation Update

Both the House and Senate have introduced numerous bills to help veterans. There are bills to waive residency requirement so as to allow veterans to qualify for instate tuition rates and priority for veterans to schedule classes in advance of the semester so soldiers can enroll prior to leaving the service.

There is a bill to consider military education and training to satisfy licensing or certification requirements for transition to civilian life and employment. The bill has passed the House and is now in the Senate appropriations committee.

There is also a bill for a Veterans Lottery ticket, scratch off, that will provide money for Veterans Trust Fund that will be used by the Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs to provide services for veterans. It is in the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee.

There are two bills in the Senate; one addresses the families of fallen soldiers and the other disabled soldiers. One will extend Tuition Waivers to children and spouses of fallen soldiers of the National Guard, allowing them to use the benefit earned by the soldier. The other will exclude veterans service-related disability compensation from being considered as income for PACE and PACENET Drug programs.

There is word around the capitol the governor wants to have a veteran's legislation package ready by November. This could contain the bills I have referenced as well as others not mentioned.

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A FEW NOTES FROM OUR JULY 19 COUNCIL MEETING IN STATE COLLEGE:

- Thanks to some super sleuth work, our fearless council secretary, Nancy Anderson, discovered that our council was born on Sept. 14, 1976, so our 37th birthday will be next month! That was a mighty fine year, being the nation's bicentennial and all ... so let's all get prepared to sing Happy Birthday!

- Nancy added that she and hubby/former state council president Chuck participated in the MOAA-sponsored European river cruise a few months ago and said it was a blast. Some 100 MOAA members attended and the vacancies created by last minute dropouts were given to wounded warriors recuperating in Europe - eight of them to be exact. She added that Chapters need to register online with MOAA travel to be eligible for the \$50 reimbursement provided to Chapters.

- USAA has expressed interest in advertising in our electronic newsletter since we reach potentially 1,000 members every month by you forwarding this pub to your Chapter members. Some Chapters have decided not to do this, but we're still at that millennium figure.

- MOAA will drop the gold bar program after this year and will deemphasize recruiting ROTC graduates other than offering them electronic memberships.

- The ongoing struggle to keep payday lending out of PA will go back on the front burner beginning on Sept. 24 when the legislature reconvenes. Included in this lobbying effort will be a plan to hold a press conference on Capitol Hill to denounce the bill, and MOAA will be there as well as other veterans' organizations.

- Bob Gray and Bill Harris will coordinate the council meeting schedules for next year and will have them firmed up by the November meeting, if not sooner.

- The 2014 budget will be discussed at the Sept. 26 council meeting and will be voted on at the Nov. 9 meeting, which will conclude with the election of officers for the 2014-15 term. The new officers' terms start on Jan. 1 so there's transition time for the new leadership.

- Bob Gray will find out why Bob Cudworth's nomination for a board seat on the Gino Merli Veterans' Center in Scranton has been delayed. It's been at the governor's office for quite some time.

- Newcomers to the meeting were Keith Beebe of the Keystone Capitol Chapter, Bill Pfeiffer of our Philadelphia Chapter and Adelle Zavada of our newly renamed Northeast PA/Pocono Mountains Chapter. Welcome aboard!

The meeting details, along with Chapter reports, will be provided by secretary Nancy Anderson.

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DFAS PASSWORD PROJECT

DFAS is implementing a new password security system for its MyPay online pay program. If you use MyPay, go to these pages to learn more about the password changes. The new system requires a lengthy 15 to 30 character password with the use of special characters. Plus, we have to change passwords every 60 days.

The first link below has the implementation dates according to the last 2 digits of your Social Security number. The second link provides the password requirements.

<https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>
<http://www.dfas.mil/mypayinfo/password.html>

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MOAA 2013 CHAPTER RECRUITING REPORT

June 30 marked the close-out of our 2nd Quarter 2013 Chapter Recruiting Program competition. As of the close of this cycle, we have recruited 720 new chapter members. Congratulations to everyone!

Congratulations to our 2nd Quarter 2013 Chapter Recruiting Program Council winners: Northeast Region – Ohio Council - 86, Southeast – Florida Council - 122, Midwest

Region – Illinois Council - 45, and in the Western Region – California Council – 43.

Unfortunately, none of the independent Chapters recruited the minimum number of new Chapter members to qualify. Council winners from each region will receive a quarterly incentive EFT or check for \$500. Again, we continue to encourage councils to consider using some or all of these “winnings” to help defray your Chapters’ recruiting costs and reward your top producing Chapters.

The 3rd Quarter competition between councils and independent Chapters is underway as of Jul 1 and will close-out on Sep 30. For a council to win the quarterly competition, its Chapters must recruit a minimum of 30 new Chapter members during the quarter. Independent Chapters must recruit a minimum of 10 new Chapter members in order to win a quarterly competition. The quarterly council winners in each region will receive a \$500 check as a campaign incentive and the quarterly independent Chapter winners will receive a check for \$250.

To help you track the progress of your recruiting efforts, we will continue to post a weekly Chapter Recruiting 2013 update to our website on Fridays. Check out your results here:

http://www.moaa.org/uploadedFiles/MOAA_Main/Main_Menu/Chapters_and_Councils/Chapter_Recruiting/Chapter%20Recruitment%20Report_5-3-13.pdf

Best of luck with your recruiting efforts. Thank you for your continued support. Council and Chapter Affairs, MOAA

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LETTER FROM H2H PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR PA

My name is Dave Tebo. I am the Pennsylvania Employment Transition Coordinator (ETC) for the Hero2Hired (H2H) program. The H2H program, under the Department of Defense’s Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Employment Initiative Program (EIP),

is responsible for assisting members of the National Guard and Reserve Components, and their families, in obtaining career oriented employment opportunities.

The H2H Employment Transition Coordinators are responsible for executing and administering operations and services established by the ESGR EIP through close cooperation with the local ESGR State Committees, leaders and members of the Guard and Reserves, federal and state veterans and employment service agencies, and a broad spectrum of employers, business and civic leaders and other organizations involved in employee recruiting and employment.

There is one ETC per State/Territory and serves as the State/Territory’s focal point for assisting Guard and Reserve service members in finding career employment opportunities through the H2H programs, including use of the H2H.jobs web-based application, job fairs sponsored by partners and alliances and other recruiting activities.

The ETCs plan, coordinate, conduct, participate in and evaluate statewide employment initiatives while involving Reserve Component (RC) leadership along with Federal, State, and local agencies and employers. The ETCs also interface and coordinate with employers to assist them in their recruitment efforts by providing qualified RC Service members, spouses, and Veteran candidates. The website can be found at: www.H2H.jobs .

I would very much like to work with you in finding career opportunities for our Reserve Component service members and their families. When employers register on the H2H website, they will:

- * Have unlimited FREE job postings,
- * Be able to create their own online presence with the H2H employer tools and build their own company profile,
- * Be able to send digital invitations to registered job seekers to gauge the interest of potential candidates,

- * Get automatic notifications for candidate applications, H2H messages and connection requests, and
- * Have a powerful search functionality to look for candidates and to invite them to apply for their job openings.

Job seekers who register on the site have:

- * A Military Skills Translator that will give them a listing of industries that are looking for their skills and talents,
- * A resume' template to help them craft their personal resume'.
- * Access to hundreds of thousands of job openings posted on the site by employers looking for people with military skills,
- * Access to full time advice and training from Employment Transition Coordinators in each state and territory.

I would like to work with the MOAA Chapters in Pennsylvania as you work towards this mutual endeavor.

Thank you for supporting our Military and I look forward to teaming with MOAA.

V/R,
 David P. Tebo
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RED TAPE CHALLENGES FOR VETS SEEKING VA ASSISTANCE

Forwarded from treasurer Harvie Beavers are these mind boggling results of research about the plight of veterans seeking VA assistance:

There is significant regulatory red tape facing U.S. veteran, says Sam Batkins, director of regulatory policy at the American Action Forum. As reported by numerous media

outlets, the delay of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) claims continues to skyrocket.

- The number of veterans waiting more than a year to receive benefits jumped from 11,000 in 2009 to 245,000 by December 2012, an extraordinary 2,000 percent increase.
- The total "logjam" is now estimated at more than 600,000 veterans waiting on VA action.

The main problem, according to reports, is that VA has not yet transitioned fully to an online platform, but instead relies on paper documents.

- For example, some reports claim that one VA center in Winston-Salem, NC, contains so many documents that it could collapse an entire floor.
- Eighteen different agencies administer more than 600 forms, imposing 43.4 million hours of paperwork.
- To put that paperwork burden in perspective, it would take approximately 21,750 employees working 2,000 hours a year to complete one year of paperwork.

Digging through the 319 information collections, Batkins constructed a hypothetical regulatory path that a veteran might face after discharge from service. He finds a disabled veteran seeking health and educational benefits could encounter up to 49 different forms, more than four hours of paperwork, and an aggregate cost of \$125 (assuming \$31 per hour of compliance time).

In any area of government, there will of course be forms and obstacles for individuals and businesses. But for America's veterans, navigating 18 agencies and more than 600 forms has produced absurd results and unnecessary delays.

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UNINSURED VETERANS **Bob Gray**

As the discussion continues in the PA General Assembly about Medicaid Expansion, the fact that Pennsylvania has approximately 47,000 uninsured Nonelderly veterans has come to

light. The research report on this nation-wide problem is attached in a PDF document. Among the interesting facts in this report are the periods of service these veterans served and their age.

The report pulled data from the US Census Bureau's annual American Community Survey for 2009 and 2010.

The attached report is also referenced in the two articles with links below.

Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center's [policy brief](#) (<http://org2.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=Dcc6KZQQh1H8q500vUKrdPzAoZRez24O>)

on veterans in the state who could benefit from expanding Medicaid, and a *Delaware County Daily Times* [editorial](#)

[Tens of Thousands of Pa. Veterans Could Obtain Health Insurance Under Medicaid Expansion | The Pennsylvania Budget and Policy](#), and [Editorial: Expand Medicaid to help Pa. veterans - delcotimes.com](#).

This research shows that there are veterans that have not contacted VA and may be eligible for services but the larger majority have no were to turn for health coverage.

This matter should be considered for discussion as it affects a large number of Pennsylvania's veterans.



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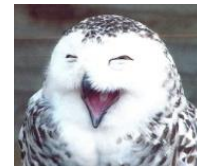
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GLORIOUS INSULTS

"I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure."
- Clarence Darrow



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