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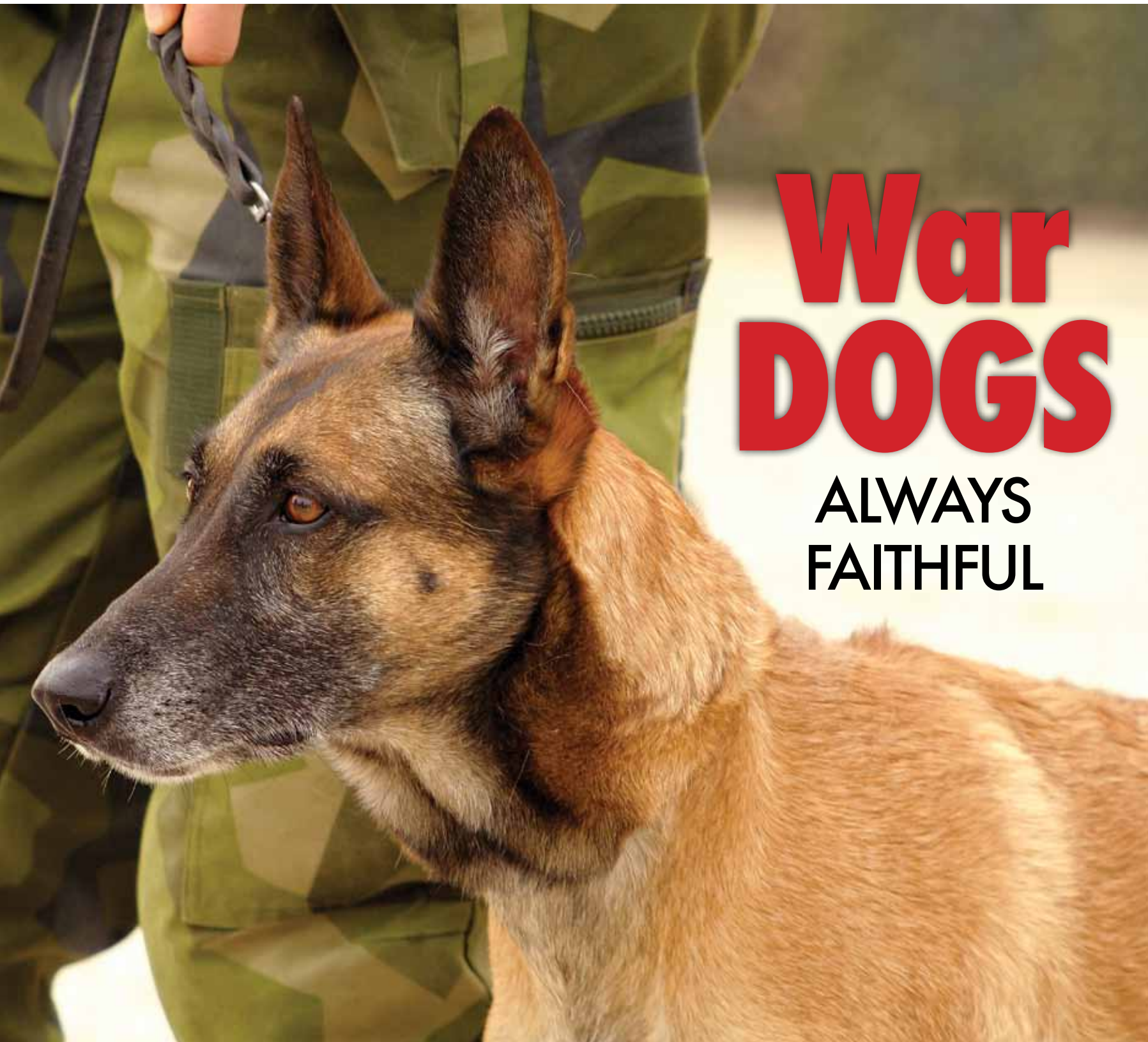


CHRONICLE

The Newspaper for Veterans and All Who Love Them.

VOLUME 5 NUMBER 2

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2015



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This past Thanksgiving, *DD 214 Chronicle* published, as found, "A Soldier's Thanksgiving Day Poem" (author unknown) on Facebook. An incredible 98,560 people read the poem. In addition, there were 4,562 people who "liked" the poem and 1,077 people shared it on their Facebook pages.

Facebook affords *DD 214 Chronicle* the ability to reach you when there are great stories and breaking veterans' news. You can also download the latest *DD 214 Chronicle* issue.

Happy Thanksgiving to our veterans and those who serve our country.

Please like DD 214 Chronicle on Facebook by going to Facebook.com/DD214Chronicle. Just click on the "Like Us" button and you'll get copies of DD 214 Chronicle, updates, and breaking news.

A Soldier's Thanksgiving Day Poem

(Author Unknown)

*Instead of family and friends for Thanksgiving you will
 Chow with your comrades tonight
 One to your left, the other to your right.
 Your regiment, your battalion,
 Have now become family and friends
 Living day to day in a personal sacrifice
 On a mission to defend.
 You are the hero's who's faces we may never get to see
 But the pride and glory that's lives in a soldier heart
 Biers one word
 "Integrity"
 On this day
 We give thanks and honor to those brave and true
 Our banners, we will proudly wave
 The Red, White, and Blue
 We will give our thanks not only to our God
 but also to every soldier for our bounties, that be.
 For they give meaning to words
 Home of the brave Land of the Free.
 To the soldiers in the mess hall
 Eating their thanksgiving feast,
 to the troops in the desert eating another
 Meal ready to eat.
 May peace, hope and strength
 Travel with you along the way
 And may these wishes find you
 On A Soldiers Thanksgiving Day.*

Uniform of the day

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STAND AT EASE By John H. Tidyman, Editor

Congress: Not the best friend of veterans

Is it asking too much of Congress to get off its lazy behind and declare a war or two?

Congress? REMFs.

It is the duty of Congress to declare war, draft young men and send many to their deaths or disfigurements. Yet this overpaid, underworked, spineless, irresponsible group of do-nothing legislators cuts orders, sending troops to battle, but refusing to sign their names on the orders.

Cowards.

If Congress had a set, it would declare war, draft young men, and stick around until the smoke cleared and the VA hospitals filled.

The last time Congress declared war followed the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

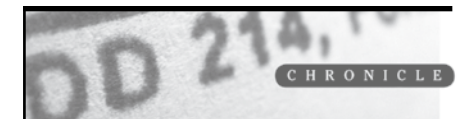
Since then, American boys and girls have died on battlefields: Korea, Vietnam, and the Middle East.

Yet they weren't at war?
 Gimme a break.



Mocha: Best Editorial Consultant Ever.

"The FY 2015 base budget provides \$495.6 billion, a reduction of \$0.4 billion from the FY 2014 enacted budget of \$496.0 billion, and is consistent with Administration-wide efforts to make tough program choices within current funding constraints. This budget adjusts programs that develop and procure military equipment, re-sizes ground forces, slows the growth of compensation and benefit programs, continues to make better use of defense resources by reducing lower



The Newspaper for Veterans and All Who Love Them.

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UNBROKEN- A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience and Redemption

Review by JC Sullivan

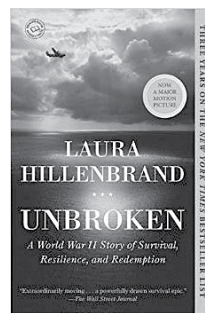
I first learned of Louis Silvie Zamperini in early July, 2014 when I read of his passing in the Plain Dealer. It referenced the book Unbroken, his true life experiences. I saved the obituary to make sure I read the book. When I did read it I learned his incredible story of a troubled childhood, competing in the U.S. Olympics, surviving a World War U.S. Army Air Force Pacific Ocean air crash, being adrift in a life raft for forty seven days, capture by the enemy, beatings, torture, freedom, anger, despair, alcoholism and eventual redemption. Now that I've read it I can only say his life story moved me deeply. Author Laura Hillenbrand, who wrote Seabiscuit, spent seven years researching, interviewing and writing his story. She, like Zamperini, is also an amazing human being.

Louie, as he's called, was born in Olean, New York to Italian immi-

grant parents Anthony and Louise. Because he contracted pneumonia when two years old, Louie's physician recommended a warmer climate. West went the family, all the way to Torrance, California of 1919. Like many other irascible young boys, his childhood was marred by continuous troubles he created for himself. The police knew him by name from the numerous situations he found himself in. His brother Peter tried to be his mentor by encouraging him to compete in school sports, especially track events. With his attention and energy finally diverted to positive activities, Peter's support paved the way for Louie to develop into a world-class runner. It led to winning a spot on the 1936 U.S. Olympic Team. The nineteen year old "Torrance Tornado" ran in

the 5,000 meter race in Hitler's Berlin, finishing 8th.

With Germany's military ramping in Europe, he saw war clouds drifting towards the U.S. By then he was a student at the University of Southern California. Although he was focused on entering the 1940 Olympics in Japan, he learned that anyone who enlisted before being drafted could choose their branch of service. Early in 1941



Louie went for the Army Air Corps. Events, however, interceded. The Olympics in Japan were cancelled when America was attacked later that year at Pearl Harbor, drawing us into World War Two.

Training as a bombardier, Louis was commissioned a Second Lieutenant. Author Laura Hillenbrand takes the reader through his training and assignments in Iowa, California, and Hawaii. He was assigned to the 372nd Bomb Squadron of the 307th Bomb Group, Seventh Air Force. He had hoped to be assigned to a B-17 but instead he found himself in the bomber nobody wanted, Consolidated's B-24 Liberator, nicknamed "the Flying Boxcar," a plane plagued with mechanical problems.

On May 17, 1943 a rescue mission was formed to hunt for a lost B-24. The only plane available for Louie and a scraped-together crew was an unreliable B-24 nicknamed the "Green Hornet." Although it had "passed inspection", they were wary to fly it. On that mission it failed its crew and crashed in the Pacific. Only two others survived, Indiana native and pilot Russell A. Phillips ("Phil") and Ohio tail gunner Sergeant Francis P. (Mac) McNamara. After Louie secured the two rafts that floated free from the plane, Mac began wailing "We're gonna die," words that later, unfortunately for him, proved prophetic. However, Mac emerged from his semi-comatose state of shock and redeemed himself by using one of the raft's oars to fight the sharks

that attempted to leap aboard the tiny raft and pull them into the sea. Forty seven days later, after having been strafed by a Japanese fighter and using his ingenuity to survive, survivors Louie and Phil were captured by the Japanese. That began a torture ordeal that few could survive and only ended in August, 1945 when the war ended.

Unbroken's story doesn't end there. Upon his return home he descends into alcoholism to deal with his despair, anger and other spiritual demons. He has constantly recurring nightmares of the torture and beatings by his Japanese nemesis Watanabe. After his wife and friends persisted in getting him to go hear a Christian evangelist named Billy Graham, who was preaching the word of God in Los Angeles, he eventually is able to discard his anger and negative lifestyle. Only then did his nightmares disappear, as did the murderous hatred he had for his tormentor.

As I read through this book I discerned parallel stories woven between the covers by its author, Laura Hillenbrand. Her storytelling gifts are numerous, beginning with her attention to the myriad technical details about life in the Army Air Corps of the Pacific wartime era. She tells of its men and equipment, their suffering, joy and remembrance, all of which puts the reader inside their flight jackets, living quarters, aircraft and their lives, before, during and after captivity. She contributes the real-life experiences of courageous men who went through it all and lived to tell her about it. And she manages to also tell the story of the thousands upon thousands lost at sea and land.

The movie version of "Unbroken" is being released on Christmas Day, 2014, directed by Angelina Jolie. I plan on seeing it. Movies, through my eye, can never do a good book justice. In this case I hope I'm wrong. After you see it make sure you pick up the book as well. It will, I'm sure, complement the movie.

The Tax Man Cometh

By Carole Grady, DD 214 Financial Editor

I am sure that you have everything in order to do your taxes this year but, if not, here are some helpful tips.

If you are going to have your return done by a paid preparer please, please do not bring a bag of receipts for him/her to go through. It will cost you more; have everything itemized by category.

Be sure to bring all W-2s, 1099s, 1098s, student loan information, and anything that concerns your taxes.

If you donated clothes and furnishings to a legitimate charity, be sure to have all those items written down and itemized; i.e., five new shirts, daybed, six pairs of shoes, two tennis racquets, etc.

Keep your receipts as back up.

If you are going to do your own

return using a computer program, be sure that you know the tax laws, especially if you have investments or have your own business, and file a Schedule C.

The tax laws for travel, entertainment, depreciation, use of home office can be tricky. The money you would pay an experienced tax preparer can save you in the long run.

If you do use a paid preparer be sure that it is not someone who closes



Carole Grady

down on April 15th and cannot be found until next year. If you get a letter from the federal, state or city governments, you will need to be able to contact the preparer for advice.

I hope all of you have faithfully done your taxes every year and are in Uncle Sam's good graces. If not, one thing to

know is that if you did not file in, for example, 2001, there is no statute of limitations restricting the IRS from added penalties and interest.

This only applies to *not filing at all*, not late filing.

Another bad thing about not filing, if you were due for a refund that year you will not be able to claim it if the return was due more than three years ago. This applies to Earned Income Credit as well.

If you owe this year and you cannot pay the full amount you can request an additional 60-120 more days to pay without a user fee. If you need more time contact the IRS at 800-829-1040 to make installment arrangements. **JUST BE SURE TO FILE YOUR RETURN ON TIME!**

Happy 2015!

Carole Grady
440-799-7514

Hire Our Heroes Comes Under Fire

By Donald Gridley

While the slogan, "Hire Our Vets," reads like an innocuous slogan, it isn't so simple in the workplace.

Non-vets in the Civil Service are questioning, often vehemently, the practice of providing veterans with hiring preference.

The preferential program for civil service jobs isn't new; it was made law after World War II. Seemed like a good idea then. Not so much today.

The program has changed since it was implemented. For veterans, it has changed for the better. Extra credit for veterans has been added and each agency now has hiring goals for veterans.

Non-veterans seeking the same jobs are upset with the hiring preference.

Veterans benefit from preferential hiring for civil service jobs under a law dating to World War II, but the Administration has boosted the extra credit veterans receive, giving them an even greater edge in getting those jobs.

The government has also set hiring goals for veterans at each

agency, and managers are graded on how many they bring on board, officials said.

Not so fast, say job-seeking non-veterans. They are often supported by supervisors and non-veteran employees. Military service, they argue, doesn't necessarily mean better job performance.

So the Administration's program to hire military vets has adherents on both sides of the line drawn in the sand. Neither side appears ready to negotiate.

Veterans argue their skills, experience, and competency, in addition to their service to the country, are worth preference.

Non-veterans say veterans are no more qualified and lessen the work quality. Both sides have good, if apocryphal stories to further their positions.

The senior mechanic at the Government Printing Office said six of eight electricians are veterans. He said some arrived for work missing an important document: An electrician's license. One new employee was hired from out of state, and the hiring interview was conducted

over the telephone. The new hire soon quit. The senior mechanic said it's difficult to assess an applicant's history. Some have been hired ignorant of electrical components that even a one- or two-year electrician should know.

But when the Commerce Department conducted a training session that included veterans, she was impressed. For a training exercise, the subject was a natural disaster. Eight veterans in the class banded together to create an innovative rescue plan.

The instructor was impressed

with the veterans' teamwork as well as the plan. "If veterans come with experience, real-world experience, of having challenges put in front of them, and succeeding, what's wrong with helping them? What's wrong with helping someone who risked his or her life for our country?"

At the Office of Personnel Management, one specialist complained veterans, thanks to their training, rarely offer innovative solutions to problems and instead defer to higher-ranking personnel.

(As if innovative thinking was a value in the federal government.)

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VA Guarantees its 21 Millionth Home Loan

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced this month that it has guaranteed 21 million home loans since the Home Loan Guaranty program was established in 1944 as part of the original Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, better known as the "GI Bill." This achievement comes during the year-long commemoration of 70 years of the "GI Bill," which established a wide range of benefits for Veterans returning from World War II, including low-cost home loans, education and vocational training.

"This vital program offers Veterans, service members and their families the keys to home ownership and is truly a testament to our Nation's commitment to enhancing the lives of those who served our country," said Allison A. Hickey, VA's Under Secretary for Benefits. "Twenty-one million home loans guaranteed, with the last one million guaranteed in just two years, is just one example of how VA em-



ployees are privileged to continue to serve and give back to our Veterans through the GI Bill."

VA's Home Loan Program provides housing-related benefits and services to make home ownership possible and affordable for eligible Veterans, service members and surviving spouses, who want to buy, build, repair or adapt a home.

Nearly 90 percent of all VA loans are made with no down payment. In fiscal year (FY) 2014, the Home Loan Program guaranteed roughly 35,000 loans per month, resulting in a total of 438,398 VA home loans guaranteed for the year. The total value of all outstanding VA loans exceeds \$380 billion. During FY 2014, the program also approved 1,253 grants to seri-

ously disabled Veterans for the purchase, modification, or construction of a home specially adapted to meet their individual housing needs.

Through loan servicing efforts, the Home Loan Program also assisted nearly 80,000 borrowers avoid foreclosure in FY 2014. These actions saved taxpayers nearly \$2.8 billion in avoided claim payments. Data from the Mortgage Bankers Association show that mortgages guaranteed by VA have had the lowest foreclosure inventory rate for the last 25 quarters when compared to all other types of home loans in the nation, including prime loans.

Veterans may obtain a certificate of eligibility for a VA-guaranteed home loan through the joint Department of Defense—VA web portal *eBenefits*, at <http://www.ebenefits.va.gov>, or by contacting their lender.

For more information about the VA Home Loan Program, visit the program's home page at www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans

You may not know Lorri Slivka, but like all great support troops, she knows what you need and how to get it for you: The Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission

By Harry Besharet

When Lorri Slivka is not in her office at the Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission, she's busy at outreach, including job fairs for veterans, and attending evening meetings when Commission members meet at area VFWs and Legion posts.

The evening work assignments allow her to meet, on a personal level, many of the veterans she serves. There she can listen, along with Commission members, to the concerns or difficulties of veterans who need assistance.

Equally important, she also serves as behind-the-scenes strategist on behalf of veterans.

The virtues necessary for her posi-

tion are sympathy, knowledge, experience, and imagination. A generous heart fills out the job description.

For some veterans who need assistance, she is a chess player; she knows where to go, but getting there often takes a combination of experience and knowledge.

One of her vital virtues is her experience. For staff and Commission members, she can be confidante, counselor, and expert on Commission rules and regulation. She knows the importance of paperwork like Marines know the importance of clean weapons.

And like your bookie, she knows the value of organization.

When deadline pressure keeps her chained to her desk, it is not unusual for executive director Jon Reiss to pop in and ask, "Can I bring you a cup of coffee?"

Veteran Service Commissions are not part of the Veterans Administration, but do have excellent relationships with the federal agency.

She has been with the Commission since 1988. Previous to the Commission, she worked for Ma Bell. She was first hired as a clerk at the Commission. The name of her position has changed from clerk to eligibility specialist.

She met and listened to veterans, seeking to resolve or alleviate

problems suffered by many vets. She handled that position for a half dozen years, which means she has heard it all.

Little wonder she did well. She loved it. She was surprised and grateful for the satisfaction provided by the work. "You know that when you've been instrumental, even in a small way, in helping veterans and their families; it's a wonderful feeling. And when you see the relief and gratitude on their faces, you know you've done good job for the men and women who unselfishly served and protected us."

Her work is above and beyond the call of duty.

Geauga Veterans Memorial Majestic and Unique

By Glen Miller

Near the geographic center of Geauga County sits a majestic 30-foot tall obelisk surrounded by six, eight-foot tall granite boulders bearing the names of more than 13,000 veterans who have fought or died defending American freedom.

Completed in 2009 after 10 years of planning and fund-raising, the \$500,000 memorial was built primarily with private funds and many in-kind donations of materials and labor. Located on Ravenwood Drive, just off state Route 44 in Claridon Township, the memorial is landscaped with seasonal flowers at the base of the obelisk and 22 maple trees, each representing a township or community in Geauga County.

The only government involvement in its construction was the county commissioners' donation of the one-acre plot on which the circular-shaped structure rests, and a \$50,000 gift from the Geauga County Veterans' Service Commission.

Most of the memorial's funding came from the hearts of people, most

of whom wanted to remember their ancestors and loved ones – all Geauga Countians who have fought or died in every war from the American Revolution to Afghanistan.

Their names are engraved in the boulders surrounding the obelisk, the centerpiece of the imposing structure, while posted in front of the memorial are American, and Army, Navy, Marine, Air Force, Coast Guard and MIA flags.

The structure is bigger than most Ohio veterans' memorial for a reason.

"When you go around most townships, villages and cities, you usually see small memorials to veterans," says Chardon attorney Paul Newman, president of the Geauga County Veterans' Memorial, Inc. "I didn't think that was right. Veterans deserve more."

A highly-decorated Vietnam vet-

eran with two Purple Hearts, Newman made his dream a reality by recruiting a ten-person non-profit board of trustees that oversaw its construction and its ongoing care.

Donations came from civic groups like the Burton-Middlefield Rotary Club, VFWs and American Legions and motorcycle riders who rode throughout Geauga County to raise money.

The names of the more than 13,000 veterans on the memorial were gathered over several years with the help of Jeannette Grosvenor, a cemetery sexton from a nearby township who created a computerized database.

The names of more local veterans will be added as they leave military service or are killed, Newman says.

Reaction to the memorial has been nothing but positive, generating praise from veterans, their families and the

general public, says Newman, a former Army Ranger with the 9th Infantry Division.

"They are touched and they all express their gratitude," he adds.

Veterans officials from across Ohio have been contacting him about the project to learn how the private fund raising was done during recessionary times when most people were closely watching their wallets.

Hundreds of people attended a Veterans Day 2009 dedication and a celebration on the memorial's completion the following year.

"I don't think remembering the service of veterans, their dedication and sacrifice should be limited to what the government does. So should people in the private sector," says Newman. "This memorial shows it can be done."

Because of the attention the memorial has drawn, county officials recently announced plans to build a new Veterans Service Commission office next to it.

"That's very fitting, very appropriate," adds Newman.

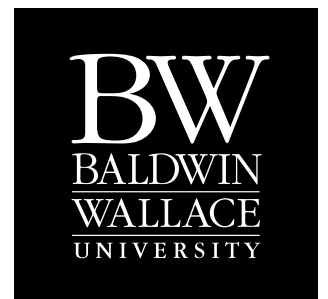


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News from a Parallel Universe

By Ethel Ogontz

President Obama, in a speech explaining sending additional troops to the Mideast without Congress having anything to do with it, said, "Most of the time, members of Congress are out raising funds, getting liquored up at parties, and, let's face it, they don't really want to send the troops. But we can see the light at the end of the tunnel, and I say, 'Full steam ahead.' "Furthermore," he said, "It's only another six billion dollars, and I've already asked the Treasury Department to print the stuff."

The VA, after being hammered by Congress' military veterans, announced it would revise its rules and regulations, translating them from Veterans Administratio-nese to English. The move, according to VA officials, will take anywhere from two to nine years. VA boss Robert A. McDonald said, "Not too many people can speak both languages."

A spokeswoman for ISIS Pharmaceuticals, Inc. said today, "Our name has nothing to do terrorists in the Middle East. Never has. Never will. Now stop calling or I'll report you." According to Egyptian mythology, Isis was the daughter of the earth god Geb and the sky goddess Nut. Her sister and brothers were Nephthys, Set, and Osiris. These



Thanksgiving dinner cancelled?

six deities—Geb, Nut, Isis, Osiris, Set, and Nephthys—belonged to an important group of nine Egyptian gods called the Great Ennead of Heliopolis.

White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough shut down computers belonging to staff members after porn was discovered on computers. "Our investigation started after the Office of Budget and Management began getting bills from on-line

porn marketers."

The House committee on energy and commerce released new details of its investigation into the events leading up to GM's recall of 2.6 million vehicles for ignition-switch defects now linked to 13 deaths. Congress has unanimously passed legislation that will outlaw the phrase, "Close enough for government work." It will be replaced by "Close enough for General Motors work."

Fun with numbers: It's impossible to know for sure what Eisenhower was thinking of when he warned of a military-industrial complex. Now used as a proper noun, The Military-Industrial Complex sells about \$235 billion in arms every year. TMIC spokesman Robert 'Spokes' Williamson said, "Big deal. We have all sorts of complexes. Oedipus, Electra, Napoleon, and Martyr, just to name a few. At least ours makes money; the rest of those complexes only make shrinks rich."

The Commander-in-Chief had good advice for military service veterans having difficulty finding jobs that pay more than the starvation rate. "Let 'em go to China. What the hell, most American companies have moved to China anyhow. It doesn't pay much, then again, the cost of living is pretty low, too."

The Bureau of Indian Affairs cancelled its Thanksgiving Dinner. "We thought it would be a wonderful dinner, but no Native Americans signed up," said Kevin R. Washburn, assistant secretary for Indian Affairs. "I still don't understand it," he said. "To make it special, we had players coming from the Cleveland Indians and the Washington Redskins."

DD 214 Chronicle Adds Two Accomplished Writers to Staff

Author **Eli Beachy** and writer **John C. Sullivan** have agreed, contingent upon their expense account limits, to join the staff of *DD 214 Chronicle*.

They ask more questions than a Philadelphia lawyer and even better, both can touch type. Each touch typist brings valuable insight and editorial talents to the newspaper.

Beachy is a former newspaper columnist, university professor, noted author and State of Ohio Distinguished Scholar of History.

U.S. Army veteran John C. Sullivan, in addition to service with the 2nd Armored Division (Hell on Wheels,) is well known for his editorial contributions to Irish publications, both in the U.S. and the Emerald Isle. He is the owner of North Coast Claims Services, LLC and resides in Northfield Village, Ohio.



Lt. Holley Macpherson

Second Lt. Holley Macpherson poses outside the 90th Operations Group Oct. 20, 2014 at F.W. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo. Recently, Macpherson pulled her first alert in a launch control center in the F.E. Warren AFB Missile Complex, where she and a crew commander monitored the ICBM mission in their flight area. Lieutenant Macpherson is the 320th Missile Squadron deputy missile combat crew commander. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jason Wiese)

The Spoils of War Go to Contractors in Afghanistan

By Arthur McKinley

The Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan estimated that between \$31 billion and \$60 billion was lost to fraud during U.S. operations in those countries. The Justice Department says it brought 237 criminal

cases from November 2005 to September 2014 arising from war-zone misconduct — often contracting fraud.

"We just were not equipped to do sufficient oversight and monitoring on the front end, and

we didn't have sufficient accountability mechanisms on the back end, which led to enormous problems," said Laura Dickinson, a national security law professor at George Washington University.

LORAIN COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Temporary financial assistance may be available to Veterans or their widow who show a need and meet eligibility requirements. Assistance is based on household income and may be given for rent or mortgage, property tax, utilities, car payment, car/home/life/medical insurances, food and/or personal items.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is provided to and from the VA Medical Facilities in Wade Park & Parma and the VA Clinic in Lorain. To schedule a ride please call 440.284.4624.

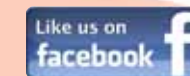


VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

If you have a disability that you feel is connected to your time in service, please call our office to speak with a Veterans Service Officer. Our VSO's hold accreditation through the Ohio Department of Veterans Services and the National Association of Veterans Service Officers. They are the duty experts on the claims process and serve as your liaison to the Department of Veteran's Affairs.

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at Lorain County Community College

The Student Veterans Services office at LCCC assists all veterans, guardsmen, reservists and their spouses with making the transition to a successful educational career. You've done your duty, now let us help you prepare for your future.

LCCC's Veterans Service Center is a one-stop shop where you can:

- Learn how to maximize your veteran's benefits
- Learn about other scholarships available
- Talk with a Veterans Certifying Official
- Meet with a Counselor
- Explore all that LCCC has to offer



"The Veterans Services staff at LCCC is great and I was able to work with a success coach right from the beginning," said Navy veteran Esperanza Correa. She is studying social work at LCCC through the University Partnership.



Call LCCC's Veterans Service Center at 440-366-7685

or visit www.lorainccc.edu/veterans

or email our office at veterans@lorainccc.edu.



Greater Cleveland Fisher House Families, Wounded Veterans & Our Oath

By Tom Sweeney

It is a simple, straightforward story about wounded veterans and their families. It is about mothers, fathers, wives, husbands and children.

When our young men and women voluntarily join our armed forces, each swears to "...ars to ut mothers, fathers, wives, husbands and their children-support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic."

Brief though it may be, it is a solemn oath. Come hell or high water, young troops pledge their lives and honor to protect us.

Long after the winds of war die away, deep shadows of pain and suffering continue, though hardly noticed by us.

The Greater Cleveland Fisher House will bring light and comfort to the families of those troops whose lives were damaged or irrevocably changed as they lived up to that oath.

Our aim is clear, and vital. A Fisher

House will provide comfortable housing at no cost to families whose veterans are in the Stokes VA hospital or as a VA patient being treated by the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, MetroHealth and others.

Fisher Houses are not new; they are gifts from Zachary Fisher, who passed away in June, 1999. At present, 62 Fisher Houses dot the map of America.

Building one in Cleveland will be an honor as well as a fulfillment of our civilian anthem during World War II, "To wait and pray for them 'til they all come home." Today, as a combat veteran from Vietnam, I add this, "... r the-mility to our veterans.eland who 'gives a damn.'" d we'll do it with the help of their families, the Fisher Housebut if they are broken, we will fix them as best we can and do it with the help of their families, the Fisher House, and everyone from Greater Cleveland who 'gives a damn.'" come home." Today, as combat veteran from Vietnam

Our VA hospital ranks No. 1 in the U.S. for its eight "Centers of Excellence," and is a 'step-down' treatment center for patients from Walter Reed and Bethesda hospitals. We care for veterans and those veterans need the medicine that only family can give.

The most valuable element in healing is the hug and hand of a parent, a wife, a husband or a child. Families who are part of the treatment have much greater odds of staying intact. It's the relationship.

Remember, our veterans took an oath and took a chance on us. They bet their lives on us. It is now our turn to volunteer to serve those who volunteered to serve us.

Here's the good news and the better news. The Fisher House Foundation will evenly split the cost of a Greater Cleveland Fisher House.

The better news is our Fisher House will have 18 suites in the 16,000 square foot home. *There is no*

charge to families. Our Fisher House will cost \$6 million to build. We are asked to raise half of that. We are just over the \$2 million dollar mark and fully expect to break ground next year.

The Greater Cleveland Fisher House is a fully registered 501c.3 and all contributions are tax deductible by federal law.

You see, the "Call to Duty" is now ours. That call is to every business, corporation, government, veteran organization and every supporter of veterans.

In short, 'give a damn' and with the help of their families let's 'fix those who are broken' as best we can.

It is our own oath. Take it. It is a debt that is legitimately owed. When we honor and help our veterans, we bring honor to ourselves.

Tom Sweeney, President
Greater Cleveland Fisher House
Combat Veteran, Vietnam

How an American hero was court-martialed

Regarded as the father of the U.S. Air Force, Billy Mitchell joined the Army General Staff before World War I and was soon responsible for determining if aviation could aid the war effort.

When assigned to Europe, he flew combat missions in France and led the Americans' aviation efforts there. He was renowned for Army antics and his staunch push for airpower's independence both impressed and

annoyed his superiors.

But when the Navy dirigible Shenandoah crashed in 1925, killing its crew, Mitchell uttered a phrase to reporters that would motivate President Calvin Coolidge to call for his court-martial: "These accidents are the result of the incompetency, the criminal negligence and the almost treasonable negligence of our national defense by the Navy and War Departments."

Mitchell was found guilty of insubordination and suspended without pay for five years. He sank into financial ruin and resigned in Feb-



Billy Mitchell

ruary 1926. In 1946, ten years after his death, Mitchell was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal by President Franklin Roosevelt for his contributions to military aviation.

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The Greater Cleveland Fisher House needs your help to build a home where military families can stay while their service members are being treated through the Cleveland VA Medical Center and surrounding facilities.



GREATER CLEVELAND FISHER HOUSE ★ WWW.GCFH.ORG

Brandie S. Smith: Mission(s) Accomplished

By Warren Harley

On the Great Highway of Life, Brandie S. Smith ignores speed limits, and with equal abandon, runs stop signs and red lights. The only advice given her by traffic cops is, "You go, Brandie!"

Some friendly advice: If Smith accepts a mission, get the hell out of her way.

While in uniform for nine years, Smith was a team member that designed and installed power grids for combat support hospitals. She also assumed duties in the recruiting and retention command.

She is not only military smart; she is book smart as well. The veteran holds a Bachelor of Art Degree in Urban Studies (2006) and a Master's Degree in Public Administration (2011) from Cleveland State University.

She has taken her hard-won experience and education and applied them to wide-ranging challenges in both the veteran and civilian communities.

Smith is a former member of San Antonio Military and Veteran Community Council Employer and Economic Development Solution Team; the Cuyahoga County Veterans Employment Transition Team; Family Readiness Group Leader; Treasurer for the PTO Board and parent representative on the Campus Education Improvement Council. She co-presented military hiring strategies and best practices at the U.S. Conference of Mayors Workforce Development Council/National Association of Workforce Boards in 2012.

Smith has a diverse background with over ten years' experience in



Brandie S. Smith

program design, implementation and management.

Her résumé is more than impressive; it boggles the mind. Some of the organizations she has provided consultative services to are:

Regional Healthcare System Coordinator for Northeast Ohio Health Science Innovation Coalition. Implemented a successful one year pilot Military Hiring Initiative for Active Duty military personnel transitioning from Texas to Ohio that resulted in 25% of the applicants being

hired in both clinical and non-clinical positions before their final exit date from the military. Also assisted in the re-design of a pilot class for foreign trained healthcare workers. Collaborated with partners such as Global Cleveland, Ohio Board of Regents, University of Cleveland and University of Akron. Candidates gained higher English attainment resulting in a 75% referral to training for credentials and licensure and 45% job placement in the medical field.

Job Developer for Towards Employment. Cultivated employer relationships in the healthcare sector, identified job opportunities, proofed resumes, conducted mock interviews and matched program graduates to the appropriate opportunities resulting in 83% of the candidates getting interviews. Towards Employment is a non-profit supporting low-income individuals with barriers to employment.

Army Family Program Manager at Joint Base San Antonio. Served as the principal advisor to a three star General. Proactively established and maintained relationships with community partners to ensure Army equities were being met according to the Joint Base Memorandum of Agreement Common Levels of Support metrics. Served as the Command's Subject Matter Expert on Army Family Action Plan; Family Programs Chairperson for the Risk Assessment Prevention Joint Base Action Council and primary Army representative to all Joint Base Family Program working groups to include the Air Force Community Partnership Initiative for Workforce and Transition.

Director of Talent at Forward March, Inc. Provided direct business assistance during the company's startup phase by developing a SWOT Analysis, writing job descriptions, participating in community and business stakeholder meetings, and advising on emerging program design and strategy.

As if that were not enough, she has taught web-based American National Government classes as an adjunct faculty member at Lorain County Community College in Elyria, Ohio and served as an Interim Program Manager for JD Breast Cancer Foundation.

Today a military spouse in the Detroit area, she continues to excel at adapting and engaging in new roles. She is a creative systems thinker adept at working within the regulations, policies and laws of multiple partners assisting them in reaching individual goals while still advancing partnership objectives.

at Joint Base San Antonio. Served

"There is strong. There is Army Strong. And then there is Army Wife Strong."

— Author Aditi Mathur Kumar,
Soldier and Spice - An Army Wife's Life

The Dogs of War: Always Faithful

By Bob Ralls

Editorial meetings at DD 214 Chronicle are usually quiet affairs. The previous edition is critiqued, coffee and sweet rolls from Elmwood Bakery shared, story ideas batted around before a vote is taken, and spittoons are cleaned. (If you can clean a cat's litter box, you can refresh a spittoon.)

After reviewing story ideas, votes are taken. The vote is rarely unanimous, but unlike the military, majority rules.

Four out of five members of the group own dogs. (No purebreds, by the way; all are pound puppies.) One of the staff members reminded us of the roles assumed and carried out by dogs in the military.

Dogs and combat have a long, long history; they were part of the Roman army. Like soldiers in every war, some came home and some didn't.

As any dog owner/handler/partner/companion will attest, dogs share the Marine motto, "Always Faithful."

Dogs are not picky eaters. Rank



means nothing to them. They don't watch the clock. Once trained, they are experts in their fields. They appear to love their work. To war dogs, time of day or night means nothing; they are eager to work regardless of weather.

When they leave us, our hearts are broken.

In Desert Storm and Desert Shield, more than 100 Military Working Dog Teams served our country and protected our troops.

In America, war dogs are trained at Lackland Air Force Base, in San Antonio, Texas. Training to become a vital member of our Armed Forces takes five months. Military protocol is not one of the courses. Once trained, they become globetrotters.

Each dog costs \$3,100, but once trained, they are worth about \$11,000. They are accurate in their detection capabilities, and worth far more.

The best of the breeds for their work are German shepherds and

Belgian Malinois, which looks like a shepherd's first cousin. Both are hard workers, intelligent, and loyal (to a fault.)

By way of example, the United States War Dogs Association estimates these brave animals and their handlers saved more than 10,000 lives in Vietnam. One reason is their sense of smell, which is far more sensitive than ours.

In our noses, we have five to 15 million smell receptors. Dogs can have anywhere 125 million to 250 million smell receptors.

For all their loyalty and passion, we treated dogs poorly for a long, long time; when dogs were about ten years old, and no longer able to work as soldiers, they were destroyed.

Not so anymore. A law passed in 2010 allows the four-legged troopers to be adopted by their current or former handlers, individuals with proper skills for caring for them, and law enforcement agencies.

It is the least we can do.

You served us. Now it's time to serve you.



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The Homeless Veterans Prevention Act

Would Improve VA's Programs for Homeless and At-Risk Veterans; Provide Resources for Underserved Female Veteran Population

TOLEDO, OH — With colder temperatures arriving, U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) — a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee — visited Griffin House, an apartment complex serving homeless veterans, today to outline a plan to further support the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) goal of eliminating veteran homelessness by the end of 2015.

"Veterans who serve their country in order to protect our freedoms should never face homelessness," Brown said. "This legislation would help Ohio veterans by providing additional resources to help keep them off the streets and start rebuilding their lives by finding transitional housing."

Brown was joined by Jed Flint, a northwest Ohio Army veteran who was homeless and struggling with substance abuse issues until receiving help from the VA. Jennifer Cawthorn-Mapes, the property manager at Griffin House, also discussed efforts to provide supportive services for veterans struggling with mental health and/or substance abuse issues.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), 62,619 veterans were determined to be homeless during a "point-in-time" survey conducted on a single night in January 2012.

Brown outlined how *The Homeless Veterans Prevention Act* would improve homelessness prevention programs by developing public-private partnerships focused on increasing the availability of legal services to homeless veterans; expanding transitional housing opportunities to include increased resources and eligibility for female veterans and veterans with dependents; and increasing existing programs. Specifically, the legislation would:

Improve homelessness prevention programs by allowing the VA to develop public-private partnerships focused on increasing the availability of legal services available to homeless veterans to help obtain proper identification, representation before the

court system, and assistance with legal issues associated with housing and family law. A recent VA survey found that lack of legal services was one of the top four unmet needs among homeless veterans.

Increase transitional housing programs by establishing strict standards for grantees to meet the needs of female veterans by providing gender-specific housing. The Act would also help keep families together by allowing dependents into transitional programs.

Expand existing programs by increasing the current eligibility for the Homeless Veterans Dental Program to include HUD-Veterans Affairs Supporting Housing (HUD-VASH) participants and reauthorizes several current VA programs that fund drop-in centers, rapid re-housing and transitional programs, and employment assistance.

As the only Ohio Senator to serve a full term on the Senate Veterans Affairs' Committee, Brown has introduced a package of key legislative proposals aimed at addressing issues facing Ohio veterans.

In July, Brown announced House introduction of his *Mental Health Exposure Military Official Record Act (MEMORY Act)* — a revised version of the *Significant Event Tracker (SET) Act*. The legislation would ensure that unit commanders document events that individual service members are exposed to which might later be connected to Post-Traumatic Stress, mild Traumatic Brain Injury, or other injuries.

In response to the disability claims backlog, Brown has helped secure record funds and staffing for the VA to combat the backlog. In November 2013, Brown announced that key provisions of his *Veterans Services Outreach (VSO) Act* passed the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. The Act would require the VA to notify veterans filing claims electronically that they can receive help and important time-saving information that could significantly reduce their wait time.

HEALTH MATTERS

Migraine, the Headache that Cripples

By Grace Lanning

If you suffer migraines, or know someone who does, you know crippling pain. The World Health Organization reports migraines are among the 20 most disabling illnesses. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, women are more likely to suffer migraines than men, 22 percent women and 10 percent men.

Migraines cost us \$20 billion every

year for doctor visits and medication, plus lost work.

Enter the U.S. pharmaceutical business. Relieving the crippling pain of migraines is big business.

Treximet is sometimes prescribed for sufferers. It is marketed by GlaxoSmith/Kline.

While the drug can sometimes ease the pain, Treximet comes with warnings, among them:

Warnings

- Increased risk of cardiovascular thrombotic events, myocardial infarction, and stroke, which can be fatal.
- Increased risk of gastrointestinal bleeding, ulceration, perforation of stomach or intestines. These situations can be fatal.
- The above problems can hit without warning signs. Old people are at a higher risk.

- Cerebrovascular hemorrhage, subarachnoid hemorrhage, stroke, and other cerebrovascular events, some fatal, have been reported in patients treated with sumatriptan. In a number of cases, it appears possible that these events were primary. Treximet contains sumatriptan and naproxen sodium.
- Not good for pregnant or nursing mothers.

The Arts and War

By Emily Hopkins

If there is a silver lining in war, it might be the inspiration war provides the arts. Literature, film, and music add vital dimensions to war. Here are some of the books, movies, and music that allow us to step back to wartime and experience, however vicariously, America at war.



The Andrews Sisters

Books

A War to Be Won: Fighting the Second World War by Williamson Murray
Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption by Laura Hillenbrand

Band of Brothers: E Company, 506th Regiment, 101st Airborne from Normandy to Hitler's Eagle's Nest by Stephen E. Ambrose

Films

Great movies, as well: *To Hell and Back*; *Casablanca*; the *Great Escape*; *Tora, Tora, Tora*; *Schindler's List*.

Music

The role played by music cannot be ignored because it soothed and encouraged the hearts of a nation whose boys and girls were far, far from home and in imminent danger.

Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy, *The Andrews Sisters*; *I'll Be Seeing You*, Tommy Dorsey and His Orchestra; *Don't Get Around Much Anymore*, Duke Ellington and His Orchestra; *Till Then*, The Mills Brothers.

(In the next edition of *DD 214 Chronicle*, we look and listen to the arts that reflected the Vietnam War.)

Seventy years ago, my dad was captured in Selestat, France

"About 2 a.m. on December 2nd, we heard tanks coming down the road and the guys said it was probably our own Tank Destroyer outfits. As they got closer, we could hear that they were coming from the opposite direction of our troops, so we kept watching. Pretty soon we could make out 4 or 5 tanks coming toward us; they were enemy tanks. We took to the buildings, most of them empty. We fired on the tanks and tried to scare them off, but we were caught red-handed without any anti-tank weapons. We could pick off the accompanying infantry, but we couldn't scratch the tanks. We kept fighting, but they came right up on us.

"I was in the building nearest the river near the bridge. I went to the other end of the building and told the guys not to shoot; we had no defense against the tanks, let them go through us.

"They lined up three tanks in front of the buildings and one tank was sitting on the bridge. I was in a room only about 30 yards from the river. I was tempted to swim across the river, but when I looked out the window the tank crew saw me and started to lower the gun and aim at the window. I ran to the back wall and climbed behind a heat stove. Then all hell broke loose.

"The stones were collapsing all around and I was buried in a pile of rubble. I must have been knocked out. When I came to I was buried in a pile of cement and bricks. The Jerries were in the room throwing grenades around. I caught a few pieces, but I was so numb I couldn't feel it. My shoulder and back ached pretty bad.

"I must have passed out for a while; when they saw me they dug me out of the rubble and took me outside. I was pretty dazed and didn't know what had happened."

"I saw some of our boys standing outside the building across the street with their hands over their heads. Their buildings had been surrounded and knocked down, too.

"They brought out of one of our officers on a door. It looked like his



legs were practically shot off. He was covered with a blanket. I happened to remember seeing an arm sticking out of the ruins of our building. It was too late to go back, but I later heard it may have been my Assistant Scout Corbiel. I also heard that T/Sgt. Bur-

nett was killed. I thought my best buddy, Rippey, was killed, too, but I later found out that he made a miraculous escape.

(And here is how Clayton Rippey escaped. My father was Clarence Swope, but his buddies knew him as 'Mike.')

"We were in the second floor of this house because the bottom floor is where they keep the livestock, and the storage, and so on, and that's where there was a big pile of turnips down in the corner there - great big things, big as cantaloupes.

"Along about two or three in the morning, we could hear this loud motor and we peeked outside and we could see all these soldiers coming into this area with a huge tiger tank. The first thing they did was the tank

shot the bridge out right behind us and then they just started yelling for everybody to come out of the houses.

"Some of them didn't come out, and so the tank just would turn its guns on whatever house they were yelling at and give them two or three

blasts and they very quickly learned that they better come out in a hurry. So they surrendered, but I'm up there with all of this stuff, these souvenirs - German flags, an iron cross, little automatics and stuff like that. And I'm trying to find where all these souvenirs are stuck and I wanted to get rid of them, so I didn't get caught with any of them on

my person, because we heard that if they caught you with German souvenirs, you were a dead guy.

"By the time I got them all fished out, I reached down in front of me and I thought Mike was right in front of me, and he wasn't. It was pitch black in that house, and I couldn't see anything, and I whispered out, 'Mike. Mike.'"

"Nobody answered. "So I crawled over and I came to this opening and took a step and fell

about halfway down these stairs into the storage area with the cows and pigs and stuff down there. And I found these turnips and dug a hole and climbed into the hole and then pulled the turnips in on top of me. Nobody came in there. I was in there, I don't know, a couple-three hours, I suppose. And then I heard American voices, a couple of guys talking. I thought, oh, man, something has happened here. This is in the daylight by then. I got out and peeked around the corner, and there was a G.I. Our guys had come in and the Germans were gone."

Clayton did not know my father was a prisoner-of-war until after the war.

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A Dirty Dozen Phrases Civilians Will Never Understand

By Kenneth McClure

1. Bravo one, this is Bravo three, over.
2. Fruit salad
3. Hit the silk
4. Big Red One
5. REMF
6. Willy Pete
7. Full bird
8. First shirt
9. Pop smoke
10. Deuce and a half
11. P-38
12. Friendly fire

New VA Chief Promises Veterans to Listen, Act

CLEVELAND, Ohio – If newly-minted VA chief Anthony Milons, Jr. is worried about his new job and the towering pile of problems he inherited, it doesn't show in his demeanor or behavior.

Figures. The guy served in the Marine Corps.

In only his third day on the job as the new director of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Cleveland Regional Benefit Office, Anthony Milons Sr. stepped into a bull's-eye of controversy.

The office, which handles financial benefits for about 900,000 veterans in Ohio, hosted a town hall discussion, inviting feedback from veterans as part of a national VA town hall program designed to improve its programs and services.

Milons, who was previously assistant director of the VA's regional office in New York, was hit with volleys of criticism, outrage and sometimes even tears from many of about 40 veterans and family members attending the session.

And he asked for more, in what Milons said will be a regular quarterly public forum at the Cleveland office.

Milons opened the event by saying he was excited about the process. "This is an opportunity for us to have a conversation," he said. "This is not the last conversation. This is the beginning."

"We're going to take feedback from you guys in order for us to do a bet-

ter job of serving you," added Milons, who served in the Marines.

The vets were quick to respond. Many cited delays lasting years in getting claims and appeals settled.

One Vietnam veteran told Milons, "You're treating disability compensation like it's a gift. It's not a gift. It's a compensation."

Another veteran of the Korean War said he has been fighting with the VA over a disability claim since 1955.

Milons quietly heard out each veteran, and offered them an immediate session with VA case workers on hand to discuss and possibly resolve their problems.

Often, he readily admitted, "We need to do a better job." Or, "We need to provide more resources in that area." Or, "We're going to take steps to resolve that."

To one veteran who demanded, "When is the VA going to start telling the truth?" Milons responded, "I promise we will give you the right information, and have courage enough to tell you the truth."

One woman, Lyn Adanich, of Parma, came to the microphone clutching the burial flag of her husband, Donald, a Vietnam veteran. She wondered why she has been waiting more than four months for the VA to process a widow's pension. "Does the mortgage company wait four months? The utility company? Why does the process take so long?" she asked.

Then, motioning to the veterans seated around her, she told Milons, "You need to make some changes. You need to take care of these veterans. They took care of you."

Milons expressed his sympathy for her loss, then noted, "We have to do better. We'll take care of you, M'am."

One man identified himself as a former employee of the Cleveland Regional Benefit Office, and said he had been the victim of reprisals and retaliation for reporting suspected wrongdoing by his fellow workers. He asked what Milon's policy would be in those cases.

"I won't tolerate supervisors who won't do the right thing," Milons said.

"You can't tolerate the mistreatment of whistleblowers," he added. "We won't retaliate. We'll say thank you."

Patrick Sullivan, 39, of Fairport Harbor, attended a town hall discussion earlier this month at the Louis Stokes Cleveland Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and also had some questions for the Cleveland Regional Office. Sullivan said that after he complained at the earlier town hall discussion about waiting more than a year for a knee brace, he got his brace the next day.

Tuesday he told Milons his claims for compensation relating to being sexually assaulted while serving in the Army have been repeatedly denied by the VA.

"I feel like I'm being raped over and

over again every time I see a denial letter," he said. "All I can do is beg you to re-open my case. At least have it reconsidered. I deserve that."

Milons responded, "We'll make sure somebody looks at your case today, and hopefully get some resolution."

After 90 minutes the questions ended, and Milons told the remaining vets, "We're not a perfect organization, but we do care about veterans."

"We're going to do the best we can to become the best organization in the country," he added. "We are not where we need to be yet, but I guarantee we're going in the right direction."

Tony Dockus, 68, of Aurora, a Vietnam vet who helps veterans with benefit claims through American Legion Post 803 and VFW Post 2629, said the discussion session was "well overdue. Well overdue." But he thought future sessions might help improve veterans' knowledge about VA benefits – an awareness he rates, on a scale of one to 100, at about 40.

Bret Clark, 53, of Wooster, a Navy vet, said the session was "a very good first step. It's a good start, but there's still a long way to go."

When Milons announced that the next town hall discussion, Clark shouted out, "I guarantee you'll fill the place up."

Milons didn't bat an eye, and replied, "Just what I'm looking forward to."

Cuyahoga Land Bank has a home ownership program crafted just for Veterans

The Cuyahoga Land Bank offers a special program crafted just for Veterans – HomeFront Cuyahoga County. This program offers assistance to eligible veterans interested in purchasing a renovated move-in ready home from the Cuyahoga Land Bank.

Veterans interested in purchasing a home are eligible for a discount of up to 20% of the purchase price. All homes meet the Cuyahoga Land Bank's Housing Quality Standards and all applicable point-of-sale requirements and the Cuyahoga Land Bank is paying closing costs.

"This is a fantastic program that makes it so much more possible to own a home without getting into

a huge loan," said U.S. Army SPC Holden Gibbons, who recently renovated a home in Euclid through the Program. "The single biggest factor that I can point to as to why dealing with the Land Bank was such an enjoyable experience was the people. You feel like you're dealing with family at every stage of the process."

Veterans who may not yet be bankable but have had steady employment for at least one year, may qualify as lease-to-own buyers. The Cuyahoga Land Bank will work with these veterans to promote home ownership through lease-to-own options.

"This program is an opportunity

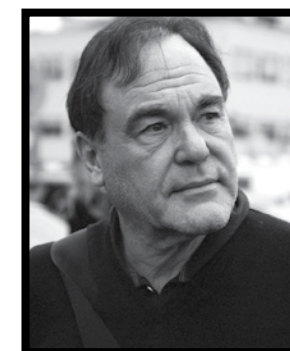
for us to give back to the men and women that have risked their lives for our country," said Cuyahoga Land Bank President Gus Frangos. "We are able to provide a chance for veterans to own a home on very flexible terms as well as to establish immediate equity."

In order to renovate a home through the HomeFront Veterans Program, the veteran must: intend to live in the property as their primary residence for at least two years; provide satisfactory documentation to the Cuyahoga Land Bank that shows they have the ability to obtain financing within a reasonable period of time; agree to follow all the rules and policies

as promulgated by the Cuyahoga Land Bank; sign a Cuyahoga Land Bank purchase/renovation/lease-to-own contract; have a minimum credit score as determined by the Cuyahoga Land Bank; have been employed for at least one year; Other terms and/or conditions may apply.

Specified properties in the Cuyahoga Land Bank inventory are available to veterans via the Homefront – Cuyahoga County, a Veterans' homeownership program.

More information on Homefront – Cuyahoga County is available on the Cuyahoga Land Bank website at: www.cuyahogalandbank.org/homefront or please call 216-698-8853.



Oliver Stone: An Artist With Boots on the Ground
 Moviemaker Oliver Stone, director and writer for *Platoon* and *Born on the Fourth of July*, was awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart for his service in Vietnam. Both movies earned him Academy Awards for Best Director.

From Fatigues to Casual Dress:

VA makes education a simple (and inexpensive) matter; These schools want you to wear their school colors

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 Antonelli College
 Baldwin Wallace University
 Bowling Green State University
 Bryant & Stratton College Akron
 Bryant & Stratton College Cleveland Downtown
 Bryant & Stratton College Eastlake Campus
 Bryant & Stratton College Parma
 Capital University
 Case Western Reserve University
 Cedarville University
 Central Ohio Technical College
 Central State University
 Cincinnati State Technical & Community College
 Clark State Community College
 Cleveland Institute Of Dental Medical Assistants
 Cleveland State University

Columbus State Community College
 Cuyahoga Community College
 Davis College
 Defiance College
 Elite Welding Academy
 Franklin University
 Great Lakes Truck Driving School
 Hamrick School
 Hocking College
 Ivy Tech Community College Columbus
 James A Rhodes State College
 John Carroll University
 Kaplan College Dayton
 Kent State University
 Lake Erie College
 Lakeland Community College
 Lorain County Community College

Lourdes University
 Malone University
 Marion Technical College
 Miami University
 Mount St. Joseph University
 North Central State College
 Ohio Business College
 Ohio Christian University
 Ohio Dominican University
 Ohio Northern University
 Ohio Technical College
 Ohio University
 Owens Community College
 Stautzenberger College
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 The Art Institute Of Ohio Cincinnati
 The Ohio State University

The University Of Akron
 The University Of Akron Wayne College
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History Takes Flight at Military Aviation Preservation Society

By Glen Miller

Tucked away behind the busy Akron-Canton Airport in Green, Ohio is the Military Aviation Preservation Society (MAPS), a growing aircraft museum that honors the men and women who took to the skies in defense of our country.

Created in 1990, the MAPS Air Museum houses 43 aircraft ranging from the earliest days of flying to supersonic jet fighters, each significant to aviation warfare.

Aircraft include the Navy F-4 Phantom and the P-51 Mustang, which has a special memorial at the museum's entrance.

Each aircraft has helped to win wars, pushed the boundaries of flight and changed aviation.

"Not many people know we're here, what we are, or what we do, but that's changing," said Executive Director Kim David Kovesci.

Over the years, visits have boomed from 2,700 to more than 28,000 this year.

Among the visitors every year are 1,500 high school students who are taught the vital role pilots, ground crews, and support staff played in defending freedom.

Expansion plans call for building classrooms where more students can be shown videos and taught by Reed Kimball, MAPS director of education.

Volunteer tour guides enhance individual and group visits with background about the museum's displays and often share some of their experiences, Kovesci said.

All visitors are directed to the museum's Gallery of Heroes, a spe-



Death from the Skies:
A Hands-On Lesson of War



cial display area inside MAPS' main hanger that features the stories of the American aviators who flew war planes – their heroism, sacrifices and achievements.

MAPS emphasizes history was not made only by airplanes, but by the men and women who designed, built and flew them, Reed said.

The gallery even includes a small piece of the U.S.S. Arizona, sunk by the Japanese air attack at Pearl Harbor.

"With education being a central part of our mission statement, we focus our efforts on providing a hands-on educational experience

that truly brings history to life," said Kimball.

Programs can be tailored to meet the needs of the audience and to address specific events or periods of aviation history, he explained. Membership to MAPS is national; members' financial help and devotion to the men and their flying machines

keep the museum flying.

In addition, Kovesci prepares grant proposals to philanthropic and corporate foundations. All of the funds, including admission fees, help maintain and operate the museum.

Volunteers are involved in everything from restoring aircraft (labors of love), to guiding tours, to maintaining the facilities, and helping with special events, Kovesci said.

Want to volunteer? Although some volunteers are veterans, including a few former pilots, Reed said no experience with aircraft or museums

is needed.

The museum hosts several special events during the year, including visits of famous aircraft, and hosts private events and group tours throughout the year.

Once an Ohio National Air Guard facility, MAPS maintains a two-story main hangar, a restoration hangar; a former motor pool building is rented from the Akron-Canton Airport for \$1 a year.

Located off exit 112 of I-77 in Green, Ohio, MAPS is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Sundays from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Information about MAPS is available at: www.mapsairmuseum.org or by calling 330-896-6322.

Admission is \$8 for adults, \$7 for people 60 or older, \$5 for children 6-12 and free for children under age 6.

Army Vet charts new course for future with Lakeland Community College

Opportunity starts HERE

For four years, Ron Sheaks served as a combat engineer in Baghdad, Iraq, with the U.S. Army. During that time, one of his primary roles was route clearance for coalition forces.



Now a civilian, Sheaks is pursuing an associate degree in geospatial technology at Lakeland Community College and eventually wants to work for an architectural firm or in urban planning.

Geospatial technology is a fast-growing, dynamic field that's particularly well-suited for

veterans like Sheaks who have vast experience using GPS technology, mapping and satellite imagery.

Looking back, he realizes his role in the Army gave him much exposure to the use of geographic information systems (GIS), which may have helped spark his interest.

"However, I have an interest in the way things relate spatially," said Sheaks, "particularly buildings and infrastructure."

And it's that curiosity that allows him to stay the course toward his degree goals!



Ron Sheaks
GIS Student

"With geospatial technology, you're able to use many facets of your personality –



from your artistic, creative side to critical thinking and analytical skills. Since it's multi-disciplinary, there are many emerging markets – and opportunities."

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– George Orwell

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