

Pass the Popcorn: We're Going to War

By Terry Meehan



In 1895, Thomas Edison perfected the Kinetoscope and the movie industry was born. Three years later, on February 15, 1898, the USS Maine mysteriously blew up in Havana Harbor, leading to the Spanish-American War. Cameras were dispatched to Florida in time to film a funeral procession of those who died on the sunken ship. The war itself was reenacted by Edison's cameramen in the woods of New Jersey; other filmmakers portrayed the Maine's demise in bathtubs and water tanks. The war movie is as old as the cinema itself, and here are ten of the best.

1. Apocalypse Now

(Francis Ford Coppola, 1979)

Based on Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902), *Apocalypse Now* is a journey into the dark heart of

the Vietnam War. Captain Willard (Martin Sheen) has been ordered to pursue rogue officer Colonel Kurtz (Marlon Brando), into the depths of the Cambodian jungle. As Coppola's camera follows Willard, we see what he sees, a visually stunning array of characters and locales that can only be described as the "terrible beauty" of war. The making of the movie was itself an apocalyptic expedition: Typhoons tore through scenery and sets, Sheen suffered a heart attack, and of course there was Marlon Brando. An excellent making-of documentary, called *Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse*, is definitely worth watching too.

2. Lawrence of Arabia

(David Lean, 1962)

World War I is heating up and author-soldier T. E. Lawrence (Peter O'Toole)

is bored with his general staff duties and talks his way into a transfer to Arabia, where the German-allied Turks hold sway over the bickering Arab tribes. Once there, Lawrence finds himself drawing water from a Bedouin well as a black speck becomes barely visible on the desert horizon. Is it the Turks, or death itself, approaching? The suspense builds, until we finally see a galloping Omar Sharif making one of the most spectacular entrances in movie history. Is T. E. Lawrence a madman or a genius? Can he, or anyone, unite the Arabs in order to drive out the Turk?

3. Paths of Glory

(Stanley Kubrick, 1957)

Paths of Glory is the film that signaled Stanley Kubrick's transformation from a very good director to a great one. The film's star, Kirk

Douglas, called it a high point of his career: "This is a picture that will always be good. I don't have to wait 50 years to know that; I know it now." Douglas made this remark 45 years ago. Kubrick's camera unblinkingly documents the desolation of trench warfare, the devastation of ill-advised attack, the dread of condemned men and the duplicity of ambitious generals. This World War I film was banned in France until 1975 but had a resurgence of popularity elsewhere during the Vietnam era.

4. The Bridge on the River Kwai

(David Lean, 1957)

During World War II, British prisoners of war in Burma are being forced to build a bridge that will be used to transport Japanese munitions into battle. Senior British officer, Lt. Colonel Nicholson (Alec Guinness), informs Commandant Saito (Sessue Hayakawa) that the Geneva Convention forbids this. Saito, with

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go for it.**

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STAND AT EASE *By John H. Tidyman, Editor*

Thank you for writing, and thank you, Rick DeChant

Unless it's a matter of clarification, our editors and writers are prohibited from responding to Mail Call. It is not a forum for debate. Mail Call represents the thoughts of our readers, and those thoughts are vital to the newspaper. It lets us know exactly what our readers think about our product. Readers who take the time to share their thoughts provide some of the best reading in the newspaper. Mail Call completes a partnership between readers and the newspaper.

Writing to Mail Call is a matter of readers taking the time to respond to a story, a reflection of their interest in this unique newspaper.

When I open envelopes addressed to Mail Call, I look forward to the letters, whether they are scathing, thoughtful, provocative, generous in praise, or story ideas.

Mail Call provides the *DD 214 Chronicle* editorial staff with food for thought. And we're hungry.

There are three legs on this stool, and each is equally important: readers, advertisers, and writers. If readers didn't respond to the newspaper, there would be no reason to publish. If advertisers didn't think the news-



paper was a vehicle worthy of their messages, there would be no newspaper. If writers didn't find and write about matters of importance to readers, there would be no newspaper.

All of the above is my way of thanking all three legs of the stool.

...

One of the many pleasures of publishing *DD 214 Chronicle* is meeting and talking with other veterans. There is an instant bond between veterans, no matter which branch or era of service.

Rick DeChant is one such veteran. He serves us as the Executive Director of Veteran Programs & Services for Cuyahoga Community College.

He understands the military, the Veterans Administration, and the value of education among veterans. Not only does he understand, but he works with veterans *and for veterans*, on both a personal and professional level. Just as important, he is a dedicated family man. I'm sure the John Carroll University graduate isn't perfect, but if there's a heaven, he's a'going. The ride up will be slow, however, because I'll be hanging onto his ankles, hoping I'm not recognized.

Mail Call

A Bill of Rights Issue

I pick up DD 214 Chronicle at the Fairlawn Library every issue. I have to respond to Richard Ruck's letter about Ganley Parma not lowering their flag to half-staff on 9/11 as Mr. Ruck had requested.

Several years after my discharge from the Army I started doing WWII re-enacting as a hobby which I did for over twenty years. The re-enacting took me to many different states, at many different military-themed public events.

Several times during these events one or more of the younger re-enactors would get upset when a civilian would not salute the flag or stand at attention when the National Anthem was played. It got to a point of wanting to give the offender a severe tongue lashing or worse.

I would tell the re-enactor that I have several photos at home that were taken during WWII, about 1943 or '44, where every person -- men, women, and children in the photo is saluting the flag as it passes. I asked, why do you think everyone is saluting? The standard answer was because everyone was more patriotic during WWII.

Maybe, but maybe not. The flag was red, white and black. It had a large swastika in the center. Everyone was saluting because there were homeland security police in civilian clothes in the crowd called the Gestapo that could make your life very miserable if you didn't salute.

We don't have to salute here in the US because of our Constitution's First Amendment, nor do we have to lower the flag on certain days. No one will arrest you if you don't; it's your choice, not someone else's.

Mr. Ruck, myself and everyone else who has served in the military took an oath to uphold that amendment to the Constitution. "I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States ... I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same."

I have to fully agree with the manager of Ganley Parma. "We don't have to," means he understands the Constitution more fully than Mr. Ruck. The manager could have said "We don't want to."

I'm surprised that Mr. Ruck, who

spent 20 years in the navy and took the oath several times never learned the meaning of free speech. The past three years I have set up a display in my yard on Memorial Day, the Fourth of July and Veterans' Day (weather permitting) with 38 American flags. I do so because I want to, not because I have to.

*Sam Hevener
Richfield*

Get Your Choppers Fixed

Hello, all. As we all know, dental coverage is a very important benefit to have, but unfortunately, not all Veterans can afford even the most basic of dental care because of high premiums and out-of-pocket expenses.

The VA has set out to do something about this issue.

The VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP) is a three-year, national pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing a premium-based dental insurance plan to eligible individuals. VA is offering this discounted service through Delta Dental and MetLife.

Eligibility for VADIP Veterans enrolled in the VA health care program and CHAMPVA program beneficiaries are eligible to participate in VADIP. Participation in VADIP will not affect Veterans' eligibility for VA dental services and treatment.

Dependents of Veterans, except those eligible under CHAMPVA, are not eligible for VADIP; however, separate coverage options may be offered dependents by the insurance carrier. For more information about VADIP.

I hope this info may be helpful to someone you know. Thanks.

*Michael Ellis
Veterans Representative - Region 2
Office of Workforce Development
11699 Brookpark Road
Parma, Ohio 44130*

Veterans on Pedestals

Thank you for the article in your Jan/Feb edition on our (American Legion Auxiliary Unit 214) Veterans' Day program. It was much appreciated and will be added to our collection of news about our Auxiliary and its work with veterans.

But the article on Page One

disturbed me and many others in our Post.

(Writer Bridget) O'Hanlon needs to visit some of the VA hospitals and see the veterans with missing limbs from wars and others who suffer from the effects of Agent Orange and many other service related illnesses.

Yes, Bridget, we put veterans on a pedestal, but not *high enough* in my eyes. They deserve every accolade that we can give them. You cannot categorize them with any other members of our society, and, yes, they stand on that pedestal alone. They are a unique group and I work tirelessly many, many hours to honor them.

Re the comment about veterans wearing uniforms to get free meals --- has Bridget ever asked one why they are wearing a uniform? Does she realize how many Honor/Color Guard members there are in just Northeast Ohio? They are all from the American Legion, the VFW, AMVET, etc., and they are all performing services for deceased veterans at wakes and grave sites.

They also wear uniforms on Memorial Day to honor those veterans who served and those who sacrificed their lives so that people like her have the freedom to write an article so despicable.

Veterans in my Post serve veterans every day and, yes, they may go to lunch or dinner in their uniforms afterwards, but none of them asks or expects a free meal.

That comment in the article nauseated me.

I don't know how Cuyahoga Community College can justify Ms. O'Hanlon's position as Student Advisor for Veterans Upward Bound when she obviously is not appreciative of what veterans have done for all of us.

She should be thankful to hear that the nation thanks and supports our troops.

God bless America and God bless our veterans. I love and honor all of you.

*Martha C. Setlock
American Legion Auxiliary*

This letter is in response to Bridget O'Hanlon's article about thanking vets. My friend is a 31-year Navy veteran, active and re-

serve. He spent time in Lebanon, and all over the world. When in the reserves he spent weekends away from his family. He now has a small pension which does not reflect the years he sacrificed in service of our nation.

The author's comments showed a total lack of respect for our military. A friend's young son is in the Army away from family and friends, collecting a very small paycheck. For a while they deducted over half of it for food, and he has to pay for all his uniforms, and most of his travel home on leave and to his next base. Tens of thousands have been killed and maimed, physically and mentally, in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Firefighters and police are also often heroes. But they are much better paid, and are not spending long periods of time away from their families.

Firefighters often have as much as 48 hours off with their families, and police usually work 8-hour shifts.

My friend sincerely appreciates and deserves "thank you for your service," sometimes from total strangers.

My grandson said when he was at the airport he was very honored and encouraged by the people who thanked him. The author should go to see the movie "Lone Survivor." Then perhaps she will change her perspective. The article was an insult to our military.

*Linda Gracey
Cleveland, Ohio*

Editor's Note: Writer Bridget Ludwa O'Hanlon is an NCO in the Ohio Army National Guard, and enlisted in 2002, after growing up in a military family (both parents served in the US Army, mother served AD component for ten years before switching to USAR and moving the family back to Cleveland). She has worked with Veterans attending college using the GI Bill since 2010, and currently serves as Advisor in Tri-C's Veterans Upward Bound program. Outside of her military duty and civilian occupation, Bridget serves as Chaplain for the American Legion Post 343 in Euclid.

Girls, Gams, Golf, and General Yoo Hoo

By Calvin Ball

It wasn't funny when it happened, especially if you belonged to the 110th Quartermaster, 35th Division, but it's funny now.

In WWII, Gen. Ben Lear, with a brand new star on his shoulders, was given the inglorious nickname, Gen. Yoo Hoo.

Here's what happened. The unit, 300 men and 80 vehicles, was returning to its Tennessee training grounds at Camp Robinson. It had just completed six weeks of field training.

When the convoy passed a country club, troops were treated to views of women players in shorts. The troops had lots to say to the attractive women, including "Yoo Hoo!"

Big mistake.

Lt. Gen. Lear was at the course, resplendent in seersucker knickers, knee socks and club in hand. As he watched and listened to his troops, his disgust overwhelmed his common sense. He was madder than a piano player in a marching band.

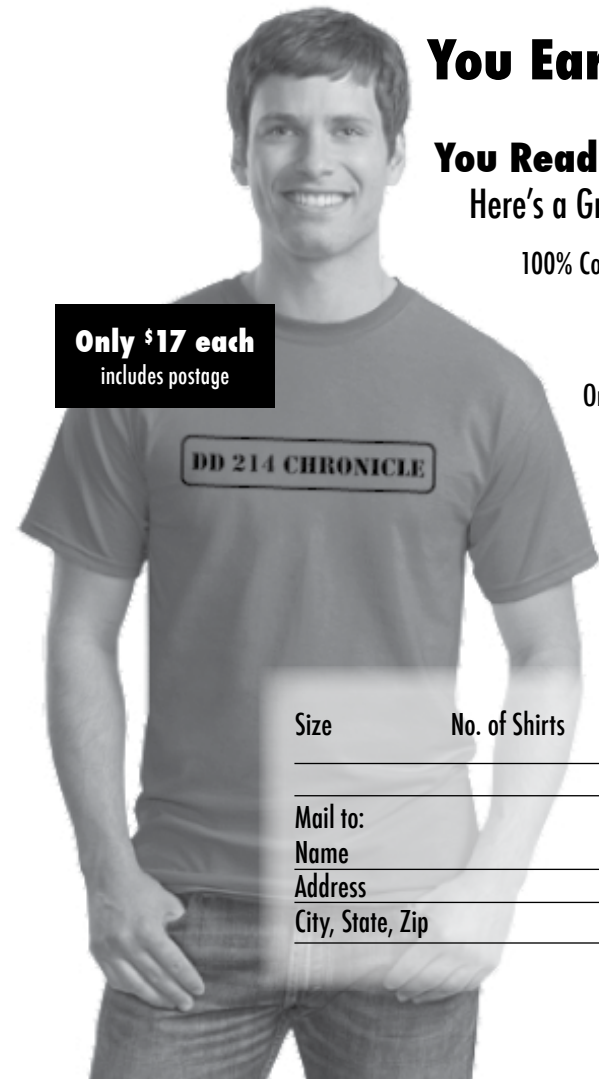
The convoy was a long one, and many of the men were unaware of the troops who were delighted to see attractive women.

To assuage his humiliation, the general ordered the whole kit-and-caboodle of troops to perform "about faces," and march back the training grounds. It was 97 degrees.

To say the troops suffered is akin to saying, "Gen. MacArthur had a way about him." A number of troops suffered heat exhaustion, and many hoped the general would suffer a heart attack. If he had a heart.

For his cruelty and lack of leadership, the knickers-clad general was nicknamed Gen. Yoo Hoo, a nickname that followed him to his grave. The unit was nicknamed "119th Yoo Hoo Regiment," a nickname embraced by the troops who suffered at the hands of Gen. Yoo Hoo.

There is a reason some soldiers adopt the initials FTA, and it isn't Fun, Travel, and Adventure.



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Lorain County Community College

Baldwin Wallace University Graduates: From Uncle Studley to Outer Space to Broadway to Hobbits

Over the course of more than a century, Baldwin Wallace University has educated and graduated 41,000 students. Many of them made marks in specific areas, but here's list of graduates whose names we know well:

Arthur Worth "Bud" Collins, Jr., who was named to the National Sportswriters & Sportscasters Hall of Fame in 2002. In 1999, he was honored with the Associated Press' Red Smith Award Recipient.

Collins was a 1947 graduate of Berea High School, and a graduate of Baldwin-Wallace College, where he was a member of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army.

During telecasts, Collins would often make reference to his fictitious "Uncle Studley," as well as a fanciful dandy known as Fingers Fortescue.

The best news about BWU is its

Michael D. Roberts, former city editor at *The Plain Dealer* and *Cleveland magazine*.

Olympic figure skater **Tonia Kwiatowski**;

Wayne G. Hammand, scholar and writer on J.R.R. Tolkien;

Diane Grendell, judge on 11th District Court of Appeals;

Football coach and athletic director **Lee Tressel**, who built a 155-52-6 record on the gridiron;

Journalist and sportscaster **Bud Collins**;

Former Cleveland City Council president and lawyer **George L. Forbes**;

Attorney, president of the Cleveland School Board, and social activist **Stanley Tolliver**;

Broadway and theater actor **Jill Paice**;

Olympic star **Harrison Dillard**;

Col. Robert F. Overmyer, USMC, test pilot and NASA astronaut.

nancial reach. Not so.

The G.I. Bill, revamped to better serve veterans, makes BWU accessible, and the connection with the VA makes challenge fast, simple, and valuable.

Here's are a few unheralded features about furthering your education in Berea: You're right next door to Metro Parks. Berea is a lovely small town with fascinating home designs from a century ago.

If BWU has a drawback, it is its mascot: Yellow Jackets, the bane of every backyard gardener. But veterans have gone through far more difficult ambushes to reach their goals.

dedication to veterans as university students. Its veterans club provides a gathering place where veterans can relax and socialize. It's also a place where veterans can share experienc-

es, problem resolutions, and strategies for success in the new challenge of formal education.

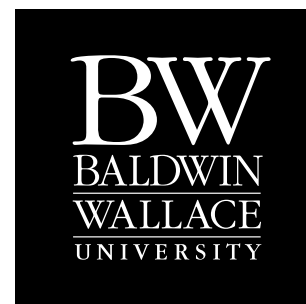
In the past, many veterans thought BWU to be out of their fi-

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The First Medal of Honor, the Korean War, "Get a Falcon, Malcolm," Bill Maudlin, the First and Last KIA in Vietnam

By Bennet Nettleton

1863

Congress made the Medal of Honor a permanent decoration. On March 3, Army officers became eligible for the Medal of Honor. The Secretary of War first presented the Medal of Honor to six Union Army volunteers on March 25, 1863 in his office.

1965

President Lyndon B. Johnson's aides, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy and Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, sent a memo to the President stating that America's limited military involvement in Vietnam was not succeeding, and that the U.S. has reached a 'fork in the road' in Vietnam and must either soon escalate or withdraw.

April 1945

Adolf Hitler commits suicide.

1950-1953

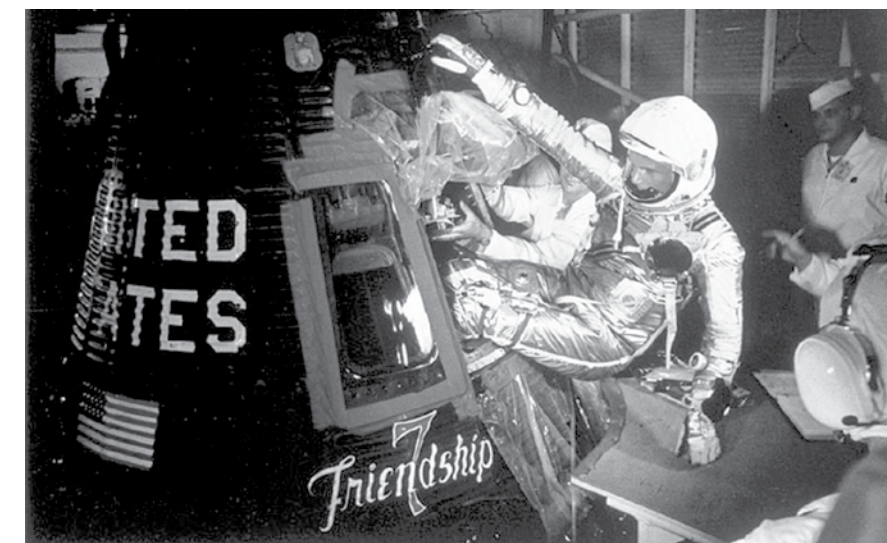
We sometimes think of the Korean Conflict as America and South Korea versus North Korea. Not quite. While the U.S. had the greatest number of troops, additional United Nations troops came from: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Columbia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. Sort of a Babylon with weapons.

1945-1948

In what might be described as the Trial of the 20th Century, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States created the International Military Tribunal (IMT) in Nuremberg, Germany, to prosecute and punish "the major war criminals of the European Axis."

July, 1945

In order to disarm the Japanese



the infantry."
— Bill Maudlin, who died last year and creator of 'Willie and Joe,' probably the best known infantryman in WWII.

1962

John Glenn piloted the Mercury-Atlas 6 "Friendship 7" spacecraft on the first manned orbital mission of the United States. Launched from Kennedy Space Center, Florida, he completed a successful three-orbit mission around the earth, reaching a maximum altitude (apogee) of approximately 162 statute miles and an orbital velocity of approximately 17,500 miles per hour. Glenn's "Friendship 7" Mercury spacecraft landed in the vicinity of Grand Turk Island. Mission duration from launch to impact was 4 hours, 55 minutes, and 23 seconds. Think about the courage it took. Remarkable and almost unbelievable.

1959

At a news conference broadcast to viewers in 21 cities on closed-circuit television, Henry Ford II introduced his company's newest car--the 90-horsepower, 30 miles-per-gallon Falcon. The Falcon, dubbed "the small car with the big car feel," was an overnight success. It went on sale that October 8 and by October 9, dealers had snapped up every one of the 97,000 cars in the first production run. "Get a Falcon, Malcolm."

1961-1975

First Vietnam battlefield fatality was Spec/4 James T. Davis who was killed on December 22, 1961. The last American soldier killed in the Vietnam War was Kelton Rena Turner, an 18-year old Marine. He was killed in action on May 15, 1975, two weeks after the evacuation of Saigon.

1953

Dwight Eisenhower's Middle East policy. Eisenhower ordered the CIA to depose Mohammed Mossadegh, the popular, elected leader of the Iranian parliament and an ardent nationalist who opposed British and American influence in Iran. The coup severely tarnished America's reputation among Iranians, who lost trust in American claims of protecting democracy.

Sept 2, 1945

Aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, Japan formally surrendered to the Allies, bringing an end to World War II.

1802

West Point is entwined with the history of our nation. Less than 50 miles north of New York City, along the banks of the Hudson River, the state-of-the-art sports facilities and academic lecture halls of the academy provided a perfect place for the environment used for cadet military training. The academy develops cadets to live honorably, with uncompromising integrity, as U.S. Army officers in service to the nation.

1965

Lyndon Baines Johnson aides, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy and Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, send a memo to the President stating that America's limited military involvement in Vietnam is not succeeding, and that the U.S. has reached a 'fork in the road' in Vietnam and must either soon escalate or withdraw.

Navy pilot wants to start family, but doesn't want to leave military; new program allows both

By Ben Story

Used to be women officers and enlisted sailors who wanted to become mothers had a single option: become mothers and leave the military. Not so anymore.

The Navy is trying out a new program that will allow women to do both.

A new Navy program allows women to take a year off and then return to the service, with no loss of rank or seniority.

Pilot Valerie Overstreet was valuable to the Navy. But the young officer wanted to start a family with her husband, also a Navy officer.

The new program is a win-win situation. She was allowed to take one year off and return to duty without any repercussions or loss of status.

Today the young mother is also a young captain and assigned to the U.S. Naval Academy.

The Navy is not alone in its efforts to retain valuable troops. The military services, after all, spend a great deal of money training troops. Losing them essentially means a loss of money, talent, experience, and education. This new program provides incentive to stay.

In a Manner of Speaking, Guys in Uniform Talk Funny

By Neil McReynolds

Here are a few terms and phrases known by veterans, but Greek to civilians:

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Moon dust | H & I fire | Hot LZ |
| Willy Peter | P-38 | Hump |
| Full bird | Pop smoke | LBJ |
| Squared away | As you were | LOACH |
| The old man | Bloused | LURPS |
| Grunt | Bulkhead | REMF |
| Lifer | The bush | Puff the Magic Dragon |
| Butt can | C-4 | Saddle up |
| Acting jack | Daisy cutter | Shake & bake |
| Police the Area | Doc/Corpsman | Sick bay |
| STRAC | Dust off | Stockade |
| Gig line | Fire for effect | The eagle shits |
| Straight leg | First shirt | Utilities |
| Bolo | Fragging | Article 15 |
| Donut Dolly | FUBAR | |
| Short arm inspection | Maggot wagon | |



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The Greater Cleveland Fisher House has raised \$750,000 in two years and will attempt to raise \$2.2 million more. The Fisher Foundation will match that figure and build a \$7 million, 16,000 s.f. 'comfort home' for 42 veteran families.

The Greater Cleveland Fisher House is a federally registered 501c.3 with the I.R.S. and all departments of the State of Ohio. Our Ohio veteran community and its supporters solemnly and sincerely salutes for you for remembering and for "giving a damn."

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This facility will also serve Veteran Families at other Medical Facilities including; Cleveland Clinic, Metro Hospital and University Hospital to mention a few.



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THE VOW

*"We will wait and pray 'til they all come home."
That was our anthem during World War II.*

*Today, we add this: "...and if they are broken...
we will fix them as best we can...and we will
do it with the help of their families...and the
Greater Cleveland Fisher House."*

CONTRIBUTIONS

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On The Cover:
PFC Matthew Zajac, U.S. Army
with his father, Mike Zajac



THE GREATER CLEVELAND FISHER HOUSE



Now here's a Wonderful and Worthwhile Partnership: the Greater Cleveland Fisher House, the Summit Racing Equipment Piston Powered Auto-Rama, and the I-X Center; "Gentlemen, Start Your Engines"

By Tom Sweeney

Hot damn! Spring must be closer than we thought because the I-X Center will be filled with just about everything powered by internal combustion engines. The Big Show is March 14 through March 16. If you like engine exhaust more than after shave, be there or be square.

The formal name of the show is the 2014 Summit Racing Equipment I-X Piston Powered Auto-Rama, presented by Rad Air Complete Car Care and Tire Centers.

For Fisher House, Even Better News

The Greater Cleveland Fisher House seeks to alleviate the pain of separation when veterans from all over the country get their specialized care at the VA hospital here. Our hospital is one of the top three VA hospitals in the country and partners, on behalf of veterans, with University Hospitals, the Cleveland Clinic, MetroHealth and others.

Fisher House is well on its way to building a residential center where families can stay and be close to their veterans coming for treatment to our VA hospital.

Think about it: If your veteran

had to travel to Cleveland in order to get specialized treatment, wouldn't you want to be close to your veteran? Wouldn't you want to be able to visit and encourage your veteran? I know you would want to talk with your veteran's physicians and nurses and gain a much better understanding of your veteran's medical condition and progress. You would sleep much sounder; you would be with families of other veterans.

Best of all, you would be there to kiss your veteran goodnight.

The proposed Greater Cleveland Fisher House will be a 16,500 square foot home with 18 to 21 suites to accommodate up to 42 people. The cost to build the house is \$7 million. The goal of the Greater Cleveland Fisher House is to raise \$3.5 million through community fundraising; the Fisher House Foundation will provide the remaining \$3.5 million.

Here's your invitation to join in a cause that is dear to every veteran's heart: Caring for our brothers and sisters who have truly borne the pains of battle.

Join us March 14-16, 2014 at the I-X Center in Cleveland and help support the Greater Cleveland Fisher House.

From our hearts, thank you, I-X Center

The I-X Center has donated two booths, a major contribution to fund raising efforts. One booth is 70 by 33 feet and the other 30 by 30 feet. In a special example of serendipity, the I-X Center was a tank plant in World War II. The property served then and it serves today.

Members of the VFW, American Legion, Amvets and Rolling Thunder will be there to contribute their time and support for the project, just one more example of veterans standing shoulder to shoulder.

In addition to attendance, another way to contribute is to help man the VFW booth. Who knows more about pain and trauma than the men and women of the Veterans of Foreign Wars?

If you are interested in helping with the booth, please call or write Kari Pfeifer, from the VFW Department of Ohio, Women Veterans Co-Chairperson. Call her right now or sooner at (419) 512-3230 or kep380@gmail.com or Jack Forster VFW 5137, (440) 759-3732 email jackforster11@yahoo.com

One of the unheralded benefits of being a veteran is the common

bond we share. We come in all shapes, sizes, colors, ages, degrees of baldness, and religious backgrounds.

This common bond means we can appreciate each other, befriend each other, share experiences (and outrageous stories) that non-veterans will never understand.

Want to do more? If your Post or college or school or business or fraternal organization or company or union or bowling league, or sewing circle supports this honorable project, hold an event that will provide financial help to Fisher House. Every such event will make a difference, whether it is passing the hat at a meeting, making a corporate donation (Fisher House has non-profit 501(C)3 status,) dedicating the proceeds from a fund-raiser, and all projects in between.

Contributions can be made at any Key Bank branch. Need more information? Call (440)377-0067, or to make an online donation today, <http://greaterclevelandfisherhouse.org/donate/>

Tom Sweeney serves as president of The Greater Cleveland Fisher House Task Force. He is a Vietnam combat veteran and former anchorman at WKYC-TV3

Special Bonuses for National Guard

From press reports Oh, boy, the National Guard is in trouble now. Know what the recruiters did? Allegedly paid out hundreds of millions of dollars to troops who recruited friends, acquaintance, brothers-in-law and others to sign up. The recruiters took a piece of the pie, too.

This one is going to take some time to figure out because there

are more than 800 soldiers under criminal investigation.

Sen. Claire McCaskill said, "Clearly, we're talking about one of the largest criminal investigations in the history of the Army."

Talking about more than pocket change, too. Three hundred million dollars were spent. It's not just enlisted troops; two general officers are also subjects of investigations.

Two Veterans at The Hospice of the Western Reserve

Just got to the Cleveland Heights Library and am using one of its computers after visiting my fellow Vietnam veteran Mike Ludwig at the Hospice of the Western Reserve for a little over an hour.

I met Mike about six or seven years ago at a Peace Show in downtown Cleveland, which served as a counterweight to the very militaristic National Air Show held at Burke Lakefront Airport.

Mike encouraged me to join Veterans for Peace, which I did. He was a speaker in November at a VFP Veterans Day event hosted by the Shaker Heights Library, but later that month was diagnosed with brain cancer.

Surgery was done at the Cleveland Clinic but the prognosis was not good and he decided to forgo chemo and radiation...a wise decision, I believe.

Because of the damage to his brain, Mike is not able to say more than a few words in response to comments or questions from visitors.

I spent most of the time saying to myself

by Lou Pumphrey

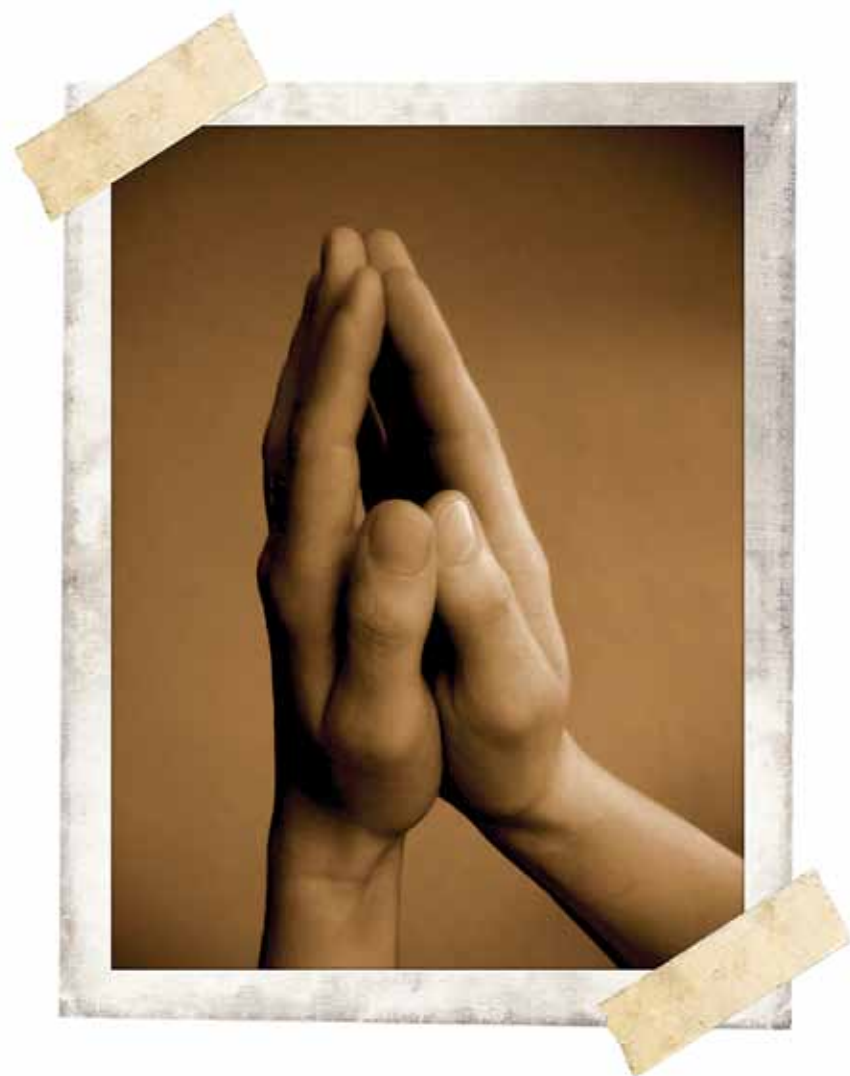
Industrial-strength Hail Marys and Our Fathers, but the downside of that exercise is that my eyes would well up and tears fell

Mike didn't notice me mopping them with Kleenex, however, as he was watching "Judge Judy" on the TV in his private room

During my visit a hospice staff member, David Waltemire, stopped by and spent about 20 minutes with Mike while I got a cup of coffee for Mike.

David is a terrific asset to Hospice of the Western Reserve, quickly establishing rapport with Mike as well as myself in his conversation.

I stayed with Mike for about another 20 minutes after David left to visit other patients. I hated to leave because at the time I was the only visitor. However, Mike was okay with my departure, as his television in his private room kept him "company." As I left, I said to Mike, "If I get any more reports about you pinching the nurses I'm going to make you drop and give me 20 push-ups."



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- ★ Resources to help navigate benefits for dependents
- ★ Veteran-to-Veteran volunteer pairing

To volunteer with fellow Veterans, call **800.707.8922**, or visit hospicewr.org/volunteer



News from the Veterans Administration

Federal Agencies Partner to Protect Veterans, Service Members and their Families Using GI Bill Education Benefits - The Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Education and Justice, along with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Federal Trade Commission announced today the launch of a new online complaint system designed to collect feedback from veterans, service members and their families who are experiencing problems with educational institutions receiving funding from Federal military and veterans educational benefits programs, including benefits programs provided by the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the DoD Military Tuition Assistance Program. (1/30/14)

Automation Speeds Benefits Processing for Post-9/11 GI Bill Students

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) decreased the time it takes to process requests for GI Bill and other education benefits for returning students by nearly 50 percent compared to fiscal year 2012. VA attributes the faster process in large part to improved claims automation that uses rules-based, industry-standard technologies to deliver Veterans' benefits. (1/29/14)

VA Purchases Land for a New National Cemetery in Colorado

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has purchased land in Colorado for a new national cemetery in the southeast portion of Colorado Springs. (1/23/14)

VA Offers \$600 Million in Funding to Support Services for Homeless Veteran Families

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced the availability of up to approximately \$600 million in grants for non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives that serve very low-income Veteran families occupying permanent housing through the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program. (1/14/14)

VA to Expand Benefits for Traumatic Brain Injury

Some Veterans with traumatic brain injury (TBI) who are diagnosed with any of five other ailments will have an easier path to receive additional disability pay under new regulations developed by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

VA Progress on Claims Backlog Highlighted during Congressional Testimony

At a hearing today before the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the Department of Veterans Affairs' Under Secretary for Benefits, Allison A. Hickey, outlined progress made by the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) in reducing the backlog of Veterans' disability compensation and pension claims by 36 percent since March -- attributing the success to the combined impact of VBA's transformation initiatives and increased employee productivity.

Veterans to Receive 1.5 Percent Cost-of-Living Increase

Veterans, their families and survivors receiving disability compensation and pension benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs will receive a 1.5 percent cost-of-living increase in their monthly payments beginning Jan. 1, 2014.

More than 1 million veterans take advantage of G.I. Bill

Officials from the Department of Veterans Affairs announced the one millionth beneficiary of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Joined by the Second Lady of the United States, Dr. Jill Biden, Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) and members of the media, the Veterans Affairs Undersecretary for Benefits Allison Hickey hosted a teleconference with the benefit's one millionth user, student veteran Steven Ferraro.

A father to three, Ferraro works full time while pursuing a degree in communications from Middlesex County College located in Edison, New Jersey. He said that it can be a "big challenge balancing school life with a family," adding that without the Post-9/11 GI Bill, the transition from being a full-time soldier to a full-time student would have been more of a struggle.

Ferraro described his county college as "veteran-friendly," with on-campus supports such as an SVA chapter and the Center for Veterans Services. SVA chapters support veter-

ans to and through higher education, and prepares them for post-graduation employment.

Since the Post-9/11 GI Bill went into effect on August 1, 2009, the Department of Veterans Affairs has processed more than 10 million tuition claims, and paid more than \$30 billion in tuition and benefits to support more than one million veterans, service members, and their families. That number is expected to rise: Undersecretary Hickey noted that 73% of all separating service members say they plan to use the education benefit.

"In just the first four years since the Post-9/11 GI Bill went into effect," says SVA executive director, D. Wayne Robinson, "one million patriots have chosen to use the benefit to pursue a post-secondary degree or credential. The GI Bill helps service members and veterans navigate life changes, make positive choices for their future, and transition into meaningful employment."

"These one million men and women are proof that even after removing the uniform veterans remain motivated and determined to not only better themselves, but to better their communities and continue to serve their nation. As we celebrate this milestone, I look forward to serving and supporting the next one million student veterans who will use this benefit to pursue the quality, affordable education they deserve."

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Sexual Assaults in the Military and Commanders are Co-Conspirators

By Harry Besharet

If there is one thing our Armed Forces should be ashamed of, it is its inability to protect women service members from 1.) rape and sexual harassment, 2.) an incompetent chain of command that tries mightily to ignore the crimes or even obstruct justice.

Even worse, U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), said a large percentage of victims who reported the crimes were intimidated and harassed by superior officers.

Retaliation for reporting rape? Our military should be ashamed of itself. Even worse, our military is sickeningly silent on protecting women soldiers from rape and its attendant pain.

If our military can't assume the



proper responsibility, Gillibrand wants the legal process taken out of the hands of the military commanders, who rely on the chain of

command, and handed over to military prosecutors.

Citing the failure of commanders to investigate and, if warranted,

prosecute, is shameful, and a source of mistrust among troops.

Gillibrand said the present state of affairs has to change. "Some of our commanders are just not maintaining a command climate that is either preventing rapes from happening, or least a climate where a victim can come forward or then certainly not protecting the victims."

Our armed forces cannot operate without women. Never have. Never will. They fill vital roles and are on the brink of joining the infantry.

To treat rape victims with such callousness should be grounds for dishonorable discharge. Dishonorable is the key word.

A few notes and comments

By Rich Watts

The Bright Side of a Brutal Winter

At the conclusion of this Ice Age winter, the snow will melt and provide plenty of groundwater for golf courses.

Speaking of Golf Courses

The Pentagon maintains 234 golf courses around the world. The U.S. Navy Recruiting Department is trying to change its recruiting motto to: "Join the Navy and Lower Your Handicap!"

Roger Staubach at the Helm

The 1963 Navy football team, many agree, was the best ever. While no quarterback succeeds without ten other guys doing their duty, Staubach filled the highlight reels with his scrambling, throwing under pressure, side stepping tacklers and throwing with more accuracy than a zeroed-in mortar. For all that, he won the Heisman Trophy.

Seven Core Army Values; The Way of Honorable Service

Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless

Service, Honor, Integrity, Personal Courage. The Bible called for Ten Commandments, all of which are better covered in the Seven Core Values.

Fine Dining in Uniform

No breakfast provided the nutrients found in chipped beef on toast, known in some mess halls as SOS.

If There's a Heaven, Medics Are Going

There are many difficult jobs in the Armed Forces, but one that stands out is medic or corpsman. These young men stuff guts back in their original containers, place KIAs on evacuation stretchers, administer pain-killing drugs, and put it in high gear when they hear, "MEDIC!" or, "CORPSMAN!" And they don't know what to expect, except it will take technical skill, courage under fire, stanching the flow of blood, and maintaining a positive attitude throughout. Many medics' names are unknown to the troops they

serve because every medic is called, "Doc."

If There is One Military Phrase that Qualifies as an Oxymoron

Friendly fire. How in hell can there be friendly fire? It has no antonym, such as 'unfriendly fire.' Invariably, it is tragic, both for the victim and the trooper who accidentally made the horrible mistake.

A Few Terms Unfamiliar to Civilians

"Puff the Magic Dragon," has no connection with Peter, Paul, and Mary's song, but describes a C-130, the slow-flying plane with multiple machine gun ports. It could fire thousands of rounds per minute, and when used at night, the tracers made it look like a fire-breathing monster. "Grunt" meant an infantryman, but they took special pride in the derogatory term. "Prick 25" was the radio on the back of an infantryman. He usually walked right behind the platoon leader or squad leader.

Hate to Burst Anyone's Bubble, but on the Horizon is, "Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's": Tax Time USA

By Carole Grady

DD 214 Chronicle Tax Advisor
440-799-7514

The fact that few of us have any idea what the government does with our tax money doesn't mean we can ignore paying it.

The sooner we get our taxes done and mailed, the better.

Here are The Final Four reasons to complete tax forms and get them in the mail ASAP:

Your spouse will stop reminding you to get it done.

If you have a refund coming and have been eyeing a new Harley-Davidson, you get two things: First, a bike synonymous with the open highway and, second, a new pal — the guy or woman who sold you your bike.

Bragging rights: You get to tell friends, family members, softball team members, and mothers-in-law that your tax return is in the mail and you're waiting for your refund. You will sleep better at night and your afternoon nap will be more satisfying.

You will feel far more confident bitching about government waste.

Round Two: Trenchermen v. Parker's

By Harry Besharet

The last time I dined at Parker's Grille & Tavern, in Avon Lake, I stayed with appetizers. Here's the one note I might have forgotten: the apps are big enough to share --- sort of like dim sum.

But this time, I wanted entrees. To get a better idea of the kitchen, I brought three friends. All can be trenchermen when the mood hits them, yet all have sophisticated palates.

Except Eddie Senko, who would rather stick with the dessert menu. Go figure. Eddie is Polish, I'm Hungarian, guest Odile Cantrelle, a transplanted Louisiana native, is mostly French, and Rich Watts, a proud mongrel.

Parker's stands out for a couple reasons. First the menu --- eclectic to say the least. Soups, salads, flat bread pizza, sandwiches, and burgers. Entrees include barbecue ribs, pan fried walleye, wild mushroom chicken, and one of the largest pork chops seen since a Porky Pig cartoon.

Plus steaks. I've been a steak man since my parents shopped at the West Side Market (the Churchin's stand, if you must know.) My Dad would toss sirloins in a cast iron skillet. He always got the tenderloin. Didn't disappoint any of the seven kids at the table; what the hell, he was paying for it.

With three guys and a woman, we would get a good sampling of entrees, and thanks to Eddie, desserts, too. Eddie demurred when the subject of beer came up. Talk about your old school, Eddie is so old the last time he was in a bar he was upset because they couldn't serve his favorite: Pabst and a shot of Corby's.

The rest of us ordered Dog Fish, Great Lakes, and Fat Tire. Too bad we're not connoisseurs of beer; we could have discussed the individual virtues of each. Odile wanted to know what Great Lakes tasted like. She worried the water came through a Lake Erie intake valve.

The big, comfortable bar features 14 beers on tap, 22 bottled beers (including a hard root beer), 24 wines by the glass and 69 wines by the bottle. Don't ask us; ask the sommelier.

A serious discussion developed on



Co-owners Paul Kalberer and Victoria and James Mowbray

an all-male subject: Who's better, the Cleveland Browns or the St. Edward Eagles. Odile didn't participate, ignorant of the Eagles' statewide reputation. After two more beers and putting in our order, it was agreed that 1.) the Browns have a nicer locker room, and 2.) the Eagles are way more entertaining.

Odile went with the Oskar burger, which is named for some guy named Oskar, we guess, but didn't meet him. Odile flat out loved it. How could she not? Between the slices of bun she found flavorful ground beef done a nice medium rare, and then loaded with crabmeat, asparagus and hollandaise sauce. With her two Great Lakes, she was happier than a young Yankee in the French Quarter.

That ol' dessert-destroying Eddie started with lemon cake. He said in order to properly enjoy a series of desserts, you start off with the lighter ones (as if we cared.) He followed it with key lime pie and said the only thing missing was Florida. Next was New York cheesecake, which he found to have a soft and lovely flavor, and equally important, great texture. Geez, if he didn't have such a sparkling personality, we would have left him in the car. I forget what he finished with, either the Ultimate Mudd Pie or the Chocolate Lava Cake.

Rich Watts can pack away the groceries, too. He asked for a plate of crab cakes, which come with a remoulade sauce. Odile reminded us that remoulade sauce comes from Lou-

isiana, so Rich let her taste. "Very good," she said, "but it's not my recipe." Dames.

Rich and I both went for the beef, a filet mignon for him and a rib eye for me. Rich goes for the filet because of its tenderness. Me, I go for the rib eye for its flavor.

On the side, we ordered cauliflower and red potatoes, both smashed. Also grilled asparagus, and I should

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Here are some of the reasons veterans make the best employees

By Rich Watts

Some veterans find the changes from military life to civilian life to be confusing, frustrating, and unsatisfying.

Little wonder.

Veterans go from a life marked by discipline, responsibility, teamwork, self-respect, and a regular paycheck.

Plus, they don't have to dress for success. Generals wear the same basic outfit worn by privates.

When discharged, the civilian world is a bit strange. No reveille, no inspections, no mess hall, no EM, NCO, or officers' clubs.

Being a stranger in a strange land doesn't mean veterans can't learn the lay of the land and strategize. Just the opposite. Veterans are used to change, sometimes dramatic change, and cope with change very well.

In addition, veterans have support in the civilian community. The VFWs and Legion posts are good examples. They are organizations experienced with easing the transition --- and much more. Veteran organi-



Veterans can see the big picture. They are observant, always eager to learn, and composed under pressure. Veterans understand promotions are earned, not passed out like Halloween candy.

For veterans, perhaps the first challenge as civilians is finding the work that best fits their skills.

While it may seem an infantryman doesn't bring skills to the marketplace, the exact opposite is true. Infantrymen are expert at quickly sizing up situations (experience and perspective), sharing information and finding solutions (appreciation for teamwork), and implementing them (determined to succeed). Infantrymen take on objectives and understand they are responsible for success.

Successfully negotiating the major changes that mark the transition from military life to civilian life isn't an easy mission.

But veterans are used to handling important missions.

zations provide a base camp from which veterans can explore options, learn about veterans' programs and benefits, and share a cold beer with other veterans.

Veterans are educated. They can maintain jet engines, speak foreign languages, write training manuals, teach all sorts of subjects, support

physicians in operating rooms and emergency wards, install and operate computer systems. The list of talent and experience is a long list. Veterans are fast learners and unfazed by change.

Furthermore, veterans bring values to the workplace that are not learned in colleges and universities.

Headlines from a Parallel Universe



State Attorney General DeWine Leads First Raid on VFWs and Legion posts Suspected of Gambling; Agents Confiscate \$92.85;

"It's mostly dimes and quarters, but it's a start," AG says

Merchant Marines Report No Sexual Assaults during First Week of 2014

Marine Drill Sergeants No Longer Teach, "This is your rifle, this is your gun; One is for ..."

President Obama asks Joint Chiefs of Staff, "So, as Commander-in-Chief, I can order these guys to do anything I want? Really? Who knew?"

MPs Refuse to Take Sensitivity Classes; "Don't need it and don't want it," Army Honcho Says

Veterans Today Club at Tri-C: Better than any EM, NCO, or Officers Club

The Veterans Today Club at Cuyahoga Community College recognizes and supports students who are veterans of the United States Armed Forces. Its resources and talents are dedicated to those who have served honorably in the United States Armed Forces.

Veterans Today intends to help men and women transition and adapt to academic life, secure veteran related benefits, provide peer support, and provide an opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate leadership skills. In addition, Veterans Today provides a collegial forum for faculty, staff, and administration to foster a better understanding of veteran's educational needs within the college, student body, and community.

Purpose

- Help veterans transition and adapt to academic life;
- Assist veterans and their families in securing veteran related benefits and community support services;
- Provide on-campus peer-support

- Provide an opportunity to develop and demonstrate leadership skills;
 - Engage in fund raising activities to support the purposes of the Club;
 - Provide activities and events where veterans can develop a learning community to achieve their educational and career goals, and
 - Provide a forum for faculty, staff, and administration to foster a better understanding of the educational needs of student veterans
- Membership is open to all veterans who have been discharged from the United States Armed Forces under HONORABLE conditions (regardless of race, creed, sex, age, handicap, or national origin) who are students enrolled in at least one (1) credit course at Cuyahoga Community College and in good academic standing.

Alumni

Membership is open to all veterans who are alumni of Veterans Upward Bound or Cuyahoga Community College.

Employees

Employees of Tri-C cannot hold membership in the club. However, they are encouraged to provide support to club members and attend meetings and events. Employees do not have voting privileges.

Club Activities:

Yearly new member installation
Quarterly club meetings
Awards and recognitions
Scholarship opportunities
Fundraising activities
Educational presentations & guest speakers
Cultural events
Film showings
Peer mentoring
Social discourse and personal development
Advocacy and social service projects within community

Faculty Advisor (Metro & East Campuses)

Dr. Louis A. Busacca, Director, Veterans Upward Bound

Co-Advisors

Metro Campus
• Gene Talley, Student Advisor, Veterans Upward Bound 216-987-4938
• Regan O'Dell, Recruiter, Veterans Upward Bound 216-987-3406

East Campus

• Regan O'Dell, Recruiter, Veterans Upward Bound 216-987-3406
• Barbara Solomon, Coordinator, Veteran Services & Programs 216-987-2516

For West Campus Veterans Today Club membership, contact Wardsey Gates at 216-987-5389



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Many veterans take their stories to the grave, much to the regret of their children, family and friends. It is understandable: many memories have been tucked away and veterans believe they are better left undisturbed. Family and other loved ones beg to differ. Award-winning journalist and author (of seven books) John Tidyman can help turn your memories into a memoir. Tidyman served as a combat infantryman in the Vietnam War, and understands the role military service played in your life. Only you can give this gift to your family and friends. Your memoir will become a vital part of your family's history and will allow family and friends to know you far better. Your memoir is a unique gift for your loved ones. Only you can give this gift.

For detailed information about your memoir, call or write:

John H. Tidyman, editor
DD214 Chronicle
2041 Morrison Avenue
Lakewood, Ohio 44107
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Continued from page 1

extreme prejudice, disagrees. Eventually Nicholson begins to see the project as a source of dignity for his imprisoned military engineers. As he and his men begin to take pride in their work, William Holden arrives with blasting caps--to remind us that this is a war movie, and the word "bridge" is in the title.

5. All Quiet on the Western Front (Lewis Milestone, 1930)

In the years between the two World Wars, every artist in every medium struggled to create works that would realize the dream that this was "The War to End All Wars." Both Erich Maria Remarque's 1929 novel and Lewis Milestone's film were part of this movement. The genius of this movie is that Milestone chose to set the film among German soldiers rather than transfer the story to our side of the conflict. He knew that the experience of war is universal. It begins with a schoolteacher firing up his students to fight for the fatherland and ends . . . well, I won't reveal the ending, but it is one of the most remarkable sequences ever filmed.

6. The Great Escape (John Sturges, 1963)

When The Great Escape arrived in theaters in 1963, marketing promos claimed that what takes place in the film was "the way it happened." Some of the characters and situations do match Paul Buckhill's 1950 book, but let's get real; this is a movie. For example there was no rousing Elmer Bernstein music playing in German prison camps. The director is telling a story, and few directors can do that as well as Sturges. The premise of both the book and the film is that the Nazis have gathered up all of their problem prisoners and put them into one lockup. This, of course, is a casting director's dream, and thus you get actors like Steve McQueen, James Garner, Charles Bronson . . . the list goes on. Have your screenwriter structure it like a heist movie, and what results is extremely watchable--even escapist.

7. Saving Private Ryan (Steven Spielberg, 1998)

Four Ryan brothers are fighting in World War II and three of them have been killed in a single week. The army decides that Pvt. James Ryan (Matt Damon) must be located and brought



home to his family. Capt. John Miller (Tom Hanks) gets the assignment and leads his men into Nazi-infested France. His squad stays true to war movie convention (one is always from Brooklyn, one from the south, etc.). The setup is perfect for Spielberg's notorious penchant for sentiment, but there is nothing sentimental about the way he opens the film. His 24-minute depiction of the D-day landing is one of the most compelling and realistic sequences ever to appear in a war movie.

8. Full Metal Jacket (Stanley Kubrick, 1987)

Kubrick's take on Vietnam is both strikingly beautiful and strangely unsettling. In other words, pure Kubrick. He sees the experience of war as a disturbance in the universe, and reflects that in the way he structures the story. The central character, Private Joker (Matthew Modine) sports both a peace symbol and a "born to kill" slogan on his helmet. The movie itself has a split personality: The first half is dominated by Sergeant Hartman (Lee Ermey, a real-life drill instructor), whose alarming profanity goes far beyond the tough drill sergeant cliché. The second half of the story suddenly drops the characters into full battle mode in the city of Hu. This sudden shift in locale and tone takes viewers out of their comfort zone . . . but so does war.

9. The Deer Hunter (Michael Cimino, 1978)

The Deer Hunter follows the lives of three working class men who have enlisted to fight in Vietnam and are celebrating their last days at home. They finish their shift at the steel

Barnes (Tom Berenger) is violent and troubled, while Sgt. Elias (William Dafoe) maintains a Zen-like, drug-induced calm. Both men are fearless fighters -- and in another war might have been heroes.

Honorable Mention (More Great War Movies)

Masterpieces in another language

The Battle of Algiers (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1966, French/Italian)
Battleship Potemkin (Sergei M. Eisenstein, 1925, Russian)
Das Boot (Wolfgang Petersen, 1981, German)
Downfall (Oliver Hirschbiegel, 2004, German)
Grand Illusion (Jean Renoir, 1937, French)

Humor (especially dark humor)

Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb (Stanley Kubrick, 1964)
The General (Buster Keaton, 1927)
MASH (Robert Altman, 1970)
Stalag 17 (Billy Wilder, 1953)

World War II

The Big Red One (Sam Fuller, 1980)
Foreign Correspondent (Alfred Hitchcock, 1940)
From Here to Eternity (Fred Zinnemann, 1953)
Inglourious Basterds (Quentin Tarantino, 2009)
Letters from Iwo Jima (Clint Eastwood, 2006)
Life is Beautiful (Roberto Benigni, 1997)
The Longest Day (Darryl F. Zanuck, 1962)
Patton (Franklin J. Schaffner 1970)
The Pianist (Roman Polanski, 2002)
The Thin Red Line (Terrence Malick, 1998)

Recent Wars

Black Hawk Down (Ridley Scott, 2001)
The Hurt Locker (Kathryn Bigelow, 2008)
Three Kings (David O. Russell, 1999)

One final thought on realism in war movies: "For movie-goers to get the idea of real combat, you'd have to shoot at them every so often from the other side of the screen." Sam Fuller, Writer-Director of The Big Red One.

Terry Meehan loves films as gin loves vermouth. His teaching career began in 1997 when he shared his passion with students at an adult education class in Lakewood, and continues to teach and inspire fans at Lorain Community College. Once a month, he shares at Lakewood Library his insatiable passion for his favorite film subjects, which include westerns, film noir, and Alfred Hitchcock.

The Cuyahoga County Veterans Service Commission: There When We Need Help

By Neil McReynolds

"The mission of the Veterans Service Commission is to continue to provide direct and indirect financial assistance and other benefits to veterans and their dependents who have met with an unexpected hardship resulting from illness, injury, or loss of employment, and meet eligibility requirements. The Commission has established outreach programs with other county, state and federal agencies to assist veterans and their dependents with employment and training for employment, so they have all of the tools needed to re-enter the work force and not be dependent on this Commission for assistance. This Commission also assists in initiating claims for benefits, obtaining documents to substantiate proof for these benefits, provides free graves and funerals for honorably discharged indigent veterans, and pro-

cures grave markers for veterans." That's the official description of the Commission, and it's pretty complete. But that description doesn't talk about the Commission itself, made of five members, one each from the military branches. Each is a veteran and understands veteran issues. (You might be surprised with what Commissioners have to learn.)

Commission members are dedicated to alleviating problems suffered by veterans and by extension, their families.

Commission members and its new

executive have been featured in DD 214 Chronicle, and the reporter invariably comes away impressed with the Commission and its employees. Each commissioner is a professional, of course, but like you and me, they are human and trained to better understand the human condition of veterans.

Commission members not only travel and talk with veteran organizations and state agencies, they huddle and offer ideas with others, especially when a case is especially challenging.

Commission members are paid far less than they're worth. It's clear

they work because each is dedicated to veterans. In addition to meeting to solve problems, each travels to spread the gospel among veteran organizations. Appointments are not taken; it is first-come, first-served.

While the Commission isn't part of the Veterans Administration, it has built and maintains a strong working relationship with the federal agency.

The Commission is a Cuyahoga County agency and commissions operate in each of Ohio's 88 counties.

A final note. While there is usually street parking on Prospect Avenue, read the hours on the meter before jamming quarters in the meter. No sense walking out of Commission offices only to find you're in debt to the city.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION
1849 Prospect Avenue,
Ground Floor
Cleveland, Ohio 44115
Hours: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM



TECHNICAL SKILLS TRAINING Priority of enrollment given to Veterans

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 - Identify and use proper test equipment
 - Assess for electrical and environmental hazards
 - Operate industrial robots and programmable logic controllers



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