

VETERANS JOURNAL



PUBLISHED BY
FRANKLIN COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION
250 West Broad Street, Columbus Ohio 43215
(614) 462-2500 FAX (614) 462-2505
E-mail: veteransservice@franklincountyohio.gov
Website: www.franklincountyohio.gov/vets



Commissioners

Gary Pfaff, VFW
Carl W. Swisher, American Legion
Larry W. Roberts, VVA
Wallace W. Sarto, AMVETS
Arthur W. Sprankel, DAV

Fall 2006 Issue

Douglas E. Lay, Director
Anna M. Henry, Administrative Assistant

The information in this journal is being provided to make the veteran community aware of some current events, activities and veterans issues that are of mutual concern. From time to time, we will include some relevant information important enough to be repeated to insure that veterans and their families are aware of the full range of benefits and entitlements available to them.

New Faces at the Veterans Service Commission

Franklin County Veterans Service Commission would like to welcome 3 new employees. Jamie Stroh has joined the Financial Assistance department. Ron Reidenbaugh has joined the Service Officer department. Barry Roberts has filled a new position as Fiscal Specialist.



Now Available!

If you are interested in receiving the Journal by email, please contact Franklin County Veterans Service Commission by calling Anna Henry at (614) 462-2500.



Employee of the Quarter

Mr. Thomas Heston has been awarded the Franklin County Veterans Service Commission's Employee of the Quarter for the second quarter of 2006. The award is determined by employee ballot. This award represents outstanding individual effort by a staff member. Mr. Heston has been with this agency since 1989. He currently is a Service Officer who assists with benefits and claims.

CONGRATUALIONS TOM!

Operation SAM

"Operation: S.A.M.," or Saluting All Military, is constantly showing servicemembers how much support they have back home. S.A.M. sends packages to troops deployed all over the world, focusing on those deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. Since its creation in January 2004, S.A.M. has shipped nearly 8,500 packages packed with hygiene, snack, comfort and entertainment items. They also make sure at least two notes of thanks and encouragement are included in each bundle. For more information, visit the group's website

<http://www.operationsam.org/> .



23rd Fall Begins



12th Columbus Day

29th Daylight Savings Time Ends

31st Halloween



7th Election Day

11th Veterans Day

23rd Thanksgiving

VETERANS NEWS

VA Awards Data Breach Analysis Contract

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has entered into an agreement with a company that will provide data breach analysis services to VA to ensure that information contained on computer equipment stolen in May from a VA employee's home - and later recovered by law enforcement - was not compromised.

ID Analytics, a California-based company, will conduct the analysis across multiple industries to detect patterns of misuse and determine whether or not there is any suspicious activity specifically related to this computer equipment theft. The company will provide VA an initial analysis, and will then continue to offer its assessments on a quarterly basis.

On July 13, the FBI indicated it is highly confident the data stored on the recovered computer equipment was not accessed or compromised. On August 5, Montgomery County, Md., Police announced the arrests of two men they believe are responsible for the theft. According to law enforcement authorities, the arrested men did not specifically target the computer equipment. Authorities also provided reassurances that the information was not compromised.

Prior to the arrests, VA indicated that, out of an abundance of caution and to further safeguard the recovered information, the Department would conduct data breach analysis. VA's agreement with ID Analytics fulfills this commitment.

ID Analytics' real-time system comprises more than three billion identity elements contributed by its members, which include the largest U.S. industry leaders from across the credit card, wireless telecommunications, and instant lending industries. ID Analytics' services are used daily by more

than half the credit and retail card issues in the United States.

Another Scam

From Phil Smith - VVA Service Officer in Detroit, MI

The Health Revenue Center has advised us of the following: We have received credible information regarding a telephone scam whereby veterans are contacted and urged to call a 1-800 number.

The pretext for this action is regarding the recent data loss by the VA and publicly generated from that event. The veteran or their spouse is compelled to believe this is a resource to assist them. Once the veteran calls the 1-800 number, they are directed to call a 1-900 number, where they incur a \$9.99 per minute charge. So, far this scam has only been identified in VISN 16 (Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana).

Please caution Veterans that this is a hoax, not a VA sponsored piece of information, and that they should never call a 1-900 number without knowing that there will always be a significant charge to their phone bills if they do.

TRICARE Announces Six Medications to Go Non-Formulary (or third tier).

On Wednesday, Dr. William Winkenwerder, director of TRICARE, announced that six medications were approved to be placed on the non-formulary (or third tier). The medication classes reviewed included contraceptives and Antiemetic Agents. Medications on the third tier (non-formulary) require a \$22 co-payment in the retail and mail-order pharmacy programs and are not available at military treatment facility (MTF) pharmacies unless medical necessity has been established and the prescription is written by an MTF provider. To view the chart of affected medications, see Formulary Update at: UF Formulary Changes.

VETERANS JOURNAL

Military Shipping Kits

Claim: The USPS provides free Priority Mail shipping supplies for customers sending packages to U.S. military personnel overseas.

Status: *True.*

Origins: Since the preponderance of "free merchandise" offers promoted via e-mail turn out to be nothing but hoaxes and pranks targeted at the gullible, we're pleased whenever we can announce that such an offer is genuine, especially so in this case as the ultimate beneficiaries are the men and women of the U.S. armed forces who are stationed overseas.

The United States Postal Service (USPS) will supply for free, to anyone who asks, specially packaged Priority Mail supplies for shipping "care kits" to members of the U.S. military stationed overseas. Each supply kit includes the following:

4 Priority Mail Flat-Rate "[shoe box](#)"-type shipping boxes

6 Priority Mail Flat-Rate "[garment box](#)"-type shipping boxes

10 Priority Mail labels

1 roll of Priority Mail tape

10 customs forms with envelopes

(The contents of the supply kits changes from time to time and sometimes includes other items, such as water-resistant [Tyvek](#) Priority Mail envelopes and Priority Mail address labels. Most of these items are ordinarily furnished for free to customers by the USPS.)

To obtain a free kit of shipping supplies, simply call the USPS' packing supplies order line at 1-800-610-8734, select option #1 ("Express Mail, Priority Mail or Global Express Guaranteed products"), and ask a customer service agent for CAREKIT04 (or a "military kit"). You need supply only

your name, address, and phone number, and they'll get a kit off to you that should arrive within 7-10 days. We've tried this service ourselves: it was easy to use, the USPS customer service agent we dealt with was courteous and efficient, and we were supplied with a customer ID number to expedite the process of ordering additional supplies. (This offer includes only packing materials — senders who use these materials still have to pay the requisite postage themselves.)

The USPS also offers a "[Supporting Our Troops](#)" page on their web site with links to guidelines for packing, addressing, and shipping items to U.S. troops.

The URL for this page is http://www.snopes.com/inboxer/not_hing/militarykit.asp

FREE MEDICINE PROGRAM



DO YOU QUALIFY?

If you're seeking relief from the rising costs of prescription medicines, look no further. Established by volunteers, Free Medicine Program can provide you with the assistance you need, and the help you deserve.

Our dedication to assisting individuals who have no insurance and can't afford to purchase their medicines has brought us great success in this area, and has resulted in substantial savings on monthly prescription drug bills for countless families nationwide.

Perhaps like you the majority of our applicants have too much income to qualify for government prescription assistance, but not enough to purchase private prescription drug insurance coverage, or are living on retirement income, disability or other assistance.

None of this should disqualify you from obtaining the assistance you need to purchase your medicines, and at the Free Medicine Program, it doesn't!

Many drug manufacturers sponsor what's called Patient Assistance Programs. These programs are intended to help those who can't afford their prescription drugs obtain them absolutely FREE!

This includes people that are uninsured, or whose insurance does not cover prescription drugs, unemployed, or whose employer does not provide health insurance and seniors who don't have prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

Unfortunately, most people, including qualified doctors, nurse, social workers, and other health professionals, are not aware that these programs even exist.

The ever-changing requirements and the application process to qualify for patient assistance program(s) are tedious, confusing and very time-consuming.

We at Free Medicine Program cut through the red tape by actually assisting you in applying for enrollment in patient assistance program(s), and with the cooperation of your physician you can obtain prescription medicines(s) free of charge.

In 2001 alone, these programs have helped an estimated 3.1 million patients fill more than 10 million prescriptions with an estimated value \$1.5 billion.

Our goal at Free Medicine Program is to:

Find the appropriate Patient Assistance Program(s) for you.

Provide you with the latest, most complete and accurate application information.

Simplify the rules, guidelines and procedures.

Expedite the submission process by preparing your customized submission package.

Guide and assist you in your application process.

Most drug manufacturers help people in financial need, regardless of their age. However, in order to qualify you need to meet the following basic requirements.

You do not currently have insurance coverage for outpatient prescription medicines.

Your income is at a level that causes hardship when medicines are purchased at retail price.

You do not qualify for a government or third party program that provides for prescription medicine coverage.

Keep in mind that sponsor's individual's income criteria vary with family incomes ranging from below the poverty level to up to \$60,000!

Those applicants normally qualifying at the highest income limits are generally MS, AIDS, and transplant or cancer patients in need of very expensive drugs.

Once you're ready to apply for the Free Medicine Program, all you need to do is to fill out, sign and return a Medication Information Form.

As soon as we receive this information, we get right to work for you! We will immediately process the information you have sent us, and send you a customized information package, prepared specifically to your individual needs.

In your personalized package, you will find a letter to your physician. Because the assistance of your doctor will have significant bearing on your acceptance in the program, we strongly suggest you talk with your physician about the assistance program right away.

Also in the personalized package, you will find a few quick, easy-to-follow steps to be taken by you and your physician necessary to proceed with the application process. Upon completion of these,

the application(s) are sent to the appropriate drug manufacturer(s) and considered for approval.

The good news that once approved, your free prescription medicines are generally sent to you in just two to three weeks!

Because of our groundbreaking work in this area, physicians nationwide are currently distributing Free Medicine Program brochures to their patients. In fact the U.S. government social security offices have brochures available for their constituents.

While the funds necessary to distribute this information and support the Free Medicine Program are obtained through a one-time processing fee of \$5, contributed by each applicant, the money is refunded if we are unable to find you assistance in obtaining your prescription medicines free, or at a significantly reduced cost.

Guarantee

If you receive no medication and are determined to be ineligible for Patient Assistance Program(s) by all applicable drug manufacturers, we will gladly refund you a full application-processing fee, no questions asked. All we need from you is a copy of the letter sent to you from the applicable prescription drug manufacturer(s) explaining why you are ineligible. Keep in mind; all refund requests must be in writing within 90 days after the original application is made to the Free Medicine Program.

Our Promise to You

While we cannot absolutely guarantee your approval, we do promise you to work diligently on your behalf, to obtain the assistance you deserve. Our team of volunteers is committed to providing you with the assistance necessary to obtain the assistance you deserve. Our team of volunteers is committed to providing you with the assistance necessary to obtain Free prescription medicines. Our track record speaks for itself, and we look forward to adding your name to our long list of successes!

If you know someone else who may benefit from this program, please pass the information on to him or her. And if you have any questions comments or suggestions for Free Medicine Program team, do not hesitate to contact us at (646) 205-8000 or visit us on the internet at www.freemedicineprogram.com.

President Signs "Freedom to Display the American Flag Act."

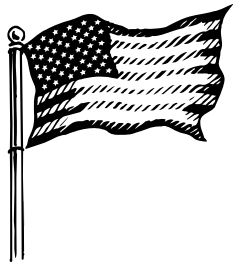
On Monday, President Bush signed the Freedom to Display the American Flag Act, an Act that would bar condominium and homeowner associations from restricting how the American flag can be displayed.

Sponsored by Rep. Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD), the resolution simply says that a homeowner or condominium owner cannot be prohibited from displaying an American flag on their own property. It also says that the association may place reasonable limits on the time and the manner of displaying the flag. The action is a commonsense accommodation of the rights of the associations to maintain the value of their properties and the rights of Americans to fly the flag.

Both the House and the Senate passed the bill (H.R. 42) unanimously.

"Americans have long flown our flag as an expression of their appreciation for our freedoms and their pride in our nation," Bush said in a statement. "As our brave men and women continue to fight to protect our country overseas, Congress has passed an important measure to protect our citizens' right to express their patriotism here at home without burdensome restrictions."

**VETERANS JOURNAL
FALL 2006
Page 5**



STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

O say, can you see, by the
dawn's early light,

What so proudly we hail'd at the
twilight's last gleaming,

Whose broad stripes and bright
stars, through the perilous fight,

O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were
so gallantly streaming?

And the rockets' red glare, the
bombs burst in air,

Gave proof through the night that
our flag was still there.

O say, does that Star - Spangled
Banner yet wave

O'er the land of the free and the
home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen
through the mists of the deep,

Where the foe's haughty host in
dread silence reposes,

What is that which the breeze, o'er
the towering steep,

As it fitfully blows, half conceals,
half discloses?

Now it catches the gleam of the
morning's first beam,

In full glory reflected now shines in
the stream;

'Tis the star-spangled banner- O
long may it wave

O'er the land of the free and the
home of the brave!

And where is that band,
who so valiantly swore,

That the havoc of war and the
battle's confusion,

A home and a country should leave
us no more?

Their blood has wash'd out their
foul footsteps' pollution;

No refuge could save the hireling or
slave

From the terror of flight or the gloom
of the grave,

And the Star - Spangled Banner in
triumph doth wave

O'er the land of the free and the
home of the brave.

O, thus be it ever when
freeman shall stand

Between their lov'd homes and the
war's desolation!

Blest with vict'ry and peace, may
the heav'n-rescued land

Praise the power that hath made
and preserved us a nation!

Then conquer we must, when our
cause it is just,

And this be our motto: "In God is
our trust."

And the Star - Spangled Banner in
triumph shall wave

O'er the land of the free and the
home of the brave.

*"I would like to go a step
further and insist upon Americans
be able to singe "The Star-
Spangled Banner."*

*"I have noted audiences singing-I
should say trying to sing-the
American national air, but outside of
about 2 per cent they are only
mumbling or pretending to sing. I
would like to have the spirit of
America show itself in song. I hope
you will insist upon some suitable
provision to that end in your
code."—President Harding to
National Flag Conference called
by The American Legion.*

Excellentlly Written E-Mail that I received

Posted on **06/01/2006 7:47:03 AM**
PDT by [CSM](#)

(The following story was written by
Lori Kimble, a 31 year old teacher
and proud military wife. Mrs.
Kimble, a California native, currently
lives in Alabama.)

I was sitting alone in one of those
loud, casual steak houses that you
find all over the country. You know
the type - a bucket of peanuts on
every table, shells littering the floor,
and a bunch of Perky college kids
racing around with long neck beers
and sizzling platters.

Taking a sip of my iced tea, I
studied the crowd over the rim of
my glass. My gaze lingered on a
group enjoying their meal. They
wore no uniform to identify their
branch of service, but they were
definitely "military:" clean shaven,
cropped haircut, and that "squared
away" look that comes with pride.

Smiling sadly, I glanced across my
table to the empty seat where my
husband usually sat. It had only
been a few months since we sat in
this very booth, talking about his
upcoming deployment To the
Middle East. That was when he
made me promise to get a sitter for
the kids, come back to this
Restaurant once a month and treat
myself to a nice steak. In turn he
would treasure the thought of me
being here, thinking about him until
he returned home.

I fingered the little flag pin I
constantly wear and wondered
where he was at this very moment.
Was he safe and warm? Was his
cold any better? Were my letters
getting through to him? As I
pondered these thoughts, high
pitched female voices from the next
booth broke into my thoughts.

"I don't know what Bush is thinking
about. Invading Iraq. You'd think

VETERANS JOURNAL
FALL 2006
Page 6

that man would learn from his old man's mistakes. Good lord. What an idiot! I can't believe he is even in office. You do know, he stole the election."

I cut into my steak and tried to ignore them, as they began an endless tirade running down our president. I thought about the last night I spent with my husband, as he prepared to deploy. He had just returned from getting his smallpox and anthrax shots. The image of him standing in our kitchen packing his Gas mask still gives me chills.

Once again the women's voices invaded my thoughts. "It is all about oil, you know. Our soldiers will go in and rape and steal all the oil they can in the name of 'freedom'. Hmph! I wonder how many innocent people they'll kill without giving it a thought. It's pure greed, you know."

My chest tightened as I stared at my wedding ring. I could still see how handsome my husband looked in his "mess dress" the day he slipped it on my finger. I wondered what he was wearing now. Probably his desert uniform, affectionately dubbed "coffee stains" with a heavy bulletproof vest over it.

"You know, we should just leave Iraq alone. I don't think they are hiding any weapons. In fact, I bet it's all a big act just to increase the president's popularity. That's all it is, padding the military budget at the expense of our social security and education. And, you know what else? We're just asking for another 9-11. I can't say when it happens again that we didn't deserve it."

Their words brought to mind the war protesters I had watched gathering outside our base. Did no one appreciate the sacrifice of brave men and women who leave their homes and family to ensure our freedom? Do they even know what "freedom" is?

I glanced at the table where the young men were sitting, and saw their courageous faces change. They had stopped eating and looked at each other dejectedly, listening to the women talking.

"Well, I, for one, think it's just deplorable to invade Iraq, and I am certainly sick of our tax Dollars going to train professional baby killers we call a military."

Professional baby killers? I thought about what a wonder-ful father my husband is, and of how long it would be before he would see our children again.

That's it! Indignation rose up inside me. Normally reserved, pride in my husband gave me a brassy boldness I never realized I had. Tonight one voice will answer on behalf of our military, and let her pride in our troops be known.

Sliding out of my booth, I walked around to the adjoining booth and placed my hands flat on their table. Lowering myself to eye level with them, smilingly said, "I couldn't help overhearing your conversation. You see, I'm sitting here trying to enjoy my dinner alone. And, do you know why? Because my husband, whom I love with all my heart, is halfway around the world defending your right to say rotten things about him." "Yes, you have the right to your opinion, and what you think is none of my business. However, what you say in public is something else, and I will not sit by and listen to you ridicule MY country, MY president, MY husband, and all the other fine American men and women who put their lives on the line, just so you can have the "freedom" to complain. Freedom is an expensive commodity, ladies. Don't let your actions cheapen it."

I must have been louder that I meant to be, because the manager came over to inquire if everything was all right.

"Yes, thank you," I replied. Then, turning back to the women, I said, "Enjoy the rest of your meal."

As I returned to my booth applause broke out. I was embarrassed for making a scene, and went back to my half eaten steak. The women picked up their check and scurried away.

After finishing my meal, and while waiting for my check, the manager

returned with a huge apple cobbler ala mode.

"Compliments of those soldiers, he said. He also smiled and said the ladies tried to pay for my dinner, but that another couple had beaten them to it. When I asked who, the manager said they had already left, but that the gentleman was a veteran, and wanted to take care of the wife of "one of our boys."

With a lump in my throat, I gratefully turned to the soldiers and thanked them for the cobbler. Grinning from ear to ear, they came over and surrounded the booth. "We just wanted to thank you, ma'am. You know we can't get into confrontations with civilians, so we appreciate what you did."

As I drove home, for the first time since my husband's deployment, I didn't feel quite so alone. My heart was filled with the warmth of the other diners who stopped by my table, to relate how they, too, were proud of my husband, and would keep him in their prayers. I knew their flags would fly a little higher the next day.

Perhaps they would look for more tangible ways to show their pride in our country, and the military that protect her.

And maybe, just maybe, the two women who were railing against our country would pause for a minute to appreciate all the freedom America offers, and the price it pays to maintain its freedom.

As for me, I have learned that one voice CAN make a difference. Maybe the next time protesters gather outside the gates of the base where I live, I will proudly stand on the opposite side with a sign of my own. It will simply say, "Thank You!"

To those who fought for our Nation: Freedom has a flavor the protected will never know. GOD BLESS AMERICA!

VETERANS JOURNAL
FALL 2006
Page 7

Volunteers of America

Partner with **VETERANS**

Volunteers of America supports a successful community workforce development initiative designed to assist homeless veterans. The project is called,

Homeless Veterans
Reintegration Program
(HVRP)

And is operated under the auspices of the Education and Vocational Services division.

About HVRP...

- The Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) is an employment service program designed to assist homeless, or previously homeless veterans, transition from homelessness into housing and employment
- All participating veterans must have at least six (6) months of documented active duty
- All participating veterans must have a military separation identifying a category other than a dishonorable discharge

The Program...

- Designed to partner with veterans and link them to employment, housing, and eligible services
- Includes a customized "Individual Employment Plan" for each veteran which leads to job placement
- Includes classes on computer technology and software applications, email, and the internet
- Assists in the development of a successful resume

- Teaches how to effectively complete employment applications
- Shares insight, understanding, and practice in interviewing skills
- Teaches internet job search techniques
- Utilize follow-up techniques after applying or interviewing for employment
- Learn to handle conflict in the workplace
- Enhance the veterans ability to apply techniques and strategies that will help retain employment'
- Referral and links to housing and related veterans services

The Services...

- Clothing vouchers for business - interview clothes
- Food assistance vouchers
- Transportation assistance
- Access to computers, fax machines, and phones
- Individual Email accounts
- Transportation to and from Job Fairs
- Individual meetings with the HVRP Program manager, Case manager, and Job Placement Retention Specialist
- GED Classes
- Post-employment support

The Alumni Club...

The veterans Alumni Club is comprised of HVRP veterans who have secured employment. The Alumni Club meets once a month and provides an opportunity for newly employed veterans to share their job experiences, and offer employment related support to each

other. It allows veterans to consider other perspectives on challenging issues that may occur in their new work environment. The Alumni Club provides positive solutions to employment related concerns in an effort to assist veterans maintain their jobs. Light refreshments served.

For More Information...

1187 and 1185 West Broad Street
Columbus OH 43222
614-351-1881

*Offices located at the corner of West Broad St. and Yale Avenue; also on the COTA Bus Line.

Chalmers P. Wylie VA Outpatient Clinic Columbus, OH

Compare the Cost, Quality and Convenience of VA Health Care

- Prescription Benefits
- Full range of behavior health services
- Women's health program
- General wellness programs

Eligibility

Honorably discharged men and women who meet the currently eligibility criteria can receive VA medical benefits. Some veterans, depending on income, may be required to make a co-payment for health care services. Call the clinic for a means test at (614) 257-5200.

**VETERANS JOURNAL
FALL 2006
Page 8**

How do I enroll?

Complete the Application for Medical Benefits, VA Form 10-10EZ 2005 on line, by mail, or in person. This short form can be completed in 10-15 minutes. In most cases we can complete your enrollment on your first visit and provide your initial medical evaluation. Please provide a copy of your DD-214 or honorable discharge certificate.

Visits require An Appointment

Call the clinic any weekday between 8 am and 4:30 pm at (614) 257-5200. Our medical staff will provide you with an initial evaluation and future follow-up outpatient visits.

What Services are Available?

The Columbus VAOPC provides an integrated approach to your health care offering a full range of primary care, behavioral health care, home based care and diagnostic outpatient services to veteran men and women in Columbus and the immediate surrounding areas.

Medical Primary Care

You will receive an annual physical assessment or appropriate health screening, immunizations, medications, and any follow-up care required by your VA primary care doctor.

Behavioral Health

Maintaining good mental health is a responsibility that we all share. At times, we may need assistance managing emotional problems and stress that can be overwhelming. The Behavioral Health program in Columbus offers individual and group counseling to veterans who have problems relation to depression, post traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, alcohol and substance abuse, family issues or chronic mental health illnesses. Day Treatment Center activities, Vocational Rehabilitation, Homeless Outreach Programs and wellness workshops are provided by our professional staff.

Home Based Primary Care

Home based primary care works closely with the staff at the Columbus VA Outpatient Clinic. Patients, who suffer from chronic medical conditions and find it difficult to leave their home, may be eligible for this service. The program also offers Care Coordination Home Telehealth service for homebound veterans. Referrals are accepted from veterans, medical professionals or other community agencies.

Specialty Service and Departments

Audiology
Behavioral Health
Cardiology
Dermatology
Extended Care Services- (home health aid, adult day health care, respite care)
Eye Care Services
Geriatric- (consultation, evaluation, and primary care)
Hepatitis C (screening and treatment)
Lab
Neurology
Nutrition
Oncology
Pain Management Consultation
Pharmacy
Prosthetics
Radiology (CT/MRI)
Rehabilitation Services (physical and occupational therapy)
Respiratory Care
Social Work
Surgery
Urology
Women's Health

For veterans who meet specific eligibility criteria, the following are also available:

Dental Service
Eyeglasses
Hearing Aids

Coping With Stress....

**A GUIDE
FOR SOLDIERS**

AND FAMILIES

UNDERSTANDING STRESS AND TRAUMA

Trauma can cause severe stress, which may become unmanageable despite the best stress management efforts. Let's look at why this happens and what you can do about it.

Most, if not all, individuals experience post-traumatic stress following the experience or witnessing of life-threatening events such as military combat, natural disasters, terrorist incidents, serious accidents or violent personal assaults. People who suffer from post-traumatic stress often re-live the experience through nightmares and flashbacks, have difficulty sleeping and feel detached or estranged. These symptoms can be severe enough and last long enough to significantly impair the person's daily life.

Traumatic events cause severe stress reactions that are particularly hard to manage. Trauma involves a unique kind of physical/emotional shock that escalates the "fight-flight" stress response (feeling angry or scared) horrified, like your life is passing before your eyes or so overwhelmed you blank out.)

Because the symptoms of post-traumatic stress and other trauma reactions change how a trauma survivor feels and acts, traumatic experiences that happen to one member of a family can affect everyone else in the family. When trauma reactions change how a trauma survivor feels and acts, traumatic experiences that happen to one member of a family can affect everyone else in the family. When trauma reactions are severe and go on for some time without treatment, they can cause major problems in a family.

**VETERANS JOURNAL
FALL 2006
Page 9**

WARNING SIGNS OF
STRESS AND TRAUMA

Stress is a normal response of the body and mind. Everyone feels stress when gearing up to deal with major life events (such as marriage, divorce, births, deaths, or starting or ending a job, military deployment etc.) or handling everyday hassles like arguments, financial headaches, deadlines or traffic jams.

Physical signs of a stress response include:

- Rapid heartbeat
- Headaches
- Stomach ache
- Muscle Tension

Emotional signs of a stress response include:

- Excitement
- Exhilaration
- Joy
- Frustration
- Nervousness
- Discouragement
- Anxiety
- Anger

Prolonged stress can drain your body and mind. Some techniques for managing stress include:

- Mental relaxation (exercises)
- Positive thinking
- Problem solving Anger control
- Time management
- Exercise
- Responsible assertiveness
- Interpersonal communication

STRESS, ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

Post-traumatic stress does not automatically cause problems with alcohol and other drug use; there are many people with post-traumatic stress who do not have problems with alcohol and other drugs. However, post-traumatic stress and alcohol and other drugs together can be serious trouble for the trauma survivor and his or her family. Stressful events may influence the use of alcohol or other drugs. Alcohol abuse and other

drug use are associated with a chaotic lifestyle, which reduces family emotional closeness, increases family conflict and reduces parenting abilities.

Post-traumatic stress symptoms are often worsened by substance abuse. Although alcohol/drugs can provide a temporary feeling of relief, they also reduce the ability to concentrate, enjoy life and be productive. Self-medicating with alcohol/drugs can:

Impair one's ability to sleep restfully and cope with trauma memories and stress.

Increase emotional numbing, social isolation, anger and irritability, depression and hyper-vigilance.

Some individuals with post-traumatic stress resort to alcohol/drugs in an attempt to cope with sleep disturbances (nightmares, trouble falling asleep and frequent awakenings, etc.). While substances may appear to help decrease the severity and number of disturbances, they ultimately hinder treatment and can lead to other serious health-related issues.

ASKING FOR HELP

There are a number of common strategies that individuals utilize when coping with extraordinary stress in their lives. These strategies, while effective at manageable levels of stress, can become unproductive or detrimental when stress reaches overwhelming or traumatic levels.

Sometimes post-traumatic stress symptoms worsen and ordinary efforts at coping don't seem to work very well. Before people with post-traumatic stress learn effective and healthy coping methods, they may try to cope with their distress and other reactions in ways that lead to more problems.

If the survivor of trauma or their loved ones feel overwhelmed, it is important that they reach out and ask for help to turn things around. When a trauma survivor or their

loved ones take direct action to cope with problems a greater sense of personal power and control are regained. Active coping means recognizing and accepting the impact of a traumatic experience and then taking concrete action to improve things. When survivors and their loved ones are able to talk about their problems with others, something helpful often results.

The following information will provide you with resource for assistance. Please do not hesitate to use these resources.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES

Ohio VA Medical Facilities:

Brecksville	440-526-3030
Chillicothe	740-773-1141
Cincinnati	513-861-3100
Columbus	614-257-5200
Dayton	937-268-6511
Toledo	419-259-2000
Wade Park	216-791-3800

VA Benefits: 1-800-827-1000

VA Tele-Nurse: 1-888-838-6446

Military One Source:

1-800-655-4545

Counseling Service:

513-763-3500

**Ohio Resource Network (ORN)
Referral Helpline for Substance Abuse Services**

1-800-788-7254 (option 2)

State of Ohio Mental Health Referral Helpline

1-877-275-6364

Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator

www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov/facilitylocator.htm

Mental Health Facilities Locator

www.mentalhealth.org/databases/

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration Referral Helplines:

1-800-622 HELP (4357)

1-800-228-0427 (TDD)

FRANKLIN COUNTY
VETERANS SERVICE
COMMISSION
250 W BROAD ST
COLUMBUS OH 43215-2787

