

The Ohio National Guard Alumni Newsletter

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The Ohio National Guard Alumni webpage remains operational at: <http://ong.ohio.gov/>. Click on Community Outreach and then Alumni Relations to register for the data base and direct receipt of the newsletter. Please take a few minutes and explore the entire website, particularly the many recent news releases about your Guard.

OHARNG Wins ACOE Competition

On April 24, Ohio Governor Ted Strickland applauded the Ohio Army National Guard for being selected as the 2009 Army Communities of Excellence Special Category Winner for the Fiscal Year 2009 by the Department of the U.S. Army.

The Army Communities of Excellence (ACOE) Award recognizes the Ohio Army National Guard's (OHARNG) effort in improving their overall performance and capabilities. The Fiscal Year 2009 award marks the third time Ohio has won the competition. The ACOE program uses the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality criteria, which provides a framework for in-depth organizational assessment and measurements for improvement. "When we began this process in 2002 we were seeking ways to improve as an organization," Wayt said. "The Baldrige criteria provided us the vehicle by which we can continually improve our processes." In addition to the award, the Ohio Army National Guard will receive \$750,000 for use toward improving the "quality of life" for the full-time employees and Soldiers of the OHARNG.

In 2002, the OHARNG submitted its initial ACOE self assessment and was named the "Rookie of the Year." Since 2002 the Ohio National Guard has been recognized as the NGB's overall winner in 2003, 2004 and 2006. In 2005, the organization was awarded First Place in the Gold Division as the NGB's entrant to compete in the Department of the Army competition.

Buckeye Guard Magazine - The Spring 2009 edition of the Buckeye Guard is in distribution. Those of you who are on the mailing list or who have contacted Editor Steve Toth, will be receiving it any day now. It will also be available shortly on the web at http://ong.ohio.gov/bg_index.html

Mobile Commissary Program Reminder -

Woods King Armory, 4303 Green Road, Cleveland, 44128. Saturday, May 09 - 1000-1930 and Sunday, May 10 - 1000-1730.

Toledo ANG Dining Facility, 2660 S. Eber Rd., Swanton, OH. Saturday, June 27-0900-1800 and Sunday, June 28-1000-1700.

Upcoming Events:

Major General Wayt's Town Hall Meeting. May 28, Woodlawn Community Center, 7:00-9:00pm, 10050 Woodlawn Blvd., Cincinnati, Ohio 45215

Bob Hope Stamp Unveiling. On May 29, at 1000, at Beightler Armory in Columbus, the USPS will unveil a new stamp honoring Bob Hope. This event will not be public, however retirees are invited and encouraged to attend. Please make plans to participate in this national event honoring one of the great friends of the military.

Memorial Golf Tournament Military Appreciation Day. On Tuesday, June 2, there will be free admission for all current military and retirees with valid ID at Muirfield Golf Club, Dublin, OH. A retiree ID will also cover immediate family (spouse and children) admissions as well. Doors open at 0700. The day features practice rounds by the tournament players on the famed Muirfield course. There will be a military guest golf clinic with PGA professionals at 1330, the traditional Honoree ceremony featuring military recognition and reserved seating at 1500, and Jack Nicklaus' golf clinic at 1630. This will be a really fun day and we hope to have a large number of retirees attend.

Call to Duty Ceremonies:

204 EN Det, Columbus – May 11, 1000, Ohio Historical Society.

1192 EN Co, Newton Falls-June 12, 1000, Harding High School, 860 Elm Road NE, Warren, Ohio 44483.

OMLT 09-3, (Operational Mentor and Liaison Team), Columbus, June 15, 1600, Groveport Madison High School.

V-E Day - Sixty-four years ago President Harry S. Truman declared May 8 as the day that Germany officially surrendered. German leaders first signed the surrender document in Reims, France. Victory in the Pacific would come a few months later, on Sept. 2, the day Japan surrendered.

Command Sergeant Major Selection - State Command Sergeant Major Albert Whatmough has announced the selection of Command Sergeant Major Rodger M. Jones to fill the position of Command Sergeant Major, 37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Buckeye). CSM Jones' previous assignment was as Command Sergeant Major, for the 148th Infantry Regiment, with which he recently completed a very successful combat deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom

Opt-in for AAFES Ads - Authorized Army and Air Force Exchange Service customers including retirees may opt-in to receive sales fliers and other offers (direct mail and e-mail) by visiting aafes.com. To subscribe to direct mail/sales fliers: <https://odin.aafes.com/feedback/docs/flyers.asp>. To subscribe to the e-mail list: <http://odin.aafes.com/emailsubscribe/default.asp>. Users must first log in, then follow the links to the correct locations. For more information, call (800) 733-5142.

Where does DFAS mail the \$10,000 check? If Defense Finance and Accounting Service officials all of a sudden decided they wanted to mail you a check for \$10,000 – no direct deposit allowed – would you receive it? Many retirees and annuitants would not because DFAS has a wrong address on file for them. Many of you assume that as long as DFAS has your correct direct-deposit information, there is no reason to keep DFAS informed of your whereabouts. Not true.

DFAS must have current mailing addresses so it can mail out important information and documents regarding your state/federal taxes, the Survivor Benefit Plan, a Retiree Account Statement, etc. And there is always the possibility for that big check! (A person can dream.) You can check your current address on file by calling (800) 321-1080, or accessing your MyPay account online. And while we're on the subject of DFAS, the best time to call for routine matters is NOT at the beginning of the month. More people call DFAS at the beginning of the month to report pay problems than any other time, so naturally the wait times will be much longer. If possible, wait until at least the middle of the month to call or use the online services at <http://www.dfas.mil/>.

Death of a spouse affects Survivor Benefit Plan coverage - Remember your retirement party 20 years ago? Do you remember out-processing? Do you remember the Survivor Benefit Plan briefing you received? If a retiree can answer "yes" to at least one of the questions, it is most likely the question about the party. Many retirees do not remember specifics about SBP coverage. Unfortunately, both the Air and Army Retiree Services Offices receive calls almost daily from retirees whose spouses have just passed away, and the SBP coverage needs to be suspended. Counselors advise retirees to send a certified

copy of their spouse's death certificate, along with a brief letter or completed DD Form 2656-6 (SBP Election Change Certificate), to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. The mailing address is: DFAS, U.S. Military Retirement Pay, PO Box 7130 London, KY 40742-7130; or via fax to (800) 469-6559. Premiums are suspended effective the first day of the month following the month the spouse dies. SBP spouse coverage is not terminated when a spouse dies. Coverage is placed in a suspended status pending a possible future marriage. For more information: <https://ca.dtic.mil/dfas/s-retired/ret-pay.htm>

Recent News Releases:

Lt. Gen. Vaughn to retire. Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard, is scheduled to retire from his current position June 1 ending a career that has spanned 40 years. A retirement ceremony was held in his honor on May 6, with Air Force Gen. Craig R. McKinley, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, as the host. <http://www.ngb.army.mil/news/archives/2009/05/050709-Vaughn.aspx>

Gates Visits Camp for Surging Troops (Washington Times, May 8). A huge U.S. military camp is taking shape in the baking heat of southern Afghanistan for thousands of extra U.S. troops charged with defeating a resurgent Taliban. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates visited Camp Leatherneck, with concrete blast walls and sand-colored tents, as he surveyed preparations for what will be the biggest wave yet in a year that is seeing U.S. troop numbers doubled. www.washingtontimes.com/

Pakistan Announces Army Offensive Against Taliban. (Washington Post, May 8). Pakistan's prime minister told the nation that the armed forces were being "called in to eliminate the militants and terrorists" who have forcibly occupied part of the country's northwest, sending thousands of civilians fleeing from the region in the past week. Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gillani's announcement, made in a late-night, televised address, signaled the final collapse of a fragile peace accord between the government and Taliban forces in the Swat region. It also represented the civilian government's formal green light for a full-fledged offensive by the military, which until now has been fighting sporadically. www.washingtonpost.com/

Websites of Interest:

<http://www.moaa.org/> - Military Officers Association of America

http://www.ngb.army.mil/news/todayinhistory/may.aspx#5_07 – Today in Guard History

<http://www.trea.org/> - Retired Enlisted Association of the United States

<http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/> - National Museum of the Air Force

<http://www.armyhistory.org/ahf.aspx?pgID=868> – National Museum of the Army

It is with deep regret and sorrow that we announce the following death:

SMSGt Steve Schlinkert, 121st Operations Group, Ohio Air National Guard.

We are continuing the planning for the Adjutant General's Alumni Reunion to be held at DSCC in Columbus on September 19. Please hold that date as we complete the agenda. If you have ideas for future newsletter content or other alumni programs and would like to communicate with me directly, please feel free to call me at 614-336-7336, or by email at james.chisman@us.army.mil. Thanks for your service.

COL (ret) Jim Chisman
Alumni Affairs Coordinator
Government Contractor