



Montgomery County

# Veterans Services

Commission Newsletter

December 2021

## Director's Message

Remembering the story of WWI's Christmas Truce: when fighting paused for the holiday.

On Christmas Eve 1914, in the dank, muddy trenches on the Western Front of the first world war, a remarkable thing happened.

The Christmas Truce occurred on and around Christmas Day 1914, when the sounds of rifles firing and shells exploding faded in a number of places along the Western Front during World War I in favor of holiday celebrations. During the unofficial ceasefire, soldiers on both sides of the conflict emerged from the trenches and shared gestures of goodwill.

At the first light of dawn on Christmas Day, some German soldiers emerged from their trenches and approached the Allied lines across no-man's-land, calling out "Merry Christmas" in their enemies' native tongues. At first, the Allied soldiers feared it was a trick, but seeing the Germans unarmed they climbed out of their trenches and shook hands with the enemy soldiers. The men exchanged presents of cigarettes and plum puddings and sang carols and songs. Some Germans lit Christmas trees around their trenches, and there was even a documented case of soldiers from opposing sides playing a good-natured game of soccer.

It was never repeated but it served as heartening proof, however brief, that beneath the brutal clash of weapons, the soldiers' essential humanity endured. During World War I, the soldiers on the Western Front did not expect to celebrate on the battlefield, but even a world war could not destroy the Christmas spirit.

On behalf of the Veterans Commission, we wish you hope, joy, peace, good health, favor and love this Holiday Season.

## Veterans Treatment Court Graduation

The Montgomery County Veteran's Treatment Court is a hybrid between a drug court and a mental health court. It uses a treatment problem-solving model rather than a traditional court model to assist veterans whose problems can often be traced to military service.

The goal of the veterans' court is not to excuse a veteran defendant's crime, but to address underlying reasons for the crime in ways that are most likely to prevent repeat criminal behavior. These probationary periods often include random drug and alcohol testing, and veterans who fail to abide by the terms of probation may be diverted to a regular court docket.

Recidivism rates are far below the national average of more than 50 percent.

On December 15, 2021, 4 Veterans completed the treatment court and had their cases closed. Veterans can avoid jail time and if eligible, get their charges expunged with the completion of this intensive treatment and rehabilitation program.



### Judge Dennis J. Adkins

In 2013, Judge Adkins created the first Veteran's Treatment Court in this area. He presides over the court, which is designed to provide treatment and rehabilitation for veterans who have found themselves involved in the Criminal Justice System due to combat related problems.

Judge Adkins was appointed to the General Division bench on June 6, 2011. He received his B.S. from the University of Dayton in 1982, and his J.D. from the Salmon P. Chase College of Law at Northern Kentucky University in 1986.

## VA Benefits

### Veterans Pension and Survivors Pension.

Pension is a needs-based benefit. It is paid to wartime Veterans with financial needs and their survivors. If you are a Veteran, you are eligible for pension if all of the following are true:

- You were discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions, AND
- You served 90 days of active duty with at least one day during wartime\*, AND
- Your countable income is below the maximum annual pension rate (MAPR),

AND

- You meet the net worth limitations, AND
- You meet one of the following criteria:
  - You are age 65 or older
  - You have a permanent and total non-service connected disability
  - You are a patient in a nursing home due to mental or physical incapacity
  - You are receiving Social Security disability benefits

\*Veterans who entered active duty after 09/07/1980, must serve at least 24 months of active-duty service. If the length of service is less than 24 months, the Veteran must have completed their entire tour of active duty. Contact us at 937-225-4801 for more info.

Recording Your DD214 and Receiving a Veterans ID Card

Why is it important to file your DD214 the Montgomery County Recorder's Office? Recording your DD214 will protect your document against fire, theft or misplacement. Your DD214 is your only evidence of active military service under Federal Law. This can help you in several ways-you may get faster access to state or local veteran's benefits or programs-but the most important thing is quick access to your DD214 should you need another replacement copy some time in the future.

When a DD214 gets lost or misplaced, it can now take an incredibly long time to get a replacement from the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis. Currently, NPRC at reduced staffing capacity focusing on emergency requests. Your non-emergency request for DD214 or any other records may take more than 16 months to receive your documents.

Some worry about privacy issues when filing a copy of their military discharge paperwork with the county, but the privacy laws require you must supply proof that you are the veteran or eligible next-of-kin or a legally appointed representative of the veteran before access to the DD214 is granted.

The Montgomery County Recorder's Office is located on the fifth floor of the Montgomery County Administration Building at 451 W. Third Street, 5th Floor, Dayton, Ohio. Parking is available in the adjacent parking garage. There is no cost to recording your DD214. While you are recording your DD214, we highly recommend you apply for your no cost Veteran ID Card.

For more information contact the Montgomery County Recorder's Office at 937-225-4275.

This Month in History

Pearl Harbor 80 Years Ago

On December 7, 1941, Japanese planes attacked the United States Naval Base at Pearl Harbor External, Hawaii Territory, killing more than 2,300 Americans. The U.S.S. Arizona was completely destroyed and the U.S.S. Oklahoma capsized. A total of twelve ships sank or were beached in the attack and nine additional vessels were damaged. More than 160 aircraft were destroyed and more than 150 others damaged.



December 25, 1776

Hoping to surprise the Germans, General Washington and his troops hopped in boats and waded across the icy Delaware River on Christmas night. At dawn on Dec. 26, about 2,400 frozen Continentals pushed into Trenton, and they did indeed surprise the enemy, who surrendered within an hour and a half.

The mission, which became known as the Battle of Trenton, was of huge significance to the Continental Army's cause. Not only did it raise the troops' spirits, but it revived the hope of the colonists, who were beginning to think their battle for independence wasn't feasible.

About Us

Montgomery County Veterans Services Commission

627 Edwin C. Moses Blvd. 4th Floor, East Medical Plaza Dayton, OH 45417

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Appointment Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Commission Meetings

Currently at 10:00 a.m. every second Wednesday of each month.

January 12, 2022

February 9, 2022

March 9, 2022

April 13, 2022

May 11, 2022

June 8, 2022

July 13, 2022

August 10, 2022

September 14, 2022

October 12, 2022

November 9, 2022

December 14, 2022

Holiday Office Closures

December 23rd

12:30 - 4:30

December 24th

Closed all Day

December 31st

Closed All Day.

Our Commissioners

Jerry Hays, President, Disabled American Veterans

William Fried, Vice President Vietnam Veterans of America

James Dare, Secretary American Legion

John Theobald, American Veterans (AMVETS)