MEDINA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES

Medina County Veterans Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

SUMMER/FALL 2008

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New G.I. Bill Passed for the 21st Century

President Bush has signed into law the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act

The Post- 9/11 GI Bill is a new benefit providing educational assistance to individuals who served on active duty on or after September 11, 2001.

By Leo Shane III, Stars and Stripes Mideast edition, Monday, June 30, 2008

The new GI Bill approved by Congress last week and expected to be signed into law by President Bush soon assures young veterans a chance at a free four-year degree, starting August 2009.

Spouses and children will see benefits, too. Reservists will see more money for college. Even vets who got out years ago could get a free college education.

The plan, sponsored by Sen. Jim Webb, D-Va., was designed to match the free-college tuition pledge under the GI Bill of Rights approved after World War II. At that time, returning troops received enough to pay for a four-year degree plus reasonable housing and living expenses while they were in school.

But critics of the current system said officials are still using decades-old education prices that haven't kept pace with the price of those degrees, making it unlikely that veterans

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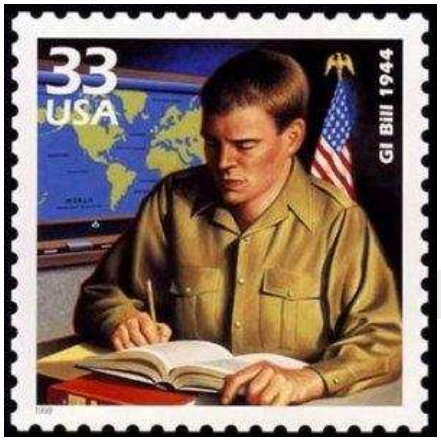

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

- Medina: 330-722-9368
- Brunswick/Hinckley: 330-225-7100 Ext. 9368
- Wadsworth: 330-336-6657 Ext. 9368
- Fax: 330-722-9378
- E-mail: Veterans@zoominternet.net

Happy Birthday

Happy 218 Years Young

U.S. Coast Guard

August 4, 1790

Mission of the Medina County Veterans Service Office

The Mission of the Medina County Veterans Service Office is to provide temporary aid and assistance to veterans, dependants and widows in time of need.

The Medina County Veterans Service Office is a state mandated agency dedicated to aiding Medina County veterans during times of need. We provide two basic services:

- Temporary emergency financial aid and assistance to eligible veterans and family members who have demonstrated a need set fourth by the commission.

Assist veterans, family members and survivors

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New G.I Bill (cont.)

can get a degree without loans or other financial aid.

The new benefit is tied to the price of the most expensive public college in a service member's home state, plus an additional housing and living expenses based on regional averages.

Now as those costs rise, so will the amount veterans can be compensated.

The new benefit won't go into effect until August 2009; the legislation gives veterans affairs officials a year to set repayment formulas and procedures. But veterans already in college will see a 20 percent boost in their current benefit this semester, in anticipation of the larger payouts next year.

For everyone else, here's what to expect:

For active-duty troops

The bill gets rid of the current enrollment requirements, replacing them with language mandating at least three months' service in the military since Sept. 11, 2001, for partial GI Bill benefits.

Anyone who has served at least three years on active duty since then is eligible for four years of tuition costs at their home state's universities, plus about another $1,000 monthly for housing and living expenses.

Each year, the veterans will also be eligible for $1,200 in tutoring services and $1,000 more to cover books. Altogether, the benefit could top more than $25,000 a year in the most expensive states.

If troops or veterans attend state schools that are less expensive, they won't get to pocket the difference. If they decide to go to a private school or out-of-state college, they'll have to cover the difference between their higher tuition bill and the state-assigned reimbursement figure.

The benefit lasts for 15 years now, instead of 10, giving troops extra time after leaving the military to either use their benefit or pass it along.

For spouses and dependents

Under a provision backed by the Pentagon, troops who served at least 10 years on active duty will be able to transfer their benefit to a spouse or dependent child. Spouses can receive the money even sooner, if their service member has served at least six years and agrees to another four-year contract.

The transferred benefit only covers the cost of tuition, not the living stipend and extra cash for books. But beyond that the same rules apply: The measure promises a full four years of college bills at the most expensive in-state school, or any less expensive university.

Families can divide the benefit up however it benefits them most, as long as they don't exceed those 36 months of college classes. For example, a retired soldier can use two years of benefits to pay for a two-year degree program, then transfer the last two years to a spouse or child.

And for long-serving service members, the changes mean that their college-age children could get a free college education starting fall 2009, provided they attend a state-backed school.

For reservists and veterans

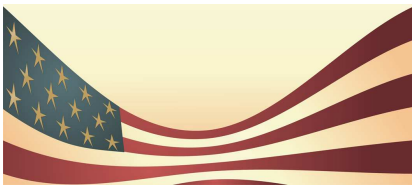
Guardsmen and reservists who served at least three years on active duty in the past seven years automatically qualify for the full tuition benefit just like other troops. Those who served less active time, but at least three months, will receive between 40 and 90 percent of the tuition benefit, based on a sliding scale.

But more importantly, the benefit can be used within 15 years of their separation from the service, instead of the current requirement that they remain in the Guard or Reserve to receive the money.

For those veterans who have already used their GI Bill benefits, the changes don't offer any new money. Many of the most vocal supporters of the bill, veterans upset over how little they received for college, acknowledged the changes will help the next generation of young service members more than themselves.

But veterans who have not yet used up their education benefits, or those who never signed up for the GI Bill when they were serving, can take advantage of the new rules.

As long as they served at least three years after Sept. 11, 2001, they're eligible for the same free tuition.



"The highest obligation and privilege of citizenship is that of bearing arms for ones country."

General George S. Patton Jr.

Any veteran who received a Purple Heart medal may apply for these plates. The veteran's DD 214 must show that a Purple Heart was awarded. Effective March 24, 2008, Section 4503.571 of the Ohio Revised Code eliminates the payment of any registration or service fee required by Sections 4503.04 and 4503.102 of the Ohio Revised Code, and eliminates the payment of any local motor vehicle license tax levied under Chapter 4504 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Mission statement cont. page 1

when applying to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for benefits.

Our assistance includes but is not limited to:

Financial Assistance:

- Rent and mortgage payments
- Utilities: Gas, Electric and Water
- Food and personal Hygiene items
- Medical
- Transportation to and from VA Hospitals in Brecksville and Cleveland, Ohio
- Grave markers and flags

Service Assistance:

- Preperations of forms and paperwork
- Documentation of claims and pertinent data
- Proper submission of claims to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs thru a service organization.
- Submission for awards decorations and medals.

Each of the 88 counties in Ohio has a board of five appointed Commissioners who administer the program for their respective county.

POW/MIA Recognition Day
Friday, September , 19 2008

Medina County Veterans Services

210 Northland Drive
Medina, Ohio 44256

Phone: 330-722-9368
Fax: 330-722-9378
E-mail: veterans@zoominternet.net

Serving Those That Served Because We Are Family

http://
www.co.medina.oh.us/
veterans/veteranshome.htm

Still Serving Proudly

Check out your local veterans Organization.

For a complete listing visit our website

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Medina County Veterans Newsletter

either in the mail or by E-mail.

VA Benefits for Survivors of Military Personnel Involved in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has a variety of programs to assist the survivors of military personnel who die on active duty. Most of these provisions apply equally to those serving on active duty inside or outside a combat theater.

Summary of Benefits

Survivors receive certain payments or benefits regardless of whether the in-service death is due to combat, accident or disease, including:

1. Burial benefits for the deceased service member, which include a gravesite in any VA national cemetery with available space, perpetual care of the grave at no cost to the family, a government headstone or marker, Presidential Memorial Certificate, and a U.S. burial flag.
2. Dependency and Indemnity Compensation at the monthly rate of $1,091 for a surviving spouse, with additional benefits for dependent children.
3. Life insurance, which most military members carry at the highest level, $400,000.

More information about how VA services apply in individual cases is available from VA representatives at 1-800-827-1000.

Released Department of Veterans Affairs
FACT SHEET, April 2008