



OHIO NATIONAL GUARD

ONG members' contributions throughout year help make Christmas special for group of children

Story by Staff Sgt. George B. Davis
Ohio National Guard Public Affairs Office

Columbus, Ohio — Throughout the year, a number of full-time Soldiers, Airmen and civilian employees at the Ohio National Guard headquarters readily pay \$2 for the opportunity to forgo the duty uniform or designated professional attire of the day on dress-down Thursdays. These contributions have a direct impact on a group of children who attend a very special event held every December.

For more than 30 years, the Maj. Gen. Robert S. Beightler Armory Special Children's Christmas Party has been an Ohio National Guard tradition maintained by the hard work of dedicated volunteers and a fundraising program fueled primarily by donations from Beightler Armory's employee dress-down day participants.



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"I look forward to it every year, it feels like Christmas has started when we start working on the party," says Warrant Officer 2 Amber Springer, event board president. Springer is filling red and green balloons with helium and securing them to the backs of chairs with white ribbon. She works at the edge of a canopy created by a tactical parachute hanging from the center of the armory drill floor.

She soon delegates this work to another volunteer so that she can direct a group of recently arrived youth volunteers in setting up the activities for the day. There are several groups involved in making this party happen, Springer says. Besides the volunteers from Beightler, members of a local Civitans organization wrapped the gifts and students of the Hamilton Township High School National Honor Society run many of the activities during the party.

Some of the student volunteers disappear and soon after, just as the children arrive, a troop of costumed characters appear to greet the children. A teenaged-sized moose and chipmunk give high-fives to children stepping off the bus outside. And just inside the armory children surround a holiday-themed mouse and snowman that are dispensing hugs.

The children's exclamations of delight echo across the drill floor as they enter and their aides guide them under the parachute canopy to find places for their coats and bags at the tables there. The special nature of these children becomes apparent as the children in wheel chairs make their way off the lifts and join their classmates. An army of aides, parents and volunteers assisting the almost 100 special needs children is also in attendance.

"We think that this is the 12th year that the children of Madison County have come to Beightler," says Peg Johnson, the retired director of the Madison County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Johnson has been one of the key organizers for this event for many years. "The children all have disabilities — cerebral palsy, autism, Down syndrome, Prader-Willi (syndrome) and a host of behavioral disabilities," says Johnson. All the schools in the district have children present, from ages 2 to 22.

The drill floor is soon a flurry of activity with children and their aides moving from one activity to another. An inflatable basketball free throw game, bowling, face painting and Christmas craft stations keep the children entertained until lunch is served.

(continued on pg. 4)

Ohio National Guard units currently deployed

Air units:

JFHQ
121st Air Refueling Wing
123rd Air Control Squadron
178th Fighter Wing
179th Airlift Wing
180th Fighter Wing
220th Engineering Installation Squadron
251st Cyberspace Engineering and Installation Group

Army units:

838th Military Police Company
437th Military Police Battalion
371st Sustainment Brigade

As of Dec. 20, 2013, about 700 Ohio National Guard Airmen and Soldiers were deployed

Job & Family Services - Veteran Services

Mike Magnusson, Transition Assistance Advisor Ohio National Guard

The primary function of the Veterans program is to assist eligible Veterans, including disabled Veterans, campaign Veterans, and other Veterans in alleviating unemployment and underemployment. Policies and programs are implemented to increase opportunities for Veterans to obtain employment, job training, intensive services and assistance in employment and training programs.

The department assures Veterans are treated with courtesy and respect at all offices and that Veterans are given priority of service in referrals to job openings and other services. Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVERs) specialists provide business outreach services and educate OhioMeansJobs Center partners on Veterans issues. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists provide intensive services and outreach to those Veterans who are unable to obtain employment through regular OhioMeansJobs Center Core Services. Go to <http://jfs.ohio.gov/veterans/index.stm> and click on "Employment Services" for more information on:

- ✦ OhioMeansJobs.com
- ✦ OhioMeansVeteranJobs.com
- ✦ Ohio's Apprenticeship Program
- ✦ Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
- ✦ State of Ohio Jobs
- ✦ Federal Jobs

To locate your county Career Center and Veteran Service Representative go to: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/veterans/locate/index.stm> or call Job & Family Services Veteran Services at 1-888-296-7541, Option #5.

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/veterans/information/mission.stm>



The Columbus Blue Jackets saluted those currently serving, or who have served, in the nation's armed forces during **Military Appreciation Night on Nov. 9, 2013**, when the Jackets hosted the New York Islanders at Nationwide Arena. More than 850 active military members and their Families were in attendance as a result of the generosity of season ticket holders and a matching donation by the Blue Jackets organization. The night featured several tributes, recognition of all branches of service and a charitable auction of newly designed camouflage-style jerseys worn by the Blue Jackets players during pre-game warm-ups. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Nicholas Pavlik, ONG)

DID YOU KNOW?

Thirty-five percent of us who make New Year's resolutions break them by the end of January. Only 23 percent of us will see them through to completion. Which percentile are you in?

Source: [FranklinCovey](http://FranklinCovey.com)

JAN 1

Veterans Affairs Dental Insurance Program (VADIP) began offering an expansive network of Delta Dental Preferred Provide Organization (PPO) dentists for maximum cost savings and program value. Visit <http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vadip/> for more information.

JAN 25**Change of Command**

174th Air Defense Artillery, Woodlawn Armory, 1000 hrs.
Outgoing Commander:
Lt. Col. Thomas Moore
Incoming Commander:
Lt. Col. Nicole Gabriel

174th Air Defense Artillery **Brigade Ball**, Hilton Columbus at Easton, Columbus, 1730 hrs.
Contact Chief Warrant Officer 2 Christopher George at 614-356-7954 for more information.

FEB 8

112th Engineer Battalion **Anniversary Ball**, Crowne Plaza Cleveland Airport, Middleburg Heights, 1700 hrs.
Contact Capt. Rosario Carbone at 614-336-6640 for more information.

APR 24-27

ONGA/ONGEA Spring Events Weekend, Hyatt Regency, 350 North High St., Downtown Columbus.

APR 26

ONG Alumni Muster (Reunion), Hyatt Regency, 350 North High St., Columbus, 0930 -1130

VETERANS ID CARDS

Sharon Gingerich
Geauga County Recorder's Office

In cooperation with the Geauga County Veterans' Service Commission, the Geauga County Recorder's Office offers Veterans ID cards daily from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

In Ohio, the Recorder's Office is responsible for maintaining Veterans' military service discharge records. These records are used by Veterans to prove their eligibility for certain benefits their military service has earned. Instead of carrying around the paperwork, the Veteran will now be able to present a personal photo ID card.

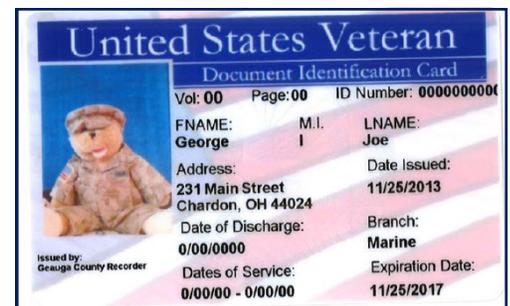
In order for a Veteran to receive the photo ID card, they will have to record their **ORIGINAL** military discharge paperwork with the Geauga County Recorder's Office and show an accepted form of photo identification (see below). We will take the picture and print the ID card while you wait.

When you come to our office remember that:

- ◆ You must bring an original discharge to be recorded to receive an ID Card.
- ◆ The original discharge must be legible.
- ◆ If the discharge is not legible, it must be accompanied by a letter from the VA translating the discharge.
- ◆ If your discharge is already on file in the Recorder's office, you do not need to bring your paperwork.

Identification accepted:

Valid Ohio Drivers License/Identification Card
ID card from U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Valid U.S. Passport
Current conceal and carry permit
Any other form of photo ID card



Example of the new Veteran ID card

If your county not does yet offer the Veterans ID Card, contact counties near you to see if they offer them. You don't have to receive your Veterans ID Card in the county that you reside in. Any recorder's office may offer them. If you have any questions or need an original or certified discharge, please contact your local County Veteran's Commission. Remember that only original discharge papers or discharge paperwork that has been certified is able to be recorded.

<http://www.recorder.co.geauga.oh.us/NewsLinks/VeteransResources.aspx>

NOTE:

Recent newspaper articles are warning Veterans that their ID cards have a bar code that reveals their Social Security numbers. The articles suggest that the ID cards are not safe to use because it reveals personal information. Please be aware that the Geauga County Recorder's Office intentionally **DID NOT** place a bar code on the cards issued. There is **NO** unseen personal information linked to the cards issued from this office.

2013 Regional Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee Meetings:

Region 1 - 23 Jan

Region 2 - 15 Jan

Region 3 - 28 Jan

Region 4 - 28 Jan

Region 5 - 14 Jan

Region 6 - 8 Jan

For questions regarding the time or place of RISFAC meetings, contact Staff Sgt. Ikiia Perry at (614) 336-4135.

Retirement Packets

Retirement packets are mailed to your last known mailing address. If you change addresses before your 59th birthday, make sure you contact the office below so they will know where to send your packet.

You will need to send the packet back to receive your retirement pay. Make sure to include the following: NGB Form 22, DD Form 214(s), NGB Form 23, 20-year letter and SBP election. If you are missing any documents, contact Ms. Jeanette Coughenour at 614-336-7038 (ONG HQs).

**U.S. Army Human Resources
Center of Excellence - Fort Knox
ATTN: AHRC-PDR-RCR
1600 Spearhead Division Ave.
Dept. 420
Fort Knox, KY 40122-56402
1-800-318-5298 or 502-613-8950**

If you are an Army Guard/Reserve or an Air Force Guard/Reserve retiree, and need help completing your retirement pay packet, contact Sgt. 1st Class Richard Wright at 614-336-7277 and he will assist you.

ONG members' contributions . . .

(cont. from pg. 1)

But many children fidget during their lunch of sloppy joes and chips. This is not their first year attending the party and they know who will be arriving soon after lunch.

Behind the stage beside several large felt sacks of wrapped presents is a gentleman who also works quickly to finish his lunch. "It's fun to see them grow up and mature," says retired Sgt. 1st Class Bernie Miesse, who has been getting in "uniform" for this party since 1985. "They just light up when Santa comes," says Miesse. "Most of them still believe with all of their heart, and it's just a pleasure to put smiles on their faces."

The gifts, like Santa, are a product of the spirit of giving within the Ohio National Guard. Funds raised during the years 26 dress-down days are used to purchase a gift of choice for these special children, says Springer. "We let them pick their top three choices from Wal-Mart or Toy 'R' Us online. And we do our best to make sure they get their first choice," she says.

And as Santa calls out to boys and girls by name and gives them their presents, the only smiles that outshine those of the children are the ones of the caregivers present. "For many of our kids this will be the biggest part of Christmas. This will be the biggest toy they get," says Johnson.

The caregivers are not the only adults present with big smiles; several volunteers bear them as well. "It's very rewarding to see, it brings joy when you don't expect it to," says Springer as she helps prepare for Santa. Unfortunately the apron she wears partially covers the Christmas kitten sweater she wore especially for the party. And so she does not get the same attention that Soldiers and Airmen in uniform get crossing the drill floor to and from their duty. But for this holiday event it is the giving spirit of personnel when they are out of uniform that matters most.

