



ALLIANCE VETERANS

MURRYSVILLE ALLIANCE CHURCH

1st Quarter 2018

OUR MISSION: *Our purpose within the Alliance Veterans is to love God, and to love others, as we focus on Jesus as the Author of our faith. We reach out to veterans in order to teach what is right, and to demonstrate God's love in a practical way. We are interested in helping, not only veterans, but their families as well.*

MEETINGS: 19:00 the 3rd Monday each month. INFORMATION: 724-327-7206 or www.murrysvillealliancechurch.org

Happy New Year – orders remain UNCHANGED!:

One of the most fascinating sites to visit in Washington D.C. is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. For 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, a platoon of 30 honor guards protects the tomb through rain, snow, and even hurricanes! It has been guarded every minute of every day since 1937.

A single sentinel takes his post guarding carefully, walking exactly 21 steps then pausing for 21 seconds before turning around and continuing his duty. The number 21 is in reference to the 21 gun salute which is the military's highest honor given to a soldier. When the changing of the guard takes place, the orders are passed from one soldier to the next – "Orders Remain Unchanged."

We are presently in the New Year; the world is rapidly changing before our eyes! War seems inevitable in the Middle East, the world economy is on the brink of complete collapse. One thing has not changed -- our orders from Jesus to preach this gospel of the Kingdom to every one!

Continue to stand guard, watching and being ever alert of the times in which we live; and never forget that our "Orders Remain Unchanged!" With so much work to be done, let's be sure we enter 2018 with our priorities intact –

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always..."(Matthew 28:19,20)

Thank God for His everlasting loving compassion, mercy and grace. What great, good news to share!

RECENT EVENTS:

November – A Soldier's Christmas. With packing help from the Franklin Regional Pay-it-Forward club and the girls' soccer team, 184 boxes of snacks, toiletries and gifts were sent to 11 soldiers serving overseas. The Heritage elementary 2nd and 3rd grade students and the Pay-it-Forward Club prepared hand made Christmas cards which were included in the packages.

February – Hospice visitations. Interim Healthcare, a hospice company, gave a \$1000 gift to the MAC veterans ministry in recognition of the time and effort put into visits to veterans in hospice care by MAC veterans.

February - Food Pantry. Since January 2016, Larry Hrabak and Bill Amos have participated in four (4) Food Pantries per month in Westmoreland County. At these Food Pantries, they provide information of Veteran benefits. As of early February 2018 they have spoken with 429 people; veterans, their relatives and friends. They also provide assistance for non-veterans with information such as housing, addictions, health care, emergency food pantries, rent and utility assistance. Through these efforts, Larry and Bill have confirmed that 39 veterans and 1 non-veteran are now receiving benefits. In February, two veterans confirmed that they are now receiving benefits:

- A veteran who was helped obtained a VA Home Loan and is closing on his house by the end of February. He may require further assistance with HVAC and water well modifications.
- A veteran was helped obtain agent orange benefits. He received a financial disbursement for every month he was in Vietnam. He is currently at 100% disability.

Additionally, Larry and Bill visit veterans at Concordia and Murrysville Rehab and Wellness nursing homes. At one of the Food Pantries in Jeannette, they provided clothing for people in need and have attended some of their weekly bread days.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

See last page with tentative schedule for 2018.

FOR PRAYER:

Our WWII Vets are now in their late 80's and early 90's. With age comes physical challenges, aches, pain and discomfort. Lift up our special friends, Ernie Bargiel, Charlie Bouma, June Fox and Billy Gentile .

Subject: Dangerous Duty

My high school assignment was to ask a veteran about World War II. Since my father had served in the Philippines during the war, I chose him. After a few basic questions, I very gingerly asked, "Did you ever kill anyone?"

Dad got quiet. Then, in a soft voice, he said, "Probably. I was the cook."

VA RESOURCES:

Veterans Choice Program – Allows for health care outside of VA facilities under certain conditions.

Contact Shirley Warren, 412-822-3840 or shirley.warren@va.gov, Rebecca Balog, 412-822-3840 or rebecca.balog@va.gov, Paula Bibza, 412-360-3614 or paula.bibza@va.gov

Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans
Help for Homeless Veterans 412-822-1300

VA Hospital Transportation (724) 830-3530

VA Health Care

The new online Health Care Application to determine Veterans' eligibility for VA services is now active at www.vets.gov.

For VA Problems contact the office of US Representative Keith Rothfus and talk to Patti Hoover.

Pittsburgh office: Phone: (412) 837-1361

US Senator, Pat Toomey, may also be contacted.

Washington D.C. office:

Phone: (202) 224-4254

Fax: (202) 228-0284

VETERAN RESOURCES:

Free Tax Preparation for Veterans

Military One Source-MilTax

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil/-/miltax-free-tax-services-from-military-onesource>

Trained MilTax consultant during tax season (January through April 17) seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. EST or EDT at 800-342-9647.

Veterans Benefits Advisors – Free counseling and assistance to fill out VA forms to receive benefits. Contact Kevin Bock, 724-837-3553 or kevinbock@comcast.net. Web site: integritystateadvisors.com

Network - Greater Pittsburgh's coordinated network of public, private, and non-profit organizations working together to serve veterans and their families. Web site: www.paserves.org

Free legal help for low income veterans:

Allegheny County 412-402-6622

Pennsylvania 717-238-6715

From U of Pittsburgh 412-648-1285

From Duquesne Law School 412-396-4704

Westmoreland County Veterans Affairs –

Claim assistance from accredited veterans' service officers (VSO). Comprehensive knowledge of local, state, and federal VA benefits. DAV Van ride scheduling to VA Hospitals in Pittsburgh. Information and referrals. All services are provided free of charge. Call Matt, Jim, Dane, or Mike @ 724-830-3530.

American Legion

The American Legion department service officers (DSO) offer free advice and guidance for veterans who need the services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). You do not need to be a member of the American Legion. At Pittsburgh office contact: Graham Weiland (supervisor); Ian Corin; Stephanie Dafi; Larry McCalis or Stephani Bengou. [412-395-6230]

Comments, questions or suggestions for items to include in this newsletter; contact Gordon Israelson, Alliance Veterans coordinator at 724-858-9334 or gisraelson@gmail.com



MAC Veterans and helpers ready to pack Soldiers' Christmas boxes