

# EyesRight

Summer 2023 Edition



## Committed Volunteer Leaves Behind Hope for Veterans Through Guitar Program



Frank McFadden standing on the far left with a group of Guitars for Vets students.

Frank McFadden was a hard worker who was proud of his career in the metal trades and shared a passion for music and helping people. Growing up with 12 siblings, Frank loved meeting new people, telling stories, and making people laugh. He had many Veterans in his family and truly valued "God, Family, and Country."

We are saddened to share that Frank passed away at his home in April, surrounded by loved ones. He had a lasting impact on the VSC of Summit County by helping establish a guitar program for Veterans.



VSC Project Manager David Burden worked with Frank to bring to life his vision to "see Veterans with a guitar in their hands" by agreeing to offer free lessons for Vets at the VSC Akron office. Frank was a talented musician who knew how to play various instruments including electric bass and acoustic guitar, and he knew the power of music could help others. David explained that Frank's spirit of volunteerism is the reason this program was started.

Frank taught many students and hoped this group would provide

*See "Committed Volunteer Leaves Behind Hope for Veterans Through Guitar Program," page 3*

## Act Fast! To Receive Backdated Compensation from the PACT Act, You Need to Apply Soon



The [PACT Act](#) is a new law that expands VA health care benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other harmful substances. This law helps provide generations of Veterans and their survivors with the care and benefits they deserve by including many new presumptive conditions related to toxic exposures in the eligibility for VA services.

While there is no deadline to apply for PACT Act benefits, there is urgency to file soon to be eligible for 12 months of backdated compensation. Most Veterans and survivors who apply for benefits or submit an "[Intent to File](#)" claim by August 9, 2023, will have their benefits backdated to August 10 of last year, if benefits are granted.

To learn more about PACT Act-related care and benefits visit [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT) or call 1-800-MYVA411.

*See "Act Fast! To Receive Backdated Compensation from the PACT Act, You Need to Apply Soon," continued on page 3*

# Director's Corner



## Services for Vets

You may already know the [PACT Act](#) expands [health care eligibility](#) for many Veterans. One group that might be eligible for expanded benefits are [post-9/11 Veterans](#). A one-year special health care enrollment period for post-9/11 combat Veterans began on October 1, 2022. Help spread the word before the special enrollment period ends.

### Post-9/11 Veterans Health Care Eligibility

If you meet the requirements below, you can enroll in VA health care before October 1, 2023. To be eligible, one of the following must be true:

- You served on active duty in a theater of combat operations during a period of war after the Persian Gulf War, or
- You served in combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities after November 11, 1998
- In addition, both of these must be true:
  - You were discharged or released between September 11, 2001, and October 1, 2013, and
  - You haven't previously enrolled in VA health care

Post-9/11 Veterans discharged or released on or after October 1, 2013, are not subject to the special enrollment period but can enroll within 10 years of their separation or discharge date. Review [more eligibility requirements](#) on VA.gov.

Veterans are encouraged to apply, no matter their separation date. Your eligibility depends on your service history and other factors.

### Tell your friends to apply for VA health care in the following ways:

- [Online](#) or by calling the toll-free hotline at 877-222-8387
- By mailing [VA Form 10-10EZ](#) to: Health Eligibility Center, 2957 Clairmont Rd., Suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30329
- In person at their nearest [VA medical center or clinic](#)

In Appreciation,

*Larry D. Moore*

Executive Director



*We provide financial assistance\* for basic living needs to eligible Veterans and their dependents.*

- Mortgage payments
- Rent
- Utilities
- Food
- Children's school clothing
- Adult work clothing
- Dentures, glasses and hearing aids

### Free to Veterans!

- Regularly scheduled transportation for medical appointments at VA medical facilities and Ohio Veterans Home

\* Other types of financial assistance may be considered on a case by case basis. All types of assistance are subject to change based on need and funding.

### Veterans Affairs Assistance

- Assistance applying for Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits
- Preparation of VA forms and paperwork
- Supportive documentation of claims and pertinent data
- Proper submission of claims to the VA
- Service connected compensation
- Non-service pension
- Widows pension
- Burial benefits
- Headstones

If you are a Veteran in financial need or need help with your VA claim, please visit us at 1060 E. Waterloo Rd., Akron, OH, or call

**(330) 643-2830.**





*Act Fast!: To Receive Backdated Compensation from the PACT Act, You Need to Apply Soon, from page 1*

To apply for benefits visit <https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/>.

To fill out an intent to file claim visit <https://www.va.gov/resources/your-intent-to-file-a-va-claim/>. ★



### Check out our recent articles on the PACT Act:

- [VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation Changed – Do You Qualify?](#)
- [What Does the Passing of the New PACT Act Mean for Your VA Benefits and Care?](#)
- [Tips for Enrolling in VA Health Care](#)

*Committed Volunteer Leaves Behind Hope for Veterans Through Guitar Program, from page 1*

support for Veterans while they learned to create music and develop new friendships. Although there were challenges along the way, including maintaining the program during a global pandemic and finding other musicians to help teach lessons, Frank was able to see his dream come to fruition when the program partnered with Guitars for Vets (G4V) in August 2022 to establish the Akron Chapter.

G4V operates over 200 chapters across the U.S. and assists with providing lessons and guitars to Vets. Creating this chapter expanded the classes at the VSC Akron office and helped more than 25 students graduate thus far with an expected total of 40 graduates by the end of the year.

As a tribute to Frank, current and former students played “Amazing Grace” at his going home memorial



*Guitars for Vets students playing “Amazing Grace” during Frank’s memorial service.*

service on June 17. “It was a special honor for the students who have been touched through Frank’s efforts and commitment,” David said.

The VSC of Summit County is truly grateful for the impact Frank’s passion has had on the Veterans we serve.

To learn more about the G4V Akron Chapter visit our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/g4vsummitoh>, or email [oh.akron@guitarsforvets.org](mailto:oh.akron@guitarsforvets.org) for more information. ★



*Guitars for Vets students practicing during a class.*



## Celebrate D-Day by Taking a Trip with Us to Conneaut, Ohio!

Celebrate the anniversary of D-Day by joining us for a free trip to visit Conneaut Township Park to experience the largest WWII Living History Event in the U.S.

Here's what you need to know:

- Departure from the VSC Akron office is at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, August 17.
- We will return to the office at approximately 5 or 6 p.m.
- Seats are limited; Veterans must register before August 12 to reserve a seat.
- The trip/event is free to Veterans; No guests or spouses.

**Sign up now** at <https://www.vscsummitoh.us/dday-signup/> or contact our office for more information! ★



## Sign Up to See the Props and Pistons Festival Airshow

Interested in attending the Props and Pistons Festival Airshow at the Akron-Fulton Airport on August 19 or 20? We are offering up to **2 free tickets** for Veterans, active duty military and Gold Star families that sign up on our website! Limited tickets are available. Registrants must complete the online form to request tickets and must pick up tickets by August 16. **Sign up** at <https://www.vscsummitoh.us/props-and-pistons/> to secure your tickets! ★



## Mark Your Calendars for the Charity Pancake Breakfast on August 19

The Charity Pancake Breakfast is a free-will offering event and all proceeds will go directly to the Summit County Stand-Down for Homeless Veterans and the Copley-Fairlawn "Share a Christmas" program.

**When:** Saturday, August 19, 2023, from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

**Where:** "The Presentation of Our Lord" Orthodox Church  
3365 Ridgewood Rd., Fairlawn, Ohio

**Who:** Anyone is invited to join for a free breakfast and donate at free-will to support these great organizations. ★



## VSC School Clothing Voucher Applications Available NOW

Now through Sept. 29, 2023, Summit County Veterans who demonstrate a financial need can apply for school clothing vouchers good toward the purchase of non-uniform and uniform school clothing, including outerwear. Recipients must be the child or qualified dependent of an honorably discharged Vet who has been a resident of Summit County for at least 90 days. The VSC will accept completed applications Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at its Akron headquarters. Voucher applications for winter clothing will open Oct. 1. For more details, call 330-643-7636. ★

## Upcoming October Events



**Learn More!**

## Save the Date for October Events!

- The 7th Annual James Seminaroti Benefit Golf Outing for ALS: October 9
- Veteran of the Year Dinner: October 19
- Veteran's Appreciation Cookout: October 28

For up-to-date information [visit our website](#) or scan the QR code. ★