

## Newsletter for SGT Michael A. DiRaimondo Chapter 750 Military Order of the Purple Heart [moph-chapter-750.com](http://moph-chapter-750.com)



### ..... From the Commander

With the New Year we go forward with great hopes of getting together and sharing a meal.

### **Chap. 750 Next Regular Meeting January 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 P.M.**

Join telephonic meeting January 14 at 6:00 PM. If you want more info:

<https://hello.freeconference.com/conf/call/5159307>

Dial-in using your phone: 1 717-275-8940 **OR** 1 712-832-8330; Access code: 5159307#

Dial one of the two telephone numbers. When asked, enter the code: **515 9307# (pound)**.

### **MOPHA Gift of a Purple Heart Mask**

No charge for the face mask. The MOPH Auxiliary is making face masks for our Patriots and other Purple Heart recipients. If you are interested in receiving one, please send me a request with your address and I will pass it on to the MOPHA 750 (the auxiliary). Thank you to member Kitty Hurliman for sewing our masks.

### **Thank you to our recent donors**

- Art and Sharon Hershey
- Norma Swarup
- Celeste Barber
- Patriot Bill Treadwell; Bill donated a car to the chapter through Jon Williams who handled all the DMV paperwork and juggling of the car and new buyer. Thank you, Jon.

To all our donors, your kind and generous contributions make possible to help those who the chapter and unit seek out to assist. Below is the latest.

### **2020 Ventura Veterans Home Pizza Party Sponsored by Chapter and Unit 750**

And here is an example that rounded out our year of helping veterans.

In the following photo, Steve and Mary Lee Maline are on the right, three staff from the Ventura CalVet Veterans Home are on the left.



Steve Maline spoke with Julian Bond, Director at the Home and told him he and Mary Lee would bring pizza, cookies, beer and wine and he was so happy to hear this. He was very appreciative of our thoughtfulness during the holiday season and very thankful.

Steve and Mary Lee came up with the idea and wanted to bring joy to the Veterans Home. The event on December 28 was a huge success. Don't tell anyone, but the beer and wine were enjoyed. Mary Lee made her renowned Italian Pizzelle cookies.

Pizzelle are traditional Italian waffle cookies, usually anise flavored, they can be hard and crisp or soft and chewy depending on the baker. Pizzelle were originally made in Ortona, in the Abruzzo region of Southern Italy.

Steve and Mary Lee continue our history of service to all veterans, whether Purple Heart or not. Many of us remember when we hosted residents of the CalVet Veterans Home to our 2015 veterans ocean fishing charter that departed Patriot Jim McGrath contributed to organizing.

### **Fundraising Idea Where We Can All Participate**

This works! Go to a place where you do business then ask if you can leave a donation box. Later, and go back to empty the contents. The chapter will supply the donation box and billboard. It may recruit new members. The box comes with a lock and key (which you keep). Patriot Hugh Clabaugh collected \$77.57 from the MOPH box at Amri's Café in Ventura (apparently Hugh is a regular there.) Finance Officer Jon Williams mailed our bank deposit slips to Hugh.



### **Reduce Your Mortgage Interest Rate**

Are you looking to refinance your current mortgage? VA's Interest Rate Reduction Refinance Loan (IRRRL) may be able to help. We recommend a personal financial health assessment to determine if refinancing your current mortgage is right for you

Go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/yxeu3bdt>

### **VA Help Line**

VA Nurse advice line 877 252 4866 Want to know about symptoms, medications or concerns?

### **This Is Good Information From A Law Firm Who Helps VA Claimants For A Fee.**

Five Common Mistakes When Filing A VA Disability Claim

Here at Hill and Ponton, we know that the process of filing VA disability claims for disability benefits can be very frustrating and confusing. Any veteran who has not yet started the VA claims process has probably heard about the delays and lengthy appeals process. For any disabled veteran who needs help making their way through this process with the VA, there are five common mistakes to avoid when filing for VA disability benefits:

### 1. Not Filing Your Claim Right Away for Disability Benefits

One of the most common mistakes I have seen is not putting in a VA claim right away. There is no statute of limitations for eligible veterans to file a claim for VA disability compensation benefits. If a veteran has been wondering if they are eligible or waiting to see if their symptoms have improved, not filing a disability claim right away could potentially lose them a lot of money.

If a veteran receives an award, either through their first decision or on appeal, the benefits will be paid to them retroactively from the date the veteran's original claim.

### 2. Giving Up on Your Disability Claim

As mentioned above the appeals process is slow and complicated. Adding to the fact that some veterans have financial hardships that they may be going through while waiting on a disability rating, it seems like it would just be easier to give up. Most of the time, a finding of service connection is also required to be able to secure other VA benefits such as health care.

### 3. Failing to Learn How the VA Decides to Give You Veterans Benefits

Most of the time, veterans think that all they have to do is fill out a VA form, send it to the VA, and wait for a check to arrive in the mail. The process that the VA uses to decide new claims is much more complicated than that. The VA will only award disability benefits when a veteran can prove that they are eligible to receive VA benefits, have a current disability, have proof that something happened to them while in service, have medical evidence linking their disabilities to something that happened in service and supporting evidence indicating the severity of their condition. It is very well known that proving these points is extremely difficult the first time around. This is one of the reasons that the VA will deny most first-time claims if they are not fully developed claims.

### 4. Not Filing for Secondary Conditions

There are many veterans who do not realize that they may be entitled to benefits for disabilities that are secondary to their already service-connected disability. This happens when a service-connected injury or illness causes a new disabling condition or aggravates a non-service-connected disability.

A great example to help understand this is when a veteran has a service-connected illness of diabetes that can later lead to other illnesses. Even if the secondary illness does not develop until years later, benefits may still be available if there is medical evidence or a medical opinion to help establish the service-connection.

## 5. Failing to Obtain a Medical Opinion

Again, one of the biggest reasons why the VA will deny a claim is the lack of medical records or medical evidence linking a service member's disability to their active-duty military service. Just lay statements claiming that the issue is related to service, on their own, will not suffice. If your disability claim contains a written opinion from a medical expert or professional linking the disability to service, it can make a huge difference in the outcome of the claim.

There are many mistakes that can be made when filing a claim for VA benefits for the first time. There is an abundance of information and knowledge behind these claims and knowing what to do and what not to do and give any veteran a nice head start. It all starts when a veteran decides to file a claim. Remember, a veteran cannot receive benefits if they do not file a claim first.

*(Commercial – Chap. 750 receives no benefit, but the information is useful)*

Need Help with your VA Disability Claim?

Don't wait any longer if your VA disability claim has been denied! Our team at Hill & Ponton has over 20 years of experience helping veterans obtain their rightful VA disability benefits. We have experience with all types of cases such as Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), Agent Orange, MST, Depression, and many more; even helping family members who have lost their veteran spouses with Dependency and Indemnity Compensation claims.

<https://www.hillandponton.com/dic-benefits-dependency-and-indemnity-compensation/>

### **From Patriot Hap DeSimone:**

Hap wants to organize a series of talks whereby MOPH and MOPHA can help young men and women in ways they may have missed in growing up. He's looking for your help.

From Hap:

"A few years ago, I felt that we were wasting our treasure of experience by not passing it on to younger men. This grew from a total lack of mentorship on the part of my uncles, and my own father. I want to do something about it.

I have written two or three five-minute talks. I envision our audience would come mainly from teenagers to mid-20's.

The scenario is a Santa Maria BBQ setting. A reasonable draw for them. Each speaker gets his five minutes, with a period for questions. The sole function is to impart as much of the wisdom that we think we have to them without being overbearing.

After Vietnam I had the great fortune of going to a Sweat Lodge put on for combat vets by the Lakota native American tribe. The leader welcomed us as Warriors. He described his village's Sons being prepared and blessed by their family and Tribal Elders before being sent off to war. Returning, they were welcomed, and received back into the society with ceremony and understanding. He spoke with wisdom about our need to return to our place in the community.

I looked to my church and found nothing. Family, friends, and workplace. There was nothing for me.

It has taken a lifetime to learn the things that may have been taught to me in a few minutes of caring conversation with one who had the knowledge. I feel that if we have what we consider knowledge or wisdom, that we share it with our younger brothers who could optionally use or adopt it as their own. I envision an "Uncle's Night" where men could present a brief talk of any topic that could be classified as wisdom, experience, or direction. Even our BAD examples may prove to be most usable.

Many young people may not have a good relationship with their fathers, so the wisdom of the most important man in their lives is not available to them.

If a number of members in our group feel that they have five minutes of wisdom to give, they could put it into a short talk. In short, I envision an evening where MOPH and MOPHA members offer their five minutes. An evening where we feed them and offer wisdom and fellowship."

###

Please contact Hap if you want to help advance Hap's idea, he can be reached at C: (805) 455-0448. It will take an effort on the part of members + money. But first let's zero in on the goal of Hap's idea and why would we want to do this.

Thank you Hap, for your worthy suggestion.

See you on the phone for our January meeting.

### **Upcoming meetings**

January 14 – February 11 – March 11