



Gen. Deborah Ashenhurst Named New ODVS Director

COLUMBUS – A few days prior to being sworn in as Ohio Governor, Mike DeWine announced a bevy of candidates for appointment to his cabinet. Among those introduced on Jan. 10 was Deborah Ashenhurst, who served in the Ohio National Guard for 37 years and this week began her new assignment as Director of the Ohio Department of Veterans Services.

Maj. Gen. Ashenhurst (U.S. Army, retired) brings a wealth of military and private sector experience to the position as well as a developed connection to the veteran community. She has held assignments at all levels from company, battalion, brigade and Joint Force Headquarters.

She also is deeply familiar with operating at a state cabinet level, as she served for four years as the Adjutant General and commander of the State of Ohio. In that role, Ashenhurst commanded the 17,000 personnel of the Ohio Army and Air National Guard, Ohio Military reserve and Ohio Naval Militia.

“I am absolutely thrilled to serve our great veterans all across Ohio and do all I can to be a voice, and a listener, for our veteran community,” she said.

Director Ashenhurst succeeds Col. Chip Tansill, who served as ODVS Director from September 21, 2015 until Jan. 13, 2019 – his final day under former Gov. John Kasich.

Ms. Ashenhurst was sworn in Monday morning, thereby becoming the first female director, the fifth overall and the highest ranking leader of the department since its inception in 2008. Her predecessors are the late William J. Hartnett (2008-11), Thomas N. Moe (2011-13), Timothy C. Gorrell (2013-15) and Tansill (2015-19).

Ashenhurst began her career in 1978 when she enlisted in the Ohio National Guard. She was commissioned an engineer officer in 1980 through the Ohio Army National Guard’s Officer Candidate School. During her military career, Gen. Ashenhurst received numerous awards and decorations, including the Army Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (with one Silver and one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster) and the Joint Service Commendation Medal.

She retired from the U.S. Army and the National Guard in October 2015. Her career culminated in service as a special assistant to the vice chief, National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C.

Prior to her appointment as the adjutant general, she was a 25-year federal employee in various positions of increasing responsibility with the United States Property and Fiscal Office with the Ohio National Guard.

Following her retirement from the military, Gen. Ashenhurst served as the senior vice president, military strategy with R2 Associates. She also served as a commissioner on the Ohio Military Facilities Commission.

“I’m proud to announce that Maj. Gen. Deborah Ashenhurst has agreed to lead the Ohio Department of Veterans Services,” Gov. DeWine said. “The General will work tirelessly to ensure Ohio’s veterans will receive their benefits and services that they have earned. It is our goal for people to look to Ohio and say that this is a very veterans-friendly place.”

General Ashenhurst resides with her husband, Col. Jim Ashenhurst (U.S. Army, retired), in Hilliard, Ohio.

About ODVS: The Ohio Department of Veterans Services works to actively identify, connect with, and advocate for veterans and their families. Ohio law gives the department the responsibility to partner with all 88 county veteran service commissions and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, in order to “serve those who have served” by connecting

Ohio veterans and their families to well-earned benefits and resources.

Recent statistics out of the VA indicate Ohio currently is home to nearly 800,000 former service members, ranking the state sixth nationally in terms of veteran population.

For more information on the Ohio Department of Veterans Services, go to OhioVets.gov.



1. What was the code name for the 1983 U.S. invasion of the island-nation of Grenada?
 - A) Operation Power Pack
 - B) Operation Tomahawk
 - C) Operation Urgent Fury
 - D) Operation Eagle Assist
2. The U.S. faced armed resistance from troops of Grenada and troops from what other country?
 - A) China
 - B) Cuba
 - C) Nicaragua
 - D) Soviet Union
3. What Marxist prime minister was overthrown as a result of America’s 1983 invasion of Grenada?
 - A) Reginald Palmer
 - B) Herbert Blaize
 - C) Robert Shepard
 - D) Bernard Coard

Last Month’s Trivia Answers:

1. Navy
2. John Larroquette
3. Fort Ord



Knox County Joint Veterans Council

The Knox County Joint Veterans Council is located at the Knox County Veterans Service Office located at 411 Pittsburgh Ave. Mount Vernon, Ohio. The post conducts regular meetings on the third Thursday of each month. The meeting time is 7:30 P.M. Contact the Veterans Service Office for membership information on the JVC.

They stand guard silently, vigilantly through whatever Mother Nature dares throw at them. They do so with great pride to honor one of their own. And they do this without thought of payment. For them, honoring a fallen brother-in-arms is compensation enough.

For the families of the deceased soldier, they are the ever-watchful sentinels, and their selfless act is a much-appreciated tribute.

They are the Joint Veterans Council.



This Month In Military History

The month of February, like every month of the year has it's notable events of interest. On February 4, 1941, the United Services Organization (USO) was founded. Planning began among leaders of religious and welfare agencies in 1940, when world events accurately forecast the United States eventual entry into the World War. The USO received no funds from the US Government, but received it's funding from voluntary contributions.

On February 1, 1942, the attack on the Marshall and Gilbert Islands began. The Navy launched a surprise surface and air attack against Japanese bases and shipping on the islands. The two carrier task forces under Vice Admiral William Halsey, attacked the Japanese in order to protect trans-Pacific supply routes to Australia.

On the 23rd of that same month, the first enemy attack on the U.S. mainland took place. A Japanese submarine shelled an oil refinery near Santa Barbara, California. It was the first and most serious of the few meager Japanese attacks on the U.S. mainland.

The Battle of the Java Sea took place at the end of February, 1942. It marked the collapse of organized Allied resistance in the area, paving the way for Japanese conquest of the Indies.

On February 18, 1943 many young men in the United States Army came of age at Kasserine Pass. Associated Press war correspondent Hal Boyle once wrote, "In war, as in love, it is your first campaign that stays bone deep in your memory." Of the 1,200 men with the 19th Combat Engineers on this day, only 125 remained. Kasserine pass was where the United States and the Germans had their first clashes with each other.

In 1944 Marines landed and secured Engebi Island, Eniwetok Atoll, and the Marshall Islands on February 18th. The 22nd Marines, under Colonel John T. Walker, had only two weeks to prepare for the landing. Backed up by Army amphibious tractors, the Marines took Engebi and its airfield with relative ease. On February 19, the assault on Eniwetok began and lasted three days, with Marines involved in the heaviest fighting. On the 22nd, the Marines landed on Parry Island and with Army support completed the capture

On the 20th of February 1944, Operation Big Week got underway. The initial mission began the six days of strikes by the Eighth and 15th Air Forces against German aircraft plants. The final missions were flown on February 25. The Americans bombed by day and the British by night, both encountering heavy Luftwaffe resistance. The United States lost 244 bombers and 33 fighter planes during the operation. Germany lost 692 planes in the air, not to mention the damage done on the ground from the relentless bombing.

In 1945, Manila began to be recaptured as the month of February got underway. After a well planned offensive, the 37th Division, First Cavalry, and 11th Airborne Division met at Manila. The Americans herded the Japanese garrison into the old walled city by the end of the month. There the 18,000 Japanese made a valiant suicidal defense, forcing the Americans to clean them out in house to house street warfare.

The Argonaut Conference at Yalta occurred in February 1945. The conference began with Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin, and their respective ministers in attendance. The Big Three issued the Declaration of Liberated Europe, a pledge to support the postwar governments of the liberated states.

On the 14th of February in 1945, following Royal Air Force attacks, the U.S. Eighth Air Force bombed Dresden, Chemnitz, and Magdeburg Germany. The bombings caused extensive fires devastating over 1,600 acres killing and estimated 100,000 people. The attack is considered the most destructive in history, even more so than Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

In the Pacific two days later, Troop carrier C-47s dropped 2,065 paratroopers on Corregidor, in the Philippines, after an amphibious landing from Bataan. Three days later, Marines landed on Iwo Jima. The Third, Fourth and Fifth Marine Divisions, under Major General Harry Schmidt landed on Iwo and cut the island in half. They stormed Mount Suribachi and raised the American Flag on February 23rd. Some 6,800 Americans died during the 36 day assault. Thousands more were injured, and more Marines earned the medal of Honor in Iwo Jima than any other battle in U.S. history.

This Month In Military History

In Korea in February of 1951, there was passage of a UN resolution condemning China for aggression in Korea on the 1st, and four days later, Operation Punch forces the Chinese to retreat north of Seoul. The operation consisted of a task force comprised of the U.S. 25th Division, which was augmented by heavy artillery and armored units and by tactical close-air support.

By the end of the month, Operation Killer begins and lasts through the first part of March, pushing Communist forces in central Korea north of the Han River.

In 1952, on February 16, Communist negotiators at Panmunjon suggest that the Soviet Union should be a member of the neutral commission in charge of supervising the cease-fire. In February 1953, Lt. Gen. Maxwell Taylor becomes the new commander of 8th Army, and proposals are made to exchange sick and wounded POW's.

Jumping to Vietnam, on February 8, 1965 the first retaliatory air strike in North Vietnam occurred. U.S. Air Force Super Sabre F-100s suppressed ground fire in the target area while flying cover for attacking South Vietnamese fighter aircraft. President Johnson opened continuous limited air strikes against North Vietnam, in order to bring about a negotiated settlement.

In February 1971, "Operation Dewey Canyon II" began. Supported by heavy U.S. airpower and artillery fire, South Vietnamese troops crossed into Laos for a 44 day assault on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Observers described the drive as the bloodiest fighting of the Indochina War.

Two years later, in February 1973, The first of 566 POWs returned home from Captivity in Vietnam. Led by Navy Captain Jeremiah Denton, the first group of 116 American prisoners of war was released in Hanoi by North Vietnam. Another 19 were released by the Vietcong. Capt. Denton's first words upon arrival at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines were; "We are honored to have the opportunity to serve our country under difficult circumstances. We are profoundly grateful to our Commander in Chief and to our Nation for this day. God Bless America".

On February 1st, 1991, Iraqi forces, estimated at 60,000 mass for attack near Kuwait. Air strikes drive Iraqis forces into defensive positions. During 26 days of air sorties, more than 26,000 sorties were flown.

By the 24th, G-Day, Coalition ground forces embark on what turns out to be a 100 hour campaign. Tanks punch holes in Iraqi defenses and then air war enters it's final faze. 100,000 coalition (mostly U.S. Forces) into assault, and the Iraqi forces begin surrendering in large numbers.

And with the "Mother of all Retreats" by Iraqi forces trying to get out of Kuwait, the fighting ends on the 28th.

The state of Ohio veteran's ID cards will be available for issue here at your Knox County veterans service office MONDAY thru FRIDAY, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. You **MUST** have **Report of Seperation or DD-214 upon request**. If you are unsure if we have it or not, please call before you come. All discharge papers must be presented, verified and authenticated prior to IDs being issued. The cards will be issued to Veterans at NO CHARGE.

