

2014 Session Review

Inside the Cover

Summary

MDVA Funding

MDVA Bonding Dollars

New Veterans Session Law

Veteran-Owned Sm. Business

Peace Officer Licensing

Instate Tuition

De-escalation Training

Veteran Memorials

Veteran Voices Program

License Plates

Honorary Naming

Transportation

Taxes

State Trails

Let's Go Fishing

Game and Fish

Veterans Housing

New Military Session Law

AGR Taxes

Professional Licensing

Unsession Items

Interstate Compact

Mike McElhiney
Legislative Director
(651) 757-1530

Linda McDonald
Legislative Liaison
(651) 757-1540

Nate Anderson
Legislative Liaison
(651) 201-8226

June 3, 2014



Veterans Summary



Once again, another legislative session has come to pass. As you may be aware this session was termed the “Unsession” referring to work that was needed in order to clean-up antiquated or dated laws to make Minnesota’s government leaner and more efficient for the citizens. As that was happening, there were also many great things being accomplished in the typical order of a legislative session, as typical as a session could be in such a shortened duration. In keeping with the order of business for the biennium this was what is referred to as the bonding year. This year session began February 25th and ended ahead of schedule. It was anticipated that business would not wrap up until May 19th, but the efficiency of those on the hill was demonstrated by bringing the session to an end on Friday May 16, 2014. Once again the administration and the legislature achieved a great deal to keep Minnesota moving forward, and it was another great

year for Minnesota Veterans. Governor Dayton ensured the maintenance and upkeep of MDVA’s facilities as well as recognized the service and commitment of Veterans by funding memorials for Veterans in the bonding bill. He produced positive changes for Veteran-Owned Small Businesses and expanded the recognition and value of Veterans through the symbolism of new Veteran license plates. These are just a few highlights of this successful session. Once again, thank you Governor Dayton and all those involved in the process for your leadership and commitment to improving the lives of Veterans and their families!

Below are a few of our greatest achievements this session:

- **Minneapolis Veterans Home:** The bonding bill included \$2,000,000 for asset preservation to the 50+ MDVA buildings state wide and \$700,000 for restoration and repairs of the Minneapolis deep tunnel.
- **Veteran-Owned Small Business:** This session yielded gains to Veteran small businesses. New law now authorizes Veteran-owned small business and enables them to receive state level certification using rules already in place for small business, socially disadvantaged small business or economically disadvantaged area small businesses. This will lighten the burden on Veteran business certifications as the state can now perform the required certifications to compete for state funded business. Funding to make this an efficient process will need to be sought in the next budget year.
- **Woman Veteran License Plate:** For several years now our Veterans have received recognition of their valuable service as members of the military through specialty license plates. There are a variety of

- Veterans' plates, however, there has never been one specifically for our women Veterans. This year women Veterans gained the recognition they deserve by passing a new law authorizing a new Woman Veteran license plate.
- **Military and Veteran Resident Tuition Rates:** Although Minnesota's state colleges are very supportive of Veteran students and already had internal policies to ensure tuition rates for Veterans were at the most affordable levels, a new law was passed to codify the fact that Veterans from across the nation with an honorable discharge can take advantage of Minnesota's public post-secondary education opportunities at an in-state tuition rate.

Lastly, in the coming months, MDVA will be promoting its legislative accomplishments by visiting Veterans in their communities and meeting Veterans' groups throughout the state. We look forward to sharing these accomplishments with you and getting your feedback. To review all legislation passed this session, visit: <http://mn.gov/governor/resources/legislation/>



Related Chp/Bill	Amount of MDVA Bonding and Effective Date	Purpose
The total New Capital Investment appropriation for MDVA is \$2,700,000 . Unless otherwise specified, the appropriations in this act are available until the project is completed or abandoned subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 16A.642.		
Chp. 294 HF 2490	\$2,000,000 Effective Date: The day following final enactment	Asset Preservation: For asset preservation improvements and betterments of a capital nature at the Veterans Homes in Minneapolis, Fergus Falls, Hastings, Luverne, and Silver Bay and up to \$70,000 for the Little Falls Veterans Cemetery, to be spent in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 16B.307.
Chp. 294 HF 2490	\$700,000 Effective Date: The day following final enactment	Minneapolis Deep Tunnel: To complete the design of and perform repairs to stabilize the structural integrity of and waterproof the deep tunnel on the Minneapolis Veterans Home campus. These funds may be used for asbestos and hazardous materials abatement related to this project.
Chp. 294 HF 2490	\$1,366,000 NOT NEW MONEY, simply a language change. Effective Date: The day following final enactment	Minneapolis Veterans Home Centralized Pharmacy: To predesign, design, remodel, and furnish Building 15 or another building located on the Minneapolis Veterans Home Campus to be used as the Veterans Homes central pharmacy.

<p>Chp. 294 HF 2490</p>	<p>\$18,935,000 NOT NEW MONEY, simply a language change. Effective Date: The day following final enactment</p>	<p>Veterans Affairs: (a) Of this amount, up to \$1,750,000 is to the commissioner of administration to: (1) construct a new distribution and service tunnel to serve Buildings 17 north and 18 and the future Building 17 south; and (2) construct steam and electrical connections, related infrastructure, site work, a canopy with vestibule, and required modifications to Building 18 drop-off and entry. This appropriation is not available until the commissioner of management and budget has determined that at least \$5,000,000 has been committed from federal sources. Any unused funds may be used under paragraph (b). (b) The remainder of this amount is to the commissioner of administration to complete the design of, perform hazardous materials abatement for, and demolish the south wing of Building 17 and adjoining buildings; design, reconstruct, and furnish the new south wing of Building 17 and adjoining buildings as a new skilled nursing building; construct a new distribution and service tunnel to serve buildings 6, 19, and the future 17 south; and design, construct, and equip a network and server room, including installation of new fiber optic lines. This appropriation is not available until the commissioner of management and budget has determined that the funds to complete this work have been committed from federal sources.</p>
-----------------------------	---	---

New Veterans Session Law & Additional Funds



Veteran-Owned Small Business: A significant change was adopted this year relative to Veteran-owned small business. A Veteran business that is majority owned and operated by a Veteran can receive certification and up to a six percent preference (except when mandated by the federal government as a condition of receiving

federal funds) through the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Administration. The issue in the past has been that Veterans could only receive these preference points if they were certified as a Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB) at the federal level. Based on feedback from Minnesota Veteran businesses, that was a timely and arduous task and sometimes difficult for small businesses. This new law allows VOSB's to now use existing rules which outline requirements for certification in order to compete for state funds. Below is the new provision in Minnesota Statute 16C.19:

(a) A small business wishing to participate in the programs under section 16C.16, subdivisions 4 to 7, must be certified by the commissioner. The commissioner shall adopt by rule standards and procedures for certifying

that small businesses, small targeted group businesses, and small businesses located in economically disadvantaged areas, and Veteran-owned small businesses are eligible to participate under the requirements of sections 16C.16 to 16C.21. The commissioner shall adopt by rule standards and procedures for hearing appeals and grievances and other rules necessary to carry out the duties set forth in sections 16C.16 to 16C.21.

(b) The commissioner may make rules which exclude or limit the participation of nonmanufacturing business, including third-party lessors, brokers, franchises, jobbers, manufacturers' representatives, and others from eligibility under sections 16C.16 to 16C.21.

(c) The commissioner may make rules that set time limits and other eligibility limits on business participation in programs under sections 16C.16 to 16C.21.

(d) Notwithstanding paragraph (c), for purposes of sections 16C.16 to 16C.21, a Veteran-owned small business, the principal place of business of which is in Minnesota, is certified if it has been verified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as being either a Veteran-owned small business or a service-disabled Veteran-owned small business, in accordance with Public Law 109-461 and Code of Federal Regulations, title 38, part 74.

(e) Until rules are adopted pursuant to paragraph (a) for the purpose of certifying Veteran-owned small businesses, the provisions of Minnesota Rules, part 1230.1700, may be read to include Veteran-owned small businesses. In addition to the documentation required in Minnesota Rules, part 1230.1700, the Veteran owner must have been discharged under honorable conditions from active service, as indicated by the Veteran owner's most current United States Department of Defense form DD-214. Effective Date August 1, 2014. (Chapter 312 HF 3172)



Peace Officer Licensing Exam: This year there were again changes to the eligibility requirements for the peace officers exam—Minnesota Statute 626.8517. The amended law will allow service members or Veterans with relevant military law enforcement experience to be eligible to take a reciprocity exam to work in Minnesota law enforcement. Veterans or service members must provide the necessary documentation for service or discharge as well as: two years of experience in a law enforcement military occupational specialty (MOS) in addition to a two-year degree from a regionally accredited institution; or four years cumulative experience in a law enforcement MOS. This again reduces the burden of redundant training and experience for Veterans thus creating a faster and smoother transition into an analogous civilian occupation. Effective Date: Following final enactment. (Chapter 268 HF 1915)



In-State Tuition Fees: The State Government and Veterans Affairs omnibus supplemental appropriations bill amended Minnesota Statute 135A.043 by adding a new section for Veterans. Minnesota Statute 135A.0431 now states: MILITARY VETERANS; RESIDENT TUITION. (a) A person who is honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States is entitled to the resident tuition rate at Minnesota public postsecondary institutions. (b) This section is in addition to any other statute, rule, or higher education institution regulation or policy providing eligibility for a resident tuition rate or its equivalent to a student. This means students at these institutions who

do not have a primary residence of Minnesota can receive instate tuition prices. Effective Date: academic terms beginning after August 1, 2014. (Chapter 312 HF 3172)



De-Escalation Training: In the State Government and Veterans Affairs omnibus supplemental appropriations bill, \$50,000 was appropriated in fiscal year 2015 to the Peace Officer Standards and Training Board (POST) for training state and local community safety personnel in crisis de-escalation techniques for use with Minnesota Veterans following their return from active military service in a combat zone. The director may consult with any other state or local governmental official or nongovernmental authority that the director determines to be relevant, to include postsecondary institutions, when selecting a service provider for this training. The training provider must have a demonstrated understanding of the transitions and challenges that veterans may experience during their re-entry into society following combat service. The training opportunities provided must be reasonably distributed statewide. This is a onetime appropriation. Effective Date: July 1, 2014. (Chapter 312 HF 3172)



Veteran Memorials: \$450,000 was designated to complete design of and construct a memorial in the Capitol Area to honor all Hmong-Lao Veterans of the war in Laos who were allied with the American forces during the Vietnam War. This appropriation is not available until the Commissioner of Management and Budget has determined that at least \$90,000 has been committed to the project from non-state sources. Effective Date: July 1, 2014. (Chapter 294 HF 2490)

The city of Edina received \$225,000 for a Veterans memorial. These funds are not available until the Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget has determined that an equal amount is available through non-state sources. The city of Edina Veterans Memorial will be a unifying symbol of shared community values in honoring all Edina Veterans – past, present and future. The design is a V-shaped granite plaza (for “victory”) leading up to the focal point of an eagle and wreath design. The wall will feature the names of the 32 Edina soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty since the City’s founding. Three flagpoles will be placed at the edge of the plaza hoisted with the American flag, state flag, and POW flag. An all-volunteer committee has been working on this project since 2010. Effective Date: July 1, 2014. (Chapter 295 HF 1068)

North St. Paul received \$100,000 for a Veterans memorial. These funds are not available until the Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget has determined that an equal amount is available through non-state sources. Though the artwork is still being finalized, the plans for the North St. Paul Veterans Park will feature engraved paver stones honoring all U.S. Veterans who provided honorable military service. The pavers will be placed randomly in three memorial red striped areas or may be requested to be side-by-side or rows with other pavers of family or comrades. Also present will be the American flag, state flag, and POW flag. The North St. Paul Veteran's Park Foundation (NSPVPF) has been working for a number of years to create a public space to give tribute to Veterans and their loved ones. Effective Date: July 1, 2014. (Chapter 294 HF 2490)



The Veterans Voices Program: \$125,000 is from the arts and cultural heritage fund for the Veterans' Voices program to educate and engage the community regarding Veterans' contributions, knowledge, skills, and experiences. Of this amount, \$25,000 is for transfer to the Association of Minnesota Public Education Radio Stations for statewide programming to promote the Veterans' Voices program. This is a one-time appropriation. Effective Date: July 1, 2014. (Chapter 312 HF3172)

The month of October is designated as Veterans' Voices Month in recognition of the state's desire to honor, recognize, and celebrate the contributions of Veterans. Schools, organizations, and communities in the state are encouraged to hold events and programs that honor Veterans and educate students and citizens about the unique culture of the military by sharing and studying Veterans' experiences through stories, essays, poetry, and art from the men and women who have served in the armed forces. The state declares that in order to educate the public, the governor may promote and encourage the observance of Veterans' Voices Month.

Effective Date: Following final enactment. (Chapter 267 HF 2812)



New Veteran License Plates: Two new laws were created relative to Veteran specialty license plates. The first was within HF 2092 which authorized a smaller motorcycle version of the existing "Combat Wounded Vet" license plate. In order to get this new plate, payment of the registration tax required by law, and compliance with other applicable laws relating to vehicle registration and licensing

is required. Effective Date: August 1, 2014 (Chapter 280 HF 2092)

The second Veteran specialty plate gained this session is the "Woman Veteran" license plate for both automobiles and motorcycles. Within the language of the bill there are criteria that must be met and approved by the Commissioners of Public Safety, Veterans Affairs the Woman Veterans Initiative Working Group as well as any other Veteran Service Organization that desires to assist in the design development. These plates will cost \$10 to purchase and the funds will go towards the development and distribution of the plates by the Department of Public Safety. Effective Date: January 1, 2015. (Chapter 207 HF 1916)



Honorary Naming: The bridge over the Mississippi River on marked Trunk Highway 60 at the city of Wabasha is designated "Michael Duane Clickner Memorial Bridge." The commissioner of transportation shall adopt a suitable design to mark this bridge and erect appropriate signs, subject to Minnesota Statute 161.139. Sergeant Clickner was the only resident of Wabasha killed during the Vietnam War. Effective Date: August 1, 2014. (Chapter 287 HF 2214)

Additionally, Minnesota Statute 161.14, was amended by adding a subdivision to read: That segment of Route No. 46, signed as U.S. Highway 8 on the effective date of this section, from the southwestern border of Chisago City to the eastern border of Center City, is designated as "Nicholas Patrick Spehar Memorial Highway." Subject to Minnesota Statute 161.139, the commissioner shall adopt a suitable design to mark this highway and erect appropriate signs. Special Warfare Operator Petty Officer 2nd Class (SEAL) Nicholas Patrick Spehar of Chisago City was killed in combat operations in Afghanistan. Effective Date: August 1, 2014. (Chapter 216 HF 2219)



Disabled Veterans Transit: Within the State Government and Veterans Affairs omnibus supplemental appropriations bill there was again a provision for a \$78,000 grant to greater Minnesota transit providers as reimbursement for the costs of providing fixed route public transit rides free of charge under Minnesota Statutes, section 174.24, subdivision 7, for Veterans certified as disabled. Effective Date: July 1, 2014. (Chapter 312, HF 3172)



Taxes: Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 273.13, subdivision 34, was amended. This law pertains to the homestead of disabled Veterans or family caregivers. This is the law that allows for a tax exclusion for Veterans with an honorable discharge and a service connected disability of 70-100%. With that disability rating, one can receive from \$150,000-\$300,000 in market value tax exclusion on their homestead property. In the past years this law has slowly evolved to authorize the surviving spouse to maintain the exclusion after the death of the qualified Veteran. This year the surviving spouses' qualification period was expanded from five years post death to eight years. This new law is effective for taxes payable in 2015, and applies to homesteads that initially qualified for the exclusion for taxes payable in 2009 and thereafter. Effective Date: August 1, 2014. (Chapter 308 HF 3167)



Camp Ripley/Veteran State Trail: Within the final Capital Investment bill, \$1,732,000 was appropriated to further develop the Camp Ripley/Veterans Trail. The Camp Ripley/Veterans State Trail is one of Minnesota's newest state trails, authorized by the Minnesota Legislature in 2009. The trail is envisioned as a multi-use system, accommodating a variety of motorized and non-motorized uses, linking the Soo Line Trail south of Little Falls to Crow Wing State Park and the Paul Bunyan State Trail. Effective Date: Following final enactment. (Chapter 294 HF 2490)



Let's Go Fishing: Although Let's Go Fishing Minnesota is not restricted to only Veterans, they certainly enjoy these fishing opportunities. That said, also in the State Government and Veterans Affairs omnibus supplemental appropriations bill, there was \$400,000 in 2015 appropriated from the heritage enhancement account in the game and fish fund for grants to local chapters of Let's Go Fishing of Minnesota to provide community outreach to senior citizens, youth, and Veterans and for the costs associated with establishing and recruiting new chapters. The grants must be matched

with cash or in-kind contributions from non-state sources. Of this amount, \$25,000 is for Asian Outdoor Heritage for youth fishing recruitment efforts and outreach in the metropolitan area. The commissioner shall establish a grant application process that includes a standard for ownership of equipment purchased under the grant program and contract requirements that cover the disposition of purchased equipment if the grantee no longer exists. Any equipment purchased with state grant money must be specified on the grant application and approved by the commissioner. The commissioner may spend up to three percent of the appropriation to administer the grant. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2016. Effective Date: Following final enactment. (Chapter 312 HF 3172)



Game and Fish: There were a few changes in the Game and Fish Omnibus bill pertaining to Veterans. Essentially the changes dealt with Minnesota Statute 97A.441 (free licenses) subdivisions 5, 6, and 6a, angling, deer and small game hunting. What the changes in law do is authorize a card issued by the state or a driver's license to be used as sufficient evidence to prove eligibility for free deer, small game or fishing licenses to permanently and totally disabled Veterans. A new provision was added to Minnesota Statute 171.70 Subdivision 15 which requires U.S. Department of Veterans

Administration proof of 100% total and permanent disability to be placed on the driver's license or state issued card. The caveat to this law relative to the driver's license is that in order to use the driver's license as proof, Department of Public Safety must first issue new driver's licenses which they currently don't have the capacity to develop. Effective Date: The day following final enactment and applies to applications submitted on or after January 1, 2016, or the date the new driver and vehicle services information technology system is implemented, whichever comes later. (Chapter 290 HF 2852)



Veteran Housing: Within the State Government and Veterans Affairs omnibus supplemental appropriations bill and as a result of the Select Sub Committee on Veterans Housing that convened last fall, \$250,000 was appropriated. These funds are for at least five grants of up to \$50,000 each to conduct a housing needs assessment for Veterans in any community within the state. No more than five percent may be used by the Minnesota Housing Finance

Agency to administer these grants. The grants may be awarded to any government or nongovernmental

organization. The assessment, which may be a study or a survey, may examine the need for scattered site housing for Veterans and their families who are homeless or in danger of homelessness or for housing that addresses the health care needs of disabled or aging Veterans. The assessment must be started by July 30, 2015, and completed by July 30, 2016. The commissioner of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency must provide copies of any completed assessment to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over housing and Veterans affairs no later than January 1, 2017. This is a onetime appropriation. Effective Day: Following final enactment. (Chapter 312 HF 3172)

\$26,000 in fiscal year 2015 is for a grant to Stearns County to provide administrative funding to support a group residential housing services provider serving Veterans in Stearns County. This is a onetime appropriation. Effective Day: Following final enactment. (Chapter 312 HF 3172)

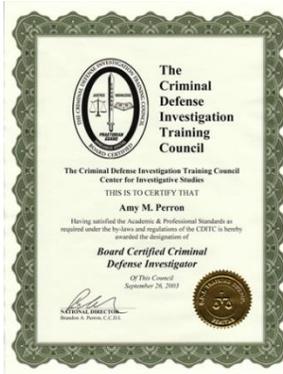


Department of Military Affairs

New Military Session Law



Active Guard Reserve Taxes: Currently, members of the National Guard and Reserve are eligible to subtract the payment they receive for military service from their Minnesota income. These payments are taxed at the federal level. This includes payment for drill weekends, annual training, and other types of duty. Under current law, this subtraction is not allowed for members of the Active Guard Reserve (AGR). AGR members who are full-time members of the Guard or Reserve are not currently allowed to subtract this income. The new law allows AGR members to subtract all income received for military service from their Minnesota income. This new law also applies to individuals called to state active service by the adjutant general, and employed by the Department of Military Affairs. Effective Date: For taxable years beginning after December 31, 2013. (Chapter 308 HF 3167)



Expedited and Temporary Licensing for Former and Current Members of the Military: Directs certain licensing boards to establish procedures to expedite licenses and to issue temporary licenses to qualified active duty military members, the spouses of active duty military members, and Veterans who have left service in the prior two years with honorable or general discharge status. To qualify for a temporary license, an individual must have a current, valid license, certificate, or permit in another state without history of disciplinary action and must pass a background check. Licensing boards are authorized to adopt rules. Additionally, the following licensing boards were appropriated various amounts of funding ranging between \$1,000 and \$44,000 for these purposes: Department of Education, Board of Accountancy, Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape, Architecture Geoscience, and interior Design, Board of Cosmetologist Examiners, Board of Barber Examiners, Board of Private Detectives, Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy, Board of Dentistry, Board of Dietetics and Nutrition Practice, Board of Marriage and Family Therapy, Board of Nursing Home Administrators, Board of Optometry, Board of Podiatric Medicine and the Board of Social Work. Effective Date: August 1, 2014. (Chapter 312 HF 3172)



Military “Unsession” Items: Military Affairs repealed unnecessary provisions in order to make Minnesota’s laws governing military affairs more streamlined. Minnesota Statutes repealed: 192.12; 192.15; 192.16; 192.21; and 192.42. Effective Date August 1, 2014. (Chapter 152 HF 2665)



Military Education Interstate Compact: Minnesota entered into the “Educational Opportunity for Military Children Interstate Compact.” Currently, 46 states are members of the compact. The Compact’s goal is to help children of military families, as their parents are deployed or relocated throughout the country, make a more successful transition between school districts by creating a uniform inter-state policy affecting a variety of student-

related issues, such as: enrollment, including the transfer of education records; course and educational program placement; special education services; excused absences related to deployment activities; eligibility for, among other things, extracurricular activities; and graduation, including course waivers, exit exams, and transfers during a student’s senior year of high school. The average military family moves six to nine times during a career, and the Compact is meant to ensure a seamless transition for military families moving to a new school district by removing barriers to educational success. Effective Date: August 1, 2014. (Chapter 272 HF 2397)

For further information on new military session law refer to the Department of Military Affairs.

**MINNESOTA
NATIONAL GUARD** 
NATIONALGUARD.COM



Shakopee VA Clinic Grand Opening!

Monday, June 16, 2014

9 am - Noon

Program begins at 9 am, followed by open house and tours.

Location: 1100 Shakopee Town Square

All Veterans and members of the general public are invited.

Light refreshments will be served.

The Minneapolis VA's newest community-based outpatient clinic will be managed by Valor Healthcare, Inc (Humana Government Business).



The Minnesota State DAR

Flag Day 5K Run/Walk

for the Fisher House

Saturday, June 14, 2014

Northwest Metro VA Clinic
7545 Veterans Drive
Ramsey, MN 55303

\$25 Pre-registration/\$30 Race Day

8 a.m. - Start

Register on-line at www.midwestevents.com or mail in form below.

(or www.active.com)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Age: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

T-shirt Size: (circle one) **S** **M** **L** **XL** **XXL** (\$3 addl. for XXL) Gender: (circle) **M** **F**



5K RUN RELEASE FORM

In consideration of the acceptance of my entry, I hereby represent that I have read this application fully, have adequately trained to participate in this athletic event, understand the risks involved in strenuous physical exercise and therefore I assume the risks associated with participating in this event. I hereby for myself, heirs, executors and administrators waive and release all claims that I or they may have against the organizers of the event, the Minnesota State DAR, MN Veterans Administration and the Fisher House, and all sponsors of this event.

I shall abide by all decisions of the race officials as final.

Runner's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian (if under 18): _____

Date: _____

Mail-in registration
postmarked by
Saturday, June 7th.
Mail registration form with
entry fee to:

Flag Day 5K - Clausens
27157 Dakota Ave.
Elko, MN 55020

Make Check Payable To:
MN State Flag Day 5K

Contact:
darflagday5k@yahoo.com