



# **Veterans-For-Change Newsletter**

*A Voice of the Veterans*

Week Ending Sunday, November 11, 2018

Volume 9, Issue 44



## **This-N-That**

Saturday the Marine Corps celebrates their 243rd Birthday! Oorah!

The United States Marine Corps Birthday is celebrated every year on 10 November with a traditional ball and cake-cutting ceremony. On that day in 1775, the Continental Marines were established.

Sunday is Veterans Day and we'd like to wish all our Veterans a good day, and from the bottom of our hearts we thank you so much for your service to our Country!

Veterans Day is an official United States public holiday, observed annually on November 11, that honors military Veterans; that is, persons who served in the United States Armed Forces.

As usual the VA is once again touting unsubstantiated number when it comes to our homeless Veterans.

It's a difficult task at best to quote accurate numbers, not to mention staying in constant communication with the various Health and Human Services agencies nationwide, but all the private organizations as well to track the number of homeless Veterans.

It takes roughly two of our volunteers, eight hours each to make all those call monthly to get as close to a count as we can, but all told the average number of homeless Veterans still hovers around 1.2 million.

Yet not long ago the VA was touting 40,000 until this month they're declaring a reduction of approximately 5% down to 37,900. That number alone barely covers California alone. And we still see no progress at the West LA Medical Facility campus as was promised more than two years ago, and by court order even longer ago.

In most cases here in California only a few cities that claim zero homeless Veterans, and one, specifically

Orange County claims that only because they've chased them all out, they've NOT resolved the problem, they only made it another cities problem.

In Riverside County though they have actually taken action and last year managed to after hundreds of hours of hard work, a couple of million dollars really did resolve the problem, create programs to keep it at zero!

This time of year is particularly difficult with the cold weather and snow coming in and what shelters there are with the limited number of beds and this is a nationwide problem we'd like to remind you that organizations all across the country will be struggling to handle the problem.

If you have gently used clothing, boxed, canned, vacuum sealed foods that are non-perishable to donate to any local shelter or to the DAV. Even household goods can be donated to the DAV which can be provided to Veterans and families having a hard time, or be sold to raise funds to provide for homeless Veterans.

Please keep our homeless Veterans in your minds and hearts!

This is also the time of year we truly need to be mindful

of all our single Veterans. This time of year can be very depressing especially being alone.

Check in on your buddies, make them a part of your family! And if you know of no one in your area who is a single Veteran, and if you live nearby any military base, contact them, and invite a few of the soldiers to dinner for Thanksgiving or Christmas, even both. There are many who won't be able to go home for the holidays, or have no family to be with.

On behalf of our Volunteers nationwide and myself, we wish you and your family good health!

Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

[Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org)



## **VA celebrates National Family Caregivers Month**

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is commemorating [National Family Caregivers Month](#) this November by honoring the service of 5.5 million family members and friends who

have dedicated their lives to providing much-needed care for chronically ill, injured or disabled Veterans.

“Caregivers make tremendous sacrifices to address the daily needs of Veterans who served our nation,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “These mothers, wives, fathers, husbands and other loved ones deserve our recognition and support for all they do to care for Veterans.”

Caregivers provide a valuable service to Veterans by assisting them beyond the walls of VA medical facilities with much-needed support, such as accessing the health care system, providing emotional and physical support and enabling many injured Veterans to stay in their homes, rather than living their lives in an institutional setting.

The recent passage of the [VA MISSION Act of 2018](#) will expand eligibility for [VA’s Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers](#) to Veterans of all eras of service — fulfilling President Trump’s commitment to help Veterans and their families live healthy and fulfilling lives.

The expansion will occur in two phases, starting with eligible Veterans who incurred or aggravated a serious injury in the line of duty on or before May 7, 1975, with further expansion to follow.

Currently, VA is developing an implementation plan for the MISSION Act and encourages all caregivers and Veterans to learn about the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, as well as the many additional resources already available to all caregivers by visiting <http://www.caregiver.va.gov> or by calling the Caregiver Support Line toll free at 855-260-3274.



## **Commemorating Veterans Day: Event Listings, Special Features and More**

Join Military.com as we commemorate Veterans Day on November 11, with a full list of discounts available for veterans their families, a rundown of major events, and other special features. [Visit the Veterans Day page for more.](#)



REMEMBER THOSE WHO SERVED



ALL GAVE SOME, SOME GAVE ALL



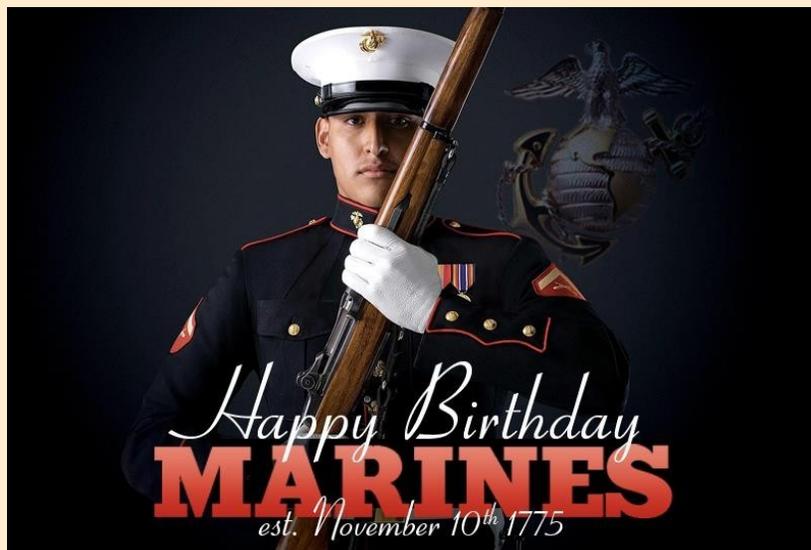
## **5 Things Military Families Must Know About Tricare's New Open Enrollment**

For the first time ever, Tricare will host an open enrollment period next month for military families and retirees who want to change their coverage plans. Currently, changing between Tricare Prime and Tricare Select, previously known as Tricare Standard, is easy and typically not time sensitive for active-duty families and retirees. Starting Jan. 1, however, the ability to switch back and forth at will is going away. [Here's what you need to know.](#)



# VA Amends Pension and DIC Regulations

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently amended its regulations governing entitlements to VA pension and Parents' Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, which are need-based programs. The new pension regulations cover the following: (1) establish a clear net-worth limit for income and assets for veterans to qualify for pension; (2) establish a 36-month look-back period to review asset transfers at less than fair market value; (3) establish up to a five-year penalty period; and (4) update medical expense definitions. The changes are intended to ensure VA only pays benefits to those veterans with a genuine need. For more information see this [article](#).





## **Veterans-For-Change Web Site**

The Veterans-For-Change website has been under construction since day one back in 2009 and every day since then. The looks pretty much stay the same, but in the background constant improvement and change is being done to make our website the most user friendly “One-Stop-Shop” website to find almost everything you might have tried to find searching the internet.

Almost a hundred people have been involved; collecting web links to documents now houses on the VFC website, collecting thousands of web links for various issues, illnesses and benefits. Creating forums for all eras of service and two forums one just for men and one just for woman where you can go question, comment, share medical and personal concerns, what ever you'd like it to be.

We also have a forum with for Mental Health and are currently seeking a new Licensed Mental Health Worker, where you can seek help or just ask questions.

We average **2,170** hits per day, and downloads average **1,797** per day with a total **4,493,845** visitors as of Friday.

If you subscribe you will have full access to the entire website and best of all it's **FREE** of charge! You just need a valid E-mail address so the system can send you a confirmation E-Mail. Once received, click on the link to be authorized automatically.

[www.veterans-for-change.org](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)

- Documents Library with over **16,729** documents on-line (Updated: 10/30/18)
- FAQ's with more than **1,600** FAQ's and answers
- Multiple Forums
  - o Afghanistan Veterans
  - o FMP - Foreign Medial Program
  - o Gulf War & Desert Storm Veterans
  - o Iraq Veterans
  - o Korean Veterans
  - o Men Veterans Forum
  - o Mental Health for Veterans (*Counselor Needed*)
  - o Political Issues
  - o Suggestion Box
  - o The Mess Hall
  - o VA Hospitals and Medical Centers
  - o Veteran Affairs

- o Vietnam Veterans
- o Welcome Mat
- o Women Veterans Forum
- o WW II Veterans
- Job Postings
- Memorial Pages (**Updated: 10/30/18**) (37 Added)
- News (Articles On-Line: **7,960**)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than **4,407**, Added 119 New Links (Updated: **10/30/18**)

If you have a submission for the memorial pages, E-Mail: [Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@veterans-for-change.org)



## **FAA Tightens Drone Restrictions Near High-Security Navy Submarine Bases**

The Federal Aviation Administration is warning amateur drone pilots that flying their aircraft near highly secure [Navy submarine bases](#) — or the vessels operating near them — is a no-go. The FAA issued new guidance Oct. 26 "to address concerns about potentially malicious drone operations over certain high-priority maritime operations." For more details, see this [Defensetech post](#).





This month's featured song:

## **Goodbye To West Virginia**

November's featured song was written by Sgt George  
Jeffrey

This song was performed and produced by:

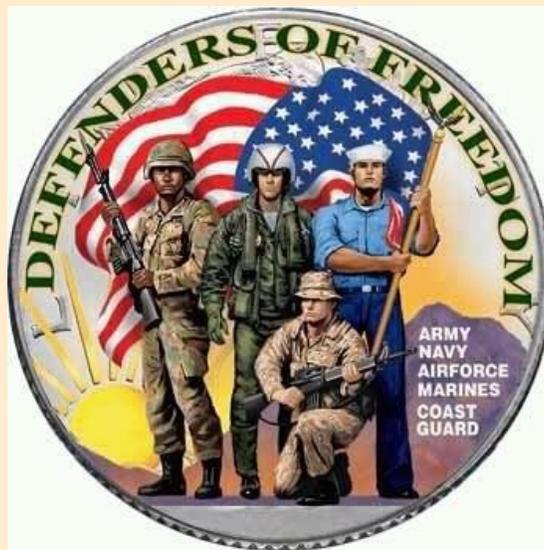
**LT Bobby Ross**

**Featured videos of other songs by LT**



**Veteran Homeless Rate Drops 5  
Percent Nationwide, Rises on  
West Coast**

The number of veterans living in shelters or on the streets dropped by about five percent between January 2017 and January 2018 — from about 40,000 to nearly 37,900 — despite slight increases on the West Coast, according to the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs. The decline followed a slight uptick in the previous year. For more details, see this [article](#).



**Eliminate Your Rx Costs with a  
TRICARE Supplement**

Get a TRICARE supplement that pays your cost shares and can pay 100% of covered excess charges. [Get valuable coverage now.](#)



## **Retirement Contribution Limits Increase In 2019**

If you contribute to the [Thrift Savings Plan \(TSP\)](#), a company-sponsored 401(k) retirement plan, or your own Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you should be happy to know that the IRS has announced you will be able to increase your maximum tax-deductible contributions in 2019. For more details, see this [article](#).





## **Still Time to Use Your VA Loan in 2018**

Your VA loan benefit has awesome features you shouldn't miss. You don't need a large down payment, sometimes even \$0. VA loan rates are competitive and you will never have to waste money on mortgage insurance. [Use your VA loan benefit today.](#)



## **Exchange Holding Three Sweepstakes**

The Army & Air Force Exchange Service is giving customers a chance to win more than \$13,000 in three sweepstakes: (1) the [Wrigley Storybook Essay Contest](#) (Oct. 31 through Dec. 25); (2) the [Cuisinart Sweepstakes](#) (Nov. 1 through 30); and (3) the [Bissell Sweepstakes](#) (Nov. 1 through 30). Authorized Exchange shoppers can visit [ShopMyExchange.com](#) to find sweepstakes entry instructions. Shoppers age 18 and older may enter. No purchase is necessary to enter or win.



**CONTACT YOUR  
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS!**

To Call your Representative:  
202-225-2305

To Call your Senators:  
202-224-3841 or 202-224-3553

To call Different Members of Congress:  
202-224-3121

TOLL FREE: 866-272-6622

**PLEASE... STOP Making Excuses!**  
[www.veterans-for-change.org](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)



## Veterans Resume Court Fight Over 'Non-VA Emergency Care' Costs

The non-profit National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP), which two years ago helped to defeat VA on behalf of the same class of veterans with unreimbursed emergency care expenses, filed a new class action lawsuit with the same appellate court in Washington D.C. The NVLSP argues that VA again is ignoring the intent of Congress and interpreting the law improperly to avoid reimbursing these veterans for emergency care costs that their own health insurance plans don't cover. For more details, see this [article](#).



## Celebrate the Marine Corps' Birthday

Oohrah! The U.S. Marine Corps commemorates its 243th birthday on November 10. Join Military.com with videos, special features and other tributes in the [Marine Corps Birthday section](#).





**AMERICAN SOLDIERS**

**WILLING TO DIE FOR THE COUNTRY  
THAT ISN'T WILLING TO PAY THEM!**



**TRDP is Ending: What to Look for  
in a New Retiree Dental Plan**

The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) ends on Dec. 31, 2018. Beginning in 2019, new retiree dental coverage will be available through the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). If you're eligible to enroll in a FEDVIP dental plan, you must enroll in FEDVIP during the Federal Benefits Open Season, which runs from Nov. 12 to Dec. 10, 2018. Now is the time to explore your new dental coverage options and make a choice.

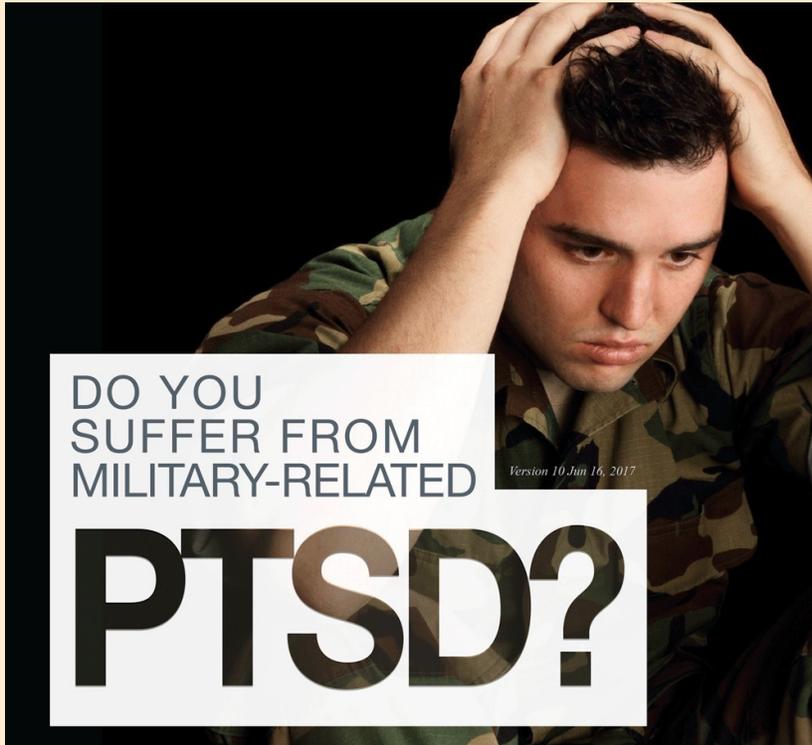
Read the full article [here](#).



## **VA Prioritizes Appeals for Those Affected by Hurricanes**

Veterans impacted by recent hurricanes Florence and Michael will now have their pending appeals claims for benefits prioritized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). VA has determined that the significant effects of hurricanes Florence and Michael were sufficient cause for the Board to advance the appeals for counties in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia determined to be disaster areas by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The [advancement on docket](#) (AOD) for these two storms is expected to last for six months. For more information, visit the [Board of Veterans' Appeals website](#).





DO YOU  
SUFFER FROM  
MILITARY-RELATED

Version 10 Jun 16, 2017

**PTSD?**

**Veterans Crisis Line:  
1-800-273-8255 & Press 1  
Ntl Call Center for Homeless Vets  
1-877-424-3838**



**AF Society Provides Disaster  
Relief**

The Air Force Aid Society (AFAS) has provided more than \$6 million in hurricane disaster and relief assistance to airmen and their families across the Florida Gulf region following the aftermath of Hurricane Michael. The Air Force Aid Society is non-profit organization whose mission is to help relieve financial distress of Air Force members and their families and assist them in achieving their educational goals and improving their quality of life by providing proactive programs. To learn more or donate to help Air Force families impacted by Hurricane Michael, visit the [Air Force Aid Society website](#). Follow the AFAS on [Facebook](#) and on [Twitter](#).



## **Post-9/11 Vets' Groups Poised to Out-Raise Legacy Organizations, Report Finds**

Organizations founded to serve veterans following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks are raising money more quickly than their pre-9/11 counterparts, save at higher rates, and may be poised for greater growth in the near future, a new study from the Center for a New American Security has found. For more details, see [this article](#).



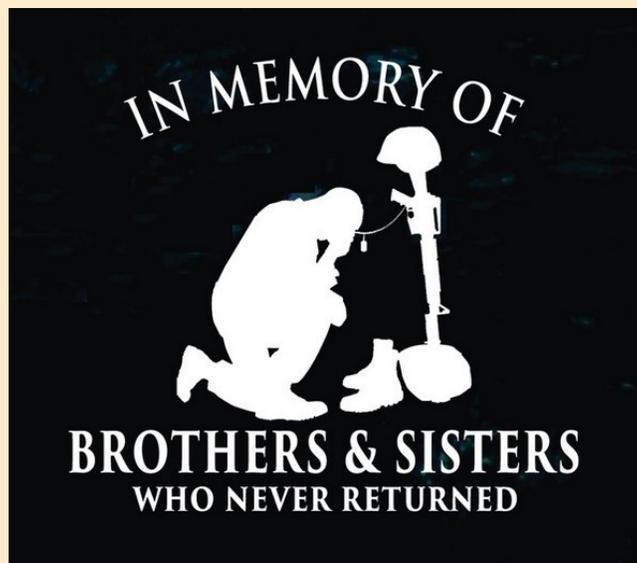
## **Toybook Sweepstakes at AAFES**

The Army & Air Force Exchange Service is bringing a little extra cheer to Warfighters and their families with [the Toybook sweepstakes](#). Through Nov. 21, authorized shoppers can complete the official entry form [online](#) for a chance to win: (1) a Mercedes 6-Volt Electric Ride-On Car; (2) a Harry Potter Hogwarts Great Hall Construction Set; (3) a Barbie Dream House; and (4) a Little People Share & Care Safari. No purchase is necessary to win and the sweepstakes is limited to one entry per person. [The Joy of Toys book](#), which features a selection of toys selected and approved by military children as well as exclusive in-store and online offers, also runs through Nov. 21.



## **Air Reserve Members Asked to Update Info**

The Air Reserve Personnel Center is asking that if you, or your family, are currently located in or are assigned to installations in Mississippi, log on to [AFPAAS](#) to update your Safe Haven address and update your status. The AFPAAS website will work on most mobile devices. If you have any problems logging into AFPAAS or have any questions please contact your unit's Commander's Officer Representative (COR).



# MILITARY STAR Holding Holiday Sweepstakes

MILITARY STAR® is sponsoring the Home for the Holidays sweepstakes. From Nov. 1 to 15, servicemembers and their families who use their MILITARY STAR card at both a military exchange and a commissary will [automatically be entered in the sweepstakes](#). Five winners will win \$5,000 each. Shoppers will also earn an entry into MILITARY STAR's Your Holiday Bill Is on Us! Sweepstakes for a chance to have their entire balance paid in full. Eligible shoppers 18 years and older can participate. Winners will be announced on or about Dec. 15. No purchase necessary to win. For official rules and alternate method of entry, visit [MyECP.com](http://MyECP.com).



## VA Partners with DoD for Spouse Career Program

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) [Board of Veterans' Appeals](#) (BVA) has announced it is joining the Department of Defense (DOD) [Military Spouse Employment Partnership](#) (MSEP). MSEP is a career program connecting military spouses with more than 390 affiliated employers who have committed to recruit, hire, promote and retain military spouses in portable careers. The MSEP is part of the DOD's broader Spouse Education and Career Opportunities (SECO) program. To learn more about SECO, visit the [Military OneSource website](#) or call 800-342-9647 to speak to a SECO career coach. For more information on the MSEP and the 350,327 active job postings for military spouses, visit the [Military Spouse Employment Partnership website](#).





## **Veterans Day Deals, Discounts, and Freebies**

Military.com has compiled a list of Veterans Day discounts on restaurants, goods, services and events for 2018 with discounts organized by category. Access the [Veterans Day Deals, Discounts, and Freebies webpage](#), and visit often as the list is updated frequently.



## **Navy Announces Education Program Changes**

The U.S. Navy has announced that officers in Unrestricted Line (URL) communities must now be screened by administrative boards in order to attend in-residence graduate education (IRGE) programs. Tuition assistance, graduate education vouchers, and other opportunities remain open for all officers, without the board requirement. URL officers in year group 2015 and beyond will be required to graduate from an IRGE program prior to assuming major command. However, these officers will be able to screen for major command prior to graduating from an in-residence program. For information about graduate education opportunities, visit the [Navy Personnel Command \(NPC\) website](#). To contact your detailer, visit the [NPC PERS-4 detailing website](#).



## **Navy Center Fields Questions from Service Members and Families**

The MyNavy Career Center (MNCC) Contact Center recently marked its one month anniversary. Since Sept. 24, the MNCC Contact Center has processed more than 25,000 service requests with a daily average of nearly 850. These requests for information or transaction support arrive via phone, direct email and through MyNavy Portal (MNP). The MNCC Contact Center is open 24 hours-a-day, seven days a week to field questions from Sailors, retirees, civilians and family members. Reach out to the contact center at 1-833-330-MNCC (6622), (901) 874-6622, DSN 882-6622, or via email at [askmncc@navy.mil](mailto:askmncc@navy.mil).



## **Army Opens Historic Training Trenches**

As part of the garrison's centennial commemoration of the Armistice of World War I, Fort Benning, Georgia, has officially opened a recreation of the training trenches the U.S. Army Infantry School used on post nearly 100 years ago during World War I. The new trench, which the Directorate of Public Works dug out recently, is meant to educate visitors about the post's previous training mission. It is a short walk from a small portion of the original training trenches the post used during WWI. For more information, and to learn about the important role Fort Benning played in training U.S. Army personnel during WWI, visit the [WWI Centennial Commission website](#).



### **Veteran Crisis Resources**

**Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1**

**Military Crisis Line 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

**National Call Center for Homeless Veterans**

**1-877-4AID-VET (424.3838)**

**VA Caregiver Support Line 1-855-260-3274**



# Honorary Bell of Peace for World War I

The World War I Centennial Commission and the National Park Service have designated the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia as the Honorary Bell of Peace to commemorate the Centennial of the Armistice on November 11, as part of the Commission's nationwide [Bells of Peace](#) project. The Liberty Bell is on display in Philadelphia at the National Park Service's Independence Park. Bells across the nation will be rung at 11 a.m., local time, on November 11, 2018 to mark the Armistice of WWI. For more information, visit the WWI Centennial Commission [website](#). To participate in the Bells of Peace project, visit the WWI Centennial Commission [website](#).



## Air Force Health Survey

Individuals across both Air Force active duty and reserve components will be randomly selected to complete the 2018 Health-Related Behaviors Survey. Information and data from the results helps shape health policies and programs to improve force health and readiness. For more information about the survey, visit [Health.mil](http://Health.mil).



## Links to Other Stories

1. [5 Things Military Families Must Know About Tricare's New Open Enrollment](#)
2. [A hero returns home: Remains of MIA airman repatriated after 53 years](#)
3. [Advice For US Troops Sent To The Mexican Border In An Age Of Terrible Leaders](#)
4. [Canceled Operations. Unsterile Tools \(The V.A. Gave This Hospital 5 Stars\)](#)
5. [Cyberfit family: Making cybersecurity understandable for all ages](#)
6. [Death of a Veteran found in his car at Wilmington's VA leads to changes](#)
7. [Deaths Days After Dunford Says They're Not Releasable](#)

8. Did the Anthrax Vaccine Make Troops Ill?
9. DoD, FDA working together to benefit warfighters
10. Fairport Man Pleads Guilty To False Claim Of PTSD To Get VA Disability Payments
11. Jackson Man Pleads Guilty to Threatening to Bomb Veterans Administration Office
12. Midstate Man And Woman Charged With Defrauding Disabled Veteran Of \$316,360
13. Navy Training Commander Fired 'Due To Loss Of Confidence In His Ability To Command'
14. New lawsuit seeks VA compensation for Veterans' unpaid emergency room costs
15. RATING REDUCTIONS: WHAT VA CAN AND CANNOT DO
16. Scientists Say Energy Drinks Make It Harder To Treat PTSD
17. Student Veterans looking for missing GI Bill payments
18. Thailand Military Bases and Agent Orange Exposure
19. The VA shadow rulers' signature program is "Trending Towards Red"
20. Trump extends Veterans Day celebrations through all of November
21. VA Announces Amended Regulations on Pensions
22. VA celebrates National Veterans and Military Families Month 2018 with events honoring Veterans and their families

23. VA hospitals embrace 3D printing to help Veterans
24. VA to fast-track benefits appeals for hurricane victims
25. VA top employees who work to find Veterans work
26. VA: Fatal dog experiments moving ahead despite criticism from Congress, Veterans groups
27. VA's Changes to Pension and DIC Rules May Make Getting Benefits Easier
28. Weeds not worth killing with RoundUp?
29. What It's Like to Live in a National Cemetery: A Look at Cemetery Lodges
30. Why this new Veterans museum is like no other
31. Women and depression

You can help VFC by reading articles posted and commenting at the bottom and rate the articles. If you don't have an account, sign up today, it's FREE. Your comments and rankings tell us what type of information you want most.

Check us out today: [www.veterans-for-change.org](http://www.veterans-for-change.org)



**World War I Centennial Events for  
Nov. 8-11**

Washington, DC will be the site of a number of remarkable World War I themed events, exhibits, and activities during the days leading up to, and beyond, the WWI Armistice Centennial. The U.S. World War One Centennial Commission is honoring those who served during WWI with a 'First Look at the National World War I Memorial' program between November 8 and 12, 2018. The Memorial site will be open to the public each day beginning with a presentation of colors at 9 a.m. and concluding with 'Taps' at sunset daily. The 'First Look Pavilion' will be open 11 am to 5 PM each day. For more information and a list of events, visit the WWI Centennial Commission [website](#).



*CLICK HERE TO FOLLOW US ON TWITTER.*



**VA Paperless Care Coordination**

Proper care coordination begins with health information sharing between the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and participating community care providers. By electronically sharing your record with participating providers through the Veterans Health Information Exchange (VHIE) Program, your participating community care providers can better manage your care, so you and your family will not need to request and carry paper medical records from one health care provider to another. For more information and to sign up, visit the [Veteran Health Information Exchange website](#).



## **Navy Exchange Announces Return Policy**

In order to accommodate customers making post-holiday gift returns, all NEX locations will accept returns through Jan. 26, 2019. This extended holiday return policy applies to original purchases made between Oct. 24 — Dec. 24, 2018, at any NEX or through myNavyExchange.com. Customers are asked to include any packaging material along with the receipt when making a return. Any returns without a receipt will be placed on a NEX Gift Card.

AppleCare/AppleCare+ Protection Plans are returnable within 60 days of purchase. Also, a great gift idea this holiday season that will not need to be returned is a NEX Gift Card. For more information, visit the Navy Exchange [website](#).



**\* RED ALERT \***

**Everyone Call The Senate Committee  
On Veterans Affairs Members Ask  
Them To Support and Vote to pass  
HR 299 Blue Water Navy  
Vietnam Veterans Act Of 2018 to the  
Full Senate for a Vote!**

**Jon Tester (D - MT)202-224-2644-Tony  
Murray, Patty (WA)202-224-2621-Ryan  
Sanders, Bernie (VT)202-224-5141-Matt  
Brown, Sherrod (OH)202-224-2315-Anna  
Blumenthal, Richard (CT)202-224-2823-Ethan  
Hirono, Mazie (HI)202-224-6361-Adam  
Manchin, Joe (WV)202-224-3954-Emily**

**Please Ask everyone to Make The  
Calls and Share this with  
Everyone!**

**Thank You Michael F Kvintus  
Sr. BWNVVA  
National Vice Commander**



**All Your Open Season Questions  
Answered**

Open season begins next week, Nov. 12 to Dec. 10. TRICARE Open Season is for enrollment in a TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select health plan. Federal Benefits Open Season is for vision coverage or retiree dental coverage through the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program. Take the time now to learn about eligibility, plan options, and enrollment. Here are a few frequently asked questions about open season.

Read the full article [here](#).



# TRICARE Prime and Select Open Season

On Nov. 12, TRICARE will kick off its first open season where Prime and Select beneficiaries can enroll in or change their health care coverage plan for 2019. The open season period will last until Dec. 10 and any changes made during this period will become effective on Jan. 1, 2019. If you are satisfied with your current plan then your coverage will continue automatically for 2019, as long as you remain eligible for coverage. [Find out more](#) about the open season and how to modify your existing health plan.



**Office of Inspector General**

1. Defense Health Care: DOD Should Demonstrate How Its Plan to Transfer the Administration of Military Treatment Facilities Will Improve Efficiency
2. DOD Should Take Additional Actions to Enhance Corrosion Prevention and Mitigation Efforts
3. Improved Performance Analysis and Training Oversight Needed for Contracted Exams
4. Medicaid Home- and Community-Based Services: Selected States' Program Structures and Challenges Providing Services
5. Medicaid: Access to Health Care for Low-Income Adults in States with and without Expanded Eligibility
6. Navy Report to Congress Aligns with Current Assessments of Arctic Threat Levels and Capabilities Required to Execute DOD's Strategy
7. Opioid Crisis: Status of Public Health Emergency Authorities
8. Veterans' Disability Benefits: Better Measures Needed to Assess Regional Office Performance in Processing Claims
9. Veterans First Program: VA Needs to Address Implementation Challenges and Strengthen Oversight of Subcontracting Limitations



## **TRDP and FEDVIP Update**

The current TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) will end Dec. 31, 2018, and will be replaced by the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) dental coverage options. Vision plans will also be available to eligible TRICARE beneficiaries through FEDVIP. The first opportunity to enroll in FEDVIP is during the 2018 Federal Benefits Open Season, which runs from Nov. 12, 2018, through Dec. 10, 2018. Coverage begins on Jan. 1, 2019. In general, retired uniformed service members and their families who were eligible for TRDP in 2018 are eligible for FEDVIP dental coverage, and if enrolled in a TRICARE health plan, FEDVIP vision coverage, beginning in 2019. Family members of active-duty uniformed service members who are enrolled in a TRICARE health plan are eligible for FEDVIP vision coverage. [Learn more.](#)



**“We Proudly Support our  
Military Personnel & Families”**



**A Launches New VA.GOV**

As part of a multi-year digital modernization effort, VA has reformatted VA.gov to consolidate information about VA programs. The consolidated website enables veterans to use their HealtheVets, DS Logon, or ID.me account to track the status of benefits and claims, refill prescriptions, message their doctors, and request a Veterans ID Card. Visit the new [website](#).





# U.S. FOOD & DRUG ADMINISTRATION

1. Barcelona Nut Company Recalls Roasted and Salted in Shell Pistachios Because of Possible Health Risk
2. Duncan Hines Classic White, Classic Butter Golden, Signature Confetti and Classic Yellow Cake Mixes Recalled Due to Potential Presence of Salmonella
3. FDA alerts patients and health care professionals that some EpiPen auto-injectors may not readily slide out of carrier tube
4. Frito-Lay Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Milk In Select Smartfood Delight Sea Salt Flavored Popcorn
5. Janssen Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall for one lot of ORTHO-NOVUM 1/35 and two lots of ORTHO-NOVUM 7/7/7 Due to Incorrect Veridate Dispenser Instructions
6. Kadash Incorporation Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Puriton Eye Relief Drops Due to Non-Sterile Production Conditions
7. Natural Life Pet Products Issues Recall of Dry Food Due to Elevated Levels of Vitamin D
8. Nutrisca Issues Recall of Dry Dog Food Due to Elevated Levels of Vitamin D

9. Sandoz Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall Of 1 Lot Of Losartan Potassium & Hydrochlorothiazide
10. Sprout Creek Farm Recalls "Margie" Cheese Due to Listeria Monocytogenes
11. Update Regarding Risk of Tissue Overheating Due to Inaccurate Magnetic Resonance Thermometry
12. Update Regarding Unintended Heating Associated with the Monteris Medical NeuroBlate Probe
13. Wegmans Food Markets, Inc. Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Milk in Wegmans Pumpkin Loaf, 11 oz., and Wegmans Placek Coffee Cake, 11 oz. and 22 oz.



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5. [IRS announces 2019 Tax Counseling for the Elderly and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program grants](#)
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7. [IRS, Free File Alliance announce changes to improve program; Improved taxpayer options available for 2019 Free File program](#)
8. [New IRS publication helps taxpayers Get Ready for tax reform](#)



## **MIA Update**

This week, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced one new identification, and the burial date and location for four previously identified servicemen. Returning home with full military honors are:

**Army Air Forces Pfc. Joseph I. Natvik**, 20, of Madison, Wis., whose remains were previously

identified, will be buried Nov. 25 in Columbus, Wis. Natvik was a flight engineer assigned to the 1330 Army Air Force Base Unit, Air Transport Command. On July 17, 1945, his aircraft crashed in a remote area en route from Jorhat, India, to Hsinching, China. All four passengers were declared deceased after an extensive search effort failed to identify the crash site.

[Read about Natvik.](#)

**Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. Robert L. Zehetner**, 19, of Brooksville, Fla., whose remains were previously identified, will be buried Nov. 30 in Bushnell, Fla. Zehetner was a member of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll. Zehetner died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. His name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the Punchbowl, in Honolulu, along with others who are missing from World War II. [Read about Zehetner.](#)

**Marine Corps Sgt. Dwight W. Randall**, 22, of Fresno, Calif., whose remains were previously identified, will be buried Nov. 20 in his hometown. Randall was a member of Company C, 2nd Amphibian Tractor Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert

Islands, in an attempt to secure the island. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded, but the Japanese were virtually annihilated. Randall died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. [Read about Randall.](#)

**Navy Molder First Class Kenneth B. Armstrong**, 36, of Seattle, whose remains were previously identified, will be buried Nov. 30 in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu. Armstrong was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which was moored off Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when Japanese aircraft attacked his ship on Dec. 7, 1941. Armstrong was one of 429 crewmen killed in the attack. [Read about Armstrong.](#)

**Navy Seaman 1st Class Kirby R. Stapleton** was stationed aboard the USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The battleship sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Stapleton. Interment services are pending. [Read about Stapleton.](#)



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