



### This-N-That

Good afternoon Jim,

It's been just over a week now and I am still waiting to hear whether or not I will be allowed to visit the San Diego and Long Beach VA Medical Centers, and as soon as I know or have more information, I will be sure to share it with you.

I've also been busy checking into more cases of unopened claims stacks across the country, and so far I've not found anything and as much as I'd like to hope this is an isolated case I personally feel this is not the case. Again, if I find out more, I will be sure to share it.

Please be sure to check out the TAKE ACTION section, two more pieces of legislation have been added and need attention.

If you've not visited our website, www.veterans-for-change.org or not visited in a while, please be sure to check often for updates on documents, web links, etc., we are a bit slow, but are moving as fast as we can, yet not over-loading to put more work on our Webmaster when we get to the transition into the new look.

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

**PS**: If you like what we're doing, have found the newsletter and website useful, please help us keep the site, newsletter and phone/fax lines operational so we can continue to provide in my humble opinion the best there is to offer Veterans. Click here to contribute what you can, please keep in mind this cannot be used as a tax deduction, it's merely a contribution in support. https://www.paypal.com/donate/?

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### Bill Introduced to Block VA Resources Going to Southern Border to Help Illegal Aliens

Senator John Boozman (Ark.) has introduced legislation (S.4082) to block the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) from diverting veteran's resources to manage the crisis at the southern border. Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas confirmed that the Biden administration is considering diverting VA manpower and funding. According to VA staff testimony before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (SVAC), the VA is currently understaffed by 2,800 positions. At the hearing, SVAC Chairman Jon Tester (Mont.) pressed Gina Grosso, Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness, on recent claims of sending VA employees to the border. She claimed that VA and DHS have not yet had discussions on this issue. Everyone is encouraged to weigh in on this issue with the FRA Action Center online.



## The future of policy for synthetic data in health care

In an important partnership, VA has sought policy recommendations for the use of synthetic data to improve Veteran patient experiences.

**Read More** 



### **Military Veterans Advocacy**



Military Veterans Advocacy is offering some free memberships for those who are struggling to get their claims through, are having financial difficulties. Annual dues are \$25.00 per year. Our organization includes

special sections, Blue Water Navy, Veterans of Southeast Asia, Central Pacific Islands, Veterans of Panama Canal Zone, and Okinawa. We have gift members available which can be paid by your fellow brother or sister Veterans. Gift members are kept confidential. Click HERE and help a Veteran.

You may contact Robin Barr at robin.barr@mvadvocacy.org



### **HVAC Subcommittees Discuss VA Claims**

Two House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittees held a joint hearing focusing on the quality of representation in the VA disability claims process. The hearing highlighted the importance of VA-accredited Veteran Service Officers (VSO) claim representatives, attorneys, and agents who must adhere to professional and ethical standards. Unaccredited claim consultants, or "Claim Sharks," avoid VA oversight, charge unreasonable fees and offer inferior service. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) this problem of predatory claims practices has been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

FRA's VSOs oversee the association's VSO program and represent veterans throughout the claims process as well as before the Board of Veteran's Appeals. The association is congressionally chartered, recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and entrusted to serve all veterans who seek its help. The FRA also provides training for members to become a VA accredited veteran service officer. Our VSOs help veterans navigate their VA benefits and their claims and appeals process at no cost to the veteran. Veterans can reach out to their local FRA branch to inquire about VSOs or contact NHQ to seek assistance at: theoL@fra.org.



Center for Women Veterans Book Corner, May: Army Veteran Mari K. Eder Each month, VA's Center for Women Veterans profiles a different woman Veteran author as part of its Women Veteran Authors Book Corner. This month's author is U.S. Army Veteran Mari K. Eder, who served for 36 years from 1977-2013.

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## Music therapy: Readjustment doesn't have to be a solo

Music therapy shows Veterans that readjustment doesn't have to be a solo performance. Here's two fellow combat Veterans jamming.

#### **Read More**







### Senate Probe Finds Problems with Military Housing Contractor

The Senate Homeland Security Committee's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations recently held a hearing on the mistreatment of military families in privatized housing on U.S. military installations. The subcommittee focused on privatized housing managed by Balfour Beatty Communities, LLC at Fort Gordon, Ga. This company is one of the largest providers of privatized military housing, which is still failing to correct mold and other structural problems - threating the health and safety of service members and their families. The company pleaded guilty in December 2021 to committing fraud against the U.S. government from 2013 to 2019. The company was ordered to pay \$65.4 million in fines and restitution and placed under an independent compliance monitor for three years. The Subcommittee Chairman Sen. Jon Ossoff (Ga.) and Ranking Member Ron Johnson (Wis.) are conducting a bipartisan investigation into military privatized housing that has been plagued by problems for many years.

The FRA welcomes this investigation and wants to ensure service members and their families have safe, quality homes and communities. The association wants to increase the accountability of privatized housing companies by putting more oversight authority in the hands of local military leaders.



### Live Whole Health #121: Yoga ball

There are so many ways that you can incorporate yoga practices and mindful movement into your daily routine, and using an exercise or yoga ball is one fun way to change up your practice.



### VE Day 77 Years ago

"*Victory in Europe Day*" is the day celebrating the formal acceptance by the Allies of German's unconditional surrender on May 8, 1945, marking the end of World War II in Europe 77 years ago.



## Veterans eligible for discounts on travel, hotel rates

Veterans are now eligible to book travel through this website to access exclusive discounts on hotels, flights and other travel deals.

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## Links to Other Stories

1) Should More States Try Contingency Management for Veterans?



### **House Hearing on Predatory Claims Practices**

VFW National Veterans Service Director Ryan Gallucci testified before a joint hearing of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittees on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, and Oversight and Investigations, on quality representation in the VA disability claims process. He highlighted the importance of VAaccredited claim representatives, attorneys, and agents who must adhere to professional and ethical standards. Unaccredited claim consultants, or "Claim Sharks," avoid VA oversight, charge unreasonable fees, and offer inferior service. "In our opinion, any group that fails to adhere to VA's well-established standards of accreditation and fee arrangements should be met at the door by Capitol Police, not offered a seat at the same table as hardworking, VA-accredited advocates who are held to professional and ethical standards designed to protect veterans," said Gallucci. "If a company asks a veteran to sign contracts, waivers, and disclosures but will not file a power of attorney with VA, then the veteran should not work with them." Watch the hearing or read the testimony.



#### Mental health: Learn what your fellow Veterans Know

Veterans and those who care about them are encouraged to learn about healing from Veterans who know because they've been there.



### Suicide Prevention Resources for Military and Veterans

### Military & Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255, Press 1 Text 838255, 24/7

Vets 4 Warriors 855-838-8255

InTransition 1-800-424-7877 Office of Warrior Care Policy warriorcare.dodlive.mil/

Military One Source 1-800-342-9647

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors [TAPS] 1-800-959-8277



### **VA Adds New Presumptive Conditions**

VA has added nine rare respiratory cancers to the list of presumptive conditions for particulate matter exposure from service in Southwest Asia. These conditions were proposed in March and have now been added to VA's regulations through an interim final rule. The VFW sees this as a step in the right direction to help veterans exposed to toxins but remains committed to passing the comprehensive toxic exposure legislation, *Honoring our PACT Act*, to codify VA's presumptive process. Read more.



### VA's National Oncology Program: Providing Equitable Cancer Care for Veterans

VA's National Oncology Program is working to better deliver equitable cancer care through new initiatives and programs.

#### **Read More**







### **Public Service Loan Forgiveness Waiver**

On April 25, 2022, the Department of Education (ED) began allowing student loan borrowers seeking financial relief through the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program to submit a DD-214 to certify periods of eligible employment. Many individuals with outstanding federal student loans may be eligible for PSLF, including eligibility from time served on active duty. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ED is offering a limited-time waiver to allow borrowers to receive credit for past periods of repayment on loans that would otherwise not qualify. Individuals must have been working full time for a qualifying employer. This waiver is available through October 31, 2022. Learn more and check your eligibility.



### Borne the Battle #276: Navy Veteran Ken Harbaugh, Podcast Host, Nonprofit Entrepreneur

This week's Borne the Battle episode features Navy Veteran Ken Harbaugh, a podcast host, entrepreneur and co-founder of The Mission Continues.

#### **Read More**



Jim, below are links to all currently active pre-written E-Mails to many pieces of legislation. We ask that you go to each one, and send the pre-written E-Mails, and to also call your Reps or Senators and ask for their support on a weekly basis!

Jim you don't need to be Active Duty or a Veteran, in fact we ask all Veteran friends to also help! (Updated 05/08/21)

Please note, we've added two new items to the **TAKE ACTION** list.

1) HR 1014 - Furnish Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) to a Veteran who has a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTS)

2) HR 109 will establish an advisory committee on the implementation by the DVA of an electronic health record

- 3) Concurrent Receipt Legislation Introduced
- 4) Expand Concurrent Receipt

5) H.R. 333, Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act

6) H.R. 344, Support the Women Veterans TRUST Act

7) H.R. 914, the Dental Care for Veterans Act

8) Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act

9) S. 134/H.R. 637, the Veterans Economic Recovery Act of 2021

10) S. 437, Take Action for Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits

11) S. 89, Ensuring Survivors Benefits during COVID-19 Act of 2021

12) STOP TRICARE Fee Increases

13) Support Bills to Expand Coverage for ChampVA and TRICARE Young Adults

14) Veterans Economic Recovery Act Introduced

15) H.R. 855, the Veterans Expedited TSA Screening (VETS) Safe Travel Act

16) HR 1355 and S 454. These companion bills will provide health care and benefits to Veterans who were exposed to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces at Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan.

17) Support Repeal of TRICARE Select Enrollment Fee

18) HR 1585 & S 565- Provide for the treatment of Vets who participated in the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll as Radiation Exposed

19) Please Support S. 344, the Major Richard Star Act

20) Support the Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act

21) S. 810 & H.R. 1972, the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021

22) HR 109 Establish an Advisory Committee on Implementation by the DVA of an electronic health record

23) HR 2372 and S 952 will Provide for Presumption of Service Connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to toxins

24) Please Ask you Senator to support S.952 the Warfighters Act

25) Support Improving VA Homelessness Program

26) S. 976, Caring for Survivors Act of 2021

27) H.R. 303, the Retired Pay Restoration Act

28) H.R. 912, American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans Mental Health Act

29) S. 976, the Caring for Survivors Act of 2021

30) HR 2269 and S 657 cover herbicide exposure in Thailand

31) Bipartisan Bill Introduced to Help Military Survivors

32) Legislation asks for Study of Involuntary Discharges for Women

33) H.R. 2436, the Veterans Burn Pit Exposure Recognition Act

34) H.R. 958-the Protecting Moms Who Served Act

35) HR 2127 and S 927, the TEAM bills Veterans Exposed to Toxic Substances

36) Ask your Senator to Support S.1520 Military Justice Improvement Act

37) Ask your member to support S.810 and H.R. 1972 The Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021

38) Ask your member and senator to support HR 2580 and S 1151 to provide for a presumption of service connected disability for certain Veterans who served in Palomares, Spain, and for other purposes

39) Ask your Senator to Support S.1520 Military Justice Improvement Act

40) HR 855, VETS Safe Travel Act

41) HR 3368, the Guam, American Samoa, and Johnston Island bill

42) H.R. 2521, Delivering Optimally Urgent Labor Access (DOULA) for Veterans Affairs Act of 2021

43) H.R. 1273, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act

44) H.R. 2968, the Military and Veteran Student Loan Relief Act

45) H.R. 845, the VA Billing Accountability Act

46) Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Bill Introduced in House

47) HR 303 and S 1147 The Retired Pay Restoration Act

48) Ask Your Legislators to Support Concurrent Receipt Reform HR-1282

49) HR 1656 TREAT PTSD Act

50) S. 1664, the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Processing Claims Improvement

51) H.R. 2724 — VA Peer Support Enhancement for MST Survivors Act

52) Please Support H.R. 3452 —Veterans Preventative Health Coverage Fairness Act

53) HR 2192, The Camp Lejeune Justice Act of 2021

54) HR 5026, The Panama Canal Zone Veterans Act of 2021

55) HR 3368, HR 5026, HR 2269, S 657 are all Toxic Exposure

Bills that need special attention and more pressure to get passed!

56) H.R. 4627, Veterans' Culturally Competent Care Act of 2021

57) S. 2172, Building Solutions for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness

58) H.R. 4571, the SERVICE Act of 2021

59) H.R. 4732, Protect Individual Unemployability Benefit for All Disabled

60) S. 1937, the Delivering Optimally Urgent Labor Access (DOULA) for Veterans Act of 2021

61) S. 2283 and H.R. 5073—the Crisis Hotline REACH for Veterans Act

62) HR 852 and S 221, United States - Israel PTSD Collaborative Research Act

63) Ask Congress to Preserve Arlington National Cemetery

64) HR 4949 and S 692, the Hello Girls Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2021

65) HR 2963, the VOW to Hire Heroes Extension Act of 2021

66) S 1970, The Clean Water for Military Families Act

67) Support S. 1198/H.R. 2819—the Solid Start Act of 2021

68) H.R. 3402/S. 976-Caring for Survivors Act of 2021

69) HR 3537 and S 1813, Accelerating Access to Critical Therapies for ALS Act

70) S. 2386/H.R. 4575, the Veteran Peer Specialist Act

71) H.R. 5721—the VIPER Act

72) H.R. 5607, Justice for ALS Veterans Act

73) HR 2601 and S 1188, SFC Heath Robinson Burn Pit Transparency Act

74) S. 3017, Veterans Dental Care Eligibility Expansion and Enhancement Act

75) H.R. 4794 and S. 2533, the Making Advances in

Mammography and Medical Options (MAMMO) for Veterans Act

76) HR 1361 and S 444, AUTO for Veterans Act

77) H.R. 4880 and S. 2720, the Veterans' Prostate Cancer

Treatment and Research Act

78) HR 2800, the WINGMAN Act

79) H.R. 5944, Veterans Administration Backlog Accountability Act of 2021

80) HR 3400, VA Emergency Transportation Act

81) HR 2992, TBI and PTSD Law Enforcement Training Act

82) HR 6260, the Casualty Assistance Reform Act of 2021

83) H.R. 6064, VA Compensation and Pension exams for claims related to military sexual trauma

84) H.R. 5819, Autonomy for Disabled Veterans Act

85) HR 3596, the Lawrence J. Hackett, Jr. Vietnam Veterans

Agent Orange Fairness Act

86) H.R. 2327 – to Remove Delimiting Dates for Survivors and Dependents' Educational Assistance

87) S. 2513/H.R. 4772, Improved VA Clothing Allowance Benefit for Disabled Veterans

88) S. 3293, the Post 9-11 Veterans Mental Health Care Act of 2021

89) HR 6402 and S 1725, will grant a Federal charter to the National American Indian Veterans, Incorporated

90) HR 6659 and S 3541, the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Acts

91) Ask your member to support S.810 and H.R. 1972 the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021

92) H.R. 6543, Restore Veterans Compensation Act

93) H.R. 3967, Honoring Our PACT Act Going to House Floor for a Vote

94) H.R. 2916/S. 1467, the VA Medicinal Cannabis Research Act of 2021

95) S. 3483, Justice for ALS Veterans Act

96) H.R. 6273 and S.3397, the VA Zero Suicide Demonstration Project Act of 2021

97) HR 7050, Ernest Peltz Accrued Veterans Benefits Act

98) S. 3851/H.R. 7089, the Veterans Exposed to Toxic PFAS Act

99) S. 3854/H.R. 6823, the Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act

100) HR 4601 and S 2405, Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach Act

101) S. 3304/H.R. 5754, the Patient Advocate Tracker Act

102) Please Support H.R. 7369, VENTURE Act

103) Please support of HR 7524, the ACES Act







# Gulf Coast VA honors social worker for going above and beyond

Social worker honored for "Going above and beyond her job. An empathetic listener to our Veterans who ensures their needs can be met."

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In their own words: Why nurses love working at VA

Why do nurses love working at VA? Hear from them here, in their own words, and learn more about how you can join them.

Read More



# What you should know about advance care planning

Advance care planning is the process of considering what's important to you and what your preferences are for care now and in the future.

Read More



# Study finds higher prevalence of mental health concerns for Vietnam Veterans

VE-HEROeS is the first nationwide survey of both the physical and mental health of Vietnam War Veterans in more than 30 years. It sought



#### Freedom Isn't Free





## Healthier drinking habits to improve your wellbeing

The VetChange mobile app can help you to stop or cut back on drinking and learn healthier ways to manage PTSD symptoms.

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### Birmingham VA cardiologist celebrates decades of achievement in research

Dr. Louis Dell'Italia, Birmingham VA associate chief of staff for research, is dedicated to improving the health of Veterans and others.



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



# Appeals: Informal conference offers clarity, feedback in higher-level decision reviews

Considering a higher-level review of your claim decision? An informal conference can allow you to communicate directly with a reviewer.

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Join VA and the White House today for a cancer cabinet community conversation

VA health leaders, along with representatives from private and public health care organizations, host a Cancer Cabinet Community Conversation.





Follow us on MEWE! The support staff at MEWE is responsive, open to suggestions and works very hard to protect your personal information.

We hope you will join us on this new site.

**VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE** 

HOMELESS HEROES PROGRAM OF VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE

**AMVETS GROUP** 

**VETERANS SOCIAL GROUP** 

{USAVET} SUPPORTING GOD & ALL WHO SERVED OUR GREAT NATION

AMERICANS FOR SOVEREIGNTY



#### VOICES events: Enjoy, support, connect with Veterans near you

Through VOICES events, Veterans come together in public spaces to enjoy, support and connect with one another.







### PTSD Bytes #8: Treatments for PTSD 5: EMDR

In this episode of PTSD Bytes, we learn about EMDR for PTSD from licensed clinical social worker and certified EMDR-therapist Marianne Silva.

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### John Thach: Pacific Wildcat

Navy Veteran John Thach served in World War II and the Korean War. He invented the Thach Weave and Big Blue Blanket Defense.



## Stent surgery study reinforces quality of VA cardiac care

Stent surgery: Common procedure but has some risk. Four-year study shows those treated by VA facility had 25% lower risk of complications.

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FDA U.S. FOOD & DRUG

1) Potential Risk of Exposure to Toxic Compounds When Using Certain Hemodialysis Machines Manufactured by Fresenius Medical Care – Letter to Health Care Providers

2) FDA Roundup: May 6, 2022

3) A Real-World Case Study of Levothyroxine Use Addresses
Institutional Concerns About Generic Product Interchangeability
4) Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: FDA Limits Use of Janssen
COVID-19 Vaccine to Certain Individuals

5) FDA Drug Shortages

6) Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: FDA Limits Use of Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine to Certain Individuals

7) Medtronic HeartWare Ventricular Assist Device (HVAD) System

8) FDA Updates and Press Announcements on Nitrosamine in Varenicline (Chantix)

9) FDA grants regular approval to fam-trastuzumab deruxtecannxki for breast cancer

10) FDA Permits Marketing for New Test to Improve Diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease

11) FDA Updates on Paxlovid for Health Care Providers

12) FDA Issues Warning Letters to Companies Illegally Selling CBD and Delta-8 THC Products

13) FDA Issues Warning Letters to Companies Illegally Selling CBD and Delta-8 THC Products

14) The TJX Companies, Inc. Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Milk in Certain Vegan Chocolate Products

15) FDA Roundup: May 3, 2022

16) Counterfeit At-Home OTC COVID-19 Diagnostic Tests



### Exhibit inspired by her mother wins gold medal

Veteran Catherine D'Angelo received gold medal in National Veterans Creative Arts competition in festival held in St. Petersburg, Florida.

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### As a military spouse, there's a place for you at VA

On Military Spouse Appreciation Day, we recognize the contributions and talents that make military spouses so valuable to VA.

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VA supports parents and expecting mothers across America

Many VA medical centers will be offering baby showers to support expecting mothers with essential baby items and vital health information.

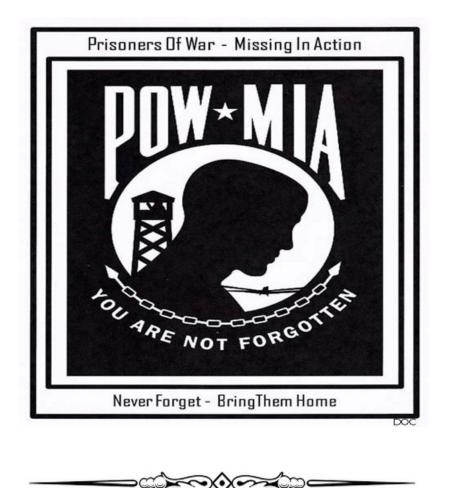
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#### Improving access to virtual care for homebound rural Veterans

VA Geriatric Scholar Christy Rothermel is helping homebound and rural Veterans keep pace with VA's rapid telehealth expansion.





# Sign in to My HealtheVet changing soon — here's what to expect

The steps for signing in to My HealtheVet are changing. Learn the steps for the VA unified sign-in process so you can access your account.

**Read More** 



Get moving with the MOVE! Coach app

Download the MOVE! Coach app to boost your daily activity and improve your health for Move More Month.

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If you received this newsletter as a courtesy or a forward from a friend or relative, you can sign up to receive in your E-mail every week.



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### Tranquility garden at Orlando VA offers hope and healing

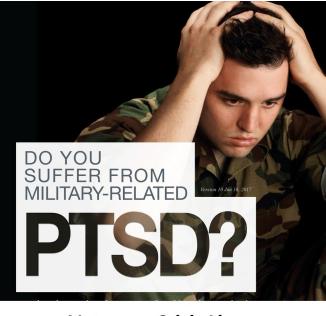
A new tranquility garden is bringing hopefulness, healing, and recovery to Veterans. It's a new addition to the in-patient mental health unit.



## Therapy provides Marine Corps Veteran all-terrain trackchair

After three helicopter crashes and a 150-foot fall, Marine Corps Veteran finally returns to independent life with unique trackchair.





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





The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced two burial updates and one new identification for service members who have been missing and unaccounted-for from World War II. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

**Navy Seaman 2nd Class Laverne A. Nigg**, 23, of Browns Valley, Minnesota, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits that caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Nigg. He will be buried on June 4, 2022, in his hometown. Read about Nigg.

**Army Air Force Lt. Col Addison Baker**, 36, of Chicago, was commander of the 328th Bombardment Squadron, 93rd bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft Baker was piloting crashed as a result of antiaircraft fire during Operation Tidal Wave. Following the war, his remains could not be identified. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. The date and location of his funeral have yet to be decided. Read about Baker.

**Army Air Forces Tech. Sgt. William F. Teaff**, 26, was assigned to the 351st Bombardment Squadron, 100th Bombardment Group, 8th Air Force. On March 6, 1944, he was serving as a radio operator on a B-17 Flying Fortress when it was destroyed during a bombing mission. The entire crew, except for the navigator, survived and bailed out, but were captured by the Germans and sent to POW camps. Teaff died on July 10, 1944, in a nearby village while receiving medical treatment for diphtheria. Interment services are pending. Read about Teaff.





#### Veterans-For-Change, Inc.

Riverside County, CA

Visit our website today

www.Veterans-For-Change.org

Serving those who served!

Please pass on to all your Veteran Friends and Family!



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