



# **Veterans-For-Change Newsletter**

*A Voice of the Veterans*

Week Ending Sunday, January 21, 2018

Volume 9, Issue 03



## **This-N-That**

Most people in our country don't know what it's like to live in a military town.

For the first twenty years of my life I either lived on a military base or out in town only a few miles from a military base.

I was born at NSA Mid South Naval Base in Millington, TN, from there we went to MCAS El Toro, CA then to Cherry Point, NC with a short time in MCAS Iwakuni, Japan, and returning again to

MCAS El Toro/LTA Santa Ana, CA.

Now we live between March AFB in Perris, CA and Camp Pendleton, CA.

Most folks in the USA don't live in a Military Town, with lots of guys in uniform walking the streets and jets overhead daily. They go on with their lives unaware of what a Military Town is all about. And that's OK!

But I want to share with you what it's like to live in a Military Town. We see guys in uniform all the time, we have state of the art, high-performance aircraft in the air nearby most days. We hear the SOUND OF FREEDOM when an F-22, F-35 or a C-130 flies over or near the house and we read in the local paper, some times daily, but at least weekly, of the loss of one of our own in combat in the Middle East.

Many of our military who are sent off to the Middle East leave behind families. A wife, son or daughter, and always making a promise to come home safely. Sadly some are not able to keep that promise, and it's never deliberately. It's just a fact of life.

And for all those who have served or are serving

today, go through life serving knowing in the back of their mind way too many times, today is my day! Thankfully it doesn't come true and they go on to the next day.

For me, when dad was in Vietnam every single day we expected to have someone in uniform show up at our door to tell us that dad didn't make it. Or when we were expecting dad to call us, he didn't call making that fear even more real. When we did get calls, I honestly don't remember what they called it but it was always like talking on a two-way radio, always ending a sentence with "over!"

We wrote letters to dad every day and it always seemed like it took a lifetime to either get or receive letters.

Well dad did come home, but so many didn't! And dad had a plaque made up with a small brass plate with the name, rank and date of death for every man under his command who had lost their life.

So between the names in the paper, what DoD alerts I receive and dad's plaque it's a forever reminder of what it was like to live on or near a military base.

And when I can I make it a point to attend the funerals of our fallen who have no family, so that when they are laid to rest in their final home they are not alone.

I just wanted to share this moment with you... and remind you that THIS IS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LIVE IN A MILITARY TOWN. This is the real America we all love... and I'm proud to be part of it. May God bless our men in uniform and their families who give so much.

And to those punk sports figures who are so proud of their juvenile take-a-knee crap... WOW!

In the next 24-48 hours we are adding another 224 documents under a new category called Medical Devices. Most might not help with a claim or an appeal, but when your doctor(s) talk to you about using a medical device or piece of equipment, it will allow you the opportunity to get familiar, better understand and maybe also take away some fears of the "unknown!"

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)



## **Trump Signs Order to Help Curb Veteran Suicides**

President Donald Trump signed an executive order Tuesday directing the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) to boost the availability of mental health services to transitioning vets in an effort to cut the suicide rate.



## **Some Bases Linked to Cancer and Health Problems**

CBS recently released a story about [toxic chemicals at Air Force bases](#) and their link to severe health problems, like cancer and birth defects, but this is in no way new information. In 2001, the Deseret News raised the same question: [Do military bases have links to cancer?](#)



# **DoD Issues Guidance for Potential Government Shutdown**

By Terri Moon Cronk, DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- The Defense Department has issued guidance to its military and civilian leadership on how to proceed if the federal government should shut down at midnight tonight, according to a memorandum from Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick M. Shanahan.

The deputy secretary said in his memo issued yesterday that the Trump administration does not want the government to shut down.

"The administration is willing to work with the Congress to enact a short-term continuing resolution to fund critical federal government operations and allow Congress the time to complete the full-year 2018 appropriations," Shanahan said in his memo.

While he and Defense Secretary James N. Mattis hope Congress passes a continuing resolution or an annual appropriations bill for fiscal year 2018 defense activities, he said, "prudent management

requires that the department be prepared for the possibility of a lapse in appropriations."

## **War Operations to Continue**

While the memo contains guidance on essential personnel to continue DoD operations during a potential shutdown, he said, the department will continue to prosecute the war in Afghanistan and operations against al-Qaida and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, and will continue to make preparations for deployments into those conflicts.

"The department must, as well, continue many other operations necessary for the safety of human life or the protection of property," the memo read. "These activities will be 'excepted' from the effects of a lapse in appropriations: All other activities would need to be shut down in an orderly and deliberate fashion, including -- with few exceptions -- the cessation of temporary duty travel."

## **Military: Normal Duty Status**

All active-duty service members will continue in a "normal duty status," regardless of their affiliation with excepted and unexcepted functions, the memo said.

"Military personnel will not be paid until such time as Congress makes appropriated funds available to compensate them for this period of service," the memo said. "Civilian employees paid for lapsed appropriations and who are not necessary to carry out or support excepted activities will be furloughed, i.e., placed in a nonwork, nonpay status."

Shanahan emphasized that no shutdown actions are to be taken until further notice is provided.

"To repeat, the secretary and I hope that Congress will pass a funding bill and the DoD will avoid a shutdown," Shanahan's memo read. "This guidance is intended to support prudent planning."

You can view the full memo [HERE](#).



## ***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 a **licensed Mental Health Worker**, again where you can seek help or just ask questions.

We average **2,200** visitors per day, and downloads average 1,200 per day with a total **3,828,803** 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 16,163 documents on-line (Updated: 12/30/17)
- 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
  - 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: 11/02/17)
- News (Articles On-Line: 7,056)
- Polls

- Web Links, more than 3,618, Added 1 New Links (Updated: 01/03/18)


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



## **VA Caregiver Support Line**

The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) Caregiver Support Line assistance is just a quick phone call away. Whether you're in need of immediate assistance or have questions about what services you may be eligible for, the caring licensed social workers who answer the support line can: (1) provide you with information about assistance available from VA; (2) help you access services; (3) connect you with the Caregiver Support Coordinator at a VA Medical Center near you; and (4) just listen, if that is what you need right now. Calling the Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274 is a great way to learn more about the support that is available to you.

For more resources and information on the Veteran Caregivers support programs, see this [article](#).



## Trying to Locate a Vietnam Veteran



Would everyone please pass this picture around and keep it going. The picture was taken the middle of 1970. The only info I have is that we were stationed together in Viet Nam and I used to call him little John because of his size. Please keep it going in hope I can locate another Vet I lost contact with.

Thanks

SSgt Ralph Roberts!

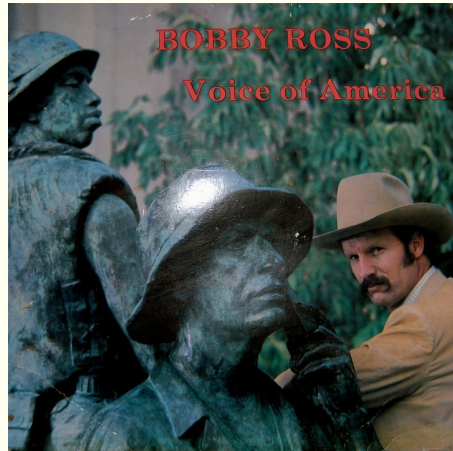
**NOTE:** If you know this Vietnam Veteran and how to contact him, please send Jim Davis a message with the details!



## **Nominations Sought for HillVets 100**

Each year [HillVets](#) recognizes 100 members of the Veteran community as the HillVets 100. Last year's honorees included VA employees, journalists, advocates and activists, military spouses and more Veterans and supporters. You can nominate a Veteran to be considered for [HillVets 100 online](#). For more information visit the HillVets [website](#).

## LT Bobby Ross and Billy D



I'm a Vietnam Veteran. A combat Veteran. I'm also 100% disabled from the various war wounds I received when I was in battle. I am somewhat fortunate, however, because I have Scotch blood running through my veins. That makes me stubborn. Too resolute to quit. When I met Billy D on the street, he was broken. He did not dream the dreams I did. He was proud to be a Vietnam Veteran, but he was lost. He did not have the ability to move forward like me. He could only move in small circles. And he couldn't bust out of those circles. As I talked with him and shared memories of the war, I knew he was not with me. He was there. Back in the war a half world away. He really did not make it home. His body did. But his soul was still there.


The Home of Billy D

<http://www.rassio.com/?page=10>



## What You Need to File Taxes

Here are several tips to prepare your income tax return: (1) prepare the proper paperwork to report all income and claim every credit or deduction; (2) check your numbers; (3) take the time you need. File an extension to obtain a few extra months to fully prepare your tax return. But remember, this is an extension of time to file, not an extension of time to pay. If you are self-employed, have especially sophisticated investments, recently moved overseas or gathering the right paperwork is taking longer than expected, consider this a smart strategy to avoid incomplete or erroneous tax returns, which might fetch unexpected fees thanks to haste. For more information, visit the [OneSource website](#).





## **VA Seeks Public Comment on Caregiver Support**



The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced it is seeking public comments on how it can further strengthen and improve caregiver support through the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC).

Through a [Federal Register notice](#), VA announced a 30-day comment period to hear from stakeholders on whether and how PCAFC should be refined to support Veterans and their family caregivers. Through PCAFC, VA provides support for certain family caregivers of eligible Veterans seriously injured in the line of duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001. To submit comments, access the Federal Register [notice](#). Learn about the VA Caregiver Support Program on VA's [website](#).



## **Finally: A DoD Audit is Coming**

TREA has been urging for years that the Department of Defense be audited just like every other department of the federal government. And in the fy2010 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) Congress directed DoD to be audit-ready by 2017. Finally, DoD says it is ready for an audit this year, even though they missed the deadline.

Last week, in testimony before the House Armed

Services Committee, David Norquist, the Defense Department's comptroller. said that the process has started for the first departmentwide audit in DoD history.

While the department has auditors looking at various contracts or processes, "this is the first time the department will undergo a full financial statement audit," he said.

This audit will verify the count, location and condition of military equipment and real property. "It tests the vulnerability of our security systems and it validates the accuracy of personnel records and actions," Norquist said.

The department will have 1,200 financial statement auditors assessing the books and records to develop a true account of the state of the department, the comptroller said. It will take time to pass all the process and system changes necessary to pass the audit and get a so-called "clean opinion," he said. He noted that it took the Department of Homeland Security -- a much smaller and newer agency -- 10 years to get a clean audit.

An audit will improve accountability, the comptroller said, noting that, for example, an initial Army audit

found that 39 UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters were not properly recorded in the property system. "The Air Force identified 478 structures and buildings at 12 installations that were not in its real property system," he added.

The audit should cost about \$367 million in 2018, Norquist said, which is about the same percentage of the overall budget that large firms like Procter and Gamble or IBM spend on their audits. "We also anticipate spending about \$551 million in 2018 fixing problems identified by the auditors," he said.

Finding better ways to do business will allow DoD to invest in greater lethality for the force, the comptroller said.

TREA has long supported an audit because DoD leaders have complained for years that military health care costs too much, and that the leading problem was health care for military retirees. At the same time, stories continually appear in the news about DoD overruns on the costs of weapons, millions of dollars being unaccounted for, and other horror stories about the way DoD wastes money. We are tired of military personnel being the scapegoats for a department that simply can't account for all the money it is given.

Even though it will cost close to a billion dollars,

TREA is pleased that an audit will finally take place. Unlike some DoD projects, we think this is money well-spent and we look forward to hearing the results when they finally become available.

Source: TREA



**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)**



**VA to Begin Paying Non-VA  
Emergency Claims**

The Department of Veterans Affairs published a revised rule Jan. 9 that allows payment of hundreds of thousands pending claims for private sector emergency care that veterans' other health insurance covered in part but not in full. In some cases, individual reimbursements owed will total tens of thousands of dollars. Read the latest [Update](#) to get the whole story.

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## Reduce Your Rx & Out of Pocket Costs for 2018

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

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Our values  
match yours.

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

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## TREA in the News

Last week TREA: The Enlisted Association's Deputy Legislative Director, Mike Saunders, was interviewed by the Stars and Stripes about the new tax bill in an article that you can read [here](#).

If you've been reading this update, then there isn't much new information in there. The main takeaways are that most people will see a tax cut, unless they live in a high property-tax area and regularly claimed more than \$10,000 in state and local tax deductions (the new law caps those deductions at \$10,000).

If you know anybody who is currently serving and is now on the new retirement plan, they should be using any tax savings to contribute to their new Thrift Savings Plan. Money contributed early grows the most in 401k-style retirement systems. Since the individual tax cuts expire at the end of 2025 they should save all that they can right now.

If there are any changes to the law that could affect the active duty, dependents, survivors or veterans we will get the word out.

Source: TREA



# What Does The New Tax Law Mean To You?

In case you weren't paying attention to the news around Christmas, the Trump administration made major changes to the tax law. Of course, both sides were very vocal about whether the law is good or bad, and both sides probably were a little bit right and a little bit wrong. Click [here](#) to get started cutting through all the noise and see what it means to you, the average military member and veteran.



## Government Shutdown Looming

Except for military and emergency services, the federal government will shut down unless Congress passes a continuing resolution by midnight tonight. Whether Congress will be able to put political differences aside is uncertain. Also uncertain is whether a new shutdown would replicate the 16-day shutdown in 2013. The VFW, along with other organizations, have worked tirelessly to shield VA from future shutdowns. That means health care facilities will remain open, new appointments will still be made, disability and compensation payments will be paid, and veterans will still be buried. More information will be known as the day and weekend unfolds.

Source: VFW







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## Get \$100k Family Coverage from Only \$7 a Month

Would your family survive if something happened to you? Get coverage customized to your family's needs. Get \$100,000 coverage from only \$7 a month. Because tomorrow is never guaranteed, start protecting your family **today**.

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## Senate Hearing on State of VA

On Wednesday, the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs held a hearing to discuss VA's implementation of recent legislation enacted into

law. VA reported that 13 provisions of the Forever GI Bill have been implemented and that it is working to ensure veterans impacted by GI Bill changes are properly informed about their new benefits. VA also reported that three percent of veterans offered the opportunity to participate in the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program (RAMP) have elected to participate. VA claims that 75 percent of veterans who have participated in the RAMP pilot program, which is designed to expedite the claims appeals process, have received favorable rating decisions. Committee members sparred over different community care proposals being considered by the Senate. Secretary of Veterans Affairs David J. Shulkin agreed to send the committee official feedback on the different proposals. The VFW, along with 25 other veterans organizations, supports S. 2193, the Caring for Our Veterans Act of 2017, which would improve VA community care and internal care, and finally expand the caregiver program to veterans of all eras. [Watch](#) the hearing, which starts at the 18-minute mark.

Source: VFW



## **World War I Coin to be Available for Purchase Wednesday**

TREA was contacted last week by the World War I Centennial Commission to let us know that on Wednesday of this week the U.S. Mint will officially release for sale the World War I Centennial Silver Dollar to honor the 4.7 Million who served. You can see more about the coin [here](#).

The World War I Centennial Commission is a Non Profit Federal Organization dedicated to building a National Memorial for the Service men and women of the Great War.

Source: TREA



## **Army Phases Out Early Retirement Program to Retain More Troops**

As the Army continues to move away from its plans to draw down its end strength, the service is phasing out its temporary early retirement program.

Starting Feb. 28 the Army will terminate its temporary early retirement authority (TERA), according to a Dec. 15, 2017, **memo signed** by Army Secretary Mark Esper.

"Since 2012, temporary early retirement authority has served as an effective tool for drawing down the Army's end strength. However, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 increased Army end strength and we have ceased the drawdown. Therefore, I am terminating the use of TERA and ending the reduction in minimum years of active commissioned service required for voluntary retirement," the memo stated.

Soldiers who are eligible for TERA must have submitted their request by Jan. 15 to be considered for the last batch.

The TERA program was started in 2012 and let soldiers who served between 15 years and 20

years retire with full retirement entitlements.

The program was a tool to cast off soldiers as the Army tried to lower its end strength during the Obama administration.

The service was planning on going as low as 450,000 active duty soldiers. Plans changed, however, after the Islamic State and other threats reared their heads.

Last year, the Army paused its drawdown and is now building its force back up to 483,500. Building the force to that level **comes with its own challenges**.

For 2018, Army Recruiting Command will need 80,000 active-duty recruits to stay on target.

Officials say they have never accessed that many soldiers in a single year without violating Defense Department policies, which set standards for new recruits' educational levels, criminal histories, past drug use and other measures of "quality."

Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Snow, the commander of Army Recruiting Command, said the Army's 1,400 nationwide recruiting centers managed to exceed

the increased 2017 goal for the regular Army without violating those standards, though recruiting into the Army Reserve fell slightly short of the higher goal.

"And the one thing our leadership has been clear with us about is that we will continue to meet the DoD benchmarks in 2018. There's a number of things we're doing to make sure we do that," Snow said in an interview. "For one, we've identified the resources we'll need early on, so we've missioned the recruiting force for the higher numbers even though it's not clear yet what Congress is going to support with appropriations."

The Army is paying active-duty recruits an average of \$12,700 in bonuses.

Bonuses will also be offered for new recruits who agree to join on a "quick ship" basis, beginning their service within four-to-six weeks from signing their contracts, rather than staying for a time in the Army's delayed entry pool.

Snow said the Army was also retooling its marketing strategies both at a national and local level, mindful of the fact that only three in 10 Americans of enlistment age meet the military's

basic qualifications to serve, including less reliance on traditional techniques like mass media campaigns and prospecting for candidates via telephone, and more of a focus on targeted advertising, including through social media.

Source: TREA



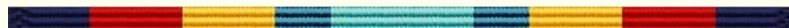
## **8 Essential Tips to Help You Land a VA Loan**

Buying a home using your hard-earned VA loan benefits can be one of the most rewarding financial experiences of your life. Understanding some basics about the VA loan process and what lenders are looking for can make a tremendous difference for prospective homebuyers. Here's a look at **eight essential tips** to help you get the most from this historic home loan benefit.



## **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**



## **House Holds Veteran Homelessness Hearing**

The House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittees on Health and Economic Opportunity held a hearing on Thursday aimed at discussing the current situation of veteran homelessness and the way



forward. Since 2009, the rate of veteran homelessness has been reduced by nearly 50 percent. With three states and 57 communities virtually ending veteran homelessness within their borders, efforts between VA, the Department of Labor, and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) have clearly been successful. Subcommittee members asked questions regarding the success of VA's Housing First plan and the holistic nature of case workers for programs such as HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH). Witnesses agreed that such programs are highly successful in working toward a "functional zero" and in assuring veterans who overcome homelessness do not become homeless again. Also in question was VA's intent to divert funding from the HUD-VASH program. VA assured the subcommittees that its intent was never to cut all funding to the program, but to assure more funding would be available where and when necessary. Read the VFW's [testimony](#) or [watch](#) the hearing.

Source: VFW



**Aurora Hospital Hearing**

On Wednesday, the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs held a hearing on the status of the Denver Replacement Medical Center in Aurora, Colo. The hospital project is behind schedule and a billion dollars over the original budget. The replacement hospital is scheduled to complete construction later this month and be open for service sometime this summer. Representative Mike Coffman has taken deep personal interest in this project as it affects his constituents directly, and rigorously questioned representatives from VA and the Army Corps of Engineers about the troubled hospital project. In 2015 the true nature of the problems with the hospital came to light and Congress stepped in to take corrective actions. The Aurora hospital project is just the latest example of VA's lack of transparency and not engaging with community stakeholders when building facilities like Aurora. VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Patrick Murray submitted testimony expressing that the VFW is glad this project is finally near completion, but is calling for better transparency and coordination in future projects.

Source: VFW



## Links to Other Stories

- 1) [30th Annual Surface Navy Association National Symposium Concludes in Crystal City](#)
- 2) [Dominoes, bicycling help recreational therapists restore life for Veterans in Texas](#)
- 3) [Navy Asks for Feedback through Personal and Professional Choices Survey](#)
- 4) [VA Becomes First Hospital System to Release Opioid Prescribing Rates](#)
- 5) [VA Facilities Now Offer Same-day Care for Urgent Primary and Mental Health-care Needs](#)
- 6) [VA Sued After Vet Died While Waiting for Heart Surgery](#)

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)



## **National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service**

On Thursday, VFW National Legislative Service Deputy Director John Towles attended the inaugural meeting of the newly established National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service. The result of the FY17 National Defense Authorization Act, the 11-member commission is tasked with reviewing the current military selective service (military draft), and providing recommendations to Congress and the Administration concerning ways to increase interest and public participation in military and public service among young Americans. The commission is comprised of former and current senior government officials, including Congressman Joseph Heck; Deborah Wada, former assistant secretary of the Army Manpower and Reserve Affairs; Mr. Edward Allard, former C.O.O. of the Selective Service System; and the Honorable Janine Davidson, former under secretary of the Navy. Learn more about the [\*\*commission and its mission\*\*](#).

Source: VFW





## MIA Update

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has announced the identification and burial updates of eight American servicemen who had been missing in action from WWII, Korea and Vietnam. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Stanley F. Stegnerski**, 25, of Chester, Pa., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried Jan. 22 in Millsboro, Del. Stegnerski was a P-51D pilot flying out of Royal Air Force Base 244 at East Wretham, Norfolk, England. On Nov. 21, 1944, Stegnerski was flying a bomber escort mission when the American aircraft were attacked by German fighters over Merseberg, Germany. Stegnerski's group closed in on a group of 20 German fighters and opened fire. He was last seen by his wingman as they prepared to attack the German Focke-Wulf fighters. A German shoot-down report noted a P-51

Mustang with a tail number similar to Stegnerski's had crashed on Nov. 21, 1944. The unidentified remains were buried in Grafentonna. Based on this information, and no information concerning Stegnerski as a prisoner of war, the Secretary of War declared him deceased on Nov. 22, 1945.

[Read about Stegnerski.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. James J. Leonard, Jr.**, 22, of San Francisco, whose identification was previously announced, will be buried Jan. 23 in his hometown. Leonard was a member of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division. In the early hours of July 20, 1950, Leonard's regiment arrived east of Yongdong, South Korea, and began preparing to assume the defense of the city. North Korean forces began attacking their positions on July 23 and took control of Yongdong by July 25. Leonard was reported as killed in action on July 25, 1950. [Read about Leonard.](#)

-- **Navy Reserve Chief Water Tender Paul R. Wright**, 41, of Meadville, Mo., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried Jan. 25 in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu. Wright was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which was moored off Ford Island, Pearl

Harbor, when Japanese aircraft attacked his ship on Dec. 7, 1941. Wright was one of 429 crewmen killed in the attack. [Read about Wright.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 1st Class John E. Savidge**, 20, of Linden, N.J., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried Jan. 26 in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu. Savidge was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which was moored off Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when Japanese aircraft attacked his ship on Dec. 7, 1941. Savidge was one of 429 crewmen killed in the attack. [Read about Savidge.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Ewart T. Sconiers**, 27, of DeFuniak Springs, Fla., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried Jan. 27 in his hometown. Sconiers served as a bombardier on the B-17F Flying Fortress with the 414th Bombardment Squadron, 97th Bombardment Group. On Oct. 21, 1942, his plane was severely damaged during a mission to bomb the German U-boat pens at Lorient, France. The crew parachuted safely and were rescued from the water, only to be turned over to German forces as prisoners of war. Sconiers was transferred to Stalag Luft II in present-day Zagan, Poland, where he remained

until 1944. He was admitted to the camp hospital in January 1944 after a fall on ice. He was subsequently transferred to the reserve hospital in Luben, Germany (present-day Lubin, Poland), where he died on Jan. 24, 1944. He was buried by fellow prisoners in the POW section of the municipal cemetery in Luben/Schleswig on Jan. 27, 1944. [Read about Sconiers.](#)

-- **Army Cpl. William C. McDowell** was a member of Company D, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. In late November 1950, his unit was assembled with South Korean soldiers in the 31st Regimental Combat Team on the east side of the Chosin River, North Korea, when his unit was attacked by Chinese forces. McDowell was among more than 1,000 members of the RCT killed or captured in enemy territory and was declared missing on Dec. 2, 1950. Interment services are pending. [Read about McDowell.](#)

-- **Navy Fireman 1st Class Chester E. Seaton** was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which was moored off Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when Japanese aircraft attacked his ship on Dec. 7, 1941. Seaton was one of 429 crewmen killed in the attack. Interment services are pending. [Read](#)



## **about Seaton.**

-- **Air Force Col. Edgar F. Davis** was a navigator aboard an RF-4C Phantom fighter-bomber aircraft, assigned to the 11th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing. On Sept. 17, 1968, Davis was on a night photo-reconnaissance mission over Laos when he and his pilot were shot down by anti-aircraft artillery fire. While the pilot ejected and was rescued, no contact was received from Davis. After search and rescue efforts were suspended after failing to locate Davis or the wreckage, Davis was declared missing in action. Interment services are pending. **Read about Davis.**

Source: VFW





## BLUE WATER NAVY SURGE

2018

WHEN WE REACH 1000 PAID MEMBERS



YOU WILL RECEIVE  
THE NATIONAL COMMANDERS  
"BLUE WATER NAVY SURGE"  
CHALLENGE COIN



Shipmates,

We are at 364 paid members! Here is what you are going to get when we reach 1000 paid members. Not to mention our ability to file for a 501(c)(19) status as a Veteran Service Organization and the ability to request the VA to recognize us as a National Veterans Service Organization.

If we can get 636 more members, then everyone

who is a paid member will receive National Commander Mike Yates commemorative Challenge Coin in honor of the year of the "Blue Water Navy Surge".

Dues can be paid online by clicking [here](#).

Or you can write us a check for \$20 paid to the order of "The Blue Water Navy Association"

and mail it to:

Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association  
8651 John J Kingman Rd  
Suite #206  
Ft Belvoir, VA 22060

Lets make this a successful year Shipmates!

HooYah!

Michael J. Little

National Executive Director

Please [sign the Petition](#) today! You don't have to be a Veteran, friends and family, anyone can help by signing the petition!



- 1) Disaster Recovery: Additional Actions Would Improve Data Quality and Timeliness of FEMA's Public Assistance Appeals Processing
- 2) FDA Medical Device Reviews: Evaluation is Needed to Assure Requests for Additional Information Follow a Least Burdensome Approach
- 3) Generic Drugs: FDA Should Make Public Its Plans to Issue and Revise Guidance on Nonbiological Complex Drugs
- 4) Medicare Part B: Medicare Represented at Least Half of the Market for 22 of the 84 Most Expensive Drugs in 2015
- 5) Prescription Opioids: Medicare Should Expand Oversight Efforts to Reduce the Risk of Harm
- 6) VA Construction: Actions Taken to Improve Denver Medical Center and Other Large Projects' Cost Estimates and Schedules
- 7) VA Facility Security: Policy Review and Improved Oversight Strategy Needed
- 8) VA Health IT Modernization: Historical Perspective on Prior Contracts and Update on Plans for New Initiative




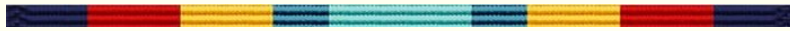
**~We Proudly Support our  
Military Personnel & Families~**



## **Blended Retirement Warning: Beware Where You Click**

This week current service members with less than 12 years of service as of Dec. 31, 2017, or Guard and Reserve members with 4,320 retirement points or less have the opportunity to 'Opt-In' for the new **Blended Retirement System** (BRS). However there are stories circulating on social media that some service members unintentionally opted-in to the system this week while on the DFAS MyPay page. Read the full [article](#).





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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Riverside County, CA

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**Please pass on to all your Veteran Friends and Family!**



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