



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, May 06, 2018

Volume 9, Issue 18



This-N-That

As most of our Blue Water Navy Veterans know, hard and serious work has been being done on H.R. 299 in order to get it to the floor for a vote, passage, and sent to the Senate for the same.

BWN has been ignored and ignored, denied and denied over and over again and they could really use your help!

Further down in this newsletter are names and E-Mail addresses and we'd like everyone, whether you're a Veteran or not, and whether or not those members are your Reps in DC or not to send a very short, polite request for their full support on this bill.

Commander John Wells has made numerous trips to DC to talk to the committee, various Congressmen and Senators to try and make this all happen, to show how it can work and where the funding can come from so that Veterans who have waited more than fifty years to finally get the much needed medical care and treatment as well as benefits.

Personally I am asking you to forward this newsletter to your personal E-Mail address book and ask all friends and family to also send a message too! Getting as much support as is humanly possible right now is the key to getting the actions taken, the bill put to the floor and full support and passage.

In early April this year, Army Veteran

Christopher Wilson went to the Emergency Room at the Salt Lake VA facility.

He was placed in a room that had been used and not cleaned, took pictures of it's condition and eventually it went viral.

I know many other Veterans have had a need to visit a VA Hospital at one time or another, and/or are scheduled to go sometime in the future.

I'd like for you all to be fully mindful of the conditions of any exam room or hospital room, and if able, take pictures with your cell phone as evidence.

If we can keep this in the media then we're making everyone both Veterans and Civilians alike aware of the type of conditions you are subjected to and maybe it will help encourage many others to be vocal about it, and encourage them to be in contact with their Reps in DC and demanding change.

And if willing, please write to me and send me

the pictures as well and I will make darn sure it's included in the weekly fax blast to all 535 members of Congress.

A couple of days ago we sent out a special release where an Army Vietnam Veteran, James Rabuse is asking for help from any and all sources as his wife Betty Hidalgo-Rabuse has been quite ill and in the hospital for some time now and was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer.

Unfortunately the account link sent with that release was plagued with problems and it took some time for the Go-Fund me to effect repairs, proper links to accounts etc.

Down further in this newsletter is another posting for those who would like to help, and the link has been tested and found to be correct now.

Some of you may remember that Betty was the Director of our Operation Mail Call Program for nearly six and a half years working tirelessly every week, getting socks, t-shirts, personal

care items, DVD's, Joke/gag gifts all donated and would spend hours baking cookies and fudge to put into the packages.

And she did all this out of love for our Troops and using her own money, all we did was ask people to send in cards and letters to be included in the packages which went out weekly.

You may not know Betty personally, but she is our hero and helped to put smiles on hundreds and hundred of our active duty service men and women.

The original plan was to get enough people to help so that James could buy a small used RV so he could fulfill the one wish Betty had, which was to travel.

They have a rented home in Atwater, but Betty has been transferred to a really good Cancer Treatment Hospital in San Francisco, so the more urgent need is to help cover travel and meals for James since he has to travel back

and forth from Atwater to San Francisco, and also needs help covering medical bills which the amount not covered by insurance is running \$1,600.00 per month.

Betty has lost quite a bit of weight due to the cancer, and was just put on a liquid diet on Thursday and is doing relatively well so far, the doctors goal is to get her to gain back some of the weight she has lost before continuing on with other medical treatments. So she will be hospitalized for a while, and this is why James needs your help.

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



Veterans: You May Be Missing Disability Rating Upgrade Opportunity

Many medically-discharged veterans who had their disability rating "low-balled" by their service branch may be missing out on an opportunity to have their disability upgraded. In 2009 Congress mandated that a Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR) be formed to reevaluate the disability ratings of up to 71,000 veterans. However, to date only about 19,000 of the eligible veterans have applied for a review. Read this week's 'Military Update' to learn more about the [PDBR application process](#).



May is Mental Health Awareness Month

In May, the Military Health System, as well as agencies and leaders across the Department of Defense (DoD) are emphasizing the importance of mental health and sharing mental health resources available to our

military communities.

TRICARE has put out the following message about mental wellness.

Assess Your Mental Wellness During Mental Health Awareness Month

You likely spend time and energy on improving your physical health. Do you do the same when it comes to your mental health? Similar to physical health, mental health requires regular care. Mental health is as critical as physical health to mission readiness.

Therefore, it's just as important to invest in your mental health as it is your physical health. TRICARE provides [mental health services](#) for you and your family at all times, but especially during times of stress, depression, grief, anxiety or mental health crisis.

Mental health encompasses the well-being of mind, body and spirit, and contributes to overall health and resilience. You can improve your mental health, and we've highlighted some of the ways how in this month's

[TRICARE monthly tips](#). Start by striving to:

- Exercise regularly
- Eat nutritious foods
- Get adequate sleep
- Maintain social connections
- Practice destressing techniques (like yoga, meditation and breathing)

If mental health concerns start to interfere with your daily life, [seek help](#). Mental health treatment works and recovery is possible. Pursuing mental health support will not end your career. In fact, it's a sign of strength.

TRICARE covers medically and psychologically necessary mental health and substance use disorder care. This includes both inpatient and outpatient care. Services include psychotherapy, prescription medication, psychiatric treatment and more. You can learn more about [covered treatments](#) online.

If you or someone you know has suicidal

thoughts, call the Military Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and press 1, text 838255, or confidentially chat online with a Military Crisis Line counselor.

Learn more about the TRICARE mental health coverage and check out the TRICARE monthly tips on the Healthy Living page for ways to take care of your mental health. You can also download the "Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services" fact sheet from the [TRICARE Publications](#) page. Take command of your physical and mental health with TRICARE this year.

You can also go here to learn more about specific mental health issues:

<https://health.mil/News/In-the-Spotlight/Mental-Health-Awareness-Month>

Source: TREA



REMEMBER THOSE WHO SERVED



ALL GAVE SOME, SOME GAVE ALL



Were TRICARE Warning Letters Ever Sent?

Many TRICARE beneficiaries have claimed that despite what TRICARE West region contractor Health Net claims, they never received information from TRICARE that they needed to update their payments or that cost changes were coming. Read Amy Bushatz' [article](#) – 'They Claim They Sent Tricare Warning Letters, But I Never Got Them' to get the full story.





H.R. 5467, the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018

On April 11, 2018, Congressman Daniel Lipinski (IL), introduced H.R. 5467, the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018.

Access to the Department of Defense (DoD) commissary stores and Morale, Welfare & Recreational (MWR) retail facilities is currently limited to active duty service members and dependents, Guard and reservists, military retirees, certain surviving spouses of deceased service members and veterans rated at 100 percent permanently disabled. In November 2017, the Secretary of DoD granted online access to MWR retail facilities to all honorably discharged veterans.

This legislation, H.R. 5467, will expand eligibility to physical commissary stores and MWR retail facilities to veterans awarded the Purple Heart, Medal of Honor recipients, former prisoners of war, veterans with a service-connected disability and caregivers of certain veterans.

DAV supports this legislation as it is in agreement with DAV Resolution No. 222, to expand commissary privileges to all service-connected veterans. Please use the prepared electronic letter or draft your own to urge your Member of Congress to support and cosponsor H.R. 5467.

Standing up for veterans is vital and we appreciate your advocacy. Your actions help make DAV a highly influential and effective organization in Washington. Thank you for all you do for America's ill and injured veterans and their families.

[Take Action](#)



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 2,100 hits per day, and downloads average 1,200 per day with a total **4,047,312** 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

- Documents Library with over 16,387 documents on-line (Updated: 02/20/18)
- 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: 01/11/18)
- News (Articles On-Line: 7,317)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than 3,645, Added 12 New Links (Updated: 04/24/18)

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



Democrat Group Opposes Military Family School Funding Measure

A group of over 40 Democratic lawmakers have sent a letter to House committee chairmen, opposing a proposal that would give troops cash for alternative schooling, but cut Pentagon subsidies for public schools. For more details, see this [article](#).



Vietnam Veteran whose wife Diagnosed with Stage 4 Cancer Needs help!



Hello my name is James Rabuse. I am a Vietnam Era Veteran. I am retired on SSI and Disability. I come to you with some bad news and just ask for prayers and help as my wife Betty is going through a lot of pain

Betty and I were married on May 27, 2017. About a month ago Betty took seriously ill, and was transferred from Atwater, CA to a Hospital in San Francisco, CA where they diagnosed her with stage 4 cancer. As you know travel, gas to and from the hospital, room and, board, and parking fees gets costly. In order for my wife to get the best possible care while she is still here, this treatment needs to get done.

Betty has been a very active Veteran volunteer being director of Operation Mail Call for Veterans-For-Change after losing her son's father in the Vietnam War, then she also lost her oldest grandson to the Afghanistan War.

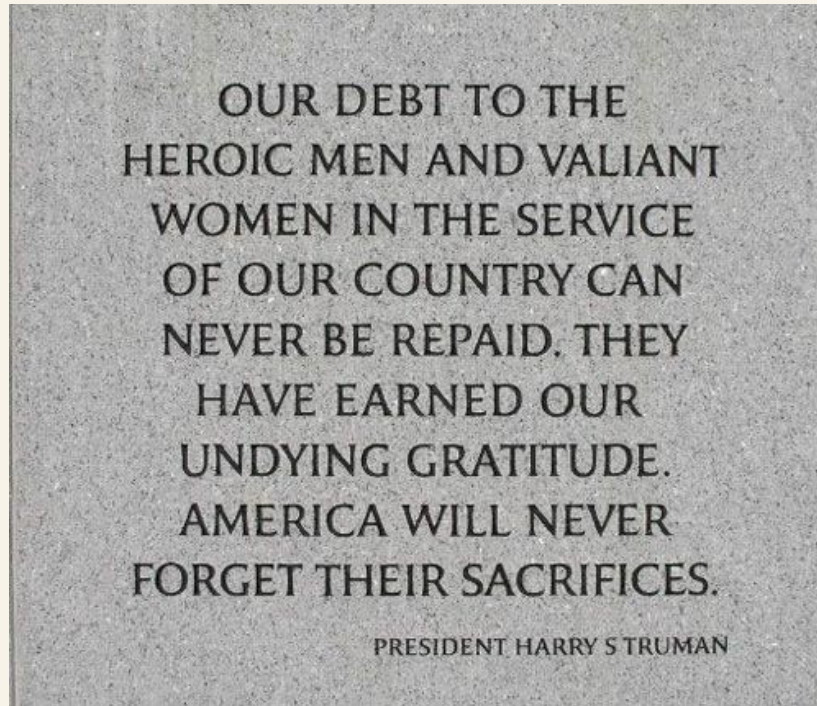
She tirelessly with her own time and money supported our troops over seas with care packages being sent out every week for almost six and a half years using her own money, donated socks, t-shirts, personal care items, DVD's, gag gifts, plus cards and letters you all have provided.

Betty did this with her love for all our servicemen in the military for many years. It is time we give back to Betty for all that she done for our troops!

Any **donation** will be appreciated and help towards traveling from Atwater, CA to San Francisco, CA and other expenses. At this time the date for her to return home is undetermined.

We Thank you in advanced for any donations made, and god bless you.

James Rabuse



**New Military Electronic
Healthcare Records Program Still
on Track**

The Defense Department's new electronic health records system is on track to roll out at every military hospital by 2022 despite ongoing startup problems faced by pilot program users, a Pentagon official told Senators at an April 26 hearing. For more details, see this [article](#).



Report: At Least 126 Bases Report Water Contaminants Linked to Cancer, Birth Defects from the Military Times

The water at or around 126 military installations contains potentially harmful levels of [perfluorinated compounds](#), which have been linked to cancers and developmental delays for fetuses and infants, the Pentagon has found.

In a March report provided to the House Armed Services Committee, the Pentagon for the first time [publicly listed the full scope](#) of the known contamination. The Defense Department identified 401 active and Base Closure and Realignment installations in the United States

with at least one area where there was a known or suspected release of perfluorinated compounds.

These included 36 sites with drinking water contamination on-base, and more than 90 sites that reported either on-base or off-base drinking water or groundwater contamination, in which the water source tested above the [Environmental Protection Agency's acceptable levels](#) of perfluorooctane sulfonate or perfluorooctanoic acid, also known as PFOS and PFOAs.

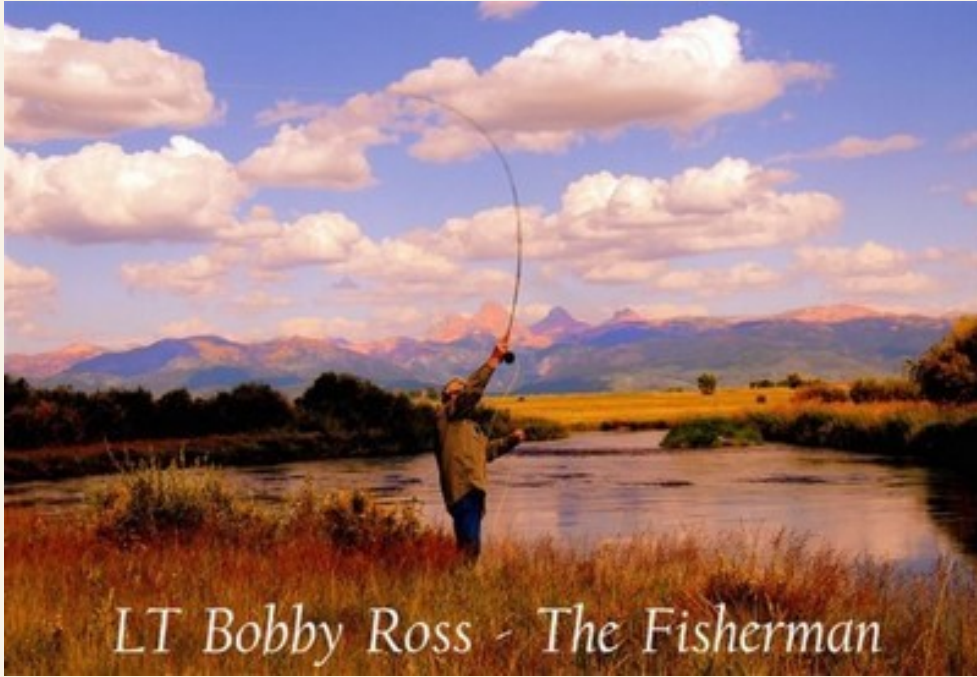
The man-made chemicals, which can be used to make items heat or water resistant, are found in everyday household, food and clothing items, even take-out food wrappers.

For more information, go to:

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2018/04/26/dod-126-bases-report-water-contaminants-harmful-to-infant-development-tied-to-cancers/>



LT Bobby Ross



May's Featured Song

The Fisherman

LT is #1 Singer in World

LT's #1 Song in 2017

LT's #2 Song Honoring Native Americans

Autistic Farmers Of America (AFOA)

PATRIOTIC MUSIC

Remember this site is an Internet Adventure. All you need do is click on the pictures and any highlighted word, and you are launched to another world in Cyberspace. Try it! So much fun!



**RAMP System for Faster VA
Appeal Decisions**

Currently the only way you can [appeal the VA's decision](#) on your disability claim is by going to the [Board of Veterans' Appeals](#), a process that takes an average of seven years. But there's a new law meant to change that — for more details, see this [article](#).



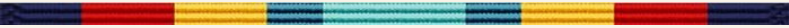
Reduce Your Out of Pocket & Rx Costs with a TRICARE Supplement

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



Congress Hosts Panel Discussion on Women Veterans

VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Kayda Keleher participated in a panel discussion with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, alongside other VSOs, VA, congressional staff and researchers working to improve the quality of life for women veterans. The panel, which was moderated by Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Dee McWilliams, president of the Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation, discussed issues faced by women veterans regarding health care, benefits, transition from military service and social stigmas. Learn more about what the VFW is doing for women veterans.



**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



**The VA Loan Benefit Increased to
up to \$453k Financing: Use Your
Benefit Now**

Spring is here and the VA Loan Benefit is now worth up to \$453k financing. Now is the time to use this great benefit. Qualified borrowers can buy or refi with as little as \$0 down, and have no PMI payments with great rates and financing up to \$453k. Use your [VA loan benefit](#) today.





LA Union Station • Historic Ticketing Hall • 800 N Alameda St • Los Angeles, CA 90012

Veterans Summer Slam Employment Fair

Friday, June 29, 2018 • 9am – 2pm

LinkedIn Tips for Professional Networking • Job Fair



MilCon/VA Spending Bill approved by Subcommittee

The House Appropriations, Military Construction, Veterans Affairs (VA), and Related Agencies Subcommittee approved its portion of the FY2019 spending plan. This is the first subcommittee to approve its portion of the budget. The still unnumbered bill strengthens oversight and accountability at the Departments of Defense and VA. Several provisions include: requiring rigorous reporting on the status of VA claims processing, and the development of the VA electronic health record, and oversight of large construction projects that are managed outside of VA.

The bill provides a total of \$10.3 billion for military construction projects—an increase of \$241 million, or 2.4 percent above the enacted FY2018 level. Specifically, the bill provides \$1.6 billion to fund construction, operation and maintenance of military family housing for FY2019. This is \$173 million above the FY2018 level matching the Administration's budget request. The funding will ensure quality

housing is sustained for all 1,400,000 military families currently served by the program.

The bill also includes \$361 million for construction and alterations for new or existing military medical facilities. This funding will allow for continued support and care for 9.8 million eligible beneficiaries. The bill will now go to the House Appropriation Committee for further consideration. FRA will continue to monitor the appropriations process to ensure adequate funding of FRA supported programs.





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**



**VA ID Card Program Now
Available to USPHS, NOAA
Veterans**

U.S. Public Health Service and commissioned members of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) were previously excluded from a new Department of Veterans Affairs ID card program. But changes were made to the online application after a Military.com story highlighted the problem. For more details, see this updated [article](#).



New Pain-Blocking Technology Available at 40 VAMCs, Coming to Dozens More

TREA: The Enlisted Association got a presentation this week from BioWave Corp., a Health Technology company that delivers "Smarter Pain Blocking Technology™." Its patented, FDA-approved medical device technology is now in use at 40 U.S.

Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers (VAMCs) nationwide. This includes five of the 19 VA Centers of Innovation (COINs), which lead the charge in specific areas of patient care.

The technology, which works on roughly 85 percent of people who try it, is a non-opioid, non-addictive technology that can cut opioid use by as much as 50 percent, while resulting in a greater range of motion and dexterity than while on a drug regimen.

It delivers therapeutic signals through the skin into deep tissue, blocking pain signals at the source using electrodes that look like a TENS device.

With opioid addiction being such a huge societal problem, anything that would reduce Americas, and veteran, use of the addictive alternative has to be considered a good thing.

It is not currently available through TRICARE.

For more information, visit
www.biowave.com/veterans

Source: TREA





**Our values
match yours.**



www.veterans-for-change.org



USAF 2018 Alpha Warrior Program

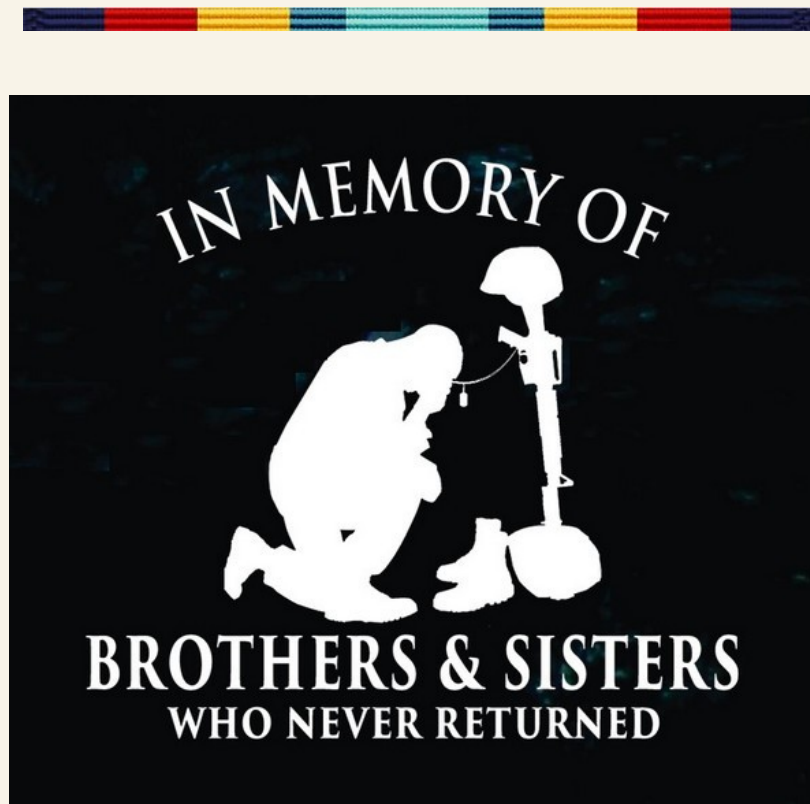
The Air Force is continuing its rollout of the Alpha Warrior program with the launch of the 2018 Alpha Warrior Meet and Greet Tour in April. Alpha Warrior challenges Airmen as they tackle the various obstacles or stations around a unique apparatus. This year's tour introduces the fitness initiative to Airmen at 27 Air Force. Tour stops are typically two days. Installations are receiving either a battle rig (a 27-foot competition rig) or battle station (a 12-foot by 12-foot training rig) based on the desires of local leadership. Training on how to use the Alpha Warrior equipment is expected to launch in May and take place at 35 installations. For more information on Alpha Warrior, visit MyAirForceLife.com.



Assess Your Mental Wellness During Mental Health Awareness Month

You likely spend time and energy on improving your physical health. Do you do the same when it comes to your mental health? Similar to physical health, mental health requires regular care. TRICARE provides mental health services for you and your family at all times, but especially during times of stress, depression, grief, anxiety or mental health crisis.

Read the full article [here](#).



Survey Lets Military Families Weigh In

In its tenth year, the annual military family lifestyle survey gathers information from a huge swath of the military community. The results are presented in a report to Congress. For more details, see this [article](#).



Support H.R. 5452, Reduce Unemployment for Veterans of All Ages Act of 2018

On April 10, 2018, Congresswoman Julia Brown (CA), introduced H.R. 5452, the Reduce Unemployment for Veterans of All Ages Act of 2018.

Currently, veterans with service-connected disabilities or other employment challenges are

able to receive career development services through the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program up to 12 years after they separate from military service. H.R. 5452 would eliminate the 12-year-period of eligibility.

In accordance with DAV Resolution No. 250, we support this legislation to eliminate the 12-year-period of eligibility. By removing the limited eligibility, H.R. 5452 will provide veterans the flexibility to receive the support they have earned and deserve throughout their lifetime and thus help reduce unemployment for service-connected veterans.

Please use the prepared electronic letter or draft your own to urge your Member of Congress to support and cosponsor H.R. 5452.

Standing up for veterans is vital and we thank you for your advocacy. Your actions help make DAV a highly influential and effective organization in Washington. Thank you for all you do for America's veterans and their families.

Take Action



Technical Issues for Military ICE Comment System

The Pentagon's official online comment system, known as ICE, has been offline for more than a month for anyone not using a Defense Department computer, officials confirmed. For more details, see this [article](#).

TREA: The Enlisted Association to Amtrak - Reinstate the Veterans' Advantage Discount

Amtrak announced back in March that they were discontinuing the Veterans' Advantage discount, which gives active duty military, retired military, veterans and their families a 15% discount on the price of an Amtrak ticket.

In the past, Amtrak had a long history of supporting the military; its previous President had a goal of making 25% of all new hires veterans back in 2015, and they unveiled a veteran-themed locomotive for its Northeast routes.

Amtrak has offered these discounts for 17 years, making the decision to discontinue them all the more puzzling as the US has become involved in counter-terror operations across the globe over the last decade and a half.

It is not just veterans, however, that have seen their discount programs go away. Students and AAA have also seen cuts from Amtrak's new

President, while disabled customers have seen their discounts reduced from 15% to 10% and the age requirement for seniors has been raised to 65.

Amtrak also recently announced a 25% cancellation fee on Acela business class and reserved coach tickets that are canceled 24 hours or more after booking and prior to departure.

For more information, check out:

<https://www.veteransadvantage.com/>

Source: TREA





Six Reasons to Continue Serving

Here are financial incentives to continue serving in the Guard or Reserve: (1) reserve retirement can provide a powerful boost to your financial security; (2) continuing to serve can open your eligibility for TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS); (3) it might offer you an opportunity to save big money by opting out of your civilian employer's health coverage; (4) once you sign up for Medicare, you will switch to TRICARE for Life and will not need Medicare Supplement Insurance; (5) you will continue to be eligible for \$400,000 of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage; (6) continuing to serve also affords you the opportunity to earn monthly drill pay along with active-duty pay for annual training; and (7) you will still have an ID card that will allow you to use a nearby installation's PX/BX, commissary, MWR and other money-saving services. For more on serving in the Guard and Reserve, visit the [Joining the Military section](#).



PDBR Review of Disability Claims Continues

The Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR) was created by the FY2008 Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to reassess the accuracy and fairness of combined disability ratings of 20 percent or less for service members who were separated from service, rather than medically retired because of medical conditions. In order to be eligible for a PDBR review, service members must have been medically separated between September 11, 2001, and December 31, 2009, with a combined disability rating of 20 percent or less, and found ineligible for retirement. According to Military.com, only 19,000 of the more than 71,000 eligible have requested a review of their claim. The PDBR claims that more than half of reviewed claims have been upgraded to a disability rating of 30 percent or more.

This review panel is authorized to recommend an increase in a disability rating, uphold the

previous finding, or issue a disability rating when the previous board did not assign one. The board, however, is NOT able to recommend a lower rating. Eligible veterans can request a board review by submitting Department of Defense Form 294, Application for Review of Physical Disability Separation from the Armed Forces of the United States. [Click here](#) to view form online.

Veterans requesting a review must mail their completed and signed DD Form 294 to:

SAF/MRBR

550 C St. W., Suite 41

Randolph Air Force Base, TX 78150-4743

Applicants may submit statements, briefs, medical records or affidavits supporting their application.

More information about PDBR is available on their [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



Education Research Tool Helps Vets

CollegeRecon's no-cost online college research tool helps veterans, service members and their families find information regarding housing, out-of-pocket costs and military / veteran support programs from nearly 3,000 non-profit schools. To get started, visit [CollegeRecon](#) for more information.

For more on the GI Bill and military education benefits, visit the [Education channel](#).



**ALL BLUE WATER NAVY
VIETNAM VETERANS , FAMILY &
FRIENDS**

John Wells will be in DC this week! He will be meeting with 4 representatives that have not co-signed HR 299.

We need to help John and email them several times a week and ask them to cosponsor HR 299.

Representative Mario Diaz-Balart (FL)

Cesar.Gonzalez@mail.house.gov ,

Representative John Moolenaar (MI)

Lindsay.Schachtner@mail.house.gov ,

Representative Andy Harris (MD)

John.Dutton@mail.house.gov , Representative

Chuck Fleischmann (TN)

Connar.Ingram@mail.house.gov.

Please be pleasant , short and tell a little of your story . Please Share this post with everyone and other sites!

Thank You,

Michael F Kvintus

BWNVVA National Vice Commander



Links to Other Stories

- 1) 'Veterans are losing 6 different ways right now'
- 2) Beyond A Failed Nominee: Whistleblower Retaliation Another Problem At The VA
- 3) Cardiovascular And Thoracic Surgeons Of Nevada Inc. Agrees To Pay \$1.5 Million To Settle False Claims Act Allegations
- 4) Comparative Health Assessment Interview Research Study
- 5) Female Veterans fight for a new mission: Fixing Congress
- 6) Nurses Sentenced to Prison for Stealing Opioids from Colorado Hospitals
- 7) Owner of Welding School Sentenced for \$1.4 Million GI Bill Fraud
- 8) Palm Bay Man Sentenced For Defrauding The Department Of Veterans Affairs
- 9) Salt Lake VA apologizes, promises change after veteran shares photos of dirty exam room
- 10) Target 8 helps misdiagnosed veteran get his benefits

11) Trump: Top Dem. should resign after former VA nominee Jackson's reputation 'shattered'

12) VA uses whole health to prevent Veteran suicide

13) Veteran Cremation Costs: What Military Members and their Families Need to Know

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



Vet Outreach: Los Angeles

The American Legion is sponsoring a veterans' outreach and district revitalization effort May 3-5 in the Northwest Los Angeles County area. All wartime veterans in this area are invited to the effort to learn more about The American Legion and veterans benefits. The effort will take place from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. May 3-4 and from 9 a.m.-noon May 5 at Newhall-Saugus American Legion Post 507, 24527 Spruce St., Newhall. A veterans service officer will be available all three days to assist with Department of Veterans Affairs-related issues and other veterans benefits.



[Click Here](#)



Navy Call to Action for Sailor Retention

The Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP) has delivered a call to action to Navy leaders to increase retention in a growing fleet. The message details key areas of focus for leaders at all levels to master, in order to foster an environment where Sailors and their families want to 'Stay Navy'. For more details, see this [Navy news article](#).



Baby Shower for Veterans

In May, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will host baby showers across the country, celebrating over 2,400 veteran mothers and fathers welcoming babies in 2018. VA's nationwide baby shower plays a critical role in connecting veterans with VA benefits, information and resources. The showers will be held May 5-16 in the weeks surrounding Mother's Day on May 13th. For a list of participating Veteran Affairs Medical Center sites, visit the [VA Center for Women Veterans website](#). For more details, see this [article](#).



MIA Update

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has announced identification and burial updates for nine American service members who had been missing in action from WWII and Korea. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

Marine Corps Reserve 1st Sgt. David H. Quinn, 24, of Temple, N.H., whose

identification was previously announced, will be buried May 5 in his hometown. Quinn was assigned to Company C, 2nd Amphibian Tractor Battalion (C-2d Amp Tr Bn), 2nd Marine Division. On Nov. 20, 1943, Quinn's unit landed on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll against stiff Japanese resistance. Quinn was killed on the second day of the battle, one of approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors killed in the intense fighting. [Read about Quinn.](#)

Marine Corps Reserve Cpl Raymond A.

Barker, 22, of Evanston, Ill., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried May 5 in Delavan, Wis. Barker was assigned to Company C, 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division. On Nov. 20, 1943, Barker's unit landed on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll against stiff Japanese resistance. Barker was killed on the first day of the battle, one of approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors killed in the intense fighting. [Read about Barker.](#)

Marine Corps Pfc. Harold V. Thomas, 21, of Columbus, Ohio, whose identification was previously announced, will be buried May 7 in Arlington National Cemetery, near Washington, D.C. Thomas was a member of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division. Thomas's unit was one of those tasked with securing the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll. Encountering fierce resistance by the Japanese, almost 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed and another 1,000 were wounded in the battle. Thomas was killed on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. [Read about Thomas.](#)

Army Pfc. Billy R. Ball, 20, of Matthews, Mo., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried May 4 in St. Louis. Ball was a member of Headquarters Detachment Philippines Department, when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands on Dec. 8, 1941. After months of intense fighting, Corregidor fell and American forces surrendered on May 6, 1942. Ball was one of the thousands of U.S. and Filipino service

members taken prisoner and eventually moved to Cabanatuan POW camp. More than 2,500 POWs perished in this camp during the remaining years of the war. According to prisoner records, Ball died on Sept. 28, 1942, and was buried along with fellow prisoners in the local Cabanatuan camp cemetery. [Read about Ball.](#)

Army Cpl. Terrell J. Fuller was a member of Company D, 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, supporting Republic of Korea Army attacks against units of the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces in an area known as the Central Corridor in South Korea. After enduring sustained enemy attacks, the American units withdrew to Wonju, South Korea. It was during this withdrawal that Fuller was reported missing as of Feb. 12, 1951. Interment services are pending. [Read about Fuller.](#)

Army Sgt. 1st Class Rufus L. Ketchum was a member of Medical Detachment, 57th Field Artillery Battalion, 31st Regimental Combat

Team, 7th Infantry Division. In late November 1950, his unit was assembled with South Korean soldiers in the 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT) on the east side of the Chosin River, North Korea, when his unit was attacked by Chinese forces. Ketchum was among more than 1,000 members of the RCT killed or captured in enemy territory and was declared missing on Dec. 6, 1950. Interment services are pending. [Read about Ketchum.](#)

Army Pfc. Oscar E. Sappington was a member of 3rd Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 309th Infantry Regiment, 78th Infantry Division. On Jan. 10, 1945, the 309th Infantry launched a number of attacks in the Hürtgen Forest of Germany. At some point during the two days of action, Sappington stepped on a landmine. Though he was mortally wounded, no soldiers from his unit could reach him during the vicious fighting to render aid or confirm his death. He was reported missing in action as of Jan. 11, 1945. Interment services are pending. [Read about Sappington.](#)

Army Pvt. Kenneth D. Farris was assigned to Company B, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division. On Nov. 28, 1944, Farris was wounded by artillery and left the front line for the battalion aid station. His regiment remained in combat for several more days, reaching the outskirts of Gey, Germany, before being pulled off the front line. When officers took an accounting of the surviving Company B soldiers, Farris could not be found. Interment services are pending. [Read about Farris.](#)

Marine Corps Pfc. William F. Cavin was assigned to Company F, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force. On Nov. 19, 1943, Cavin's unit landed on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll against stiff Japanese resistance. Cavin was killed on the first day of the battle, one of approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors killed in the intense fighting. Interment services are pending. [Read about Cavin.](#)





S. 2356, Stronger Medical Workforce Act

Senator Jon Tester, Ranking Member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee introduced S. 2356, the Stronger Medical Workforce Act—a bill that calls for better access to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care services for rural and underserved communities. VA reports there are currently 33,000 staff vacancies in the health care system. Tester, concerned about Montana's chronic difficulty in recruiting qualified medical personnel, introduced legislation to specifically help fill vacancies in rural areas and other areas classified as underserved.

This bill directs the VA Secretary to create new criteria that define "underserved" specific to VA and to establish a plan to address each facility that meets such criteria. Each plan would

address how a facility will address increasing personnel or use temporary personnel including mobile deployment teams, use of special hiring incentives and direct hiring authorities. In addition the bill would authorize a pilot program to support tuition reimbursement and loan repayment for health care clinicians who agree to work in underserved VA facilities for a specified length of time. The bill would also draw from the Public Health Service Corps, enlisting 500 officers to work within VA facilities. Finally, it would allow Vet Center employees to qualify for VA's education debt reduction program.

DAV supports this bill in accordance with Resolution 230, which calls for sufficient resources for VA to improve health care in rural areas and Resolution 112, to ensure timely access to quality VA care. Help advocate for real improvements at VA's underserved facilities by using the prepared letter to ask your Senators to cosponsor and support S. 2356, the Stronger Medical Workforce Act.



Long Medical Delays for Pacific Island Vets

According to the Government Accounting Office (GAO), it takes between 37 and 75 days for veterans in the Pacific islands to receive medical attention and mental health care from defense facilities. These services are provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs Pacific Islands Health Care System (VAPIHCS) to approximately 50,000 veterans who live Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. GAO found that some of the veterans experienced delays related to the processing of their enrollment applications, contacting them to schedule appointments and completing comprehensive mental health evaluations. The bureaucratic delays were compounded by an acute shortage of medical professionals. For more information, read the [GAO report](#).



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National Veterans Golden Age Games

The 2018 National Veterans Golden Age Games will take place August 3-8, 2018 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Games include ambulatory, visually impaired and wheelchair divisions, with each divided into age categories. Competition events include 3-on-3 basketball, air rifle, badminton (singles and doubles), boccia (singles and doubles), bowling, pickleball, cycling, field (discus, javelin, shot put), golf, horseshoes, nine ball, power walk, shuffleboard, swimming, table tennis and track. For more information, or to volunteer, visit the National Veterans Golden Age Games [website](#).





Update on H.R 299

I realize there are a lot of rumors going around right now on HR 299. Here is what we can tell you.

Chairman Roe has made it a priority to push this bill forward.

We have been in discussions with the Committee staff the past few weeks. There is a markup hearing scheduled for Thursday. We do not know for certain whether HR 299 will be on the schedule.

The bills to be considered will be announced Tuesday. As you should remember we brought the bill to markup this past November and it was shot down due to differences over the offset.

There are sensitive negotiations going on right

now concerning a new offset between the parties and the various Veterans Service Organizations.

So we need to see what develops over the next few days.

John B. Wells, Commander, USN (Ret.)
Military Veterans Advocacy
Executive Director



U.S. FOOD & DRUG
ADMINISTRATION

- 1) Ethnic Foods Inc. Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Peanuts in “Bhavnagri Mix”
- 2) Seabear Company Issues a Voluntary Recall of Cold Smoked Wild Coho Salmon Lox Because of Possible Health Risk
- 3) Stonewall Kitchen Voluntarily Recalls a Limited Amount of Basil Pesto Aioli due to Mislabeling and Undeclared Presence of the Dairy Allergen, Egg
- 4) Van's Foods Voluntarily Recalls Gluten Free Waffles in Eleven States



State Veterans Home Construction Grants

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently announced that it will use \$685 million in funding from Congress to fund several State Veterans Home construction projects through the VA State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program. The new funding can be used where needed for repairs, renovation or new construction. The program provides up to 65 percent of the cost to build and renovate facilities. Plans for the new funding include at least 52 projects including bed replacement projects. This is the largest appropriation in the more-than 50-year history of this program.



**This month please remember
these women who died during
May while serving our country in
or during war times**

2 May 1991: FLARNG SGT Tracey Brogdon,
accident in Saudia Arabia, DESERT STORM

2 May 2007: USA PFC Katie M (Soenksen)
Rowella, 19, IED, IRAQ

2 May 2008: USMC L/CPL Casey Lynne
Casanova, 22, IED, IRAQ

3 May 2008: USA SPC Emily Ort, found
unconscious from accidental multiple
prescription drug toxicity, Ft Irwin, CA

3 May 2013: USAF CPT Victoria A Pinckney,
27, KC-135 aircraft crash, AFGHANISTAN

3 May 2013: USA SGT Maribel M Ramos, 36,
murdered in CA

3 May 2014: USA PFC Daniela Rojas, 19,
Homburg, Germany due to a non-combat
related illness

7 May 2017: USA Marinna Rollins, 23, possible
suicide, Fayetteville, NC

8 May 2004: USA SPC Isela Rubalcava, 25,

IRAQ

9 May 1898: Army Contract Nurse Lulu Plant, undiagnosed illness, SPANISH AMERICAN WAR

9 May 2008: USA SPC Mary J Jaenichen, 20, non-combat, IRAQ

9 May 2014: USA SGT Heidi L Ruh, 33, shot on base, Kosovo

10 May 2012: USA PFC Shanon E Pirofsky, 35, died at Ft Eustis, VA

11 May 2008: USA CPL Jessica A Ellis, 24, IED, IRAQ

12 May 2015: USMC CPL Sara A Medina, helicopter crash in Nepal

12 May 2015: USMC CPL Sara Medina, 23, helicopter crash, Nepal

13 May 1945: USA PFC Alethia Fair from CA, C-47 crash, New Guinea

13 May 1945: USA SGT Helen Kent from CA, C-47 crash, New Guinea

13 May 1945: USA PFC Mary Landau from NY, C-47 crash, New Guinea

13 May 1945: USA T/3 Marion McMonagle from PA, C-47 crash, New Guinea

13 May 1945: USA SGT Belle Naimer from NY,

C-47 crash, New Guinea

13 May 1951: USN SN Doris Frances Brown,
non-hostile death, KOREA

13 May 1991: CAARNG CPT Sashai Dawn, 34,
helicopter crash in Honduras

13 May 1991: CAARNG 1LT Vicki Boyd, 30,
helicopter crash in Honduras

13 May 1991: CAARNG SSG Linda Simonds,
34, helicopter crash in Honduras

14 May 1945: USA PFC Eleanor Hanna from
PA, from injuries C-47 crash, New Guinea

9 May 2014: USA SGT Heidi L Ruh, 33, shot
on base, Kosovo

15 May 1945: USA SGT Laura Besley from PA,
from injuries C-47 crash, New Guinea

16 May 2004: USN PO3 CT Laura A (Skinner)
Alford, 21, murdered by a roommate, Virginia
Beach, VA

18 May 1944: USA ANC 2LT Eloise
Richardson, 24, MIA declared dead on 19 May
1945, WW II

18 May 2007: AKARANG Martina Ann Delp,
33, electrocuted while cutting tree in AK

19 May 2009: USN LT Allison Oubre, 27,
helicopter crash near Coronado Islands, CA

20 May 1917: USA ANC Edith Ayers, Attica, OH, WW I

20 May 1917: USA ANC Helen Burnett Wood, Evanston, IL, WW I

20 May 2004: USA PFC Leslie D. Jackson, 18, IRAQ

20 May 2009: USA SPC Crystal J Carney, 21, found dead in her home on Fort Hood, TX

20 May 2009: USAF 1LT Roslyn L Schulte, 25, St Louis, MO, IED, AFGHANISTAN

22 May 1943: ANC 2LT Mafaida Arney, plane crash at Peterson Army Airfield, Colorado Springs, CO

24 May 2015: INARNG SGT April L James, 32, suicide, Evansville, IN

25 May 2009: USN PO Debbie Russell, 44, murdered by husband after serving in Iraq

26 May 2009: USAF SrAirman Ashton L M Goodman, 21, IED, AFGHANISTAN

26 May 2014: USA Vanessa L (Hernandez) Alcorte, 32, murdered, Lubbock, TX

29 May 1997: USAF CPT Amy Lynn Svoboda, 29, plane crash near Gila Bend, AZ

30 May 1945: USA PFC Rose Brohinsky from NY, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA SGT Doris Cooper from IL,
C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Flossie Flannery from
IN, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Frieda Friend from
NY, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Mary Gollinger from
CA, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA CPL Velma Holden from
NC, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Odessa Hollingsworth
from OK, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Alice King from OR,
C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Wilma Liles from TX,
C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Evelyn McBride from
TX, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Alice McKinney from
WI, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Rose Puchalla from
MN, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Mildred Rice from MO,
C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PVT Pearl Roomsburg from

CA, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Helen Rozzelle from Washington, DC, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Leona Seyfert from IL, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Ruth Warlick from TX, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 1945: USA PFC Bonnie Williams from KS, C-47 crash off Derwin Point, Africa

30 May 2014: USA SGT Shaina B Schmigel, 21, paratrooper training accident, Ft Bragg, NC



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