



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, October 11, 2020

Volume 11, Issue 33



This-N-That

Good evening Jim,

Well it's been a month since our last newsletter, mostly we have been up to our eyeballs moving, unpacking, trying to get things back together, but of course Murphy's Law kicked in and we had a horrible time with internet connections, etc.

This newsletter is literally packed jam full of information, links to articles, etc., so we do hope you find things useful as well as enjoyable reads.

At this point in time to help cut costs as well as time down, we will be going to publishing bi-monthly vs. weekly, but it's not in concrete as of yet.

There is a lot going on with the elections, the VA, the House and Senate and we still need to ride them all like a dirty diaper to get their attention whether or not you believe they listen to you.

With the holidays coming around the corner I'd like to remind everyone that those who do "spring" cleaning at this time of year to keep in mind making donations of gently used items to the DAV or another Veteran Service Organization to help our Veterans in need.

Our website was off line early this AM for about four hours, but it's up and active again, so if you've not logged in for a while, or don't have an account, please do make one, it's FREE and once logged in allows you to comment on various articles, post to the forums, as well as access to thousand more documents!

Please be safe, please practice the guidelines, don't let your friends or family wake up to your passing!

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



Suicide impacts us all but there's help

Suicide affects everyone, and with more knowledge about suicide prevention, many of us are able to get help ourselves or for a loved one. The DoD Warrior Care Recovery ...

[Read More](#)



TRICARE Approves PCM Referral Waiver in Louisiana and Texas

Following Hurricane Laura, TRICARE approved a waiver of primary care manager (PCM) referral requirements in certain parishes and counties in Louisiana and Texas through Sept. 26. This means you can seek care from any TRICARE authorized provider. You can also go to any TRICARE authorized hospital or medical facility without any referral, even if the hospital or provider is outside of the network. Please visit the TRICARE disaster [alerts page](#) for a complete list of affected parishes and counties.

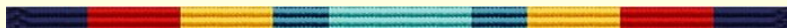


Your actions
could save a life.

Showing you care can make a big difference to someone in crisis.

VeteransCrisisLine.net

 **Veterans
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

The advertisement features two men, one in a light blue shirt and glasses, and another in a dark sweater, with the latter's arm around the first. The text is in a clean, sans-serif font. The logo includes a blue star and a red speech bubble.

VA Introduces New AI Platform

VA announced a new artificial intelligence (AI) platform, an electronic Virtual Assistant (e-VA), for Veterans in the Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program. The new platform will provide efficient customer service support for Veterans and automated administrative tasks for VR&E counselors and staff. Veterans receiving services through VR&E must opt in to e-VA when they receive an email or text introducing this new function. It is important to note all correspondence through e-VA will be included in Veterans electronic VA files.



Links to Other Stories

1. [Anonymity Could Help Mitigate Military Suicide](#)
2. [1 in 4 women Veterans, employees report sexual harassment at VA. Congress wants answers.](#)
3. [Pensacola Army Veteran receives specially adapted home from Homes for our Troops](#)
4. [WWII Veteran in Arroyo Grande receives surprise honor salute for his 96th birthday](#)
5. [Country star Luke Combs, Ford donating \\$25G in guitars to Vets managing PTSD](#)
6. [Someone stole Leroy Petry's Medal of Honor license plate](#)
7. [Attack on VA computer systems exposed personal](#)

information of about 46,000 Veterans

8. You May Be Eligible for a Free iPad from the VA
9. A 29-year-old Marine is dying of a rare brain cancer. Burn pits caused it, his family says.
10. New housing complex for homeless Veterans opens in Omaha
11. Five reasons you should join an online Veteran network
12. Cultural roots laid foundation for sergeant major's career
13. Buffalo Man Pleads Guilty To Assaulting A VA Police Officer
14. Boca Raton Doctor Pleads Guilty To \$20 Million Health Care Fraud Scheme
15. Las Vegas Resident Pleads Guilty to Fraudulently Obtaining Nearly \$1.2 Million In Benefits from The Social Security Administration and Department of Veterans Affairs
16. VA Hospital Nurse Charged with Using her Position to Obtain Painkillers
17. Former VA Employee Pleads Guilty to Embezzling \$70,000 Using Mobile Payment Application
18. Senior Veterans Affairs Official in Philadelphia Indicted for Soliciting Bribes
19. Former Veterans Affairs Doctor Pleads Guilty to Three Civil Rights Offenses
20. Spring Hill Man Pleads Guilty to Theft of Government Funds

21. Doctor Pleads Guilty to Obstructing Telemedicine Investigation
22. District of New Jersey Announces Charges in Health Care Fraud Cases as Part of Nationwide Federal Law Enforcement Effort
23. VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers begins expanding eligibility to Veterans of earlier eras
24. VA launches White Ribbon VA campaign to promote healthy relationships during Domestic Violence Awareness Month
25. VA employees “Show Some Love” during 2020 CFC kickoff
26. VA launches program to send caring letters to 90,000 Veterans
27. VA wins presidential award for its in-house innovations improving health care services for Veterans
28. NMHM documents military medicine advancements during the Civil War
29. VA Burial and Memorial Benefits Quick Start Guide now available
30. Walter Reed annual symposium focuses on substance use disorder





New VA Clinical Trial for Veterans with COVID-19

VA announced a new clinical trial to study COVID-19 convalescent plasma in the treatment of seriously ill patients. This trial is the first of many studies in the VA Coronavirus Research and Efficacy Studies (VA CURES), which is a standardized framework for studying potential treatments for COVID-19. “This trial will go a long way toward helping in the fight against COVID-19,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “VA CURES will provide valuable information that will benefit our Veterans who are battling COVID-19, as well as other patients and the medical community in general.” [Learn more.](#)



Veterans-For-Change Web Site

The Veterans-For-Change website has been around since 2009. The looks pretty much stay the same, but in the background our new webmaster has been making repairs to things that haven't worked properly in over a year.

There are still repairs being made, but the polls are now working 100% and there are fourteen polls open to all to take.

Constant improvement and change is being done to make our website the most user friendly “**One-Stop-Shop**” website to find almost everything you might have tried to find searching the internet.

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

We also have a forum with for Mental Health and are

currently seeking a new Licensed Mental Health Worker, where you can seek help or just ask questions.

We average **3,578** hits per day, and downloads average **4,651** per day with a total **6,758,009** visitors as of Friday.

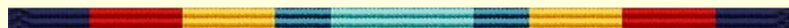
If you subscribe you will have full access to the entire website and best of all it's **FREE** of charge! You just need a valid E-mail address so the system can send you a confirmation E-Mail. Once received, click on the link to be authorized automatically.

www.Veterans-for-change.org

- Documents Library with over **19,504** documents in **171+** Libraries, added **46** documents on-line (Updated: 09/24/20)
- FAQ's on-line with **1,843** FAQ's on **104** topics! (Updated 05/30/20 - 46 NEW)
- 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: 04/23/20) (3 Added)
- News (Articles On-Line: **9,993**)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than **7,730**, Added 56 New Links (Updated: 08/31/20)

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



What's New? Continued Health Care Benefit Program Rates

TRICARE recently updated the [TRICARE Costs and Fees Sheet](#). The October version includes the new rates (Oct. 1, 2020–Sept. 30, 2021) for the [Continued Health Care Benefit Program](#) (CHCBP), as well as current 2020 costs and fees for other TRICARE programs. If you need health care as you make a transition to civilian life, the CHCBP gives health coverage for 18 to 36 months. This is temporary coverage for when you lose TRICARE coverage. If you qualify, you may purchase CHCBP coverage within 60 days of loss of TRICARE coverage.

Download the TRICARE Costs and Fees Sheet and browse other TRICARE publications at <http://www.tricare.mil/publications>.



Air Force opens Intrepid Spirit Center at Eglin AFB

In late August, Elgin Air Force Base in Florida opened the doors to a new Intrepid Spirit Center, the first for any Air Force base. An ISC serves as a dedicated ...

[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 10/09/20)

1. [Support Veterans Economic Recovery Act!](#)
2. [NDAA Amendment to Provide Benefits to Vets Exposed to Agent Orange](#) Ask Your Senator to please support HR. 3224 The Deborah Sampson Act
3. [Please Support Addition of Agent Orange Presumptive Diseases](#)
4. [Support Amendments That Add Diseases Caused by Agent Orange!](#)
5. [H.R. 6027, the Restore Veterans' Compensation Act](#)
6. [H.R. 5867, the STOP Veteran Suicide and Substance Abuse Act](#)
7. [H.R. 95, Legislation to Allow Homeless Veterans to](#)

- Stay With Their Children While Receiving Services
8. H.R. 303, the Retired Pay Restoration Act
 9. H.R. 553, Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act
 10. H.R. 1527, the Long-Term Care Veterans Choice Act
 11. S 179 and HR 712, VA Medicinal Cannabis Research Act of 2019
 12. H.R. 1200, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2019
 13. S. 785, the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act
 14. H.R. 96, to Provide Dental Care for All Veterans Enrolled in Veterans Health Care
 15. H.R. 6590, DAV Supports Deferring Debt Collections during COVID-19 Crisis
 16. H.R. 6933, the Caring for Survivors Act of 2020
 17. Support S. 3761/H.R. 7443 to re-establish VSO review period on VBA decisions
 18. S. 4166, Ensuring Survivors Benefits during COVID-19 Act of 2020
 19. Please Ask Your Member Of Congress To Support Tester/Harder Amendment In The Fy2021 National Defense
 20. NDAA Final Passage Coming Soon



**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



**Get Answers to Your TRICARE Dental
Program Coverage Questions**

Are you looking to keep that healthy smile? Practicing good oral hygiene is the key to keeping your gums and teeth healthy. Having a good dentist helps, too. When you're looking for a new dentist, you may have questions about who you can see and if they accept your insurance. You may also have questions about covered services or oral health. Whether you're in the CONUS or OCONUS service area, the TRICARE Dental Program is committed to helping you find the right dentist and answering your questions.

To learn more, [read the article](#).



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

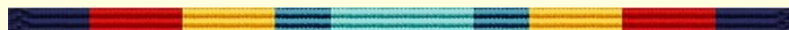
"History is not there for you to like or dislike. It is there for you to learn from it. And if it offends you, even better. Because then you are less likely to repeat it. It is not yours to erase. It belongs to all of us."



Emergency Prescription Procedures in Florida

Due to Hurricane Sally, emergency prescription procedures are in place until September 25 in select counties in Florida. The affected counties include: Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Walton, and Washington.

For more information, visit the [tricare.mil disaster alerts](#) page.



Office of Inspector General

1. [Combating Wildlife Trafficking: Agencies Work to Address Human Rights Abuse Allegations in Overseas Conservation Programs](#)
2. [Child Care Facilities: Federal Agencies Need to Enhance Monitoring and Collaboration to Help Assure Drinking Water is Safe from Lead](#)

3. Army Modernization: Army Should Improve Use of Alternative Agreements and Approaches by Enhancing Oversight and Communication of Lessons Learned
4. Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs: Views on Usefulness and Challenges of Programs
5. VA Acquisition Management: Actions Needed to Improve Management of Medical-Surgical Prime Vendor Program and Inform Future Decisions
6. VA Health Care: Additional Steps Could Help Improve Community Care Budget Estimates
7. Veterans Community Care Program: Improvements Needed to Help Ensure Timely Access to Care
8. Disaster Assistance: Additional Actions Needed to Strengthen FEMA's Individuals and Households Program
9. Chemical Security: DHS Could Use Available Data to Better Plan Outreach to Facilities Excluded from Anti-Terrorism Standards
10. Coast Guard: Improved Analysis of Vessel Response Plan Use Could Help Mitigate Marine Pollution Risk
11. Veterans Community Care Program: Improvements Needed to Help Ensure Timely Access to Care
12. Whistleblower Protection: Actions Needed to Strengthen Selected Intelligence Community Offices of Inspector General Programs

13. VA Disability Benefits: VA Should Continue to Improve Access to Quality Disability Medical Exams for Veterans Living Abroad
14. COVID-19: Federal Efforts Could Be Strengthened by Timely and Concerted Actions
15. Defense Health Care: Implementation of Value-Based Initiatives in TRICARE
16. VA Acquisition Management: COVID-19 Response Strains Supply Chain While Modernization Delays Continue
17. Veterans Affairs: VA Needs to Address Persistent IT Modernization and Cybersecurity Challenges
18. Public Health Preparedness: Information on the Use of Medical Reserve Corps Volunteers during Emergencies



DHA Launches New Websites for Air Force Military Hospital and Clinics

On Sept. 1, the Defense Health Agency (DHA) launched 74 new websites to Air Force military hospital and clinics. This is an important step to modernize the Military Health System on the web. Each website moved to the TRICARE website to give patients a standard web experience.

To learn more, [read the article](#).



Coast Guard launches MHS GENESIS at four pilot sites

The Coast Guard deployed the MHS GENESIS electronic health records (EHR) system to four Coast Guard medical facility pilot sites on August 29, the first step toward ...

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CLICK HERE TO FOLLOW US ON TWITTER !



Continue to Do Your Part to Slow Spread of COVID-19

By now, you've probably adjusted to life during COVID-19. Staying away from large gatherings and wearing a mask in public is the new normal. You've also learned how to safely access your TRICARE benefit. But now isn't the time to let your guard down. These habits will be important to remember—

especially as some restrictions begin to ease in your community.

To learn more, [read the article](#).

Here's another article that you may be interested in:

Maintaining Positive Social Media Interactions During COVID-19

As the Department of the Air Force's chief of chaplains, Maj. Gen. Steve Schaick has seen firsthand the power of social media to forge connections during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, airmen have signed onto Facebook Live events in increasingly higher numbers, said Schaick, who's also a chaplain. Participation has been so strong that the Air Force likely will continue to incorporate aspects of social media into religious outreach efforts even after physical distancing restrictions are lifted.

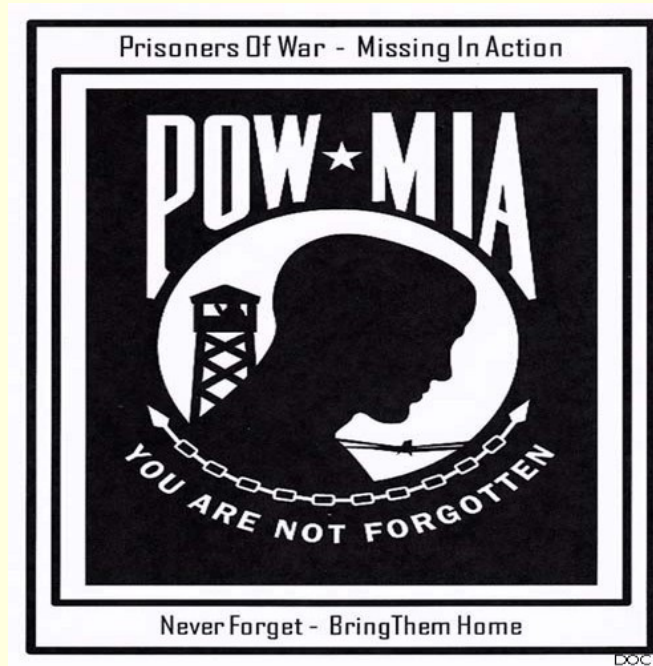
To learn more, [read the article](#).



MHS immunization experts will answer flu vaccine questions

With influenza season arriving while the coronavirus is still in circulation, health care experts are worried about the potential for a perfect storm of illness. That's why experts ...

[Read More](#)



Washington state's COVID-19 response director visits Madigan

The Pacific Northwest was the first area in the United States to see cases of COVID-19. Madigan Army Medical Center located aboard Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington is within an hour of the ...

[Read More](#)



Former BAMC COVID-19 patient donates plasma

Thefety Tibbs was one of the first COVID-19 patients treated at Brooke Army Medical Center aboard Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston. Now, he's back at the military medical ...

[Read More](#)



FRA and Others Urge DHA to Extend Grace Period for TRICARE Select

The FRA and several other groups have dispatched a letter to the Director of the Defense health Agency (DHA) requesting a 12-month re-instatement period in lieu of the current 90-day re-instatement period during the implementation of new the TRICARE Select enrollment fee that will take effect Jan. 1, 2021. It is now even more essential to allow sufficient time to

notify beneficiaries about the new enrollment fees, since the consequences of failing to pay are so severe. Military retirees earned their health care benefit through decades of selfless service to our nation. Missing a communication from TRICARE should not result in them losing their essential benefit.

As noted in the Aug. 7, 2020 NewsBytes, those TRICARE Select beneficiaries under age 65 that joined the military before Jan. 1, 2018 (Group A) will be required to pay a monthly fee beginning Jan. 1, 2021. The monthly fee for an individual is \$12.50 and \$25 for a family. This must be done via allotment, if feasible. In order to maintain health care coverage, TRICARE Select Group A retired beneficiaries must pay their TRICARE Select enrollment fees. These and other fee increases were opposed by the FRA and were authorized by the FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA-S.2943, P.L.114-328). The FRA opposition resulted in a smaller fee and a four-year delay.

The DHA notes that **FAILURE TO PAY WILL MEAN LOSS OF COVERAGE** until the following open enrollment period. Beneficiaries who fail to set up their TRICARE Select enrollment fee payment by Jan. 1, 2021 will be disenrolled from TRICARE Select for non-payment. Those beneficiaries will have 90 days from their termination date to request reinstatement. If

a beneficiary does not act, they will only be able to get care from a military hospital or clinic if space is available (i.e. all civilian health care costs will be their full responsibility).

The fees are waived for Chapter 61 retirees and their family members and survivors of deceased active duty service members. For more information about the fees please [go online](#).



HVAC Subcommittee Discusses Improvements for TAP

The House Veterans Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a virtual hearing on coordinating transition resources for service members who are transitioning out of the military. The subcommittee members want an approach that would assist any service member transitioning into civilian life to include job placement, assistance in educational, financial, entrepreneurial, and healthcare benefits. Some of the services offered by these agencies include job training, interview coaching, resume building, and recommendations for mental health treatment programs. The subcommittee members want to move away from the one-size-fits-all approach when assisting transitioning service members. The metrics of success in the Transitional Assistance Program (TAP) will be based on a reduction in the suicide rate, placements in sustainable jobs and the overall mental and financial wellbeing of the Veteran and their families. Although it is difficult to quantify emotional wellness since it can sometimes be hidden, there is hope since some of the emerging mental health programs are yielding great results.



Emergency Prescription Procedures in Alabama

Due to Hurricane Sally, emergency prescription procedures are in place until September 25 in the entire state of Alabama.

For more information, visit the TRICARE [disaster alerts](#) page.

DVBIC study focuses on concussion-related headaches

Headaches are the most common form of pain, according to the National Institute of Health's National Library of Medicine. Service members with concussion-related ...

[Read More](#)



VSO's

I wanted to provide you with an update on our efforts for the Care Treatment Rehabilitative Services Initiative (CTRS).

We have moved from parking lots 10 & 17 to the Great Lawn. I have attached pictures of Dr. Braverman at the Great Lawn helping to set up the site.

I have also attached the [Factsheet for CTRS](#).

The CTRS is a pilot initiative that expands unsheltered homeless Veteran's access to the VAGLAHS Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans Program.

Our goal is to improve unsheltered Veteran's healthcare outcomes while moving towards a more permanent housing solution.

Those housing solutions are based on their commitment within the initiative. I want to share with you the POC for the CTRS Initiative, Dr. Peter Capone-Newton. He can be reached at peter.capone-newton@va.gov.

For more information too, here is a number for the CTRS Initiative: **1-877-222-8387**.

We opened this up April 6, 2020 for the purpose of providing a low-barrier treatment area where

homeless Veterans can seek out healthcare, social work, hot meals, a clean and safe environment and opportunity to transition into a more permanent solution within our CERS Programs (Community, Engagement and Reintegration Services). As you are aware, the CTRS is an initiative and not a program, meaning it is not funded.

This is why we seek out community partners like Brentwood Schools and Village for Vets along with so many other donors who have gone through our Voluntary Services Department.

Meet Brian who happens to be a homeless Veteran living in our CTRS site on the Great Lawn of GLA. Brian talks about his addiction with drugs and alcohol and how the CTRS initiative is helping him to get his life on track again.



My First Poem

I do not remember my poems, either # one or # two,
I suppose in early elementary school,
likely it was a roses are red or the sky was blue.

I like to rhyme, but even though, the words may
chime,
and some folks think it's really cool,
at times the sing song makes me lose my mind.

Poems are less threatening than writings done in
prose,
and safety seems to be the best defense,
though I wrote story line and article, a poem is what I
chose.

2006 Richard G. Shuster



COVID-19 vaccine distribution strategy is released

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Department of Defense (DoD) today released two documents outlining the Trump administration's ...

[Read More](#)





New PTSD Therapy for Couples Shows Promise

A study published in the Journal of Behavior Therapy reveals that couples that have one person with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) may soon have faster access to more efficient therapy that treats the disorder and simultaneously improves their relationships. Current treatment usually involves a 15-week process that may soon be shortened to only one weekend.

The pilot program included active duty and Veteran couples and was created by Consortium to Alleviate PTSD (CAP). The CAP is a multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional research consortium jointly funded by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs to advance the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of

PTSD among post-9/11 service members and Veterans.

The FRA supports robust funding for research to treat PTSD. According to the researchers, the impacts of PTSD on military members or Veterans and their families is significant, with estimates suggesting that 15 percent of service members and 23 percent of Veterans who have deployed to Iraq and/or Afghanistan since Sept. 11, 2001, suffer from PTSD. The disorder affects not only individuals, but also their spouses and families. The researchers noted that PTSD is associated with relationship distress, physical and psychological aggression, and partner psychological distress.



**New Baby on the Way? Get Ready with
TRICARE**

Is the size of your family about to grow this year? Planning for a new baby can be a fun and exciting time in your life. But the thought of maternity costs and maintaining a healthy pregnancy can be stressful. That's why it's important to understand your health care needs and your coverage. As a TRICARE beneficiary—and expectant mother—you have access to maternity care before, during, and after you give birth.

To learn more, [read the article](#).



Hearing on Legislation and Re-authorizing the Women's Veterans Taskforce

The House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) recently held a hearing to re-authorize the Women's Veterans Task Force and to discuss pending legislation. The HVAC agreed to extend the Women's Task Force and Rep. Julia Brownley (Calif.) Chairwoman of the Task Force highlighted the wins of the task force including the passing of the FRA supported Deborah Sampson Act (H.R.2452) and looks forward to accomplishing more in the next session of Congress.

Suicide prevention and mental health were the

primary focus of the discussion due to the Senate's passing of the FRA supported Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act (S.785) and sending a formal letter to the house by the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (SVAC) requesting the House to pass the bill. HVAC Chairman Rep. Mark Takano (Calif.) noted it will be easy to pass the Senate bill as is, but he preferred additional improvements to the bill. Ranking Member Rep. Phil Roe (Tenn.) recognized some of the insufficiencies of S.785, but he did stress the importance of passing the legislation without amendment and sending it directly to the president to be signed into law. Roe pointed out the limited legislative days left on the calendar for this session to accomplish final passage and that amending the bill would require Senate approval before sending the bill to the president. ALL are encouraged to visit the [Action Center](#) to weigh on this issue.





A man was showing his friend a new set of matched golf clubs he had just bought.

"Doctor's orders," the man told his friend. "My wife and I have been gaining too much weight and we went to see the doctor about it. He said we needed more exercise, so I joined the country club and bought myself this set of golf clubs."

"What about your wife?" the friend asked. "What did you buy her?"

"A new lawn mower," the golfer said.



Women Veterans to be Honored in Virtual Reception

Now Accepting Nominations for the 2020 CalVet Trailblazer Award

Sacramento – Women veterans will be honored during a virtual reception on Wednesday, October 21, 2020 from 6-7:30 p.m. This year, CalVet Women Veterans Affairs will recognize several outstanding California Women Veterans with the CalVet Trailblazer Award during its annual reception. However, this reception will be hosted virtually, due to the ongoing pandemic.

Additionally, Women Veterans Affairs is collecting nominations for its annual CalVet Trailblazer Award until Thursday, October 1, 2020. Awardees will be selected from the nominations and recognized during the virtual reception. To nominate an outstanding California woman veteran, please view the nomination instructions and deadlines at <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/WomenVets/Pages/Women-Veterans-Reception.aspx>.

"The Coronavirus Pandemic has changed many aspects of our service and outreach to veterans, but it will not deter our ability to celebrate and honor the extraordinary women veterans of our state. I look forward to even greater participation at our annual event this year, since it will be available to all virtually," said Lindsey Sin, CalVet Deputy Secretary, Women Veterans Affairs.

The reception is free and is open to the public. Pre-

registration for the reception is required. Please register for the event at <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/WomenVets/Pages/Women-Veterans-Reception.aspx> or call 916-653-1402.



Suicide Prevention Resources: Take Care of Yourself and Each Other

Globally, people are facing challenges caused by COVID-19. The pandemic may cause anxiety and stress. These feelings may feel stronger with less social interaction. Feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or lonely might increase the risk for suicide for some people. It's important to tend to your mental health and find ways to cope. There are many resources to help you. These include, but not limited to, TRICARE mental health services.

To learn more, [read the article](#).





HOME *of the* FREE
BECAUSE *of the* BRAVE

Honoring those who served



Pain Management and Opioid Safety with TRICARE

Feeling physical pain is part of being human. That pain can sometimes impact our daily lives. But the medications meant to treat pain can cause additional problems if used improperly. Read more about pain management and opioid safety, and learn how your TRICARE benefit can support you on your road to recovery.

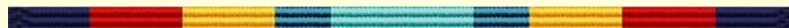
To learn more, [read the article](#).



HVAC and SVAC Agree on Suicide Prevention Legislation

With the end of the 116th Congress on the horizon, leaders of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees (HVAC & SVAC) have come to an agreement on several suicide prevention bills. With this agreement, major suicide prevention legislation will be passed and sent to President Trump to be signed into law.

The Senate and House passed the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act (S.785). In exchange for the House passing that bill without making changes (which would require taking time to go to conference) and sending it directly to President Trump to be signed into law, the Senate has agreed to pass nine House bills that complement its bill. The FRA supports this legislation and wants to thank Everyone is encouraged to use the FRA [Action Center](#) to weigh in on this important issue. Your efforts helped to pass this important bill.



Tax & Credit Information



1. [Guidance issued to implement Presidential Memorandum deferring certain employee Social](#)

Security tax withholding

2. IRS approves temporary use of e-signatures for certain forms
3. Opportunity Zones
4. Taxpayers should renew expiring ITINs early to avoid a refund delay next year
5. IRS accepting applicants for the Compliance Assurance Process for 2021
6. Tips for taxpayers who need to file a new W-4
7. IRS provides tax relief for victims of Hurricane Laura; Oct. 15 deadline, other dates extended to Dec. 31
8. Settlements begin in syndicated conservation easement transaction initiative
9. Millions of taxpayers receive a tax refund interest payment
10. Federal benefit recipients with children have more time to get the \$500 Economic Impact Payment
11. IRS provides additional guidance on base erosion and anti-abuse tax
12. Choosing a trustworthy payroll service provider can protect employers from fraud
13. Interest rates remain the same for the fourth quarter of 2020
14. Rachel Leiser Levy selected as new Associate Chief Counsel Employee Benefits, Exempt Organizations and Employment Taxes
15. Tips for taxpayers who need to file an amended

tax return

16. IRS expands enforcement focus on abusive micro-captive insurance schemes; taxpayers urged to consult independent tax advisor before Oct. 15 filing deadline

17. IRS issues final regulations for Achieving a Better Life Experience accounts

18. Taxpayers should know and understand their correct filing status

19. IRS issues final regulations on the deduction for meals and entertainment

20. Redesigned IRS.gov page helps people closing a business; page features steps to navigate final tax actions

21. Terms to help taxpayers better understand Individual Retirement Arrangements

22. Here's how to get the status of an Economic Impact Payment

23. IRS provides final regulations on income tax withholding on certain periodic retirement and annuity payments

24. How people can reconstruct records lost in a natural disaster

25. IRS expands multilingual resources and services

26. Six tips for people starting a new business

27. IRS reminds taxpayers of the home office deduction rules during Small Business Week

28. Businesses can file cash transaction reports

electronically and in batches

29. IRS provides final regulations on deductions for estates and non-grantor trusts, including excess deductions on termination

30. The Oct. 15 deadline for extension filers is almost here

31. IRS provides tax relief for victims of Oregon wildfires; Oct. 15 deadline, other dates extended to Jan. 15

32. IRS releases state-by-state breakdown of nearly 9 million non-filers who will be mailed letters about Economic Impact Payments

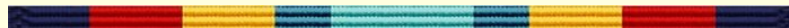
33. What to know about the tax-exempt application process for charities

34. Free IRS2Go app puts information at taxpayers' fingertips



**TAP Program for Military Spouses
Coming Soon.**

The Department of Labor (DOL), Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) was created to protect the rights of veterans in the workplace and assist homeless veterans. The VETS recently announced it is developing a course curriculum for military spouses for those with service members transitioning out of the military or to another installation. A pilot program is scheduled to start in October 2020, with full implementation expected in early 2021. The course will use components of the current curriculum for service members, such as resume development and interviewing techniques, but will also include components more specific to the needs of spouses such as complexities with state licensing and credentialing requirements. For more information on this [program go online](#).



**Plan Now: TRICARE Select Enrollment
Fees for Group A Retirees Coming
January 2021**

Did you hear the news about TRICARE Select enrollment fees? TRICARE Select Group A retirees must begin paying enrollment fees to maintain health coverage starting on Jan. 1, 2021. TRICARE Select is the name of the plan that replaced the former TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra programs in 2018.

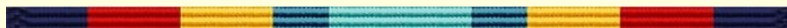
To learn more, [read the article](#).



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**Got TRICARE for Life Questions? Here's
What You Should Know**

Will you soon be eligible for Medicare based on reaching age 65? If so, now's the time to start thinking about your future health care needs. With TRICARE For Life (TFL) coverage, you can get the care you need while minimizing your out-of-pocket costs. As you begin to learn about TFL, you may have questions about costs, what's covered, and if you're eligible for it.

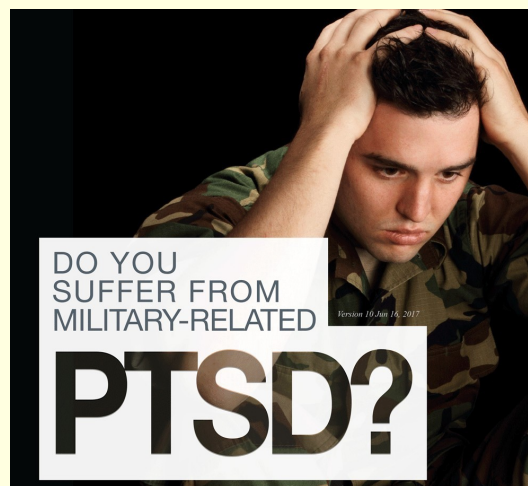
To learn more, [read the article](#).



The Soul

I have looked into the dulled eyes of imbeciles, morons and those with downs and have seen recognizable signs of a kindly soul and spirit, conversely, I have looked into the eyes of men of sparkling brilliance and found no signs of a soul or kindly spirit. I think we all have a soul, some just hide it better than others..... The soul, I think, is a transparency of our Creator's image, issued to each of us, the transparency contains all the ingredients to provide us with what we spiritually require, leaving it up to us to identify and use those ingredients in such a way, as to develop the individual's finished soul product....

Richard G. Shuster



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



Active Duty Suicides are a Major Concern for Military

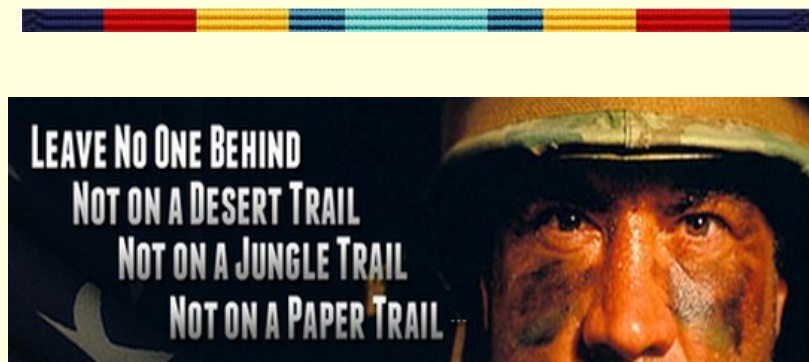
According to recent data released by the military services, the suicide rate among active duty continues to be a concern. The Navy's annual suicide numbers increase while the annual suicide rate for Marines declined. In 2019, 72 active-duty sailors and seven Reservists committed suicide, which is the highest rate of suicide in the Navy since 2006. In 2019, 47 Marines committed suicide which is 11 fewer (23 percent decline) from 2018. The suicide rate for active duty sailors is 21.9 per 100,00 and the rate for Marines is 25.3 per 100,000. The overall suicide rate for all Americans is 14.2 per 100,000. Those in need can call the Crisis Line at: 1-800-273-8255 (and press 1 if you are active duty or a veteran).



TRICARE Open Season is Just a Month Away

Are you working on your fall to-do list? Don't forget to add health care as an item. With the [2020 TRICARE Open Season](#) coming soon, now is the time to start thinking about your and your family's health care needs. Depending on where you live, and your beneficiary status, you may have many coverage options to choose from. Open season is also a good opportunity to learn about important changes, like [TRICARE Select enrollment fees for Group A retirees](#), and if you need to take action.

To learn more, [read the article](#).



HVAC Holds Hearing on Burn Pits

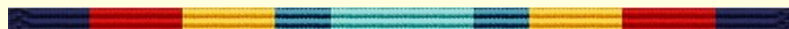
The House Veterans Affairs Committee (HVAC) recently held a hearing to discuss toxic exposure caused by burn pits in the middle east and southwest Asia. In her opening statement, Chairwoman Rep. Elaine Luria (Va.) highlighted the many effects of toxic exposure and airborne hazards. The HVAC members

questioned Department of Veterans Affairs staff about the negative effects of these hazards, and what steps they are taking to get veterans who are affected by this the proper care they need. The burn pit registry was created to allow eligible veterans and service members to document their exposures and report health concerns through an online questionnaire.

Burn pits were a common way to get rid of waste at military sites in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 3.7 million service members have been deployed to the Southwest Asia theater of military operations since 1990. Deployment to the region exposed service members to airborne hazards including oil-well fire smoke, emissions from open burn pits, dust suspended in the air, exhaust from military vehicles and local industrial emissions. Temperature extremes, stress, and noise encountered by service members may have increased their vulnerability to these exposures. Toxins in burn pit smoke may affect the skin, eyes, respiratory and cardiovascular systems, gastrointestinal tract and internal organs. The VA has received 12,582 claims related to burn pit exposure but only 2,828 have been granted. The FRA supports the "The Toxic Exposure in the American Military Act" (TEAM Act - S.4393), which expands access to preventative and diagnostic services for veterans exposed to toxins and establishes an independent

scientific commission tasked with researching the health effects of such toxic exposure and reporting its findings to the VA and Congress. Everyone is urged to use the [Action Center](#) and contact their senators about this issue.

If you think you have been affected by burn pits visit to sign up for the [burn pit registry](#).



HVAC Subcommittee has Oversight Hearing on VA Medical Supply Chain

The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee conducted an oversight hearing on the effectiveness of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical supply chain in the wake of the pandemic. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) provided information to the Subcommittee on a soon to be released report reviewing VA's inefficient supply chain process and GAO's recommendations. In response to lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, VA Regional Readiness Centers will house six months' worth of supplies, including gloves, gowns, and masks. Three centers are up and running and the remaining centers will be ready by July 2021.



The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced seven burial update and four new identifications for service members who have been missing and unaccounted-for from WWII and Korea. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

Marine Corps Reserve Pvt. Jacob Cruz, 18, of Los Angeles, was a member of Company D, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands, in an attempt to secure the island. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded, while the Japanese were virtually annihilated. Cruz died on the third day of battle, Nov. 22, 1943. Cruz will be buried Nov. 13, 2020, in his hometown. [Read about Cruz.](#)

Army Cpl. Robert C. Agard, Jr., 19, was a member of 2nd Platoon, 24th Reconnaissance Company, 24th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on July 19, 1950, while conducting a night recon patrol with his unit near Taejon, South Korea. He was never found, nor were any remains recovered that could be identified as Agard. He was declared non-recoverable in January 1956. Interment services are pending.

[Read about Agard.](#)

Marine Pfc. Henry E. Ellis, 22, was a member of Headquarters Company, 1st Service Battalion, 1st Marine Division. He was killed in action on Nov. 30, 1950, while defending the convoy of which he was a member near Koto-ri, North Korea. His body was not immediately recovered, though many deceased Marines were later recovered and buried in the United Nations Cemetery at Koto-ri as UN forces withdrew from the area. Interment services are pending. [Read about Ellis.](#)

Marine Corps Cpl. Elmer E. Drefahl, 22, 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, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including

Drefahl.. Interment services are pending. [Read about Drefahl.](#)

Air Force Maj. Paul A. Avolese, 35, was a radar navigator assigned to the 4133rd Bombardment Wing. That day, he was part of the crew of a B-52D Stratofortress bomber conducting a bombing mission from Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, to a target in Vietnam. During a maneuver over the South China Sea, Avolese's bomber collided with another B-52, causing both aircraft to fall into the sea. Four of the crew members from his aircraft were rescued, but Avolese was never recovered. He was declared dead on July 24, 1967. Interment services are pending. [Read about Avolese.](#)

Marine Corps Reserve Pvt. Howard E. Miller, 22, of San Mateo, California, was a member of Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands, in an attempt to secure the island. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded, while the Japanese were virtually annihilated. Miller died on the third day of battle, Nov. 22, 1943. Miller will be buried Nov. 6, 2020, in his

hometown. [Read about Miller.](#)

Navy Electrician's Mate 3rd Class Alton W.

Whitson, 22, of Seattle, 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, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Whitson. Whitson will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, in October 2021. [Read about Whitson.](#)

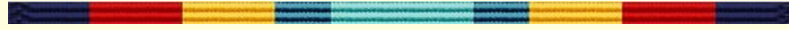
Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. John P. Langan, 18, of Columbus, Nebraska, was a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands, in an attempt to secure the island. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded, while the Japanese were virtually annihilated. Langan died on the third day of battle, Nov. 22, 1943. Langan will be buried in Platte Center, Nebraska. The date has yet to be determined. [Read about Langan.](#)

Army Sgt. Jesse “Johnnie” D. Hill, 20, of Highland Park, Michigan, was a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Hill will be buried in Holly, Michigan. The date has yet to be determined. [Read about Hill.](#)

Navy Fireman 1st Class Louis J. Tushla, 25, of Atkinson, Nebraska, 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, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Tushla. He will be buried July 17, 2021, in his hometown. [Read about Tushla.](#)

Navy Hospital Apprentice 1st Class John M. Mulick, 21, of Elma, Iowa, 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, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship

resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Mulick. The date and location for Mulick's burial have yet to be decided by the family. [Read about Mulick.](#)



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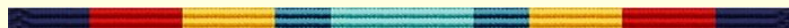
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