



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, April 04, 2021

Volume 12, Issue 14



This-N-That

Good evening Jim,

This week thankfully we're beginning to see more and more new legislation being put forth and you will see in the "**TAKE ACTION**" section what new has been added. There might be one or two that look like duplicates, and they are, but, they're through two different organizations which is nice. All those participating is helping us really get the bang for the buck, so please do take action on both.

I also encourage everyone to share this with friends and family, no one has to be a Veteran to participate and help us get more legislation passed and signed into law.

I also want to thank those who have contributed more documents as well as news links, makes it a great deal easier for us to help keep you informed.

I do my level best to steer clear of politics, but the one thing I just can't overlook is that Congress in their infinite wisdom managed to come up with funding to house illegals crossing the borders and continue to ignore all our homeless Veterans and are still forcing National Guard in DC to sleep in the garage on a cement floor.

I'd like to ask everyone to please think about that, use the phone numbers always provided in the newsletter to call both your Rep and Senators and in a polite way tell them how unhappy you are that Americans are not being put first. Especially those who have or are serving our country.

I've been talking to some high schools and small colleges to see if we can get an intern to help at least with keeping the website updated with news pieces as quickly as they come in, but so far, we're

still just in the talking more, so keep your fingers crossed for us.

Please also pay attention to the links to information from the **FDA** as again there are more recalls in place, and we want to make sure all our Veterans and their families are safe.

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

And I'd like to encourage everyone who can to help and support Military-Veterans Advocacy go to www.militaryVeteransadvocacy.org. They helped all our Blue Water Navy Veterans, and are still working on BWN and now many other issues, and Commander John Wells and his hard-working team continue to fight for all of our Veterans!

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



Military Veterans Advocacy

Military Veterans Advocacy is offering some free memberships for those who are struggling to get their claims through, are having financial difficulties. Annual dues are \$25.00 per year. Our organization includes special sections, Blue Water Navy, Veterans of Southeast Asia, Central Pacific Islands, Veterans of Panama Canal Zone, and Okinawa. We have gift members available which can be paid by your fellow brother or sister Veterans. Gift members are kept confidential. Go to this link and help a Veteran.

https://www.militaryVeteransadvocacy.org/.../c2/yearly_dues

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



VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

Chairman's Remarks

Monday March 29th was National Vietnam Veterans Day, a date which unfortunately passes without the recognition it deserves. Over 58,000 Americans died in support of that war, which ranks as the fourth highest death rate in United States history. Only the Civil War and the two World Wars

sacrificed more Americans. But that is only the official count. Tens of thousands, or probably more accurately hundreds of thousands, of American service members have died of illnesses related to the use of herbicide. This includes not only those who served in-country, but those who were offshore, in Thailand, Laos, Korea, Cambodia, Guam, Okinawa, the Panama Canal Zone and the Philippines. In addition, the herbicide was used throughout the United States in places like CBC Gulfport MS, Eglin AFB FL, Fort Drum NY, and Fort McClellan AL. Some Veterans Service Organizations have written off the Vietnam and Vietnam Era Veterans. MVA has not. We will continue to push for all victims of military toxic exposure - be it herbicide, radiation, burn pits, or any other poison.

Some good news on the legislative front, Senator Boozman of Arkansas has introduced a bill to cover Veterans in Thailand through June of 1976 when our forces departed. Congressman Bruce Westerman has a companion bill in the House. Watch for these two bills to become a "Bill of the Week" in the near future.

We are supporting a bill to cover the K-2 Veterans who were exposed to ionizing radiation in

Uzbekistan. We are also supporting benefits for those Veterans exposed to radiation in the Enewetak Atoll. Both of these efforts have been highlighted as Bills of the Week.

On the litigation front, our cases for Thailand, Guam, and to extend the line for Blue Water Navy personnel outside of the territorial sea are moving forward. We have contacted the VA about covering Phu Quoc Island, which lies outside of the area covered by the Blue Water Navy Act and are awaiting their response. Meanwhile Mike Yates is working hard to expand our data base of deck logs, many of which are not covered on the National Archives website. We have asked the VA to re-issue and update the "Ships List" and are awaiting a response. We are waiting for the VA to respond to our Panama Canal Zone rulemaking request, and we continue to gather materials to submit a rulemaking request on Okinawa.

In a recent success, the MVA supported Save Lives Act was signed by President Biden. This will provide covid vaccines to all Veterans, their spouses, and care givers. We have some members in the Philippines who were denied vaccines by the Veterans Health Administration in Manila. This bill will now cover them.

We have also brought noted Veterans' law attorney Robin Hood onboard as our volunteer Director of Litigation. Robin will begin to assume more duties on the litigation front freeing me up for other matters.

Our other Robin, Robin Barr, continues to work miracles in keeping the administrative side of MVA humming. Any administrative or membership questions please contact her at Robin.Barr@mvadvocacy.org.

I cannot say enough about our Bill of the Week program. It has been successful with a number of positive comments from our members and from Congress. But we are not getting the participation that I hoped for. Please use the links to send a pre-written e-mail to your Member of Congress and Senators. Do not get discouraged if you do not get a response. IT IS A NUMBERS GAME ON THE HILL and all offices have people designated to record these types of support emails and provide a summary to the Member or the Senator. It helps raise awareness and leads to others co-sponsoring bills that we think are important. All of our Bills of the Week can be found at <https://www.militaryVeteransadvocacy.org/bill-of->

[the-week.html](#).

For those wondering, yes, we will have a rifle raffle this year. First prize is an M1A1 Springfield rifle. Second prize a Smith and Wesson Model 686, 7 shot revolver. We will be printing the tickets soon and will publicize all information next month. Tickets will cost \$45 per chance and the drawing will be June 26th.

Also don't forget to order your MVA or Section gear at the MVA online marketplace at <https://military-Veterans-advocacy.square.site/>.

We have had to delay having the Veterans benefits webinar because our Continuing Legal Education certification was delayed. We have now received that certification and will be picking a date soon. Stay tuned.

Our 1500th member is 16-year-old Jacob, who is a sophomore in high school and currently taking Army JROTC. He is thinking about joining up after high school. This was a birthday gift from his parents. Please help us gain members. Membership is only \$25 per year and life memberships are available. You can join MVA or renew your membership at <https://www.militaryVeteransadvocacy.org/store/c2/>

[yearly_dues](#). Please help us reach our goal of 2000 members by the 4th of July so that we can apply for official recognition as a Veterans Service organization. Gift memberships are available.

See you next month!

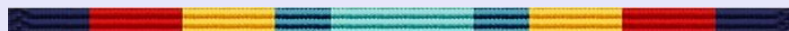
John B. Wells
Commander USN (ret)
Chairman of the Board



When we "break bread," we build social bonds

Throughout history, people have bartered, decided the fates of nations, and built friendships all over meals.

[Read More](#)



President Signs Veterans Vaccine Bill into Law

The House unanimously approved a Senate amendment and passed the "VA Vaccine Act" (H.R.1276) sending it to the president, who signed it into law. "Today, we sent vital legislation to the

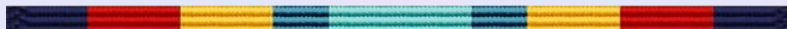
President's desk that will ensure VA has the authority to provide COVID-19 vaccines to all Veterans, caregivers, and Veteran spouses who walk through its doors," said House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Takano (Calif.). "VA has proven itself as one the most effective vaccinators in the nation - but it's clear VA needs additional authority to continue leading this effort to get as many shots into arms as possible. After hearing some Veterans were turned away because they weren't eligible for VA care, I saw a need and worked with Ranking Member Bost (Ill.), to speedily pass the bill in two weeks. This expansion must be contingent on having adequate supply of the vaccine and VA must continue to prioritize vaccinations and healthcare delivery for our nation's Veterans that are enrolled in VA care. ...When COVID-19 vaccine supply is readily available, our bipartisan legislation will give VA the authority it needs to vastly ramp up its vaccination efforts, and I look forward to President Biden signing my bill, as amended, into law." The bill will expand the VA's authority to provide vaccines to:

- Veterans who are not currently enrolled in the VA's health care system, including Veterans without compensable service-connected disabilities and

Veterans who have incomes above VA's threshold;

- Caregivers of Veterans who are enrolled in various VA home-based and long-term care programs;
- Veterans living abroad who rely on the Foreign Medical Program (including those who reside in the Philippines);
- Spouses of Veterans; and
- CHAMPVA recipients (spouses or children of permanently and totally disabled Veterans or of Veterans who have died from service-connected disabilities).

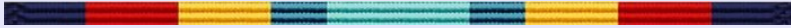
According to Stars and Stripes, the legislation requires the VA to offer coronavirus vaccines to 24 million more people.



VA seeks medical assistants, technologists to support Veteran care

Medical support assistants and medical technologists at VA help ensure that millions of Veterans across the country receive the care they need.

[Read More](#)



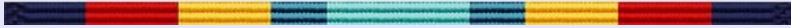
Your actions could save a life.

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

VeteransCrisisLine.net



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



SAVE LIVES Act Signed Into Law

On Wednesday, President Biden signed into law VFW-supported [H.R. 1276](#), Strengthening and Amplifying Vaccination Efforts to Locally Immunize All Veterans and Every Spouse (SAVE LIVES) Act. The law allows VA to provide a COVID-19 vaccine to all Veterans, their spouses, caregivers, and Civilian Health and Medical Program recipients regardless of their eligibility for VA health care. Veterans who are already using VA health care will have priority. "COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on all Americans including Veterans and their families," VFW National Legislative Director Pat Murray said in a statement. "The end may be near, but we will not come out of this until everybody possible has vaccinations."

[Read More](#)



The difference between celiac disease and non-celiac gluten sensitivity

Eating gluten free has become very popular in recent years.

[Read More](#)



Historic observance celebrates the achievements of women

"f there's a first...then there can be a few and then many. A first is a signal that [anything] is possible!"

[Read More](#)



Iraq Veteran competing virtually in Winter Clinic

Iraq Army Veteran Seth Cole would prefer to be in Aspen for the Winter Clinic but plans to make the most of the virtual version this year from home. Sports are part of his rehabilitation goals.

[Read More](#)



Marine Corps Veteran Richard: Why I get my health care at VA

Marine Corps Veteran Richard says VA came through when he needed help the most, enrolling him for care, bedside in a civilian hospital. "The only reason I am sitting here today is because of VA."

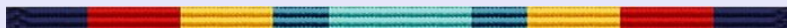
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Links to Other Stories

1. Court Enters \$4.5 Million Judgment Against Owner of Defunct Urine Drug Testing Laboratory Resolving Allegations of Participation in Kickback Schemes
2. Davis Man Pays \$635,000 in Civil Settlement to Resolve Allegations of False Statements to Obtain Grant Frauds
3. Pennsylvania Man Admits Role in \$4.6 Million Kickback Scheme Related to Genetic Testing
4. Justice Department Takes Action Against COVID-19 Fraud
5. Owner of Defunct Urine Drug Testing Laboratory Agrees to Pay Over \$2 Million to Resolve Allegations of Participation in Kickback Schemes
6. Owner of Central Medical Systems Sentenced to 15 Months for Medicare Billing Fraud
7. More Charges Against State Lawmaker for \$900,000 COVID-19 Fraud Scheme at Springfield Health Care Charity
8. North Texas Woman Guilty in Multimillion-Dollar Conspiracy Involving the Sale of Forged Prescriptions
9. AG FERGUSON: Mesh Manufacturer Boston

- Scientific will Pay More Than \$8.8 Million for Failing to Disclose Risks of its Transvaginal Mesh Devices
10. Marine Vet condemns marijuana, says he 'toked up' in Kentucky & woke up in Kenya
 11. Meet Captain StarEagle: Space Force Swears In 1st Female Native American Intel Officer
 12. Here's When VA Disability, Social Security, SSI Recipients Will Get Their \$1,400 Stimulus Checks
 13. Nearly \$20 billion for VA hospital upgrades in Biden infrastructure plan
 14. Female Veterans served America, but the VA system doesn't serve and protect them



MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHIEF OF STAFF

We now have over 1500 members, and we want to make it to over 2000. We need help from everyone by sharing our posts. When you are on other Facebook pages, recommend our pages to those members. If you belong to the Members of Veterans of Southeast Asia Facebook group, you can recommend the Veterans of Okinawa Facebook page to those you know that served in Okinawa. Do not be afraid to ask questions of the Admins or Section Leaders on the Facebook pages. This is what we are here for.

Weekly we will be posting information about a Bill of the Week. Please read these posts and click the link near the bottom which will allow you to send a pre-written email to your Member of Congress and Senators asking them to support the bill. It only takes a minute, and it will help to get these bills passed.

If you have not read the rules of our Facebook pages, or if it has been a while since you have, please take time to read them. You will find that we believe in these rules and will follow them. It is sad that we must have these rules but as the old saying goes, "Growing old is mandatory, growing up is optional". The rules apply to everyone here and we will enforce them. If you have any problems with a post or member, please contact an admin. If you have a problem with an admin, check the rules. There is a way to appeal.

I also want to remind you of John's birthday fundraiser for Military-Veterans Advocacy. Two things to remember, first all funds we receive are only used to Litigate, Legislate, and Educate on the behalf of Veterans. Second, none of the Board Members, Leaders, or Section Leaders receive any pay for the work we do. We are all volunteers. Click [here](#) for John's Fundraiser

<https://www.facebook.com/donate/3786448008116386/1849931171841826/>.

Mike Yates

MVA Chief of Staff

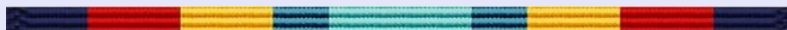
Military Veterans Advocacy, Inc.



Review: For many men with prostate cancer, surgery risks outweigh potential benefits

The researchers conducted a systematic review of 67 studies to compare the effectiveness of watchful waiting versus radical prostatectomy, along with several other treatments. The review is one of the first studies to look at very long-term results.

[Read More](#)



VBA has safely resumed in-person exams nationwide

VBA has safely resumed in-person Compensation & Pension (C&P) exams everywhere in the country and will schedule them as soon as possible.

[Read More](#)



Dover Air Force Base features park 'n' pickup pharmacy

COVID-19 has brought a slew of changes to the way military medical treatment pharmacies operate.

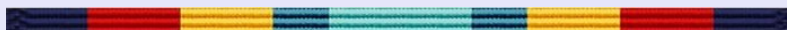
[Read More](#)



Paving the way for women in military medicine: Dr. Mary Edwards Walker

Dr. Mary Edwards Walker was the first woman to be appointed as an assistant surgeon in the U.S. Army, she is also the only woman to date to have received the Medal of Honor, the U.S. government's highest and most prestigious military decoration.

[Read More](#)



Suicide Prevention Resources for Military and Veterans

Military & Veterans Crisis Line

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

Vets 4 Warriors

855-838-8255

InTransition

1-800-424-7877

Office of Warrior Care Policy

warriorcare.dodlive.mil/

Military One Source

1-800-342-9647

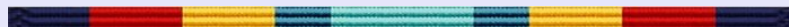
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors [TAPS]

1-800-959-8277

4 WAYS TO HELP HOMELESS VETERANS

- 1 Encourage the Veteran or their families to visit the closest VA Medical Center or Community Resource and Referral Center for help.
- 2 Give the Veteran the phone number to the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans (1-877-424-3838).
- 3 Call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans (1-877-424-3838) on behalf of the Veteran.
- 4 Explore www.va.gov/homeless to learn about VA programs for Veterans who are homeless and share that information with others.

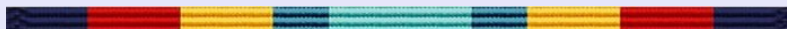
NRD.GOV



**Women leaders say military health care
offers limitless opportunities**

Formal mentoring programs exist for women in the military, but the need for ad hoc networking, personal communication, and informal mentoring still appear to be the strongest threads among female military health care professionals.

[Read More](#)



VFW Testifies on C&P Exams Backlog

On Tuesday, the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs held a hearing to discuss VA compensation and pension (C&P) exams. VA paused C&P exams in April 2020 due to health concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic and, although exams are now taking place, there is a considerable backlog causing delays to the entire VA disability claims process. VFW National Veterans Service Director Ryan Gallucci recommended VA use all its available resources and tools to address the backlog, consider private medical evidence when making rating decisions, and improve communication with Veterans and Veterans service organizations about claims status and scheduling for exams. [Watch the hearing.](#)



VA delivers COVID vaccines to homebound and rural Texas Veterans

William Harris wanted a COVID-19 vaccine but hadn't left his home in years due to a severe case of COPD. So, VA came to him and others in rural Texas.

[Read More](#)



VA steps up for community fight against COVID-19

More than 100 VA employees support community vaccination efforts in several states and territories. They volunteer to give vaccines to local communities as part of VA's 4th mission.

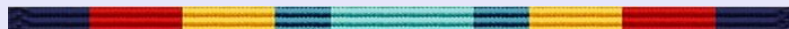
[Read More](#)



Veterans' caregivers supported by social workers

The Caregiver Support Program celebrates VA's social workers who are essential to program's success. "They allow us to provide resources in a manner that caters to the real caregiver experience."

[Read More](#)



[Veterans-For-Change Web Site](#)

The Veterans-For-Change website has been around since 2009. The looks pretty much stay the same for now, but in the background our new webmaster has been working on a whole new look and feel, a facelift so-to-speak. And we're sincerely hoping to roll out the new website sometime this coming June.

Constant improvement and change are 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, whatever you'd like it to be.

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

We average **2,575** hits per day, and downloads average **3,860** per day with a total **7,231,952** visitors as of Saturday afternoon.

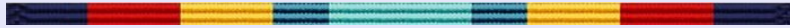
If you subscribe you will have full access to the entire website and best of all it's **FREE of CHARGE!** You just need a valid E-mail address so the system can send us a notification to approve your account. Once received, and we approve, the system will send you an E-Mail letting you know your account has been approved. Be sure to check your junk and spam folders just in case you don't receive it in your In-Box.

www.Veterans-for-change.org

- Documents Library with over **19,535** documents in 237+ Libraries, added 235 new documents on-line (Updated: 03/18/21)
- FAQ's on-line with **1,843** FAQs 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: **10,375**)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than **8,016**, Added 74 New Links

(Updated: 03/02/21)

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



Protect Yourself from COVID-19 Cyber Scams

Many people are anxiously anticipating their turn to receive their COVID-19 vaccine. Cybercriminals know this. That's why the latest cyber-crimes involve scams to trick people into signing up for fraudulent vaccine appointments or giving away their personal information.

Scammers are using telemarketing calls, text messages, emails, social media platforms, and door-to-door visits to perpetrate these and other COVID-19-related scams. Make sure you're informed on the ways you can best protect your personal information.

Follow these 4 tips to stay cyber safe:

1. Do not respond to, or open hyperlinks in text messages or emails about COVID-19 from unknown individuals or sources. Be extra cautious,

especially with messages purporting to be from clinics trying to schedule an appointment — these can be fraudulent attempts to get you to download malware or click on malicious content.

2. Do not give your personal or financial information to anyone who claims to be offering Department of Health and Human Services grants or says they are a contact tracer. Legitimate government workers will never ask for your Medicare number or financial information, or attempt to set up a COVID-19 test for you and collect payment information for the test.

3. Ignore offers or advertisements for COVID-19 testing or treatments on social media sites. If you make an appointment for a COVID-19 test online, make sure the location is an official testing site.

4. Avoid posting your vaccination record card on social media. This personal information can be used to craft convincing, individually-tailored phishing campaigns to trick you into clicking on dangerous links.

If you suspect COVID-19 health care fraud, report it immediately call 800-HHS-TIPS (800-447-8477).



LEGISLATIVE NEWS

We are now at a point where we will be very busy

over the next year. It took 10 years with constant work to get the Blue Water Navy Bill passed. Let's not see a repeat of our efforts for the Toxic Exposure bills. MVA Secretary Mike Kvintus and I will be working together by guiding you all to make these bills cross the finish line. Robin Barr, John Wells, and I are working on a list of bills that we support. We are sending support letters to the sponsor of each bill, as well as to every Congressman and Senator that we are meeting with virtually. There are 61 new Congressmen. We have already met with about 2/3 of them.

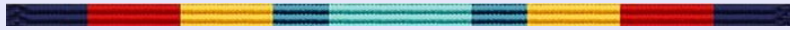
Bills that were introduced under the previous session are now being reintroduced. Some of those bills are:

- S 657 Senator Boozman's Thailand Bill
- S 454 Senator Blumenthal's K2 Bill
- HR 1355 the House companion bill for S 454
- S 952 Senator Gillibrand's Warfighter's Bill
- S 927 Senator Tillis' TEAMS Act
- HR 2127 the House companion bill to the TEAMS Act

I will update you all in the next newsletter. We need each and every one of you to utilize our Bill of the Week program and contact your Members of

Congress and Senators to help get these bills passed.

Susie Belanger
Legislative Director
Military Veterans Advocacy, Inc.



Lawrence "Yogi" Berra: All-Time Great

On this 2021 MLB Opening Day, we remember WWII Navy Veteran and New York Yankees legend and MLB Hall of Famer, Lawrence "Yogi" Berra.

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VA believes in survivors of military sexual trauma

This Sexual Assault Awareness Month, VA speaks directly to MST survivors about their past trauma and their future recovery with the inspiring message: "We believe you — and we believe in you."

[Read More](#)



Military children qualify for a variety of VA benefits

Every April, the nation celebrates the Month of the Military Child – a time that honors all military children for their dedication and sacrifices. At VA, we honor military children year-round by providing them earned benefits. Dependents and surviving children of Veterans and service members may qualify for certain benefits, such as life insurance, education services and health care.

[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 04/03/21**)

1. HR 1014 - Furnish Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) to a Veteran who has a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTS)
2. HR 109 will establish an advisory committee on the implementation by the DVA of an electronic health record
3. Concurrent Receipt Legislation Introduced
4. Expand Concurrent Receipt
5. FRA and Others asks SecDef Not to Raise TRICARE Fees
6. H.R. 333, Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act
7. H.R. 344, Support the Women Veterans TRUST Act
8. H.R. 914, the Dental Care for Veterans Act
9. Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act
10. Oppose TRICARE fee Increases
11. S. 134/H.R. 637, the Veterans Economic Recovery Act of 2021
12. S. 437, Take Action for Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits
13. S. 89, Ensuring Survivors Benefits during COVID-19 Act of 2021

14. STOP TRICARE Fee Increases
15. Support Bills to Expand Coverage for ChampVA and TRICARE Young Adults
16. Veterans Economic Recovery Act Introduced
17. Support Bipartisan Bill to Expanding COVID-19 Vaccine Access for Veterans and Families
18. H.R. 855, the Veterans Expedited TSA Screening (VETS) Safe Travel Act
19. HR 1355 and S 454. These companion bills will provide health care and benefits to Veterans who were exposed to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces at Karshi Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan.
20. Support Repeal of TRICARE Select Enrollment Fee
21. HR 1585 & S 565- Provide for the treatment of Vets who participated in the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll as Radiation Exposed



Land a job at VA with these federal resume tips

Preparing one resume to apply for private sector and federal jobs is a common mistake. Learn how to tailor your resume to help you get hired at VA.

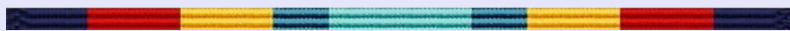
[Read More](#)



Every Veteran, spouse and caregiver in America eligible for COVID-19 vaccine

The SAVE LIVES Act gives VA the job of delivering vaccine to all Veterans in America, whether they're enrolled in VA health care or not, as well as their spouses and their caregivers.

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Veteran battled homelessness, now has a career helping others

After years of health issues, addiction, and homelessness, Navy Veteran Dawn Densel is healthy, has stable housing, and works for the federal government, thanks to VA and its many programs for Veterans experiencing homelessness.

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Veteran women get a little love and a mammogram

VA Connecticut decided to combine a VA Love-Your-Self Campaign with local providers Hartford Healthcare and Yale New Haven Health having their mobile mammography buses visit our facilities.

[Read More](#)



How can Disaster Unemployment Assistance help you?

With Hurricane season fast approaching, it is important to know what resources are available if a disaster were to strike. If major damage is sustained in a state, the President may declare it a major disaster zone, which allows states to access special funding from the federal government.

[Read More](#)



**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



**HVAC Subcommittee Hearing on Improving
Female Veterans' Health**

The House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health and Women Veterans Task Force conducted a joint hearing to look beyond the "Deborah Sampson Act" and continue to improve women Veterans' health care. The FRA is thankful that Congress passed, and former President Trump signed into law the "Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act" (H.R.7105) last year. It includes major provisions of the FRA-supported Deborah Sampson Act. The intent of the Act is to assist female Veterans by including the creation of the VA Office of Women's Health, which provides \$20 million to retrofit VA hospitals with women's health spaces and makes permanent a program to provide child care at VA facilities, as well as other measures.

During the hearing, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) staff responded to questions concerning VA's policies and procedures regarding implementation of the act. The FRA welcomes the oversight hearing and wants to increase access to gender-specific medical and mental health care to meet unique needs of women service members and women Veterans.



AT-RISK VETERANS: WHO, WHAT, AND WHY

Hello Veterans and MVA members. My name is Brian O'Callaghan, and I am MVA's Director of At-Risk Veterans services. I am a Marine Corps combat Veteran and former Capitol Hill staffer. I also contend with multiple service-connected disabilities, including PTS and TBI, which through a long, circuitous route, brought me to MVA and my current role.

Our At-Risk Vets program is designed to advocate for issues that most affect Veterans facing homelessness, justice system involvement, and mental health issues. Our goal is to ensure that the VA and other government bodies fulfill our collective promise to provide the best, and swiftest possible care and intervention for Veterans facing these massive challenges.

Allow me to provide a brief introduction to our efforts.

Over the last year, we have worked to keep Congress focused on the plight of Veterans who are homeless or may become homeless as a result of

the COVID-19 pandemic. And despite the obvious limitations placed on travel and in-person meetings, we have had some success. The following links show a couple of our media efforts:

<https://thehill.com/opinion/civil-rights/491567-covid-19-and-homeless-Veterans-a-looming-crisis>

<https://dailycaller.com/2021/03/18/california-accounts-half-homeless-Veterans-living-streets/>

On the mental healthcare front, we submitted a rule making request to the Secretary of the VA back in January. Our goal was to require VA doctors to better inform Veterans about the dangers of several psychotropic medications, their alternative treatments, and then require signatory informed consent from the Veteran before starting medication regimens that increase the likelihood of suicide, criminal behavior, or substance abuse. Our intent is to mirror the successful program the VA has implemented for opioids, but alas, the VA denied our request. However, the fight is far from over. We plan to submit an updated request and if that one is denied, we plan to move this effort to litigation.

I hope this brief introduction helps you understand the work we are doing to advocate on behalf of

some of the most vulnerable Veterans. I promise to provide more in-depth articles in the future. Thank you for your service and thank you for your support of our MVA mission.

Semper Fi,
Brian O'Callaghan
Director, At-Risk Veterans
Military Veterans Advocacy, Inc.



VICTORS: Caring for Veterans with significant visual impairment

The VICTORS outpatient program represents a unique team approach to vision rehabilitation using the disciplines of optometry, ophthalmology, social work, psychology and low vision therapists.

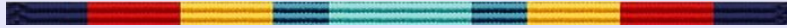
[Read More](#)



Lovell FHCC staff steps up to create formidable COVID-19 team

The COVID-19 vaccination effort at the Capt. James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center has brought out the best in staff, many who volunteered to create a formidable team dedicated to one thing - getting shots in the arms of every staff member and as many of the FHCC's Veteran, military, and military dependent patients as possible.

[Read More](#)



DOD health care leaders give COVID-19 update, praise DHA personnel

Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Dr. Terry Adirim and Defense Health Agency Director Army Lt. Gen. (Dr.) Ronald Place praised the job done by members of the military medical community in fighting COVID-19 during a recent briefing at the Pentagon.

[Read More](#)





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We hope you will join us on this new site.

[VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE](#)

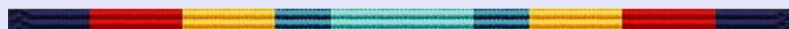
[HOMELESS HEROES PROGRAM OF
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SERVED OUR GREAT NATION](#)

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VFW Testifies Before Senate

VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Tammy Barlet testified before the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs regarding Veterans' mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic and implementation of the VFW-supported Hannon Act. Barlet spoke about VFW [ATLAS](#) locations and the VFW's work with VA and Philips to leverage VA's anywhere to anywhere authority to expand telehealth options for Veterans who live in rural areas, or who may lack access to the internet, necessary equipment, and knowledge to facilitate VA Video Connect. "Making eye contact and seeing facial and body cues is essential to successful appointments," Barlet said on the importance of the VA Video Connect appointments. [Watch the hearing.](#) [Read the testimony.](#)



COVID-19 Vaccine: You Asked, We Answered – Part II

Your COVID-19 questions answered. VA is listening to your questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and hosting a blog series on questions from Veterans. Tell us what you think.

[Read More](#)



VA Co-Payment Debts During COVID-19 to be Canceled, Refunded

VA co-payments received between April 6, 2020, and September 30, 2021, will be waived, refunded, or forgiven under the American Recovery Plan.

The VA is canceling and refunding copayments for the following benefits:

All medical care received through VA between April 6, 2020, and September 30, 2021

All prescription medications received through VA between April 6, 2020, and September 30, 2021

We hope this will help Veterans and their families during this challenging time.

If you're a Veteran who receives care through VA, here's what this means for you:

If you received a statement with copayments for services or medications received on April 6, 2020, or later, we'll remove these copayments from your account. You won't have to pay these copayments.

If you already paid any copayments for services or medications received on April 6, 2020, or later, we'll send you a refund.

If you have unpaid copayments for services or medications received before April 6, 2020, we won't require or expect you to make payments on your account until October 1, 2021. We won't add any interest or fees to your accounts. And we won't take any collection actions on these specific copayments. If you'd like to voluntarily make payments during this time, you can. But we won't require or expect payments until October 1, 2021.

[Find out how to pay your VA copay bill](#)

We don't need anything from you at this time to process your refund. Please check back often for updates on when to expect refunds to start. We ask for your patience as we adjust statements and process refunds.

Source: Michael Isam



More than 50,000 Veterans have switched benefit payments to direct deposit

VA recently announced that more than 50,000 Veterans have switched to receiving their benefit payments through direct deposit.

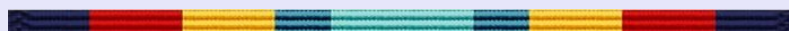
[Read More](#)



An Updated Guide to Benefits.gov Resources

Benefits.gov was launched by the U.S. Department of Labor in April 2002, creating the U.S. government's official benefits website. Our mission is to increase citizen access to benefit information while reducing the difficulty of interacting with the government.

[Read More](#)



1. Biomedical Research: Information on Federal Contributions to Remdesivir
2. COVID-19: Sustained Federal Action Is Crucial as Pandemic Enters Its Second Year



Press Conference on Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Bill

On Tuesday, VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Kristina Keenan participated in a press conference held by Sens. Thom Tillis (R-NC) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH) to introduce S. 927, the Toxic Exposure in the American Military (TEAM) Act. This legislation aligns directly with the VFW's priority to establish a permanent framework to address past, present, and future toxic exposures in the military at locations both domestic and abroad. Unlike other bills which address toxic exposures in a piecemeal fashion, the VFW believes the TEAM Act will not only take care of a significant number of Veterans but would provide VA the guidance necessary to address all toxic exposures in the military. The VFW also supports the companion bill, H.R. 2127, introduced by House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Ranking Member Mike Bost (R-IL). The VFW looks forward to working with Sens. Tillis and Hassan, and Ranking Member Bost on this comprehensive legislation to provide America's Veterans with the care and benefits they need.



BLUE WATER NAVY ASSOCIATION

As you know, we have an ongoing project called the Deck Log Project. Ed Ball started it and I took over after he retired. This is a very slow, detailed project

because we want to get it right. I am going to give you an example of what happens:

I have been working on the Deck Logs for the USS Mattaponi AO-41 for the dates it shows, it earned the Vietnam Service Medal. I was able to find the Deck Logs from 1963 until 1970 with the exception of 1966 and 1968. During the years I was able to find, I found that the USS Mattaponi had around 85 days it was within the Territorial Seas. In the Deck Logs, I found over 265 entries for other ships that were with it. I was able to add over 350 entries to the Master Deck Log list.

I want to remind everyone of the rules we have. Please review them in the file section. Being the largest and oldest section brings a lot of responsibility. We need to set the example for the other sections. For the work we have been doing the last few years, we have set the bar very high. We are the default experts on how we run the Facebook pages and we are known for it. For those of you that have not been on the Blue Water Navy Facebook page, we know that Congress does monitor our page(s).

Mike Yates
Director, Blue Water Navy

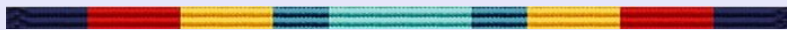
Military Veterans Advocacy, Inc.



Improving Reproductive Health for Women with PTSD

PTSD affects many areas of a woman's life, including relationships, work, sleep and even reproductive health. Dr. Nillni's research aims to understand the ways that trauma and PTSD impact women in their childbearing years, and especially during and right after pregnancy. Her research helps women get better care for PTSD during pregnancy, which benefits their families too.

[Read More](#)



Disabled Veterans, active duty can get adaptive equipment for automobiles

Veterans and active duty with a service-connected disability that prevents them from driving an automobile may qualify for a VA program to purchase a specially modified motor vehicle.

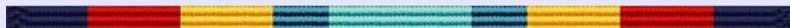
[Read More](#)



Enrolling and Disenrolling from TRICARE

Do you know how to enroll or disenroll from TRICARE? With a premium-based plan like TRICARE Young Adult, you can do so at any time. But with TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Select plans, the rules for enrolling and disenrolling are different.

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



Florida Vet Centers honor Vietnam Era Veterans

Florida Veterans rode their motorcycles to honor Vietnam War Veterans. Staff from the area Vet Centers were on hand to recognize the Vets and answer questions about readjustment counseling services.

[Read More](#)



VA, DoD secretaries honor Vietnam War Veterans

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough and Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III honored Vietnam War Veterans during a ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., March 29, 2021.

[Read More](#)



Live Whole Health #65: Checking in with your body

We often forget about our bodies until something starts to hurt or stops working. Have you thought about the miraculous way that your body functions?

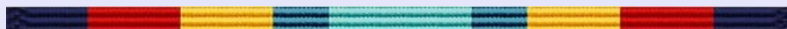
[Read More](#)



Vietnam Veteran leads the way for tomorrow's medicine

VA's Million Veteran Program is one of the largest genetics research programs, supporting groundbreaking research in precision medicine. Vietnam Veteran Milton Verdoot shares his story for enrolling.

[Read More](#)



DHA Improves TRICARE Comprehensive Autism Care Demonstration Program

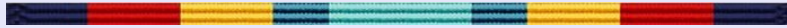
Do you have a family member with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder? If so, they'll soon have expanded access to health and support services. The Defense Health Agency has authorized policy changes to the TRICARE Comprehensive Autism Care Demonstration (ACD) program. These changes will expand the ACD into a more comprehensive program to fit your family's needs.

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





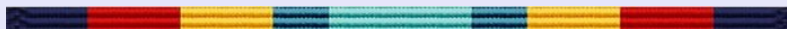
CLICK HERE TO FOLLOW US ON TWITTER !



Intrepid Spirit Centers promote healing from traumatic brain injury

For service members or Veterans with traumatic brain injury and associated health conditions, life can seem like a living hell.

[Read More](#)



Visual dysfunctions common in even mild TBI patients

In 2008, the National Defense Authorization Act authorized the Secretary of Defense to "establish a center of excellence to address the full scope of vision care including prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, research and rehabilitation of military eye injuries and diseases..."

[Read More](#)



Senate Introduces Bill to Extend and Improve Care and Benefits for Gulf War Illness

On Thursday, Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ) introduced a bill that addresses the VFW's concerns surrounding care and benefits for Persian Gulf War Veterans outlined in the Independent Budget. Although U.S. military operations in the Persian Gulf are currently ongoing, the authorization to provide benefits will expire on December 31, 2021. The Improving Benefits for Gulf War Veterans Act would permanently extend VA's authority to grant benefits for Gulf War Illness and would broaden the definition of Persian Gulf Veteran to include those who served in Afghanistan, Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, and Jordan. Additionally, since Gulf War Illness is difficult to identify, the bill would create a single Gulf War Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ) for the associated symptoms and would provide training to VA medical examiners for Gulf War disability claims. The VFW looks forward to working with Sen. Menendez to pass this significant legislation. [Learn more.](#)



THAILAND

U.S. Senator John Boozman's Statement for Thailand Veterans Legislation

WASHINGTON - U.S. Senator John Boozman (R-

AR) called on the Senate to advance his bipartisan legislation, S 657, to ensure Veterans who served in Thailand during the Vietnam War-era get the benefits they have earned and to help address health care needs that resulted due to Agent Orange exposure.

"Americans who served our country, and to this day are paying a high price as a result, have been carelessly hindered by the current limitations on the presumption of toxic exposure to Agent Orange, but they aren't forgotten. We have an obligation to ensure they get the benefits they are due, and I am committed to supporting their cause", Boozman said on the Senate floor.

Boozman recognized the efforts of Mena, Arkansas Veteran Bill Rhodes, who developed illnesses linked to herbicide exposure. Rhodes served in the U.S. Marine Corps and was stationed in Thailand in 1973. His benefits claim was denied by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"He did his homework. He spent time looking for documentation to support his claim and realized this is a problem that needs a legislative fix because the Department's policy limits benefits for Vietnam War-era Thailand service", Boozman said. "I appreciate

the determination and tireless effort of Mr. Rhodes. He's said this legislation gives him some hope, but he won't be proud of his work until the bill is passed".

All Veterans who served in Thailand should support Military Veterans Advocacy in their efforts to get this legislation passed into law as they are working on multiple fronts to get it done.

Bill Rhodes
Director, Veterans of Southeast Asia
Military Veterans Advocacy, Inc.



Face of InnoVAtion: Ronald Major

Face of InnoVAtion is a regular series from the VHA Innovation Ecosystem (VHA IE) focusing on VA employees who are working to change and save Veteran lives.

[Read More](#)





Borne the Battle #235: VA Secretary Denis McDonough

On Feb. 8, 2021, Denis McDonough was confirmed by the Senate to be the United States' 11th Secretary of Veterans Affairs. On Borne the Battle he discusses the priorities behind his "First 100 Day Plan" for VA.

[Read More](#)



VBA salutes Vietnam War Veterans

During his inaugural address in 1961, President John F. Kennedy affirmed that the United States stood ready to pay any price and to bear any burden to preserve freedom and liberty. Vietnam War Veterans surely shouldered that burden. More than 58,000 of them paid the ultimate price and another 153,000 were wounded over the course of the conflict. Today, on National Vietnam War Veterans Day, VBA joins the rest of the nation in honoring the service and sacrifice of all Veterans who served in the Armed Forces from 1955 to 1975. On March 29, 1973, the last U.S. combat troops ...

[Read More](#)



Telemedicine advances put to the test during pandemic

In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, the [Telemedicine and Advanced Technology Research Center](#) continues to develop technology that increases medical capabilities and provides rapid, flexible critical care expertise at the point of need.

[Read More](#)



DHA centers of excellence collaborate to improve TBI care

When a rocket-propelled grenade struck her helicopter in Afghanistan in 2011, Army Staff Sgt. Beth King sustained a traumatic brain injury and was later diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

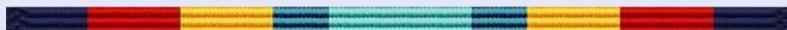
[Read More](#)



After a Veteran passed, VA nurses found a home for his puppy

Two VA nurses stayed by a critically ill Veteran and comforted him. They listened to his stories about his love for his new puppy. After he passed, they found the puppy and secured him a new home.

[Read More](#)





1. Accelerating Medical Device Innovation with Regulatory Science Tools
2. Acellular Dermal Matrix (ADM) Products Used in Implant-Based Breast Reconstruction Differ in Complication Rates: FDA Safety Communication
3. Antoto-K Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Thumbs Up 7 Red 70K Due to the Presence of Undeclared Sildenafil and Tadalafil
4. Bit & Bet LLC Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Thumbs Up 7 Blue 69K Due to Presence of Undeclared Sildenafil and Tadalafil
5. Contact FDA
6. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: FDA Continues to Advance Over-the Counter and Other Screening Test Development
7. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: FDA Makes Two Revisions to Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Emergency Use Authorization to Help Increase the Number of Vaccine Doses Available
8. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

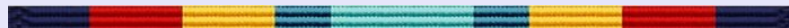
(04/01/21)

9. Development Considerations of Antimicrobial Drugs for the Treatment of Gonorrhea
10. FDA Allows for First Point-of-Care Chlamydia and Gonorrhea Test to be Used in More Near-Patient Care Settings
11. FDA approves add-on therapy for patients with genetic form of severely high cholesterol
12. FDA Approves First Cell-Based Gene Therapy for Adult Patients with Multiple Myeloma
13. FDA Approves First in the World Device to Treat Patients with Congenital Heart Disease
14. FDA Approves New indication for Drug to Treat Neurogenic Detrusor Overactivity in Pediatric Patients
15. FDA Authorizes Marketing of Device to Improve Gait in Multiple Sclerosis Patients
16. FDA Drug Shortages
17. FDA is Investigating Reports of Infections Associated with Reprocessed Urological Endoscopes
18. Harris Teeter Announces Voluntary Recall of Fresh Foods Market Cookies & Crème Cakes Due to Undeclared Hazelnut
19. Infections Associated with Reprocessed Urological Endoscopes - Letter to Health Care Providers

20. Investigation of Acute Non-viral Hepatitis Illnesses – “Real Water” Brand Alkaline Water (March 2021)
21. Lamictal (lamotrigine): Drug Safety Communication - Studies Show Increased Risk of Heart Rhythm Problems in Patients with Heart Disease
22. Mammography Problems at Tennessee Women’s Care P.C. in Nashville, TN: FDA Safety Communication
23. Midwestern Pet Foods Voluntarily Recall Due to Possible Salmonella Health Risk
24. Namoo Enterprise LLC Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of PremierZen Black 5000 Due to the Presence of Undeclared Sildenafil and Tadalafil
25. Nuri Trading LLC Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Shogun-X 7000, Thumbs Up 7 (Black) 25K, Thumbs Up 7 (White) 11K, 69MODE Blue 69, Due to the Presence of Undeclared Tadalafil, Sildenafil, and/ or Vardenafil
26. S&B Shopper LLC Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Imperial Extreme 2000mg Due to Presence of Undeclared Sildenafil and Tadalafil
27. SARS-CoV-2 Viral Mutations: Impact on COVID-19 Tests
28. Studies show increased risk of heart rhythm

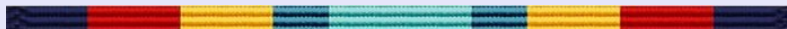
problems with seizure and mental health medicine
lamotrigine (Lamictal) in patients with heart disease

29. Ummzy LLC Issues Voluntary Nationwide Recall of Thumbs up 7 Red 70K, Shogun-X 15000mg, and Krazy Night Due to the Presence of Undeclared Tadalafil Sildenafil & Vardenafil
30. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: April 2, 2021 (04/02/21)
31. Support the Veterans Toxic Exposure Bill (S. 927/H.R. 2127)
32. Support Funding of Gulf War Illness Research
33. Help us get support on these 4 Service Dog bills
34. H.R. 912, American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans Mental Health Act
35. Support the Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act



Legislation Introduced to Recruit Separating Medical Personnel

On Wednesday, Sens. Mike Braun (R-IN) and Margaret Wood Hassan (D-NH) introduced VFW-supported S. 894, Hire Veteran Health Heroes Act of 2021. This legislation would require VA and DOD to identify military personnel in health care occupations who are interested in pursuing employment in a related field after separation from military service. The bill would also require the referral of such personnel to a VA recruiter for consideration of open positions in the specialty and location of interest to the service member. [Learn more.](#)



Chats with the Chief: South Texas Director Chris Sandles on VA's fastest growing HCS

Jon Jensen, VHA Chief of Staff, talks with Chris Sandles, director of the South Texas VA Healthcare System. He manages the fastest growing VA health care system in the country.

[Read More](#)



DOD warfighter brain health draft plan has six priorities

Documenting how warfighters score on cognitive testing – from the beginning of their careers until after they leave military service – is one of six major concerns and priorities of service members being addressed in a plan for brain health that is in final draft form.

[Read More](#)



Vietnam Veterans Memorial showcases warriors instead of war

When people visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., they can see the 58,279 names on The Wall, The Three Serviceman statue, the Vietnam Women's Memorial, the In Memory plaque, and a flagpole that flies both the U.S. and the POW-MIA flag. While the memorial and names provide an obvious visual reminder, Army Veteran Jan Scruggs wants people to know the story behind the memorial. It involves a poncho, a promise, PTSD, an Academy Award-winning movie and a focus on warriors instead of a war.

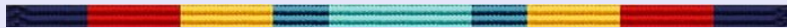
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CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE VFC NEWSLETTER!



WRNMMC's kidney transplant ranked as 5-star

The Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland has the best organ transplant outcomes in the greater District, Maryland and Virginia region, according to the Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTR), an agency that tracks transplant programs outcomes.

[Read More](#)



VETERANS OF PANAMA CANAL ZONE

In the news...the MVA has submitted a Rulemaking

Request with evidence to the VA Secretary and are waiting for a decision. As director, I believe the evidence is clearly in favor for those Veterans of Panama who have a disease as outlined by the VA. This Rulemaking Request can be seen on the MVA website here:

<https://www.militaryVeteransadvocacy.org/Vets-of-panama.html>.

The MVA received a letter back from the VA Undersecretary regarding our Rulemaking Request. It is not a No, not a Yes, but a “we are still reviewing the evidence.” I continue to research and provide more proof, but, again, it is my belief the proof provided to the VA is in your favor for exposure. I invite everyone to thoroughly read our Rulemaking Request and the References provided to the VA.

In my research of the EPA studies of these chemicals, their own Position Document on 2,4,5-T states TCDD comes up through the food chain. Their report was from a study of agricultural spraying of fields. The cows ate the sprayed fields, the people ate the meat. This is not rocket science, but a travesty that Veterans need to prove they were near a perimeter or directly sprayed upon.

2,4-D which causes many cancers was used in

Gatun Lake for many years, beginning in 1948. We bathed, fished, and recreated in these waters. We have records of 2,4-D & 2,4,5-T shipped/stored and used in Panama. We have pictures from 2020 of what appears to be Agent Orange barrels used for fencing around the new marina at Fort Sherman.

We continue to await a decision and I am hopeful that the VA Secretary will someday soon add Panama to the list of places where dioxin (TCDD) was used.

Wins recently for Panama CZ Veterans....we have had a handful of Veterans win in 2020 by using these shipment records. The judge ruled in favor of the Veteran due to “overwhelming evidence” when speaking of the U.S. Census records. The shipments from 1958-1977 can be seen in the references attached to our Rulemaking Request.

Asked for a bill to be introduced in Congress... on a second-pronged approach, we met again with one of the congressional aides we had met with in January to continue to ask for assistance from the House of Representatives for introduction of a bill to ask the VA Secretary to make Panama presumptive and add Panama to the list of places where dioxin

was located.

We have asked that the representative relay to the GAO that we want the GAO to send individuals to test for these chemicals in the old Canal Zone. I am positive they will be found if they agree to look.

Donna Tornoe
Director, Veterans of Panama Canal Zone
Military Veterans Advocacy, Inc.



#VeteranOfTheDay Navy Veteran Ruth Drover Burnham

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Navy Veteran Ruth Drover Burnham, who turns 100 years old March 29 and served in the Reserve during World War II.

[Read More](#)



35th Annual National Disabled Veterans Sports Clinic

The 35th Annual National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic will look a bit different but the mission remains the same. This year's five-day event, sponsored by VA and DAV, will be held virtually.

[Read More](#)



Blood donation could earn Indianapolis 500 trip, gift card

Those who come to give blood or platelets April 1-15 through the American Red Cross will automatically be entered to win a VIP trip for four to the 2022 Indianapolis 500®.

[Read More](#)

A Veteran's perspective on the challenges of transition

Retired Army Sergeant Major Jason Beighley says leaving the security blanket of the military culture was tough. He shares the three major things he has learned since retiring.

[Read More](#)



Vietnam Purple Heart Veteran reflects on service, transition, family

Purple Heart Veteran Thornell Billingslea served in the 173rd Airborne Brigade. As we celebrate National Vietnam War Veterans Day, VA says to all Vietnam Veterans, "Welcome Home."

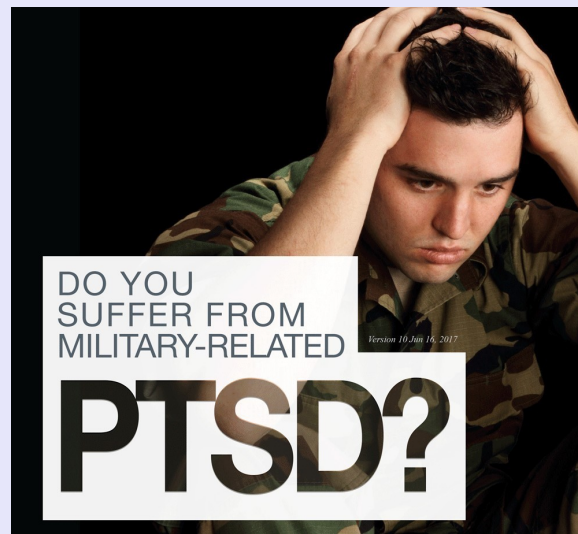
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The Defense Health Agency is planning to complete treatment facility transition by fall 2021

The Defense Health Agency is planning and preparing to complete the military medical treatment facility transition by the mandated time at the close of this fiscal year, explained Dr. Brian Lein, DHA's assistant director, Health Care Administration.

[Read More](#)



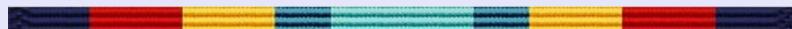
**Veterans Crisis Line:
1-800-273-8255 & Press 1
Ntl Call Center for Homeless Vets
1-877-424-3838**



**BAMC Women's History Month honors
women past and present**

Brooke Army Medical Center, located aboard Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston in Texas, held a virtual Women's History Month commemoration March 23 to honor women from the past and the present.

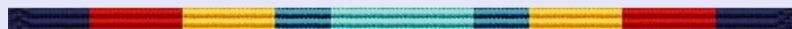
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#VeteranOfTheDay Army Veteran Leslie Zimmerman

During Women's History Month, today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran Leslie Zimmerman, who served during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

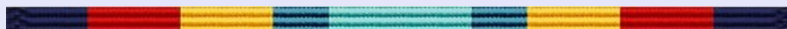
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Fresh Focus #23: MOVE!

Knowledge is power when learning about our patterns and behaviors, especially in relation to food. This series hands that blueprint over to you and provides you with the tools to carry the plan through. This week's episode features MOVE!

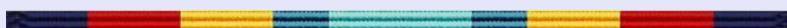
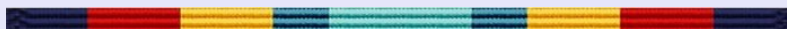
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Defense Health Agency celebrating the mighty military child in April

The month of April is a mighty big deal for the Defense Health Agency.

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OKINAWA

I have been working with a few Veterans that have

been trying to get records. I have helped them with their paperwork, but it seems that the National Personnel Records Center system has been shut down due to Covid issues. As of March 8, 2021, they have entered into a phased expansion of their onsite work force, but they are still not accepting non-emergency records requests. There is no set timeline for return to full operation. When they do, I assume there will be a huge backlog and waiting time. If you are looking for records for Veterans separated after calendar year 2002, they are available electronically. You can use the online application at

<https://Vetrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html>.

Legislation, Litigation, and Education requires a huge amount of time and effort from a team of professionals that receive no pay for their efforts. If you are on social media sites with other Veterans, please ask them to log onto the MVA site and see what MVA has done and continues to do. As the Director for the Veterans of Okinawa, I am specifically asking that if you know any Veterans that served on Okinawa to join our site and share any information with us regarding herbicide use or storage that you have knowledge or documentation of. I can be contacted by personal email at

Jerrybalmes@gmail.com.

The more members we have at MVA, the more power we have to move our mission further.

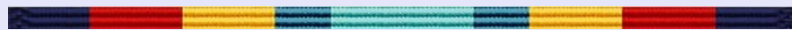
Jerry Balmes
Director, Veterans of Okinawa
Military Veterans Advocacy, Inc.



Forbes ranks VA as one of America's best large employers

VA was named one of 2021's top large employers by Forbes magazine, recognizing our efforts to create a great working environment for our employees.

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Update: SAVE LIVES Act allows VA to soon provide COVID-19 vaccinations to all Veterans, their spouses and caregivers

VA has begun work to implement the expansion of COVID-19 vaccinations to all Veterans, caregivers, spouses and CHAMPVA beneficiaries under the SAVE LIVES Act. We still have a limited amount of vaccines. We're working to determine how quickly we can begin to offer vaccines to these other groups. In accordance with the law, we must prioritize vaccinations and health care delivery for Veterans enrolled in VA care.

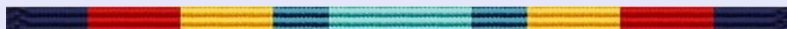
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Tax & Credit Information



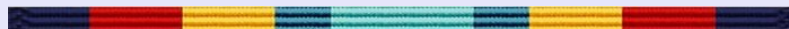
1. Face masks and other personal protective equipment to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are tax deductible
2. People should check Get My Payment for status of third EIP and watch their mail
3. IRS extends additional tax deadlines for individuals to May 17
4. Emergency aid granted to students due to COVID are not taxable IRS explains student and higher education institution reporting requirements, credits and deductions
5. IRS projects stimulus payments to non-filer Social Security and other federal beneficiaries will be disbursed later this week
6. IRS warns university students and staff of impersonation email scam
7. Here's how taxpayers can track the status of their refund



**Veterans schedule COVID-19 vaccinations
with VEText**

Veterans are scheduling COVID-19 vaccination appointment through VEText, an interactive digital solution from VA that automatically reminds Veterans of upcoming appointments via text messaging.

[Read More](#)



#VeteranOfTheDay Marine Corps Veteran Shannon Teague

During Social Work Month, today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Marine Corps Veteran Shannon Teague, who served from 200-2004 and is now a VA social worker.

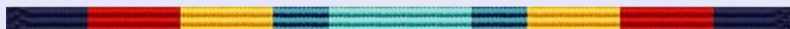
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Celebrating Women's History Month

Women's History Month - VA celebrates valiant women Veterans of yesterday, today and tomorrow. Women have honorably served in the military for generations and continue to break barriers even today.

[Read More](#)



Veterans see help through American Rescue Plan, says SecVA

Veterans will see significant help through the American Rescue Plan, VA Secretary Denis McDonough told the House Veterans Affairs Committee March 25 during a virtual hearing.

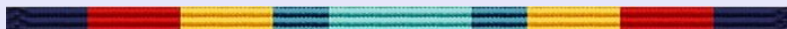
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Virtual program helps diabetic patients better manage their insulin

The Diabetes Remote Electronic Assisted Monitoring, or DREAM, program focuses on teaching patients how to measure and adjust their insulin independently based on their provider's instructions.

[Read More](#)



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

Army Pvt. Lyle W. Reab, 22, of Phillips, Nebraska, was assigned to Company F, 2nd Battalion, 112th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action as of Nov. 9, 1944, after

his unit engaged German forces at Vossenack, Germany, in the Hürtgen Forest. His body was not recovered. Reab will be buried June 8, 2021, in Aurora, Nebraska. [Read about Reab.](#)

Marine Corps Pfc. John F. Middleswart, 19, of San Diego, 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 Middleswart. He will be buried on June 8, 2021, in his hometown. [Read about Middleswart.](#)

Navy Pharmacist's Mate 3rd Class George L. Paradis, 23, 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 Paradis. Interment services are pending. [Read about Paradis.](#)

Navy Seaman 1st Class Wilbur F. Ballance, 20,

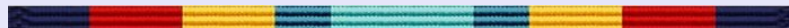
was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen,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

Navy Fireman 1st Class Harold E. Bates, 27, 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 Bates. Interment services are pending. [Read about Bates.](#)

Navy Seaman 1st Class Elmer P. Lawrence, 25, 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 Lawrence.

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

Navy Signalman 1st Class Eugene M. Skaggs, 33, 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 Skaggs. Interment services are pending. [Read about Skaggs.](#)



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www.Veterans-For-Change.org

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



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