



# Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

*A Voice of the Veterans*

Week Ending Sunday, June 20, 2021

Volume 12, Issue 25



## **This-N-That**

Good afternoon Jim,

We'd like to wish all our fathers, a Happy Father's Day today! Hopefully you're being flooded with attention from kids and family.

We've added a few more **TAKE ACTION** items to the list, so when you get down to that portion of the newsletter, please act on all items listed.

We need to make sure our Reps and Senators in DC are aware we're not going away and we're not giving up the fight. Also, for all our civilian readers, you too can help by participating. You don't have to be a Veteran or in the Military to help our Veterans and their families.

I've also added an article and the link if under Other Links to Stories regarding CPAP machines, specifically Phillips Corporation. If you use a Phillips CPAP for sleep apnea, please be sure to read that article, and see if your machine is listed, then contact your doctor immediately.

I just happen to be one of the unfortunate ones. I've had my machine for a few years now, and I know I will be calling my doctor on Monday to get my machine swapped out.

What's going on with them is there is a seal inside the machine that disintegrates then starts to produce a carcinogenic gas. And I just want to make sure all who use this machine, which is a great machine other than this issue, is protected and doesn't end up developing and unwanted illness.

It's just a few days away, the Military Veterans Advocacy will be holding their third annual raffle drawing on Saturday June 26th. So, if you're interested, please get your ticket while you can.

If you're not currently a subscriber to our newsletter, maybe think about subscribing today!

Or if you'd like you can also follow us on [Twitter](#), or join us on [MEWE](#) too!

I still don't have a release date yet on the launching of the new website, hopefully I had hoped we'd have a launch date this week, but I'm not sure how our Webmaster is doing health wise. So many in his town have had bad reactions to the COVID vaccine.

Our webmaster is located in Sweden so communications are

often delayed due to time zone differences, but I personally do like him quite a bit, he's good, responsive, intelligent and very knowledgeable and the best part is he doesn't charge me an arm and a leg for the work I ask for where our prior webmaster would have bankrupted me.

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

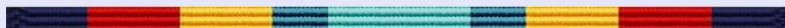
On behalf of our Volunteers nationwide and myself, we wish you and your family good health!

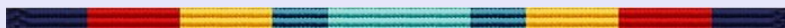
Respectfully,

Jim Davis

Founder

[Jim.Davis@Veterans-For-Change.org](mailto: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](https://www.militaryVeteransadvocacy.org/.../c2/yearly_dues)

You may contact Robin at [robin.barr@madvocacy.org](mailto:robin.barr@madvocacy.org)



## **How to enjoy the summer... and the sun... safely!**

Spending time outside is a great way to be active, lose some stress and get Vitamin D. You can work and play outside without raising your skin cancer risk by protecting your skin from the sun.

[Read More](#)



## **Minority Summit expands diversity, partnerships with Minority Serving Institutions**

More than 500 participants from Minority Serving Institutions (MSI), academic affiliates and professional organizations attended VA's "2021 Minority Summit: The Power of Collaborating with VA." The summit was hosted by the VA Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) June 9 to find ways to advance VA academic partnerships with MSIs and expand diversity in health professions trainees.

[Read More](#)



## **Military-Veterans Advocacy's 3rd Annual Rifle Raffle**



Military-Veterans Advocacy's 3rd annual rifle raffle continues to be a hit, with a little over a month to go, has sold half of the 300 tickets printed, Last year we ran out of tickets prior to the drawing and this year the tickets are going fast. Our first prize this year, the Springfield M1A1 rifle is a collector's item as well as a fully functional firearm., Many of you carried that rifle in boot camp so there is a sentimental reason for the quick pace of ticket sales. Our second prize, the Smith and Wesson Model 686 7-shot revolver is also beautifully tooled and will be the envy of everyone at the range, And of course our third prize \$250. cash will always come in handy.

So please feel free to jump on our web site at <https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/rifle-raffle.html> and purchase a ticket or tickets. And while you are on the website, if you are not a member please consider joining. Membership is \$25 per year.

Life memberships are also available [https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/store/c2/yearly\\_dues](https://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/store/c2/yearly_dues). We have gift memberships for those who are having financial concerns. For more information contact Robin Barr [robin.barr@madvocacy.org](mailto:robin.barr@madvocacy.org).

Drawing is June 26, you do not have to be present to win, but you must comply with all federal and state firearms laws. Tickets are \$45 apiece! We accept Master Card, American Express and Discover.

Please help our volunteer staff continue to litigate, legislate and educate on your behalf.

Commander J. B. Wells U. S. Navy (Retired)  
Attorney at Law  
Chairman  
Military-Veterans Advocacy, Inc.



## **#VeteranOfTheDay Air Force Veteran Olga Custodio**

During Caribbean-American Heritage Month, today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Olga Custodio, the first Latina to graduate from Air Force pilot training. Olga Nevarez, who later married Edwin Custodio and took his last name, was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Growing up, her father was in the Army, so the family moved around the world.

We honor your service, Olga!

[Read More](#)





# Your actions

could save a life.

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

VeteransCrisisLine.net



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## Providing clean syringes to Veterans who inject drugs

Syringe Services Programs provide preventive and treatment services. They limit the negative effects of injection drug use (infections, overdose) and provide mental health support.

[Read More](#)

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## You Asked, We Answered: What can I do once I'm vaccinated?

VA is listening to your questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and this blog series answers your questions.

[Read More](#)

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## Take Command of Your Dental Health with TDP Wellness Program



It's especially important for those with chronic medical conditions to practice good oral health and see the dentist as directed. If you or a family member has been diagnosed with a chronic medical condition, you qualify for additional dental services when you register with the TRICARE Dental Program's [TDP Wellness Program](#).

[Read More](#)



## Know the Warning Signs

**It Matters.**

**Sometimes, a crisis may involve thoughts of suicide. Learn to recognize these warning signs:**

- Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings
- Feeling like there is no reason to live
- Rage or anger
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Increasing alcohol or drug abuse
- Withdrawing from family and friends

**The presence of the following signs requires immediate attention:**

- Thinking about hurting or killing themselves
- Looking for ways to kill themselves
- Talking about death, dying or suicide
- Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse

..... Confidential chat at [VeteransCrisisLine.net](#) or text to [838255](#) .....



## **VA Puget Sound brings COVID-19 vaccines to Veterans experiencing homelessness or housing instability**

In late 2020, Seattle's VA Puget Sound Health Care System contacted community partners, such as homeless shelters, transitional housing programs and permanent housing programs to help get the COVID-19 vaccine directly to Veterans in need, such as those experiencing homelessness or those experiencing housing instability.

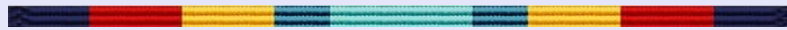
[Read More](#)



## **Building COVID-19 Vaccine Trust: Myths vs. Facts**

As of today, more than 140 million people in the U.S. have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Still, there are those who've decided to hold off on getting the COVID-19 vaccine until they learn more about it. Here's a look at common vaccine myths and the facts you need to know.

[Read More](#)



### ***Links to Other Stories***

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20. Air Force's Last POW Retires After More Than 30 Years of Service
21. Newt Gingrich: America's last WW2 Veterans – here are their honest, inspiring and heartbreaking stories
22. Retired Two-Star Reduced to 2nd Lieutenant After

Sexual  
Battery  
Conviction

23. Philips recalls sleep apnea machines, ventilators over possible cancer risk
24. 'The Father of Naval Special Warfare' Almost Changed the History of the Vietnam War
25. Scanning military records now will improve disability claims process later, VBA says
26. Plan

Your  
Visit  
to  
Kansas  
City's  
National  
WWI  
Museum  
and  
Memorial

27. Boy  
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28. VA  
Warns  
of  
'Dramatic  
Increase'  
in  
Homeless  
Veterans  
as  
Eviction  
Moratorium  
Ends

29. PTSD  
Myths  
Persist  
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Military  
Community,  
New  
Survey  
Finds

30. Veterans  
protest  
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## Bladder Cancer: Know the signs

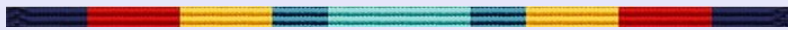
VA encourages Veterans to talk to their doctors about the signs and symptoms of bladder cancer.

[Read More](#)

**Message From Monica Diaz Executive  
Director, VHA Homeless Programs Office**

June is a month of special observances that connect to the VHA Homeless Programs Office's (HPO) mission to support Veterans experiencing homelessness—posttraumatic stress (PTSD) Awareness Month, Pride Month, and Juneteenth. Many Veterans who are homeless are living with PTSD, are members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT), and related identity communities, and/or are Black Americans. HPO is dedicated to serving these populations with innovation, thoughtfulness, and an acute understanding of their unique needs.

[Read More](#)



## **Men: It's a Sign of Strength to Ask for Help**

Service member sees there's a stigma associated around men monitoring their health or getting help for issues related specifically to men's health.

[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]**

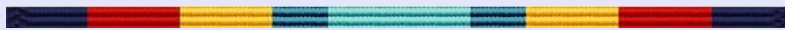
1-800-959-8277



## **G.I. Jobs, connecting the military community to civilian opportunities**

Top Gun changed Chris Hale's life and he used his experiences to form G.I. Jobs to help Veterans transition from the military to civilian life.

[Read More](#)



## **Hernias: What Every Service Member Should Know**

According to the National Institutes of Health, men are eight to 10 times more likely than women to develop inguinal hernias.

[Read More](#)



## Men's Health Focus on the Mental, Physical, & Emotional Health Aspects

Men are far more likely than women to go two years or longer without seeing a physician or other health care professional.

[Read More](#)



The Veterans-For-Change website has been around since 2009, We've been around since May 2006. 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 **2,755** hits per day, and downloads average **3,994** per day with a total **7,460,179** visitors as of Sunday 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](http://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: **10,653**)
- Polls
- Web Links, more than **8,153**, Added 59 New Links (Updated: 05/26/21)

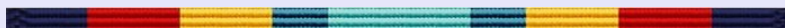
If you have a submission for the memorial pages, E-Mail:  
[Jim.Davis@Veterans-for-change.org](mailto:Jim.Davis@Veterans-for-change.org)



## **Hurricane season – save these phone numbers & links**

Next week is the official start of summer and, in parts of the country, hurricane season. Veterans and their families can find help and support through the resources listed in this blog. Print out a copy, put it on the fridge and make sure everyone in your family knows what to do.

[Read More](#)



## **Enjoy the summer and the sun safely with these tips**

Sunday is the first day of summer!

Spending time outside is a great way to be active, lose some stress and get Vitamin D. You can work and play outside without raising your skin cancer risk by protecting your skin from the sun.

You can protect your skin from too much sun with these simple but effective accessories.

[Read More](#)



## **Vietnam Veterans of America, June 16, 2021**

Today at 3:00 pm, the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, Chairman, Jon Tester-MT and Ranking Member Jerry Moran-KS, will hold a full committee hearing to review the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget and 2023 Advance Appropriations Requests for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

### **WITNESS LIST**

#### **PANEL ONE**

The Honorable Denis McDonough, Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Accompanied by:

The Honorable Jon Rychalski, Assistant Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer

## PANEL TWO

Mr. Shane Liermann, Deputy National Legislative Director,  
Disabled American Veterans

Mr. Patrick Murray, Director, National Legislative Service,  
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Mr. Roscoe Butler, Associate Legislative Director, Government  
Relations, Paralyzed Veterans of America

Watch the hearing at: <https://www.veterans.senate.gov/>

Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is the nation's only congressionally chartered veterans' service organization dedicated to the needs of Vietnam-era veterans and their families. VVA's commitment to all veterans is exemplified in its founding principle, "Never again will one generation of veterans abandon another."

[www.vva.org](http://www.vva.org)



**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 **06/19/21**)

Please note, we've added **2** new items to the **TAKE ACTION** list.

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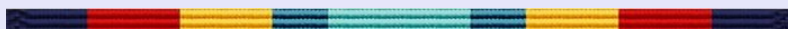
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48. H.R.  
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49. H.R.  
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51. Comprehensive  
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Act!





## Vaccination event for Veterans and others experiencing homelessness demonstrates VA's Fourth Mission in action

In addition to vaccinating Veterans, VA has offered the vaccine to non-Veterans as part of the Fourth Mission, which includes providing support for national, state and local efforts during public health and other emergencies. This support was evident on June 3, when VA held a COVID-19 vaccination clinic outside its Central Office in Washington, D.C., for anyone — not just Veterans — experiencing homelessness.

[Read More](#)



### SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

TALK:	BEHAVIOR:	MOOD:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Killing themselves</li><li>• Feeling hopeless</li><li>• Having no reason to live</li><li>• Being a burden to others</li><li>• Feeling trapped</li><li>• Unbearable pain</li></ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased use of alcohol or drugs</li><li>• Looking for a way to end their lives</li><li>• Withdrawing from activities</li><li>• Isolating from people</li><li>• Sleeping too much or too little</li><li>• Visiting or calling people to say goodbye</li><li>• Giving away possessions</li><li>• Aggression</li><li>• Fatigue</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Depression</li><li>• Anxiety</li><li>• Loss of interest</li><li>• Irritability</li><li>• Humiliation/Shame</li><li>• Agitation/Anger</li><li>• Relief/Sudden Improvement</li></ul> 



## Dress for success: Non-profit helps Women Veterans find new jobs

Dress For Success Austin (DFSA) provides a network of professional support, business attire and development tools to

help all women thrive in work and life.

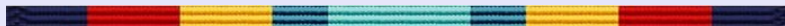
[Read More](#)



## **Living His Best Life with VA Whole Health**

Pandemic depression and a few extra pounds were preventing this Navy Veteran from living out his best retirement years in Florida. Whole Health changed that by helping him to lose weight and make new connections.

[Read More](#)



## **Bladder cancer: Know the signs and seek treatment**

Bladder cancer is the 4th most common cancer among Veterans. It occurs when the cells in the bladder start to grow out of control. Since early diagnosis is critical to successful treatment and recovery, VA is encouraging Veterans to talk to their doctors about the signs and symptoms of bladder cancer.

"Early diagnosis of bladder cancer leads to good outcomes," said Dr. Chong-Xian Pan of the VA Boston Healthcare System. "Two out of three bladder cancer cases are related to smoking. Even electronic cigarettes are linked to bladder cancer. Quitting smoking is the best way to prevent bladder cancer from occurring."

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



## **Fresh Focus S6 #29: Malnutrition**

When people think of seeing a Registered Dietitian, they think of eating healthier or aiming to lose weight to meet a specific goal. However, for some of our Veterans, gaining too much weight is not their problem it is actually quite the opposite. When you go many days without eating enough, many changes occur inside your body. Your body will start to break down muscle and fat to use for energy. This can lead to a condition called malnutrition.

[Read More](#)

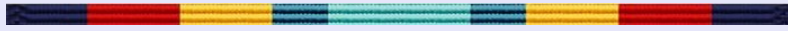


## **How to succeed in college or grad school #3: Tactics for achieving good grades**

In the third guest blog post in this series, Harvard Extension

School Instructor Cynthia A. Meyersburg, Ph.D., guides student Veterans on how to prepare for and succeed when returning to an academic school. This post examines tactics for achieving good grades.

[Read More](#)

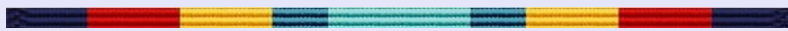


## **Mother and daughter emotional in-person reunion a year after COVID-19 lockdown**

"Pure joy" were the words Stephanie Harrist's mom, Brenda Bartkowiak, used to describe their reunion at the Battle Creek VA Medical Center Community Living Center (CLC) last month. The CLC began coordinating in-person family visitations for the first time since putting pandemic restrictions in place on March 17, 2020.

"This is the first time I've been able to touch my daughter in 16 months," Bartkowiak said. "It's really good to be with her again."

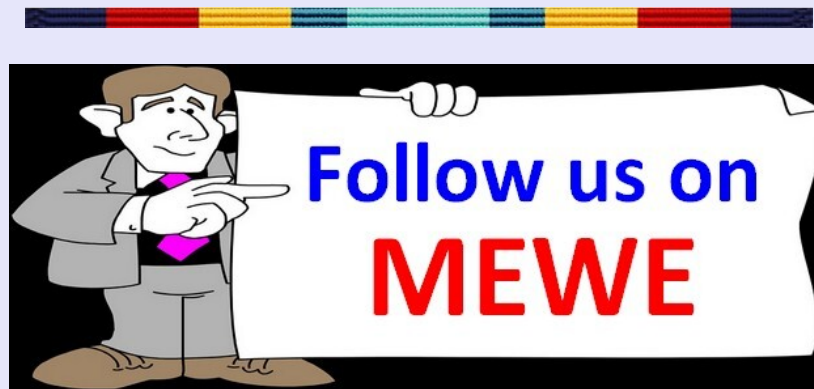
[Read More](#)



## **VFW Testifies on VA Infrastructure**

This week, VFW National Legislative Director Patrick Murray testified before the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs on behalf of the VFW and our The Independent Budget partners, DAV (Disabled American Veterans) and the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). The hearing focused on President Biden's national infrastructure plan, which includes a proposed

\$18 billion for VA capital infrastructure needs. Murray stated, “We are very appreciative of this proposal and given the gap in funding identified by VA’s Strategic Capitol Investment Planning process, such an infusion is certainly justified.” Murray also stressed the need to refocus hiring initiatives within VA in order to increase the capacity for critical VA construction. [Watch the hearing](#), which begins at 18:15 mark.



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[VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE](#)

[HOMELESS HEROES PROGRAM OF VETERANS-FOR-CHANGE](#)

[AMVETS GROUP](#)

[VETERANS SOCIAL GROUP](#)

[{USAVET} SUPPORTING GOD & ALL WHO SERVED OUR GREAT NATION](#)

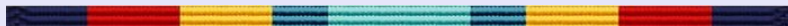




## **Serving Veterans in the time of COVID-19: OIT tools to the rescue**

In the time of COVID-19, Veterans especially need to be able to count on VA. That's why an important goal of VA's Office of Information and Technology (OIT) has been and continues to be using technology in ways that make accessing VA services increasingly more seamless, effective, efficient and easy for Veterans.

[Read More](#)



## **Sheri Swokowski: American Hero**

Retired Army Col. Sheri Swokowski is the highest-ranking, out transgender U.S. Veteran in the United States. Today, she advocates for LGBTQ+ Veterans.

[Read More](#)



## **VFW Testifies on VA Budget**

This week, VFW National Legislative Director Patrick Murray testified before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on behalf of VFW and with our The Independent Budget partners, DAV (Disabled American Veterans) and the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). The hearing focused on President

Biden's budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs. "While VA has received increased funding levels, a persistent lack of regular oversight and IT development continues to negatively impact access for an increasing number of veterans," said Murray. Additional hearing witnesses also called for robust oversight of critical education and employment programs within VA. [Watch the hearing.](#)



## Office of Inspector General

1. COVID-19:  
TSA  
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Spread  
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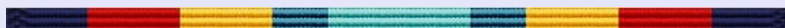
3. Prescription  
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## **Community care optometrist committed to Veterans**

Dr. Jesse Dominguez and his staff consider it a special honor to care for Veterans at his practice. "These Veteran patients don't just come to get glasses from us. They become part of our family."

[Read More](#)



## **Medically Complex Telerehabilitation program "saved my life"**

Medically Complex Telerehabilitation addresses functional and motivational needs of Vets through their individual telerehabilitation and coaching sessions. There's also camaraderie and social support.

[Read More](#)



## VHA Webinar for Gulf War Veterans

On June 22, 2021, VA will hold a virtual class on Gulf War exposures and health concerns. Topics to be covered are potential exposures, research findings, health effects, available resources, and steps to manage symptoms. [Read more.](#)



1. [FDA warns that vapors from alcohol-based hand sanitizers can have side effects](#)
2. [Philips Issues](#)

a  
Recall  
Notification\*  
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Mitigate  
Potential  
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4. Coronavirus  
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2021
5. FDA  
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6. FDA  
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## **VA, Prudential to host Wellness Wednesday Financial Education series**

We've weathered quite a year with the pandemic, where it's taken all we could muster to stay healthy and protect our loved ones. Now, as things slowly return to normal, it's time to focus on financial "health."

[Read More](#)



## **Do you know what VA's IT team does that benefits you?**

Do you know how this VA office works behind the scenes and why it's really important to you and the Veteran community?

[Read More](#)



## **VA to Help with Digital Divide**

Veterans who may not have a video-capable device or broadband connection for telehealth appointments can contact the [VA Digital Divide Consult](#) for assistance. Through this program, a social worker will help determine if the veteran is eligible for either VA's Connected Devices Program, Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) Lifeline program,



Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) program, or a local ATLAS site. Telehealth allows for a continuum of care between a veteran and health care provider, eliminates extensive travel and wait times, and permits the veteran to choose a safe space for their appointment. [Learn more.](#)



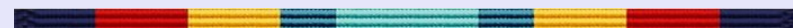
*CLICK HERE TO FOLLOW US ON TWITTER !*



## **Borne the Battle #246: Navy Veteran Jonathan Kingham, Nashville and Operation Song Songwriter**

High military aptitude test scores and high school curiosity earned Jonathan Kingham a place in the Navy that started him on the path toward a career as a singer-songwriter. On this episode of Borne the Battle, Kingham discusses the how the Navy helped him enter the Seattle music scene, the evolution and future of the music industry and how singers and songwriters make a living from music.

[Read More](#)



## **Hospital director Veteran urges others to complete advance directive**

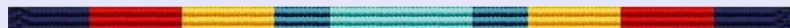
As service members transition to Veteran status, they may not be aware that previously completed advance directive documents may no longer be valid. Here's a lot of information and forms.

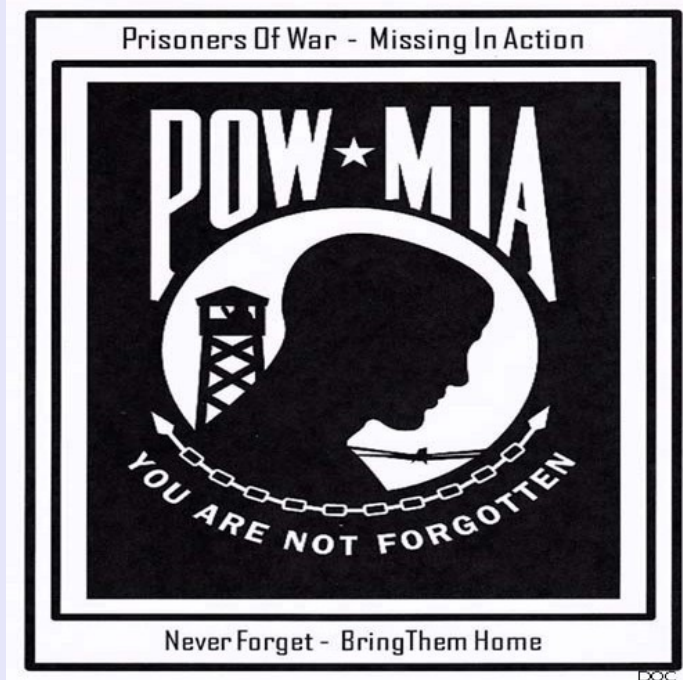
[Read More](#)



## **Direct Child Tax Credit to Begin in July**

Part of the American Rescue Plan Act provides for an enhanced 2021 child tax credit. Many veteran households with children under 18 years old will soon be eligible for direct monthly payments per month from July to December 2021. Eligible households will receive \$300 per child 5 years old and under, and \$250 per child 6-17 years old. It is also possible to qualify for a one-time \$500 payment for children who are between 19-24 years old and full-time college students. These direct payments should help with the issue of hunger in the veteran community as veteran groups have found nearly 40 percent of American military families have been in need of food during the pandemic to include 1 in 4 Iraq and Afghanistan War veterans. [Learn more.](#)





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## **Minority Summit expands diversity, partnerships with Minority Serving Institutions**

More than 500 participants from minority-serving institutions, academic affiliates and professional organizations attended VA's 2021 Minority Summit to find ways to advance VA academic partnerships and expand diversity in health professions trainees.

[Read More](#)

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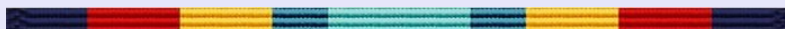
## **Register for June 24 Webinar About the Autism Care Demonstration**

Register today for the TRICARE webinar, "Autism Care Demonstration Program Changes: An Overview of What TRICARE Beneficiaries Need to Know," on June 24, from 1 to

2 p.m. ET.

Are you a parent of a child diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and enrolled in TRICARE's Autism Care Demonstration (ACD)? If yes, join this webinar to learn how the changes to the ACD will affect you and your family. You may also have a chance to ask a question during the Q&A session.

[Register Here](#)



## **Senate MilCon/VA Looks at DoD Housing and Other Infrastructure Needs**

The Senate Appropriations Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Subcommittee held a hearing on the Department of Defense infrastructure needs, which included the issues with military family housing. It was noted that the FY2022 DoD budget for family housing (\$9.8 billion) has an increase of 22 percent more than the current fiscal year budget (\$8.1 billion). The association is thankful that Subcommittee Ranking Member Sen. John Boozman (Ark.) pressed DoD witnesses about the poor condition of many base barracks and the need for adequate child development centers.

The FRA welcomes the proposed increased funding for family housing that was discussed during the Subcommittee hearing on DoD infrastructure. The association urges Congress to work to ensure service members and their families have safe, quality homes and communities. The FRA wants to increase the accountability of privatized housing companies by putting more oversight authority into the hands of local military leadership. Members can weigh in on the military housing issue by going

to the [Action Center](#).



## **A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY: Juneteenth Commemoration**

On Juneteenth, we remember, we commemorate and we reflect on the long road to freedom forced upon Black slaves across America. We stand with those who have continued that fight ever since. Their resilience represents the best of us, and we at VA, will never forget their sacrifices to this Nation. America proudly celebrates alongside them.

[Read More](#)



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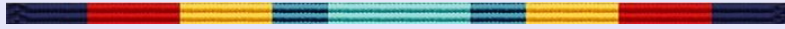


## **VA psychiatrist offers "A Few Good Notes" for her Veteran patients**

Dr. Mary Rorro is a psychiatrist with the New Jersey VA. She created a program called "A Few Good Notes" blending music, poetry, photography, and the arts as part of her psychiatric

practice.

[Read More](#)



## **Peer-to-peer Pay-It-Forward program paying dividends for MHS GENESIS**

The Defense Health Agency's Pay-It-Forward program was designed to leverage the experience of those who have gone through the Department of Defense transition to new modern electronic health record, MHS GENESIS, to help new users.

[Read More](#)



## **SVAC Reviews FY2022 VA Budget**

The Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee held a hearing to review the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) proposed budget request for Fiscal Year 2022. The hearing considered how the agency's budget aims to better serve veterans and their families through increased benefits, care and services. Witnesses included VA Secretary Denis McDonough, and VA Assistant Secretary for Management and Chief Financial Officer Jon Rychalski. SVAC Chairman Jon Tester was happy to see a 10 percent increase in the proposed budget but noted the significant backlog of disability claims. He says this will increase if Congress enacts the veteran toxic exposure bill.

During the hearing, Tester questioned VA Secretary McDonough on the agency's plans to address critical problems facing the agency through additional resources, such as

investing in the benefits claims process. There was also lengthy discussion of the budgetary impact if the veteran toxic exposure bill becomes law. Members can weigh in on the toxic exposure issue by going to the [Action Center](#).

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## 50 personal mobility devices donated to VA and Vets who use them

On the Operation Mobility Tour, 25 Veterans will receive an iBOT wheelchair donated by Mobius Mobility, with matching donations to SCI/D Centers.

[Read More](#)



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## VA Bedford's five-year transformation to a learning, teaching culture

VA partners with medical schools and colleges to provide training programs at VA facilities. As a result of that partnership, VA Bedford has a renewed focus on leading-edge training in geriatrics.

[Read More](#)



## **Coast Guard Set to Roll Out New Electronic Health Record System Soon**

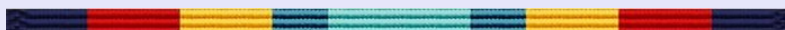
The Coast Guard's electronic health records solution, MHS GENESIS, is officially expanding from four pilot sites to 14 clinics and 17 sickbays as the Pacific Area rollout prepares to go live at the end of August 2021.

[Read More](#)



## **President Biden Nominates Del Toro as SecNav**

As predicted in the May 14, 2021, edition of NewsBytes, President Joe Biden has submitted Carlos Del Toro to serve as Secretary of the Navy. Del Toro is a Naval Academy graduate, and CEO of a tech consultancy. After coming to the United States as a child from Cuba in 1962, Del Toro went on to become the first Hispanic to serve as a Captain of an Aegis cruiser or destroyer. His Navy career includes Middle East deployments during Operation Desert Storm. The appointment requires Senate confirmation.



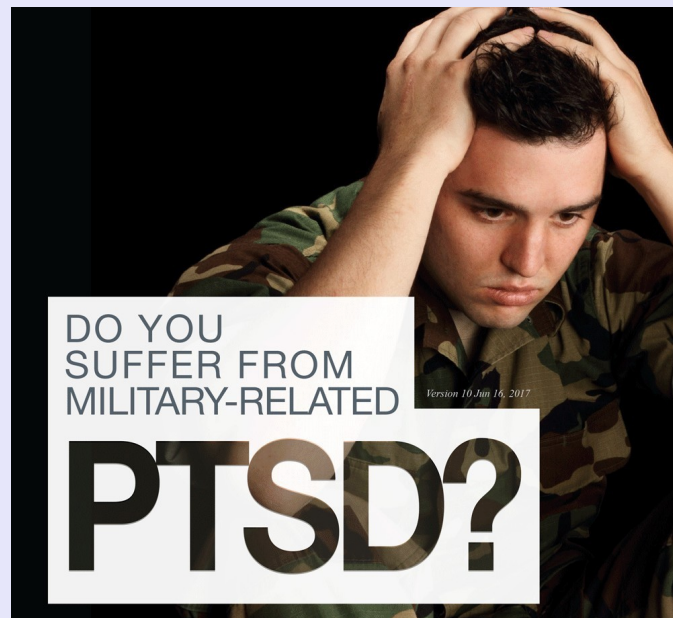
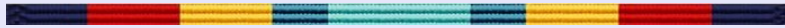
## **Coaching Into Care helps loved ones help Veterans**

For more than a decade, caring and experienced Coaching

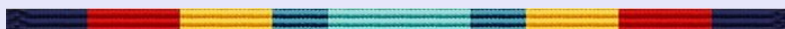


Into Care professionals have been empowering Veterans' families and friends with guidance and resources to have discussions about mental health.

[Read More](#)



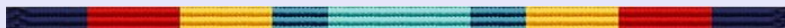
**Veterans Crisis Line:  
1-800-273-8255 & Press 1  
Ntl Call Center for Homeless Vets  
1-877-424-3838**



## **Leadership Discusses Lessons Learned from Latest MHS GENESIS Waves**

The Defense Health Agency's Program Executive Office for Defense Health Care Management Systems Modernization (PEO DHMSM) held a virtual media roundtable in Arlington, Virginia, June 10.

[Read More](#)



## **Retiring from Active Duty? You Need This TRICARE Brochure**

When you retire from active duty, you experience a major life change. Some parts of your TRICARE coverage will also change. Wouldn't it be helpful if you had a resource you could download? Check out the TRICARE Retiring from Active Duty Brochure for information you need to know.

[Read More](#)



## **VA nurse executive volunteers over 300 hours to administer vaccines**

Nurse executive La Tara Miller volunteered more than 300 hours providing COVID-19 relief in her community. "I felt like I had to do something. Nurse practitioner or nurse executive, I'm always a nurse."

[Read More](#)



## **#VeteranOfTheDay Army Veteran William J. Bean**

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran William James Bean, who fought in the Battle of Saint-Mihiel and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive during World War I.

[Read More](#)



## **G.I. Jobs is connecting the military community to civilian opportunities**

Founded by Veterans, G.I. Jobs continues its service to connect the military community to civilian opportunity. Job boards, job fairs, a monthly print and digital magazine, and other resources – all free to service members, Veterans and their families.

[Read More](#)

## **Dress for Success: Non-profit helps women find new jobs**

Dress For Success Austin (DFSA) and its affiliates across the country provide a network of professional support, business attire and development tools to help all women thrive in work and life.

[Read More](#)

## #VeteranOfTheDay Army Air Forces Veteran Milton W. Stern

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Air Forces Veteran Milton W. Stern, who served during World War II and was a prisoner of war.

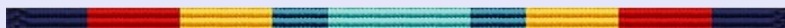
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## VA diversity & inclusion task force: How it affects applicants and employees

A 120-day task force on inclusion, diversity, equity and access will help ensure a welcoming and supportive environment for patients and employees.

[Read More](#)



## Tax & Credit Information



1. IRS offers overview of tax provisions in American Rescue

Plan;  
retroactive  
tax  
benefits  
help  
many  
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preparing  
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2. Filing  
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under  
the  
American  
Rescue  
Plan;  
Total  
payments  
reach  
nearly  
165  
million

5. IRS  
grants  
diesel  
fuel  
penalty  
relief  
due  
to  
disruptions  
of  
the  
fuel  
supply  
chain
6. Here's  
what  
taxpayers  
need  
to  
know  
about  
reporting  
tip  
income  
on  
their

tax  
return

7. IRS  
extends  
deadline  
to  
apply  
for  
the  
2022-  
2024  
volunteer  
Taxpayer  
Advocacy  
Panel

8. IRS  
begins  
correcting  
tax  
returns  
for  
unemployment  
compensation  
income  
exclusion;  
periodic  
payments  
to  
be  
made  
May  
through  
Summer

9. IRS  
extends  
May  
17,  
other  
tax  
deadlines

for  
victims  
of  
Tennessee  
storms;  
provides  
special  
guidelines  
for  
disaster  
area  
individuals  
needing  
further  
extensions

10. Most  
federal  
tax  
returns  
are  
due;  
those  
who  
can't  
pay  
should  
still  
file  
on  
time.

11. IRS,  
Treasury  
Announce  
Families  
of  
88%  
of  
Children  
in  
the



U.S.  
to  
Automatically  
Receive  
Monthly  
Payment  
of  
Refundable  
Child  
Tax  
Credit

12. What  
someone  
should  
do  
if  
they  
missed  
the  
May  
17  
deadline  
to  
file  
and  
pay  
taxes

13. IRS  
provides  
guidance  
on  
premium  
assistance  
and  
tax  
credit  
for  
continuation  
health  
coverage

14. Here's how taxpayers can check the status of their federal tax return
15. IRS urges groups to share information to help those without permanent addresses get benefits including Economic Impact Payments, upcoming advance Child Tax Credit
16. Attention extension filers: Tax help

is  
available  
anytime  
on  
IRS  
(dot)  
gov

17. With  
the  
May  
17  
deadline  
in  
the  
past,  
file  
taxes  
now  
to  
get  
refund  
or  
cut  
penalties  
and  
interest

18. IRS  
working  
to  
help  
those  
without  
a  
permanent  
address  
get  
benefits  
including  
stimulus  
payments

and  
tax  
credits

19. Tips  
for  
troubleshooting  
common  
after-  
tax-  
day  
issues

20. 2021  
IRS  
Virtual  
Nationwide  
Tax  
Forum  
begins  
in  
July

21. The  
American  
Rescue  
Plan  
includes  
retroactive  
tax  
benefits  
that  
can  
help  
taxpayers

22. Checking  
withholding  
can  
help  
taxpayers  
decide  
if  
they

need  
to  
give  
their  
employer  
a  
new  
W-  
4

23. More  
than  
1.8  
million  
additional  
Economic  
Impact  
Payments  
disbursed  
under  
the  
American  
Rescue  
Plan;  
total  
payments  
reach  
nearly  
167  
million

24. Understanding  
the  
taxpayer's  
right  
to  
be  
informed

25. Interest  
Rates  
Remain  
the

Same  
for  
the  
Third  
Quarter  
of  
2021

26. IRS  
seeks  
nominations  
for  
the  
Internal  
Revenue  
Service  
Advisory  
Council

27. Identity  
theft  
protection  
for  
taxpayers  
in  
six  
steps

28. Looking  
ahead:  
How  
the  
American  
Rescue  
Plan  
affects  
2021  
taxes,  
part  
1

29. Looking  
ahead:  
How

the  
American  
Rescue  
Plan  
affects  
2021  
taxes,  
part  
2

30. IRS  
sending  
more  
than  
2.8  
million  
refunds  
to  
those  
who  
already  
paid  
taxes  
on  
2020  
unemployment  
compensation



## **LGBTQ+ Veteran Benefits FAQ**

What benefits are available to LGBTQ+ Veterans?

VA recognizes all same-sex marriages. All Veterans in same-sex marriages who believe they are eligible for VA benefits should apply. Those denied claims based on prior guidance should re-apply for benefits.

How can Veterans upgrade their Character of Discharge?

What can I do to help ease Veterans' concerns? Where can I get more information?

[Read More](#)



## **Fresh Focus S6 #29: Malnutrition**

When people think of seeing a Registered Dietitian, they think of eating healthier or aiming to lose weight to meet a specific goal. However, for some of our Veterans, gaining too much weight is not their problem it is actually quite the opposite.

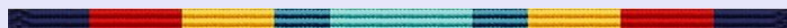
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## **Fresh Focus S6 #30: Difficulty eating**

Have ever been sitting at the kitchen table with your veteran loved one and notice they may be starting to have some difficulty feeding themselves?

[Read More](#)



## **Why I get my health care at VA: Jake**

Jake served in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. After separating from service he was injured and partially paralyzed. He came to VA for help, and received much more than he expected.



[Read More](#)



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

**Navy Radioman 3rd Class Earl M. Ellis**, 23, of Hope, Arkansas, 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 Ellis. He will be buried on Oct. 23, 2021, in Sutter Creek, California. [Read about Ellis.](#)

**Navy Fireman 1st Class Neal K. Todd**, 22, of Akeley, Minnesota, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths

of 429 crewmen, including Todd. He will be buried on July 10, 2021, in his hometown. [Read about Todd.](#)

**Army Sgt. Lloyd A. Alumbaugh**, 21, of Jasper, Missouri, was a member of Ambulance Company, 7th Medical Battalion, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Nov. 28, 1950, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Alumbaugh will be buried June 25, 2021, in Reeds, Missouri. [Read about Alumbaugh.](#)

**Army Pfc. John J. Sitarz**, 19, of Weirton, West Virginia, was assigned to Company L, 3rd Battalion, 110th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division. His unit was engaged in battle with German forces near Germeter, Germany, in the Hürtgen Forest, when he was declared missing in action on Nov. 2, 1944. Sitarz could not be recovered because of the on-going fighting, and his status was changed to killed in action on Nov. 3, 1945. Sitarz will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, at a date yet to be determined. [Read about Sitarz.](#)

**Army Staff Sgt. Raymond C. Blanton**, 19, of Richmond, Virginia, was assigned to Company C, 1st Battalion, 60th Infantry Regiment, 9th Infantry Division. His unit was engaged in battle with German forces near Germeter, Germany, in the Hürtgen Forest, when he was killed in action on Oct. 14, 1944. Blanton could not be recovered because of the on-going fighting. He was declared non-recoverable in 1951. Blanton will be buried July 1, 2021, in his hometown. [Read about Blanton.](#)

**Army Cpl. Kenneth R. Foreman**, 19, was a member of Company A, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry

Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, after his unit was attacked by enemy forces as they attempted to withdraw near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Foreman.](#)

**Army Sgt. Elwood M. Truslow**, 20, was a member of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 12, 1950, after his unit was attacked by enemy forces as they attempted to withdraw near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Truslow.](#)

**Army 1st Lt. Myles W. Esmay**, 21, was a member of Company B, 236th Engineer Combat Battalion, reinforcing the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), also known as Merrill's Marauders. Esmay's battalion arrived at the recently captured airfield in Myitkyina, Burma, on May 28, 1944, where they were tasked with holding the airfield and taking part in the siege of Myitkyina. On June 4, the battalion attacked Japanese forces at Namkwi village northwest of the airfield. The fighting lasted until June 7. Esmay was reported to have been killed on the last day of fighting. Interment services are pending. [Read about Esmay.](#)

**Navy Seaman 2nd Class Walter R. Pentico**, 17, 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 Pentico. Interment services are pending. [Read about Pentico.](#)



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