



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, January 09, 2022

Volume 13, Issue 02



This-N-That

Good evening Jim,

One of the things our government has been doing which angers and shocks me beyond belief is that our Military size is being reduced all because they don't want anyone serving who is unvaxxed.

Just a couple of weeks ago they discharged 200 Marines for refusing the COVID-19 Vaccine, and I was told this past week that that number is nearly 1,200, but I've also been told that the number of new recruits has been greatly reduced for various reasons.

My personal opinion, and it's just that a personal opinion, but we went through this using human beings as Guinea Pigs for

testing back in 1947 during the Nuremberg Trials, and the code was written and accepted worldwide and I have been providing the two-page document to several hundred so far for them to refuse the vaccine and still be able to hold their job.

I truly don't think there has been enough testing and from last I found just in the United States there have been 880,000 people who have suffered bad side effects or worse, loss of life. Even the CDC doesn't have accurate records, and Judge Sotomayer erroneously stated that 100,000 children were in danger by not being vaccinated.

So, there is a great deal of hype out there and my only reason for bring this up is only to keep you as best informed as I can. And with the "latest" version omicron most people are saying this version is no worse than the good old standard flu virus.

Personally, I've lost one family member due to the vaccine, a close friend who did not get the vaccine but did contract the Corona Virus it hit him so badly he was on life support for just over a week, kept in the hospital for just over three months, and now will have a visiting nurse and physical therapist for the remainder of his life.

And just a couple of hours ago we received word that my great nephew who is just a few months old was diagnosed with Covid.

So my point is, please be careful what you do, where you go, who your around, and talk with all your doctors before taking any action or inaction regarding the Corona Virus Vaccine.

We have added one new piece of legislation to the TAKE ACTION list. But we still do need to continue putting the

pressure on them.

I've mentioned in the past few newsletters tax season is just around the corner! If you're not sure what is and isn't deductible, here is a link to a check list to gather all the information you might need to have your income taxes prepared. So, if you click [HERE](#), you will be taken to a download screen for a tax planning guide!

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.

With an account, you will be able to access thousands more documents, be able to comment on the various articles we post and share with you, and more.

Once your account is approved, you will receive notice of approval, be sure to check your spam folder as they do end up there once in a while.

If you choose to create an account to access more information, please keep in mind not to use your E-Mail address as a user ID, and that the system is case sensitive. Neither the webmaster or myself have access to password information as it's 132-bit DoD level security encoded. But, if need be, we can change it for you.

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



VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE



As Chairman of Military-Veterans Advocacy® I have witnessed a two-person group, funded mostly out of my checkbook, grow into a vibrant organization with hundreds of members and a fifteen-member board of directors. We started with an occasional visit to Congress that grew to a full-fledged effort to storm (in a friendly way) Capitol Hill, the courts and even the Department of Veterans Affairs. I'm often seen as the face of MVA™ but I am not the heart and soul of this organization. That honor belongs to Susie (aka Princess Susie) Belanger.

Susie was very upset at the VA for not providing benefits to Blue Water Navy veterans. I made the mistake (a good mistake) of telling Susie in a chat room that I was a Chief Engineer on 3 Navy ships and that I was familiar with the water distribution system, which we suspected was the pathway for herbicide contamination. She asked if I could spend an afternoon on the Hill when I traveled to DC. "Sure," I said. Then it was an extra day. Then the rest of the week. OK you get the idea. But then I got the famous call from Susie when she said, "We have 35 appointments set up for you next

month.” My response was “But, Susie, I’m not going to DC next month.” Her reply - “You are now!”

I formed Military-Veterans Advocacy® in self-defense, really, so I could write off my travel expenses as a charitable contribution. But I had the easy job. Susie had the hard job. She had to do all the scheduling. All I had to do was show up, look pretty, and try to sound like I knew what I was talking about. Princess Susie and Prince Ernie soon became fast friends as well as colleagues. I did draw the line when she tried to kidnap my dog.

There were some growing pains. Susie used to schedule me without a thought as to how far it was between the House and Senate side (it’s 1.1 miles). She would often tell me I was whining when I complained I did not have enough time between appointments. Finally, she came to DC with me. The night before, I told her that ladies had to wear high heels on Capitol Hill (after the first day I told her I was just being mean). But from then on, she scheduled all my appointments on the same side and usually in the same building.

Without Susie there would have been no MVA™ and the Blue Water Navy would never have gotten their benefits. Even today she works hard on other areas to support all of our sections. She has been a force multiplier and has become famous on Capitol Hill. Her emails, known as “Susiegrams,” are often opened with trepidation and sometimes delight by Hill staffers.

So it is with great regret that I announce that Susie, our Princess, will retire as Legislative Director next month. She will remain on the board and continue to give us the benefit of her guidance. But as she turns 75, she wants to spend her

remaining years, of which we hope there are many, enjoying family and friends. Jacqueline Bloom, Susie's Deputy, will be joining the board this month and assuming duties as Legislative Director when Susie formally stands down in February.

The View from the Bridge is somewhat blurred by the tears in this old sailor's eyes. This is our tenth year in operation and without our Princess we would never have made it. Susie, the Congress will miss you and we are happy that you will remain on our board. Jackie, you are Princess trained and we know that you will do a great job. So "All Ahead Flank" and set a course for success!

John B. Wells
CDR USN (ret)
Chairman



VA Puget Sound recognizes Wall of Heroes honorees

Wall of Heroes, with framed biographic displays, a reminder of the sacrifice, bravery and heroism demonstrated by Puget Sound Veterans.

[Read More](#)



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. Click [HERE](#) and help a Veteran.



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



New year, new career: Why now is a great time to apply at VA

With the close of the holidays and the start of a new year, there is no better time to take up the hunt for a new job, and VA is hiring.

[Read More](#)



Survivor Benefits for Family Members

If you're the surviving spouse, child, or parent of a service member or Veteran who died from a service-related injury or illness, you may be eligible for VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). DIC is a tax-free monthly financial benefit. Find out if you're eligible and how to apply.

[Read More](#)



Legislation



H.R.2127 - TEAM Act (117th Congress)

Sponsor: Rep. Bost, Mike [R-IL-12]
(Introduced 03/23/2021)

Has changes in:

Cosponsors (1 new, 59 total)

Cosponsor: 12/20/2021: Rep. McClain, Lisa C. [R-MI-10]

S.2280 - VETS Safe Travel Act (117th Congress)

Sponsor: Sen. Young, Todd [R-IN] (Introduced 06/24/2021)

Has changes in:

Cosponsors (1 new, 7 total)

Cosponsor: 12/17/2021: Sen. Warnock, Raphael G. [D-GA]

Ruiz's two bills that were signed into law as part of this year's

NDAA are:

1. H.R. 4397, the Department of Defense (DOD) Burn Pits Health Provider Training Act, which requires DOD to implement mandatory training for all medical providers working under DOD on the potential health effects of burn pits.
2. H.R. 4400, Burn Pit Registry Expansion Act, which requires DOD and VA to expand the Burn Pits Registry to include Egypt and Syria. As the co-founder of the bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Burn Pits Caucus, Ruiz has been a consistent advocate for servicemembers exposed to toxic burn pits and their families.

**Slotkin Provisions on PFAS, Supply Chains, Burn Pits,
Pass in Bipartisan Defense Budget**

Biden signs Defense Department's Budget into law with Congresswoman's amendments on a range of issues relevant to Michigan, including PFAS contamination, supply chain vulnerabilities, and toxic burn pit exposure.

President Joe Biden signed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) into law, which will fund the Pentagon and the U.S. military for the coming year.

Susie Belanger
Director of Legislation
Military-Veterans Advocacy, Inc. ®





Your actions

could save a life.

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

VeteransCrisisLine.net



Caregiver of Iraqi Freedom Veteran praises Campaign for Inclusive Care

A caregiver for an Operation Iraqi Freedom Veteran shares her journey in the Campaign for Inclusive Care and VA's Caregiver Support Program.

[Read More](#)



Activity Grants for Military Kids

Our Military Kids funds the extracurricular activity of your child's choice for up to \$300 per grant, per child (ages 3-18) of National Guard, deployed Reserve, and post-9/11 combat-injured service members. These activities help military children to build self-confidence, enhance overall family wellness, and strengthen a shared sense of community. Learn more and fill out a simple, one-page application on the Our Military Kids website!

[Read More](#)



The National Defense Authorization Act, Pub. L. 117-81, has been signed by the President.

Specific veteran and toxic exposure issues are as follows:

Sec. 341. Study of Perfluoroalkyl Substances and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances.

Sec. 583. Establishment of the Atomic Veterans Commemorative Service Medal.

Sec. 714. Authority of Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into agreements for planning, design, and construction of facilities to be operated as shared medical facilities.

Sec. 725. Mandatory training on health effects of burn pits.

Sec. 1084. Observance of National Atomic Veterans Day.

Sec. 6602. Expansion of scope of Department of Veterans Affairs open burn pit registry to include open burn pits in Egypt and Syria.

Remember this is the Defense Authorization Act not the VA Authorization Act so Veterans matters are limited.

One bad provision is Section 316 which allows the SecDef to exempt certain locations outside of the United States from the prohibition on open-air burn pits.

Source: MVA



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](https://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net) or text to **838255**



One year after enactment: Isakson-Roe Act

Key accomplishments from the first year of the Isakson-Roe Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act, including assistance for homeless Veterans and Intimate Partner Violence awareness.

[Read More](#)



FRA Launches 2022 Survey on Military, Veterans Benefits

As part of its mission to bring the enlisted concerns to Capitol Hill, the FRA is conducting an online survey to determine which military and veteran benefits are most important to active duty and Reserve personnel, retirees, veterans, and their families. The [brief survey](#) asks current and former members of the uniformed services, as well as their spouses, to rate a variety of benefits and quality-of-life programs associated with their service to our nation.

The FRA is asking all current and former military personnel and their spouses to share their opinions about the programs they value most. Survey responses and comments from participants provide the legislative team important reference information when we testify before Congress or one-on-one meetings with lawmakers and their staff. The FRA also shares the survey results with elected officials on Capitol Hill, key committee staff, and leaders within the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs - ensuring these crucial decision-makers understand the enlisted sea service perspective.



Litigation

Happy New Year's everyone!

I would like to take a moment to introduce myself to the Military-Veterans Advocacy ® community. My name is Brian Lewis, and I was recently elected as a Board Member and appointed your Director of Litigation by CDR Wells. I am a Minnesota licensed attorney and currently work as a partner at Francis White Law, PLLC, in Woodbury, Minnesota. I served in the Navy for four years as a Fire Control Technician and qualified in both submarine and surface warfare. My primary practice areas are in military law, VA claims appeals, and federal litigation. I am admitted to all the courts in which MVA™ regularly submits briefs and I am a VA accredited attorney. Back before COVID, I was privileged to be at the arguments in Procopio and meet most of the Board of what was then Blue Water Navy. My thanks to CDR Wells, SgtMaj Kuiken, Col. Maness, and the rest of the Board for reposing your trust in me.

My congratulations go to Robin Hood, the previous Director of Litigation, for the hard work he did in getting Military-Veterans Advocacy ® to this point in our litigation efforts. He is a hard act to follow but I will do my best. It will be my privilege to work with CDR Wells and the incomparable Mel Bostwick, who has been a stalwart supporter of our efforts.

We currently have several irons in the fire with amicus briefs or proposals for amicus briefs. We are also looking at extending our litigation support efforts to topics that affect veterans in

general but may not be directly related to toxic exposure. Doing that will help us burnish our credentials as a veterans service organization with other entities and courts. As the Membership folks work to get our numbers above 2,000, our Legal Department will be working to identify areas where we can get more involved in supporting larger veterans issues to help hopefully grow our ranks.

I promise you all that I have absolutely zero problem calling out the VA, the DoD, or any other entity who decides to not do right by our servicemembers and veterans. If you ever need to contact me, my email is <mailto:brian.lewis@madvocacy.org>. I am generally responsive to emails within a few business days. Let's get moving!

Brian Lewis, Esq.
Director of Litigation
Military-Veterans Advocacy®



[Links to Other Stories](#)

- 1) An archaeological crew may have found a WWII US bomber in Italy
- 2) Dee Johnson and Rep. Ronny Jackson to host event for Veterans in Amarillo
- 3) Medal of Honor recipient Gary Beikirch dies at 74
- 4) Nearly twice as many military members died from suicide July-Sept than from coronavirus since pandemic's start
- 5) Richard Marcinko, first commanding officer of SEAL Team Six, dies
- 6) Service dogs help Iowa Veterans, first responders
- 7) Veterans rights leader hauled in nearly \$1M last quarter in GOP challenge to Sen. Patty Murray
- 8) Veterans unemployment drops to lowest level in two years



Why is the booster crucial right now?

As COVID-19 cases rise again, it's more important than ever to make sure you're vaccinated and boosted. Hear Dr. Vivian Vega, Tampa VA Attending Physician, Infectious Disease answer the most asked questions about the vaccine and booster.

[Read More](#)



Federal Judge Blocks DoD Vaccine Mandate

Federal District Judge Reed O'Connor agreed with a group of Navy SEALs and other special forces service members who refused the COVID-19 vaccine on religious grounds, ruling that the Department of Defense cannot punish them over their decision. In the ruling (Case 4:21-cv-01236-O), Judge O'Connor of the Northern District of Texas issued a preliminary injunction blocking the Navy and the Defense Department from enforcing the Biden administration's vaccine mandate against the active-duty military personnel.

"Our nation asks the men and women in our military to serve, suffer, and sacrifice. But we do not ask them to lay aside their citizenry and give up the very rights they have sworn to protect," O'Connor wrote in his 26-page order. "The Navy service members in this case seek to vindicate the very freedoms they have sacrificed so much to protect," O'Connor, wrote in his order. "The COVID-19 pandemic provides the government no license to abrogate those freedoms. There is no COVID-19 exception to the First Amendment. There is no military exclusion from our Constitution." The opinion noted that more than 2,800 active-duty Navy personnel have requested religious accommodations, though none have been approved. The Navy is expected to appeal the decision to the 5th Federal Circuit Court. Press reports indicate that 99.4 percent of Navy personnel are already vaccinated.



US Court of Appeals

On December 9, I attended the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit hearing on our cases to expand herbicides to Guam, American Samoa, Johnston Island, Thailand, the airspace over Vietnam, and to the entire offshore theater of combat. It was a rough oral argument with the Judges questioning our attorneys closely. The Department of Justice attorney advanced false information which may have swayed one or more Judges. That being said, I have learned through long experience to not predict outcomes. We will know the decision when it is issued. Hopefully that will happen this Spring.

Should we not prevail on some or all of our claims we can and will seek review by the full court and/or the Supreme Court of the United States. Depending on what the court says we may initiate other rule making requests.

We hope that the Court on reflection will agree with us. If not, I want to emphasize that we still have a number of arrows in the litigation. We have faced setbacks before and have later prevailed. We are confident that will happen again.

John B. Wells
CDR USN (ret)
Chairman MVA



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



#OperationSong Darius Carter

Army Gulf War Veteran Darius Carter shares the story behind his #OperationSong effort, a song called "Thankful."

[Read More](#)



SVAC Approves Veterans Bills

The Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee approved legislation to better serve veterans to deliver stronger benefits and health care under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The committee also approved Kurt Delbene to serve as VA's Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology - a position responsible for delivering adaptable, secure, and cost-effective technology services to VA employees and veterans. His

nomination now goes to the full Senate for approval.

"I'm glad the Committee took decisive action today to advance a critical nominee for VA, along with 25 bills on behalf of veterans" said SVAC Chairman Jon Tester (Mont.). "These efforts reflect a continued priority of improving benefits and services for our nation's veterans and their families, and I'll keep pushing until we get them across the finish line." The bills the SVAC considered and passed include the following bills:

The "Department of Veterans Affairs Information Technology Reform Act" (S.731) to increase transparency and accountability through Congressional oversight into proposed and current information technology systems and management at the VA.

The "Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options (MAMMO) for Veterans Act (S.2533) to strengthen and expand access to high-quality breast cancer screening and life-saving care for veterans.

The "Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Authorization Act" (S.2624) authorizing several VA construction projects to serve veterans for FY2022.

The "Rural Veterans Travel Enhancement Act" (S.2627) to improve permanently expand travel assistance programs and advance travel reimbursements for low-income veterans.

The "Guard, Reserve, and Active Duty (GRAD) Educational Assistance Parity Act Educational Assistance Parity Act" (S.2644) to expand GI Bill benefits to select National Guard and Reserve duty statuses.

The "Strengthening Oversight for Veterans Act" (S.2687) to provide VA's Office of Inspector General the authority to subpoena testimony from former VA employees who have left federal service, former contractor personnel who performed work for the VA, or other potentially relevant individuals during its inspections, reviews, and investigations.

The "Veterans' Prostate Cancer Treatment and Research Act" (S.2720) to expand treatment and research of prostate cancer to help diagnose and treat veterans through VA, which is the number one cancer diagnosed by the Veterans Health Administration.

The "Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act" (S.3025) to improve MST survivors' access to benefits and health care, as well as bolster MST claims processing and access to MST care for former Guard and Reserve members.

The "Reform and Update Rural Access to Local (RURAL) Exams Act" (S.3163) to improve rural veterans' access to medical disability examinations, by enhancing the transparency of the medical disability examination program and revamping how VA delivers exams to rural and housebound veterans.

The "Post-9/11 Veterans' Mental Health Care Improvement Act" (S.3293) to strengthen VA's mental health care workforce, expand care options, and support mental health research at the Department.

The "Veterans Benefits Improvement Act" (S.3388) to reduce the VA's claims backlog, increase transparency over the claims process, and provide veterans with timelier access to their earned benefits.

The "Student Veterans Transparency and Protection Act" (S.1607) to improve veterans' access to information about higher education and allow the VA to restore benefits that veterans use at schools subject to civil enforcement.

The "VA PTSD Processing Claims Improvement Act" (S.1664) to improve VA's post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) claims processing training, to ensure veterans experiencing PTSD have access to the health care, treatment, and compensation.

The "Chaplains Memorial Preservation Act" (S.1850) to allow the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces to update the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish chaplains' memorials at Arlington National Cemetery with the names of all military chaplains who died on active duty.

The "GI Bill National Emergency Extended Deadline Act" (S.1936) to protect veterans' educational benefits from expiring due to institutional closures or other factors caused by the COVID-19 national emergency.

The "Vet Center Improvement Act" (S. 1944) to mandate VA to evaluate productivity expectations for readjustment counselors at Vet Centers in order to assess the impact of these expectations on the welfare of counselors and on the care provided to veterans. It also creates a pilot program at Vet Centers to assist veteran and servicemembers experiencing food insecurity.

The "Burial Equity for Guards and Reserves Act" (S.2089) to ensure all members of Reserve components are eligible to be buried in state veteran cemeteries, so long as their service was terminated under honorable conditions.

The "Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General Training Act" (S.2431) requiring VA to provide training to employees on reporting waste, fraud, and abuse, in coordination with the VA Office of the Inspector General.

The "Brian Neuman Department of Veterans Affairs Clothing Allowance Improvement Act" (S.2583) to improve the application and review process of VA for clothing allowance claims submitted by veterans.

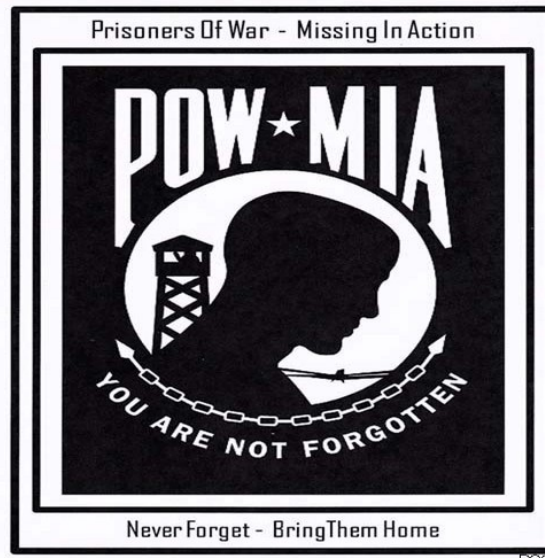
The "Every Veteran Counts Act" (S.2761) directing VA to establish and regularly update a database of veterans' demographic data.

The "Supporting Families of the Fallen Act" (S.2794) to increase the VA's Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance and Veterans' Group Life Insurance coverage - upgrading these coverage amounts for the first time since 2005.

The "Long-Term Care Veterans Choice Act" (S.2852) requiring VA to expand veterans' access to the Medical Foster Home program - which allows veterans in need of long-term care to choose to live in the home of a VA-approved caregiver, rather than institutional care.

The "Reaching Every Homeless Veteran Act" (S.5783) to expand the Department of Labor's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program to all 50 states and U.S. territories. This program offers customized employment and training services to homeless or at-risk-of-homelessness veterans to address their specific barriers to employment.

These bills will go to the Senate floor for further consideration.



Milwaukee VA employee is Wisconsin Woman Veteran of Year

VA employee Darcie Greuel, also a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves, was honored by Gov. Tony Evers as Woman Veteran of the Year.

[Read More](#)



You Asked, Benefits.gov Answers: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) FAQs

On Benefits.gov, our goal is to make it easier for citizens to find the help they need and connect them to valuable government assistance programs and resources. Here are a few common questions about Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) answered for you!

[Read More](#)



BLUE WATER NAVY ASSOCIATION™

Here it is the beginning of a New Year and we are still fighting to get benefits for more Blue Water Navy Veterans along with other Veterans.

We have a good start on our renewal of our members, but we really need to get everyone to renew. Also, we need to increase our membership with new members. So, I am asking everyone to help by recommending our organization and Facebook Page to others. Let them know of the things we do and are doing.

When you are looking to donate, please remember us. If you are buying things off of Amazon, please designate Military-Veterans Advocacy as the Nonprofit you would like to donate to <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/38-3890520>

On another subject, we are still working on changing the Deck Log Project. I'm sorry for the delay in doing this but we have no choice in it. It will be better in the long run.

One of the things you are going to see more of this year on the Blue Water Navy Facebook page is more information about

other Sections. The Blue Water Navy Section is unique in that its members are more likely to have gone to other areas such as Guam, Okinawa, Southeast Asia, and the Panama Canal Zone than some of those Members being related to the Blue Water Navy. Army and Air Force Veterans are less likely to serve onboard a US Navy Ship, than a US Navy Veteran either going to Guam, Okinawa, Southeast Asia, and the Panama Canal Zone. Marines are a different story, they served in these areas and the US Navy Ships were their transportation.

The main thing we need to work on is focusing on becoming a registered VSO, so please help us grow.

Mike Yates

Director, Blue Water Navy™

Military-Veterans Advocacy, Inc. ®



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 01/09/21)

Please note, we've added 1 new item to the **TAKE ACTION** list.

- 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) [H.R. 855, the Veterans Expedited TSA Screening \(VETS\) Safe Travel Act](#)
- 18) [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.](#)
- 19) [Support Repeal of TRICARE Select Enrollment Fee](#)

- 20) HR 1585 & S 565- Provide for the treatment of Vets who participated in the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll as Radiation Exposed
- 21) Please Support S. 344, the Major Richard Star Act
- 22) Support the Military Retiree Survivor Comfort Act
- 23) S. 810 & H.R. 1972, the Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021
- 24) HR 109 Establish an Advisory Committee on Implementation by the DVA of an electronic health record
- 25) HR 2372 and S 952 will Provide for Presumption of Service Connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to toxins
- 26) Please Ask you Senator to support S.952 the Warfighters Act
- 27) Support Improving VA Homelessness Program
- 28) S. 976, Caring for Survivors Act of 2021
- 29) H.R. 303, the Retired Pay Restoration Act
- 30) H.R. 912, American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans Mental Health Act
- 31) S. 976, the Caring for Survivors Act of 2021
- 32) HR 2269 and S 657 cover herbicide exposure in Thailand
- 33) Bipartisan Bill Introduced to Help Military Survivors
- 34) Legislation asks for Study of Involuntary Discharges for Women
- 35) H.R. 2436, the Veterans Burn Pit Exposure Recognition Act
- 36) H.R. 958—the Protecting Moms Who Served Act
- 37) HR 2127 and S 927, the TEAM bills Veterans Exposed to Toxic Substances
- 38) Ask your Senator to Support S.1520 Military Justice Improvement Act
- 39) Ask your member to support S.810 and H.R. 1972 The Fair Care for Vietnam Veterans Act of 2021

- 40) Ask your member and senator to support HR 2580 and S 1151 to provide for a presumption of service connected disability for certain Veterans who served in Palomares, Spain, and for other purposes
- 41) Ask your Senator to Support S.1520 Military Justice Improvement Act
- 42) HR 855, VETS Safe Travel Act
- 43) HR 3368, the Guam, American Samoa, and Johnston Island bill
- 44) H.R. 2521, Delivering Optimally Urgent Labor Access (DOULA) for Veterans Affairs Act of 2021
- 45) H.R. 1273, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act
- 46) H.R. 2968, the Military and Veteran Student Loan Relief Act
- 47) H.R. 845, the VA Billing Accountability Act
- 48) Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Bill Introduced in House
- 49) Action Alert: Tell Congress to Support the COST of War Act and the Honoring our PACT Act!
- 50) HR 303 and S 1147 The Retired Pay Restoration Act
- 51) Ask Your Legislators to Support Concurrent Receipt Reform HR-1282
- 52) HR 1656 TREAT PTSD Act
- 53) S. 1664, the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Processing Claims Improvement
- 54) H.R. 2724 — VA Peer Support Enhancement for MST Survivors Act
- 55) Please Support H.R. 3452 —Veterans Preventative Health Coverage Fairness Act
- 56) HR 2192, The Camp Lejeune Justice Act of 2021
- 57) HR 5026, The Panama Canal Zone Veterans Act of 2021
- 58) HR 3368, HR 5026, HR 2269, S 657 are all Toxic Exposure Bills that need special attention and more pressure

to get passed!

- 59) H.R. 4627, Veterans' Culturally Competent Care Act of 2021
- 60) S. 2172, Building Solutions for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness
- 61) H.R. 4571, the SERVICE Act of 2021
- 62) H.R. 4732, Protect Individual Unemployability Benefit for All Disabled
- 63) S. 1937, the Delivering Optimally Urgent Labor Access (DOULA) for Veterans Act of 2021
- 64) S. 2283 and H.R. 5073—the Crisis Hotline REACH for Veterans Act
- 65) HR 852 and S 221, United States - Israel PTSD Collaborative Research Act
- 66) Ask Congress to Preserve Arlington National Cemetery
- 67) HR 4949 and S 692, the Hello Girls Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2021
- 68) HR 2963, the VOW to Hire Heroes Extension Act of 2021
- 69) S 1970, The Clean Water for Military Families Act
- 70) Support S. 1198/H.R. 2819—the Solid Start Act of 2021
- 71) H.R. 3402/S. 976—Caring for Survivors Act of 2021
- 72) HR 3537 and S 1813, Accelerating Access to Critical Therapies for ALS Act
- 73) S. 2386/H.R. 4575, the Veteran Peer Specialist Act
- 74) H.R. 5721—the VIPER Act
- 75) H.R. 5607, Justice for ALS Veterans Act
- 76) HR 2601 and S 1188, SFC Heath Robinson Burn Pit Transparency Act
- 77) S. 3017, Veterans Dental Care Eligibility Expansion and Enhancement Act
- 78) H.R. 4794 and S. 2533, the Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options (MAMMO) for Veterans Act

- 79) [HR 1361 and S 444, AUTO for Veterans Act](#)
- 80) [H.R. 4880 and S. 2720, the Veterans' Prostate Cancer Treatment and Research Act](#)
- 81) [HR 2800, the WINGMAN Act](#)
- 82) [H.R. 5944, Veterans Administration Backlog Accountability Act of 2021](#)
- 83) [HR 3400, VA Emergency Transportation Act](#)
- 84) [HR 2992, TBI and PTSD Law Enforcement Training Act](#)
- 86) [HR 6260, the Casualty Assistance Reform Act of 2021](#)



America250: Air Force Veteran Gerald W. Johnson

This week's America250 salute is Air Force Veteran Gerald W. Johnson, who served as a fighter pilot and earned ace status during World War II.

[Read More](#)



Your Guide to Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as food stamps, is federally funded, and managed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. SNAP provides nutrition benefits to help support families in need.

[Read More](#)



COLD WINTER BLUES

By Lois Homer

The holidays are over and it's January now

It's icy, cold and snowy, winter is here and how

When I was a kid, I loved it when it snowed

Now that I'm older, I hate being on the road

It used to be fun to slide around on the ice

Now that I'm older, it doesn't feel so nice

I've slid down on my bottom which didn't feel too good

Luckily I was well padded down with my coat and hood

The other day I took a short walk over to the store

My neighbor was there also right in front of the door

I was bundled up in hat and scarf and so was she

I didn't recognize her, nor did she recognize me

She tried to help me get a cart unstuck

A man came over to help us, what luck!

Our voices sound familiar as we spoke

We laughed as we recognized each other, what a joke!

When I was a kid, our apartment was always cold

My mom would call our landlord using words so bold

One winter when it got down to twenty below zero

We all got virus pneumonia, our landlord was no hero

We all recovered but my mother got worse

She landed in the hospital for three months with a nurse

My half brother was lucky because he lived with his dad

But I had to stay in an orphanage which was so sad

My dad worked long hours and had to work late

And I was too little to be left home alone, that's fate

I hated to go but there was one consolation for me

The orphanage was warmer than my apartment you see

Some of the kids there had no family at all

Others like me, were there for a short haul

My aunt refused to care for me or take me in

Because my mom had been fighting with her, what a sin

After my mom was back home and well

She stopped wasting time calling the landlord to yell
She called the Chicago Housing Authorities and they came out

Our heat was put on and the landlord did pout

When I got married, with landlords I fought
Because they didn't give heat the way they ought
That's the reason that we bought our townhouse
We share it with insects and an occasional mouse

One winter morning I woke up to look

At a snowy fairyland, just like a book

The only thing that wasn't so great

Our electricity was off, which I did hate

Sixteen hours later it came back on

After bouts with Con Ed on the phone, I won



SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

TALK:

- Killing themselves
- Feeling hopeless
- Having no reason to live
- Being a burden to others
- Feeling trapped
- Unbearable pain



BEHAVIOR:

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Looking for a way to end their lives
- Withdrawing from activities
- Isolating from people
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Visiting or calling people to say goodbye
- Giving away possessions
- Aggression
- Fatigue

MOOD:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Loss of interest
- Irritability
- Humiliation/Shame
- Agitation/Anger
- Relief/Sudden Improvement



VA's Evidence Synthesis Program – Data to provide effective care for Veterans

Evidence Synthesis Program evaluates research studies to identify promising treatments and services to provide effective care for VA patients.

[Read More](#)



Your Top Job Corps Questions, Answered!

Are you interested in finishing your high school education, career training, learning new skills, or finding a job? Benefits.gov is here to help you meet your goals. Benefits.gov offers information on Education and Training resources, including the Job Corps program. Job Corps is managed by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration.

[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



How VA served Veterans in 2021

Many people would like to forget 2021. It was a tough year, but a lot of good happened, too, especially at VA. The department is committed to making 2022 even better, and to do that, we're taking a quick look back at what it accomplished and how it served Veterans in 2021.

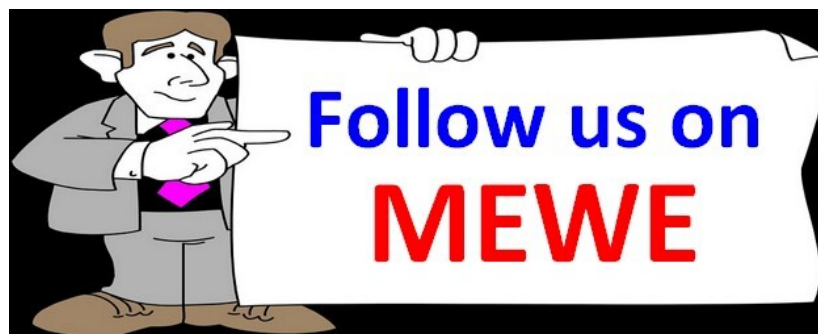
[Read More](#)



Naloxone can save a life

Overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S. Using opioids, whether as prescribed or not, comes with a significant risk of overdose. It's important for Veterans and their family members and caregivers to know what to do in an emergency. Learn about the signs of overdose and how the medication naloxone can save a life.

[Read More](#)



Follow us on [MEWE](#)! The support staff at [MEWE](#) is responsive, open to suggestions and works very hard to protect your personal information.

We hope you will join us on this new site.

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

[AMVETS GROUP](#)

[VETERANS SOCIAL GROUP](#)

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

[AMERICANS FOR SOVEREIGNTY](#)



Five unique ways to serve Veterans as a physician assistant assistant

Your expertise as a physician assistant can be applied to numerous specialties within VA, all of them helping Veterans find the care they need.

[Read More](#)



Women Veterans

VA is dedicated to providing women Veterans with comprehensive primary and specialty health care services, including reproductive services, rehabilitation, mental health services, and treatment of military sexual trauma. [Visit the Women Veterans Health Care](#) for more information.

[Read More](#)



Office of Inspector General

- 1) Behavioral Health and COVID-19: Higher-Risk Populations and Related Federal Relief Funding
- 2) COVID-19: Agencies Are Taking Steps to Improve Future Use of Defense Production Act Authorities
- 3) Behavioral Health and COVID-19: Higher-Risk Populations and Related Federal Relief Funding
- 4) Black Lung Benefits Program: Continued Inaction on Coal Operator Self-Insurance Increases Financial Risk to Trust Fund
- 5) Community Living Centers: VA Needs to Strengthen Its Approach for Addressing Resident Complaints
- 6) COVID-19: Agencies Are Taking Steps to Improve Future Use of Defense Production Act Authorities
- 7) COVID-19: Selected States Modified Meal Provision and Other Older Americans Act Services to Prioritize Safety
- 8) Cybersecurity: NIH Needs to Take Further Actions to Resolve Control Deficiencies and Improve Its Program
- 9) VA Community Living Centers: Opportunities Exist to Strengthen Oversight of Quality of Care
- 10) Department of Veterans Affairs: Supportive Services for Veterans Families



Health equity podcast: Veterans' sociocultural determinants of health

The newest health equity podcast focuses on the role social factors have in influencing Veterans' health outcomes.

[Read More](#)



Turning Pain into Prose

When Sarge returned from serving three combat tours in Vietnam, he was hypervigilant and experienced rage and nightmares. As part of his healing process, he started writing down the thoughts that were too hard to voice, eventually composing poems and music.

[Read More](#)



- 1) [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update: FDA Shortens Interval for Booster Dose of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine to Five Months](#)
- 2) [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update: FDA Takes Multiple Actions to Expand Use of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- 3) [COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- 4) [Covidien, LP Recalls Puritan Bennett 980 Series Ventilator Due to Manufacturing Assembly Error](#)
- 5) [FDA Drug Shortages](#)
- 6) [FDA Roundup: January 4, 2022](#)
- 7) [FDA Roundup: January 7, 2022](#)
- 8) [Getinge/Datascope/Maquet Recalls Cardiosave Hybrid and Cardiosave Rescue Intra-Aortic Balloon Pump \(IABP\) Due to Reports of Fluid Leaks](#)
- 9) [GHGA, LLC. Issues Allergy Alert on Undeclared Fish in Chicken Salad Croissants](#)
- 10) [Medtronic Recalls Synergy Cranial and StealthStation S7 Cranial Software Due to Potential Risk of Inaccurate Biopsy Depth Gauge Cycle View](#)
- 11) [Outbreak Investigation of E. Coli O157:H7 - Spinach \(November 2021\)](#)
- 12) [Outbreak Investigation of E. coli O157:H7: Power Greens Packaged Salad \(January 2022\)](#)



Live Whole Health #104 – Intention Setting

The start of a new year is a good time to pause and reflect on both the past year and the year ahead, setting intentions and goals.

[Read More](#)



PTSD Resources

When you experience a traumatic event — a car accident, an IED blast, military sexual trauma, or the death of a fellow Service member — it can continue to bother you for weeks, months, or even years. The symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder, known as PTSD, can disrupt your everyday life. If you think you might have PTSD, learn more about resources that can help you recover.

[Read More](#)



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**National Blood Donor Month: Turn your day
around by giving blood this January**

With the start of a new year, you, your friends, and family can make a big difference by pledging to give blood twice in 2022 to help save lives and in the process — you can turn your day around through this simple, essential, and lifesaving act.

[Read More](#)



Can you retrain your brain?

Common problems with thinking, learning, and memory can be worse for Veterans with serious mental illnesses. Cognitive training, however, can help improve Veterans' overall functioning and also may relieve their psychiatric symptoms. VA researchers are studying many different cognitive training programs to determine which work best for various groups of Veterans and why that is.

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Veteran earns six figures, advances his career with Salesforce Military

Here's a story about a partnership initiative, resources for Veterans, and a Veteran who completed Salesforce Military and earns six figures.

[Read More](#)



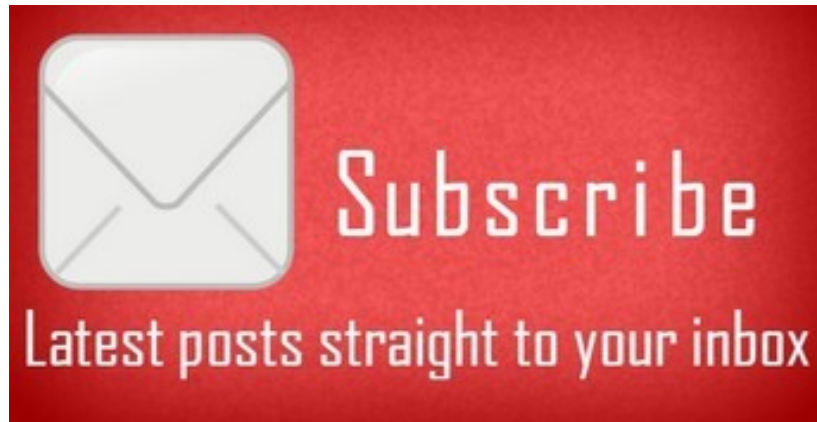
Redefine what it means to live your best life

What matters to you? To live an active life, get good sleep, or to rediscover what makes you happy? VA offers a Whole Health approach to help you achieve your best health goals.

[Read More](#)



If you received this newsletter as a courtesy or a forward from a friend or relative, you can sign up to receive in your E-mail every week.



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VA woman Veteran author: Navy Veteran Lisa Washington

Author and Navy Veteran Lisa Washington is a Christian fiction author, who has written three books, including her newest, "Kaleigh." This month's author is Lisa Washington, a Christian fiction author and the winner of the 2020 Author Elite Award for her novel Love Lifted Me, also the winner of the 2018 African American Literary Show Award for best Christian Fiction for her debut novel When You Least Expect It. Lisa is a Navy Veteran and a graduate of Wayne State University, Averett University and Butler University. Education is important to her; she is currently an advisor for an online university.

[Read More](#)



Here's how VA served YOU in 2021

2021 was a tough year. But a lot of good happened, too, especially at VA. We remain committed to making 2022 even better. Here's a quick look back at how we served Veterans in 2021.

[Read More](#)



**Our values
match yours.**



www.veterans-for-change.org

CLICK HERE TO GO TO THE VFC WEBSITE



**VA Pacific Islands groundbreaking on new VA
clinic in Kalaeloa**

VA Pacific Islands and Hunt Companies Hawai'i marked a milestone on December 21 with the groundbreaking for the Advanced Leeward Outpatient Healthcare Access (ALOHA) project in Kalaeloa. Upon completion, the \$120 million, 88,675 square-foot multi-specialty outpatient clinic will provide primary and mental health care, X-ray, laboratory and diagnostic services. It will also include a pharmacy and specialty care for more than 87,000 Veterans on O'ahu.

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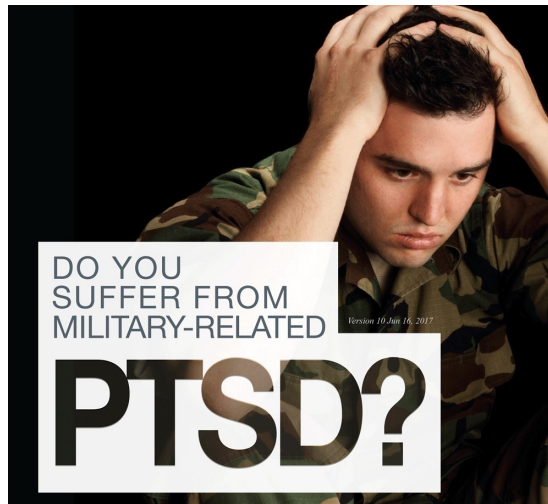


This new year, try intentions rather than resolutions

Many people set New Year's resolutions for things they resolve to continue, stop or change. Intentions, on the other hand, come from the heart and can help us realize our goals.

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



Development of New Pan-Coronavirus Vaccine Shows Promise

A series of recently published preclinical study results show that the Spike Ferritin Nanoparticle COVID-19 vaccine developed by researchers at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Maryland not only elicits a potent immune response but may also provide broad protection against SARS-CoV-2 variants as well as other coronaviruses.

[Read More](#)



Connect with other Veterans through VOICES

VOICES events bring Veterans together. If meeting new people in settings like barbeque cookouts, coffee meets, recreation and community service is your thing, then give these events a try.

[Read More](#)



Don't Underestimate Mother Nature: Winter Safety Tips for Cold Weather

Never forget the power of nature and its effects, especially if exploring outdoors during the coldest months of the year.

[Read More](#)



#VeteranOfTheDay Army Veteran Chuck Boers

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran Chuck Boers, who worked as a combat photographer during the Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom. As a member of the Lipan Apache nation, Johancharles "Chuck" Van Boers knows the importance of warrior culture in his community. Since multiple members of his family also served in the military, Boers decided to enlist in the Army in August 1982 after graduating from high school.

We honor your service, Chuck!

[Read More](#)



#VeteranOfTheDay Army Air Forces Veteran Lorraine Vogelsang

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Air Forces Veteran Lorraine Vogelsang, a 100 year old who served as a clerk during World War II. Lorraine Mulvaney Vogelsang endured the hardships of the Great Depression before enlisting in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. The third oldest of eight siblings, she lived in Fairfax, Ohio, with her parents.

We honor your service, Lorraine!

[Read More](#)



#VeteranOfTheDay Army Veteran Monica Benning

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran Monica Benning, who took care of patients as a nurse during the attack on Pearl Harbor Dec. 7, 1941. In 1914, Monica Benning was born to her parents, August and Mary Anne Conter. Her father was a doctor, and she chose to follow in her father's footsteps by becoming a nurse.

We honor her service.

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Tax & Credit Information



- 1) [IRS sets forth required information for a valid research credit claim for refund](#)
- 2) [IRS extends videoconferencing to large business taxpayers](#)
- 3) [IRS joins international organizations in fighting charity fraud during special awareness week](#)
- 4) [The tax responsibilities that come with shutting down a business](#)
- 5) [Here's how people can become an IRS-certified volunteer](#)
- 6) [IRS reminds employers to e-file payroll tax returns timely](#)
- 7) [Here's what taxpayers should know about backup](#)

withholding

- 8) IRS, Security Summit partners remind families to make online safety a priority during National Cybersecurity Month
- 9) Tips to help taxpayers decide how and when to file an amended tax return
- 10) Small business advertising and marketing costs may be tax deductible
- 11) Child Tax Credit: Families with income changes must enter them in IRS online portal on Monday to impact Nov. 15 payment; Spanish version coming in late November
- 12) Understanding taxpayer rights: The right to retain representation
- 13) IRS issues another 430,000 refunds for adjustments related to unemployment compensation
- 14) People can stay connected to the IRS through social media and e-news subscriptions
- 15) IRS help for employers wanting to rehire retirees or keep them after retirement age
- 16) Year-end giving reminder: Special tax deduction helps most people give up to \$600 to charity, even if they don't itemize
- 17) IRS releases reporting guidance for partnership interests held in connection with the performance of services
- 18) Common tax scams and tips to help taxpayers avoid them



#VeteranOfTheDay Army Veteran Elvis Presley

On the anniversary of his birthday, today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran Elvis Presley, who served with the 3d Armored Division in Germany.

[Read More](#)



#VeteranOfTheDay Air Force Veteran Karl Richter

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Air Force Veteran Karl Richter, the youngest pilot to shoot down a MIG in air-to-air combat during Vietnam.

[Read More](#)



#VeteranOfTheDay Marine Veteran William E. Lentsch

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Marine Veteran William E. Lentsch, who received a Purple Heart for injuries during the Battle of Savo Island.

[Read More](#)



#VeteranOfTheDay Army Veteran Alfred V. Guerra

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran Alfred V. Guerra, who served as an infantry soldier in the Pacific theater during World War II.

[Read More](#)



#VeteranOfTheDay Navy Veteran Walter Stinner

Today's #VeteranOfTheDay is Navy Veteran Walter Stinner, who served as an aviation ordnance man in the Vietnam War from 1965 to 1968.

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Riverside County, CA

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Please pass on to all your Veteran Friends and Family!



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Jim.Davis@Veterans-for-change.org

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