



Veterans-For-Change Newsletter

A Voice of the Veterans

Week Ending Sunday, February 02, 2022

Volume 13, Issue 06



This-N-That

Good evening Jim,

This week has been somewhat busy with new information coming in to fill up the newsletter, but still almost no word on legislation passing.

I have received a few disturbing E-Mails, one presented me with a press release which is posted further down in this newsletter.

It's where a Veteran was arrested, stripped of all benefits and detained without lawyer counsel, without reason or specific charge who eventually passed away while still in custody and now they're refusing to release his body to his widow.

Another I had received was about a battle trying to get benefits for burn pit exposure and being turned down at every level.

The first is rather strange, and I am waiting to hear more details on, the second is not a new issue, it's been going on for a long time now. And that person has been through everything if not more or less than others in the same position.

As I'm not truly the expert, I did recommend he contact one who was more than familiar with burn pits and hope to hear something good soon.

If you have applied for benefits and medical care and are still having a problem, please, take the time to tell me your story, and I will do my best to point you in a direction that might be beneficial for you.

It's been a number of years since I handled claims and appeals and I do miss it sometimes, but I don't miss the endless hours, waking up in the middle of the night thinking of something that could or should be done.

But we've never stopped collecting documentation and information that might help Veterans and could be used in appeals and possibly initial filings.

Between the website, newsletter, over-seeing the Homeless Veterans Backpack Program, there simply isn't enough time left over for much else.

I do try and spend at least five hours per week contacting reps and Senators in DC, talking with state Assemblymen to keep doing the best I can and things moving forward.

I did have my sleep study, but seems it takes 7-10 for a complete diagnosis, but I was told by the technician I had stopped breathing 47 on average per hour. To me, that's more than enough information to first scare the heck out of me, but also good news in that I will automatically be covered for a new machine to replace the old one on recall.

I do have a follow-up appointment with that doctor come Monday, so will have confirmation as well as a complete diagnosis.

We've added one new item to the **TAKE ACTION** list, and I will be doing my best to see if any of that list can be reduced this week.

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.

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



File a Claim for Military Exposure

If you have an [illness or condition related to in-service exposure](#), you may be eligible for disability compensation. VA is now processing service-connected disability claims for six new presumptive conditions related to exposure to hazardous materials and encourages Veterans who were previously denied to file a claim.

[Learn More](#)



Black Army Veteran's historical stand paves way for changes

Just under 70 years ago, an Army Veteran's stand against racial injustice changed interstate transportation. Sarah Keys was a young, Black soldier serving at Fort Dix, New Jersey. She traveled on her way home to Washington, North Carolina, Aug. 1, 1952.

[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@madvocacy.org



Explore a VA Pension

Did you know VA's [Veterans Pension program](#) provides monthly payments to wartime Veterans over the age of 65 with a limited income and net worth? If you are under 65 but have a permanent and total disability, you may also be eligible.

[Learn More](#)



Free resources help Veterans, military spouses find jobs

Free resources from AARP's new job center help Veterans and military spouses find jobs. For many of the 8.3 million military Veterans in the civilian workforce, transitioning into a career can be a difficult process. Even after securing a civilian job, Veterans and their spouses often find themselves in roles that leave them underemployed, meaning [...]

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The Dangers of Yo-Yo Diets and How to Avoid Them

Dear Doc: I suppose I'd consider myself a "gym rat." I've got quite a bit of muscle mass. I guess I'm what you could refer to as "stocky." This tends to be a problem around PRT (Physical Readiness Test) time. I'm a perfectly healthy guy in my twenties, but I have a lot of anxiety when it comes to weighing in.

[Read More](#)



Healthy Mind and Body: The Psychological Aspects Weight Loss

Experts say it's a mistake to fixate solely on your diet. There are a host of mental and psychological factors that impact weight, and getting those aspects of your lifestyle and fitness program on track can make all the difference.

[Read More](#)





Your actions

could save a life.

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

VeteransCrisisLine.net



Ten VA jobs that are open to the public right now

VA has numerous jobs available to the general public, which means the start of your VA career might be just around the corner.

[Read More](#)



Innovation Revolutionary: Keeping Veterans safe with sterile syringes

Elizabeth Dinges is a VA Innovation Ecosystem Revolutionary establishing Syringe Service Programs to aid Veterans with addiction.

[Read More](#)



How a Dietitian Can Help You Lose Weight and Maintain Readiness

If you've struggled unsuccessfully to lose weight in the past, it might be time to try getting some professional help. A trained nutritionist can help you reach your goals by designing a personalized plan based on your health status, your individual needs, and your lifestyle.

[Read More](#)



Dental Health is Mission Critical

Dental emergencies are among the top reasons why service members can't deploy or why they're sent home early. Take care of your dental health with these tips.

[Watch Video](#)



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**



Innovation Revolutionaries: Working with the community to save Veteran lives

Working with the community to save Veteran lives, innovation revolutionaries help Veterans struggling with mental health...and are just getting started.

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How VA respects your data privacy

At VA, your privacy is our priority. Read how VA's privacy policies and practices adhere to data stewardship principles in managing web user data.

[Read More](#)



Researchers Connect with Warfighters to Guide Tech Development

Researchers with the Defense Health Agency's Hearing Center of Excellence are connecting directly with warfighters to better understand the hearing and balance challenges they experience in an operational environment.

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Medical Experts Urge Community Members to Get Flu Shot, Get it Early

The flu is still spreading in many places -- alongside COVID-19. It's not too late to get your flu shot and avoid the risk of severe illness.

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Links to Other Stories

- 1) 3M ordered to pay \$110 million to 2 Army Vets in latest earplug suit
- 2) Cardinal Health Agrees to Pay More than \$13 Million to Resolve Allegations that it Paid Kickbacks to Physicians
- 3) Contractor Gets Jail After Defrauding Government Out of \$346 Million in Contracts Meant for Vets and Minorities
- 4) Family of fallen Marine claims they were disrespected by airline
- 5) Former Tennessee Clinic Owner Sentenced for Opioid Distribution
- 6) Georgia nurse practitioner convicted of health care fraud in complex telemedicine fraud scheme
- 7) Mahoning County Physician Pleads Guilty to Illegally Prescribing Controlled Substances and Causing the Deaths of Two Patients
- 8) Marine Vet and his family get mortgage-free home from Operation Finally Home
- 9) Richard Overton, oldest WWII Veteran, still waiting for a headstone three years after death
- 10) Shelton Doctor Admits Illegally Prescribing Controlled Substances
- 11) South Florida Man Sentenced To 15 Years for Consecutive Health Care Fraud Conspiracies
- 12) Three dozen military Veterans in Congress voted against expanding GI Bill benefits
- 13) U.S. Attorney's Office Files Suit Against Philadelphia

Pharmacy and Pharmacist for Illegally Dispensing Opioids and for Health Care Fraud

14) VA approved thousands of ineligible doctors — now lawmakers want changes

15) Young and Dying: Veterans Are Getting Brain Cancer and Struggling to Get Benefits



Navigating the COVID-19 pandemic: VA plays key role in identifying drugs to treat patients with the virus

To date, more than 60 VA medical centers have been involved in trials on COVID-19 therapeutics (see sidebar), including antiviral drugs such as remdesivir, monoclonal antibodies, convalescent plasma, and immunomodulators. Other therapeutics are in the pipeline for clinical trials, but only one has received FDA approval.

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Borne the Battle #267: Army Veteran Greg Williams, Human Behavior Pattern Recognition Specialist, Marine Corps Combat Hunter Program

This week's Borne the Battle features Army Veteran Greg Williams, who has over 30 years experience identifying human behavior patterns.

[Read More](#)



Campaign Plan Targets Medical Readiness, Better Health

The Defense Health Agency recently launched a five-year campaign plan identifying eight strategic initiatives focused on improving the medical readiness of U.S. military personnel and the health of its 9.6 million beneficiaries.

[Read More](#)



What You Need to Know About TRICARE Qualifying Life Events



The new year is upon us. Will 2022 be a year of big changes? If so, how will those changes affect you and your health care coverage? It isn't uncommon for military families to experience lots of change. That's why TRICARE allows you to enroll in, or change your TRICARE coverage after certain events, known as [Qualifying Life Events](#) (QLEs).

[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



VA's health professions education the focus of roundtable

Doctors Caucus confers on how VA's academic affiliations and training programs enhance Veteran care and health professions education.

[Read More](#)



New Montana VA clinic named after Doolittle Raid Veteran

A 60,000 square foot VA clinic named after Doolittle Raid Veteran David J. Thatcher brings Missoula-area Veteran-

centric services.

[Read More](#)



What Will You Pay? Check TRICARE Cost Resource



Have questions about health care, pharmacy, or dental costs? You should check out the TRICARE Costs and Fees 2022 Fact Sheet. This resource provides an overview of most of your costs and fees for TRICARE health plans, the TRICARE Pharmacy Program, and the TRICARE Dental Program.

[Read More](#)



Need Help Managing Your Weight? See What TRICARE Covers



Do you or a family member need help with weight management? You are not alone. The National Institutes of Health found that about two-thirds of U.S. adults are overweight or obese. Even if there's no obesity in your family

and if you're satisfied with your current weight, striving to maintain a healthy weight lowers your risk of serious health conditions.

[Read More](#)



Blood and platelet donation appointments still critically needed amid first-ever Red Cross blood crisis

While there has been a significant and encouraging response to the dire need for blood across the nation, the American Red Cross needs more people to give in the weeks ahead to recover from its worst blood shortage in more than a decade.

[Read More](#)



Fiber – A "super" food to add to your diet

Good for heart and gut health, fiber can reduce the risk of diabetes and some cancers, and aid with weight loss. It is rich in vitamins and minerals.

[Read More](#)



A New Way to Meet with Your Military Health Care

Team

You and your family can conveniently get care in a new and easy way. All active duty service members, retirees, and families enrolled in a military hospital or clinic can now use MHS Video Connect - the Military Health System's web-based telehealth solution to access care.

[Learn More](#)



Answering Your Questions About COVID-19 Testing

COVID-19 continues to spread, now as the Omicron variant. Getting vaccinated is the most effective way to protect you and your family from getting seriously ill, getting hospitalized, or dying. You should also make sure you're up to date with your vaccines. [Testing](#) is another important step you can take to protect yourself and others.

[Read More](#)



Jim, below are links to all currently active pre-written E-Mails to

many pieces of legislation. We ask that you go to each one, and send the pre-written E-Mails, and to also call your Reps or Senators and ask for their support on a weekly basis!

Jim you don't need to be Active Duty or a Veteran, in fact we ask all Veteran friends to also help! (Updated 02/05/21)

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
- 85) HR 6260, the Casualty Assistance Reform Act of 2021
- 86) H.R. 6064, VA Compensation and Pension exams for claims related to military sexual trauma
- 87) H.R. 5819, Autonomy for Disabled Veterans Act
- 88) HR 3596, the Lawrence J. Hackett, Jr. Vietnam Veterans Agent Orange Fairness Act
- 89) H.R. 2327 – to Remove Delimiting Dates for Survivors and Dependents' Educational Assistance
- 90) S. 2513/H.R. 4772, Improved VA Clothing Allowance Benefit for Disabled Veterans
- 91) S. 3293, the Post 9-11 Veterans Mental Health Care Act of 2021



Stayce Harris: Trailblazing and flying high

Stayce Harris was inspired by the Tuskegee Airmen and female pilots to serve in the Air Force. She later became the first African American woman to serve as a United States Air

Force Lieutenant General

[Read More](#)



VA, Bombas, Veterans United provide 50,000 pairs of socks to homeless Veterans

50,000 socks have been given to homeless Veterans at 53 VA Medical Centers and 50 community partner sites across the country.

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The 'BodPod' Measures Body Composition with High-Tech Accuracy

Step into this oblong, egg-shaped machine for just five minutes and you'll receive a detailed analysis of your body composition measuring your fat mass and your fat-free mass, including blood, organs, and muscle.

[Read More](#)



Benefits for Senior Citizens

Benefits.gov can help you find benefits you are eligible for,


including resources for seniors. Learn more about benefits for senior citizens:

[Read More](#)



SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS

TALK:	BEHAVIOR:	MOOD:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Killing themselves• Feeling hopeless• Having no reason to live• Being a burden to others• Feeling trapped• Unbearable pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Depression• Anxiety• Loss of interest• Irritability• Humiliation/Shame• Agitation/Anger• Relief/Sudden Improvement





HUD-VASH team helps Marine Veteran Mathew Robie find a home after a fire

A Marine Veteran is grateful for the HUD-VASH manager who supported his transition from living on the road to finding a home...and a generator!

[Read More](#)



Live Whole Health #108: Seated sun salutations

Here comes the sun! Even on cold days we can sometimes see a glimpse of that big ball of fire that lights up the earth. When the sun is shining – and even when it is hiding behind clouds – we can practice sun salutations to warm our bodies and invigorate our day.

[Read More](#)



Saving Lives Starts with You: Thanking Donors during National Blood Donor Month

Donations from generous individuals allow the Armed Services Blood Program to provide lifesaving blood products to service members and their families in times of need.

[Read More](#)



You Asked, Benefits.gov Answers: Medicaid FAQs!

Medicaid is a joint federal and state program that provides free or low-cost health coverage to millions of Americans, including eligible low-income people, families and children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Benefits.gov has put together a list of facts and FAQs to help you find the

answers you need.

[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



**Veterans: Living or traveling abroad? Info on the
VA Foreign Medical Program**

Veterans living or traveling abroad can learn more here about the Foreign Medical Program including eligibility and enrollment and more.

[Read More](#)



You Asked, We Answered: Face mask protection against omicron

You Asked, We Answered: What type of face mask should I wear for the best protection against omicron? Construction and fit are important.

[Read More](#)



This Civil War-Era Doctor Laid a Foundation for Modern Military Medicine

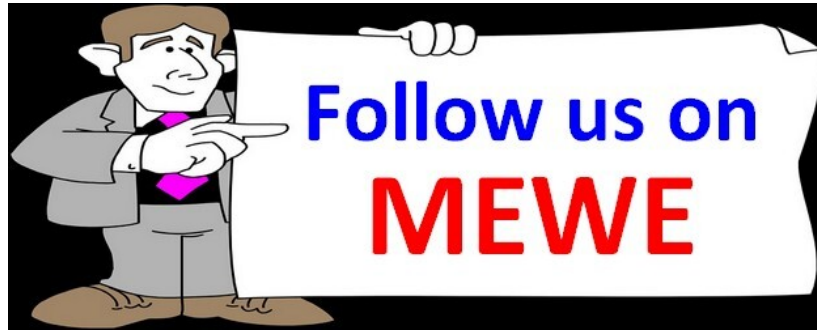
Army Brig. Gen. (Dr.) William Hammond, a founding father of modern military medicine, advocated for a lot of controversial ideas around the time of the American Civil War.

[Read More](#)



Complete the VFW 2022 Health Survey

The VFW has developed a survey to evaluate your health care experiences, how your health care may have changed in the last six months, and your perceptions of your overall physical and mental health over the past 30 days. Your feedback is vital to our advocacy efforts and to compile a report on this important topic. Help the VFW hold VA and Congress accountable by taking this short survey regarding your experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Take the survey.](#)



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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[AMVETS GROUP](#)

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

[AMERICANS FOR SOVEREIGNTY](#)

A caregiver's letter to her fellow caregivers

Lou Anne Bates is the caregiver for her husband, an Army

Veteran, and a participant in VA's Caregiver Support Program (CSP). Read Bate's letter to her fellow caregivers as she shares how she found support through CSP and how she's reuniting with the woman she was before becoming a caregiver. Dear Fellow Caregivers, During the [...]

[Read More](#)



VA Pensions for Surviving Spouses

Did you know VA provides tax-free, supplemental income for qualified, surviving spouses? Learn how to apply for this benefit by watching the YouTube video and visiting the web links in the video description.

[Watch](#)



Army Nurses Offer Insights on Living with COVID-19 Now, Looking Into Future

One of the more challenging jobs for any public health professional is dealing with unpredictability inherent in outbreaks like the COVID-19 pandemic. Issues like new COVID-19 variants and the need to sometimes adjust recommended preventive measures can lead to increased public confusion and sometimes resistance or fatigue.

[Read More](#)



Complete the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry

All veterans who served in eligible locations should complete the [Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pits Registry](#).

Participation in the registry is very important as it will allow VA to track burn pit exposure and draw inferences regarding associated adverse health effects. Exposure to burn pits may be associated with respiratory conditions such as asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD). VA recently added asthma, rhinitis, and sinusitis as presumptive conditions related to particulate matter exposure. The VFW encourages anyone who has not already filed a claim for these conditions, or had their medical records or any previous claims recently reviewed, to reach out to an accredited [VFW Service Officer](#) for assistance.



TeleOncology: Ensuring Access to Best-in-Class Oncology Care

VA's National Oncology Program (NOP) has continued to expand telehealth options for Veterans needing cancer care through the National TeleOncology Program (NTO). NTO delivers screenings, diagnostics, and treatment for medical oncology – including rehabilitation and palliative care – which improves access and outcomes for Veterans. Every year, approximately 50,000 Veterans are diagnosed [...]

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VA Launches User-friendly Online Financial Status Report Form for VBA Debts

VA launched a user-friendly online financial status report form for Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) debts. Quick on the heels of launching the online debt management tool in 2021, this new feature makes it easier for Veterans to manage their debt online.

[Read More](#)



How to Get Urgent Care Under Your TRICARE Health Plan

Do you have an injury or illness that isn't quite serious enough for a trip to the emergency room? This might be the right time to go to an urgent care center. Most TRICARE beneficiaries can go to an urgent care center whenever they need to. You just want to be sure to check out the urgent care rules for your health plan.

[Read More](#)



Sens. Moran, Tester Introduce Landmark Bill to

Provide Health Care for Post-9/11 Toxic-Exposed Veterans

Senators unveil the first phase of their effort to address toxic exposure comprehensively for all generations of veterans during a bipartisan press conference

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) and Jon Tester (D-Mont.) – the ranking member and chairman of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee (SVAC) – today unveiled their bipartisan Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act— landmark legislation to offer Post-9/11 combat veterans, including those suffering from conditions caused by toxic exposures, such as burn pits, access to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care.

“Post-9/11 veterans are the newest generation of American heroes to suffer from toxic exposures encountered during military service,” said Sen. Moran. “The Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act is an important first step to make certain our veterans receive the care they need as a result of their service. I appreciate the entire Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee for working together to craft this consequential legislation to care for our servicemembers who put their life and health on line for their country.”

“Today, we took a critical step in our bipartisan effort to do right by all toxic-exposed veterans across the country with the introduction of our Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act,” said Sen. Tester. “This landmark bill will allow us to connect a generation of burn pit veterans with the care they’ve earned, while moving the ball forward on addressing toxic exposure in the comprehensive way our veterans deserve. Our work here is just beginning, and together we will keep fighting to deliver

quality care and benefits to the men and women who stood in harm's way to protect our country.”

Approximately 3.5 million Post-9/11 combat veterans may have experienced some level of exposure to burn pits during their service—many of whom are living with undiagnosed illnesses linked to military toxic exposures—and nearly one-third of those veterans are currently unable to access VA care. Among its many provisions, the senators' bipartisan Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act would:

- Expand the period of health care eligibility for combat veterans who served after September 11, 2001 from five years following discharge to ten years;
- Provide a one-year open enrollment period for any Post-9/11 combat veterans who are outside their 10-year window;
- Establish an outreach plan to contact veterans who did not enroll during their initial period of enhanced eligibility;
- Direct VA to incorporate a clinical screening regarding a veteran's potential exposures and symptoms commonly associated with toxic substances;
- Mandate toxic exposure related education and training for healthcare and benefits personnel at VA; and
- Strengthen federal research on toxic exposures.

This bipartisan legislation is unanimously supported by the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, which includes Senators John Boozman (R-Ark.), Bill Cassidy (R-La.), Mike Rounds (R-S.D.), Thom Tillis (R-N.C.), Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska), Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), Tommy Tuberville (R-Ala.), Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii), Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.), Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) and Maggie Hassan (D-N.H.).

The Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act also has strong backing from the nation's leading veterans service organizations, including Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Wounded Warrior Project, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, The American Legion and Military Officers Association of America.

As leaders of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Senators Moran and Tester [have been dedicated to identifying a path forward](#) for outstanding toxic exposure issues and remain committed to following through on the country's promise to provide timely care and benefits to all generation of exposed veterans. The Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act is the first of a three-step approach to expand access to health care for toxic-exposed veterans, establish a new process through which VA will determine future presumptive conditions, and provide overdue benefits to thousands of toxic-exposed veterans who have been long-ignored or forgotten.

A one-pager on the Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act can be found [HERE](#).

To download a video of the press conference, please click [HERE](#).

Source: [United States Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs](#)





**U.S. FOOD & DRUG
ADMINISTRATION**

- 1) [Advances in FDA's Drug Safety Programs](#)
- 2) [Conagra Brands Issues Voluntary Allergy Alert on Undeclared Egg in Wish-Bone® Thousand Island and Chunky Blue Cheese Dressings](#)
- 3) [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update: FDA Takes Key Action by Approving Second COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- 4) [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act \(CARES Act\) Drug Shortage Mitigation Efforts](#)
- 5) [Esupplementsales, LLC Issues a Nationwide Recall of One Lot of Hard Dawn Due to the Presence of Undeclared Tadalafil](#)
- 6) [FDA announces proposed rule: National Standards for the Licensure of Wholesale Drug Distributors and Third-Party Logistics Providers](#)
- 7) [FDA Approves First Generic of Restasis](#)
- 8) [FDA approves treatment for adults with rare type of anemia](#)
- 9) [FDA Drug Shortages](#)
- 10) [FDA investigating possible increased risk of death with lymphoma medicine Ukoniq \(umbralisib\)](#)
- 11) [FDA Issues Draft Guidances on Real-World Evidence, Prepares to Publish More in Future](#)
- 12) [FDA Roundup: February 1, 2022](#)
- 13) [FDA Roundup: February 4, 2022](#)
- 14) [FDA Sodium Reduction Efforts Underscored in USDA's Transitional Nutrition Standards for School Meals](#)
- 15) [Formal Meetings Between the Food and Drug Administration and Sponsors or Requestors of Over-the-Counter Monograph Drugs](#)
- 16) [Immunogenicity Information in Human Prescription](#)

Therapeutic Protein and Select Drug Product Labeling-- Content and Format

17) Outbreak Investigation of *Listeria monocytogenes*: Dole Packaged Salad (December 2021)

18) Ukoniq (umbralisib): Drug Safety Communication - FDA Investigating Possible Increased Risk of Death with Lymphoma



Stay safe from COVID-19 by switching to a telehealth visit

Avoid COVID-19 by switching your in-person appointments to VA Video Connect. Telehealth visits save you time and protect you from exposure.

[Read More](#)



Best of 2021: Our Top Career Advice for Veteran and Civilian Job Seekers

As 2021 takes a bow and leaves the stage to make room for the new year, there's no better time for Veterans and job hunters to review some of the best career advice we've offered to applicants over the last 12 months.

[Read More](#)



Flu Season: Staying Healthy

Getting your flu vaccine is the best way to stop the spread.

[Watch Video](#)



Information Alert: Legislative Victories for Veterans in 2021

The 117th Congress wrapped up its first session in December 2021 with the passage of several important bills that benefit our nation's injured and ill veterans.

Please [click here](#) for a list of key public laws that include provisions relevant to DAV resolutions. Passage of these bills comes in large part as the result of DAV's strong grassroots efforts and support over the last year. It starts with participation in the resolution process and adopting resolutions at national convention, to actively working as legislative advocates by contacting your federally elected officials, and finally urging passage of legislation to ensure we keep the promises made to the men and women who served.



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Study finds strong tie between sexual trauma, suicidal thoughts in Veterans with no history of mental health care

The researchers examined VA data on 41,658 Veterans (12.3% women) who had been screened for both military sexual trauma (MST) and suicidal ideation between 2008 and 2013, and who had no prior mental health visits or antidepressant medications in their electronic medical record.

[Read More](#)



Chats with the Chief: Making the World More Accessible for Disabled Veterans

From wheelchairs that don't need batteries to robotic arms that help Veterans with everyday tasks, Dr. Rory Cooper and his team find ways to make the world more accessible for disabled Vets. It's all in this week's Chats with the Chief.

[Read More](#)



It's time to put your heart health first

Heart disease is still the leading cause of death in the U.S. If you've been busy taking care of everyone else – we challenge

you to put yourself first...have a conversation with your health team about your heart health.

[Read More](#)



VA Reports Veterans with COVID at an All-time High

In recent weeks, COVID-19 cases among the veteran population have reached an all-time high. As of January 19, the VA recorded 55,202 veterans with active COVID-19 infections - 3,175 of whom are hospitalized at a VA facility. Reports also show that nearly 13,000 VA health care employees were unable to report to work due to infection, which is more than double the amount at last winter's peak.

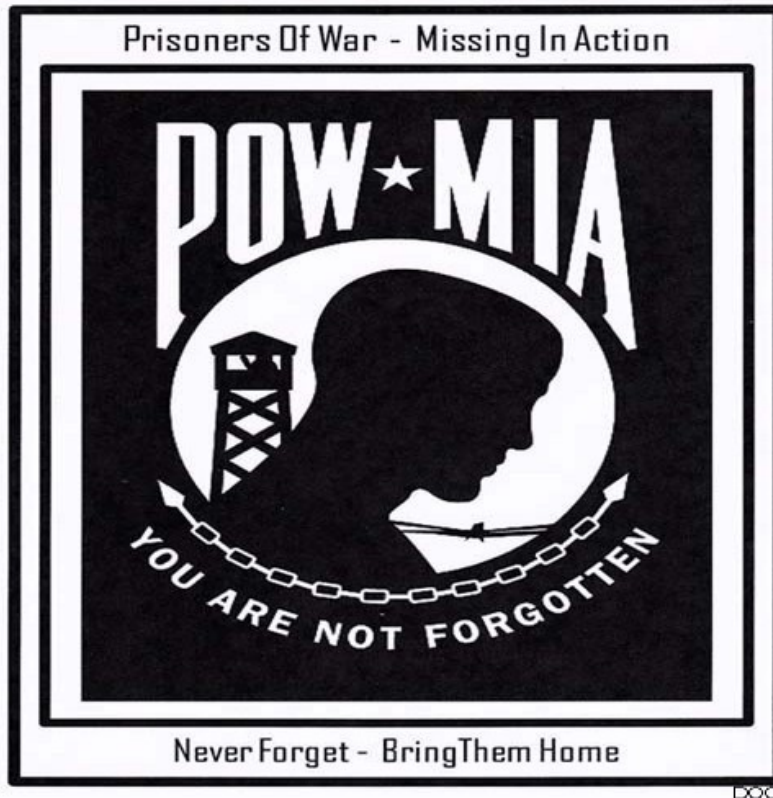
Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (SVAC) Chairman Jon Tester (Mont.), Ranking Member Jerry Moran (Kan.), Senators Sherrod Brown (Ohio) and Richard Blumenthal (Conn.) are leading a bipartisan push to provide veterans nationwide access to no-cost, at-home COVID-19 test kits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). These legislators have dispatched a letter to VA Secretary Denis McDonough, which states: "[We] must ensure veterans are not left behind in this effort to expand testing access...[they] deserve to have every available tool to protect themselves and their families from COVID-19, and at-home tests are one useful approach for limiting the spread within communities and VA facilities."

Currently, the VA is not providing or mailing out at-home coronavirus test kits to veterans due to the increasing demand,

but VA medical facilities can offer free in-person tests in many circumstances. However, this may limit access for; veterans living in rural or remote areas, veterans with transportation or childcare needs, or veterans with mobility limitations. Also, under Section 6006(b) of Public Law 116-127, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (Families First), the VA is required to cover FDA-authorized COVID-19 testing with no cost sharing for veterans for the duration of the public health emergency.

In addition, Congress has appropriated billions of dollars in COVID-19 funding to support veterans and the VA's operations throughout the pandemic. The VA received \$60 million from Families First, nearly \$20 billion from the CARES Act (P.L. 116-136) and more than \$17 billion from the American Rescue Plan Act (P.L. 117-2). The VA has only obligated \$458 million of the nearly \$14.5 billion appropriated for VA medical care in the ARP as of Jan. 18, 2022. The VA should be able to fulfill its statutory obligation to provide veterans with free at-home COVID-19 testing with this level of resources.





In the mission to end intimate partner violence, VA is here to help

VA committed to giving Veterans support to foster healthy relationships and improve services to Veterans who've experienced domestic abuse.

[Read More](#)



Why Less Sunlight in the Wintertime Can Put You at Risk of Depression

During winter months at Fort Wainwright in Alaska, the sun comes up around 10 a.m. and sets a little bit before 3 p.m.

Along with the frigid weather, the extended darkness creates an increased risk of depression and other mental health problems.

[Read More](#)



Get health care when living or traveling abroad

Are you a Veteran living or traveling abroad with a VA-rated service-connected disability? You may be eligible for medical services through VA's Foreign Medical Program.

[Read More](#)



SVAC Approves Veterans Toxic Exposure Bill

The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (SVAC) approved the "Health Care for Burn Pit Veterans Act" sponsored by SVAC Chairman Jon Tester (Mont.) and Ranking Member Jerry Moran (Kan.). The bill offers Post-9/11 combat veterans, who are suffering from conditions caused by toxic exposures, access to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care. The senators' claim the bill creates a three-step approach to: expand access to health care for exposed veterans, establish a new process through which the VA will determine future presumptive conditions, and provide overdue benefits to thousands of toxic-exposed veterans who have been long-ignored or forgotten.

This past year, the SVAC approved the "Comprehensive and Overdue Support for Troops (COST) of War Act" (S.3003) sponsored by SVAC Chairman Jon Tester. This legislation and a similar bill in the House have both stalled due to the cost.

Everyone is urged to use the FRA [Action Center](#) to ask their senators to support this new bill.



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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Health Equity podcast #6: Preventing diabetic foot ulcers

Veterans Health Equity podcast reviews PAVE, a remote patient monitoring tool used for preventing Diabetic Foot Ulcers.

[Read More](#)



Tips for Dealing with Seasonal Sadness

Seasonal sadness can affect anyone, but many people find ways of coping with these changes. Healthy coping strategies include finding something you enjoy and relating it to this change of season.

[Read More](#)



Information for survivors of intimate partner violence and military sexual trauma

Veterans who have experienced military sexual trauma or intimate partner violence: contact your VA intimate partner violence assistance program coordinator or military sexual trauma outreach coordinator.

[Read More](#)



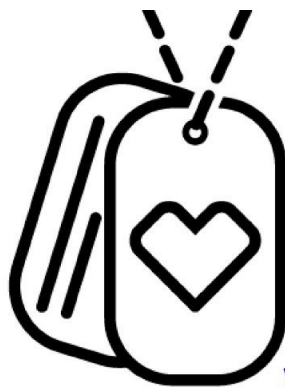
Update on Hawaii Fuel leak

As a follow-up to the January 14, NewsBytes, the Navy has begun pumping almost 5 million gallons of treated water each day from a well in Hawaii that is contaminated by a jet fuel leak from the Red Hill Bulk Storage Facility that sickened military families on the island of Oahu. The contaminated water is

being pumped into a carbon treatment system to remove fuel from the water.

More than 9,000 military families in Hawaii have been stuck in hotels through the holidays after jet fuel from underground storage tanks at the storage facility leaked into a well that supplies water to their on-base homes.

During a recent House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee hearing, the Navy pledged to work with Hawaii state agencies and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on cleaning up the leakage. Hawaii health officials said it was critical to pump water out of the well, so it does not migrate to other parts of the groundwater aquifer. The Center of Disease Control (CDC) has begun surveying residents about the health impact of the leaks.



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help Veterans**

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technologist at VA is a natural fit.

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Self-Care is as Easy as Downloading an App

The idea of "self-care" – the act of taking time for oneself to do something enjoyable – can help people to prioritize taking a moment for themselves to recharge.

[Read More](#)



Switch to telehealth visits! We'll walk you through it.

If you're concerned about the spread of COVID-19 or would prefer to save travel time, consider switching to a video telehealth visit. Not only are telehealth visits free, your VA care team can walk you through making the switch.

[Read More](#)



For Immediate Release

Justin Perez-Gorda served in the U.S. Army from March 18, 2008, to February 25, 2013. While deployed to Afghanistan, he

was nearly killed by an improvised explosive device (IED) attack on January 5, 2011, near Memlah. This caused significant damage to his back, lower limbs spine and groin.

As a result of his injuries, he was awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

Mr. Perez Gorda was under military medical care from January 5, 2011, until his discharge from active duty on February 25, 2013. During the 782 days he was in military hospitals or undergoing physical and occupational therapy on an outpatient basis, he was able to regained the ability to stand and walk limited distances. During this time, he also trained to drive an automobile again and obtained his Texas motor vehicle operators permit. The military treatment team concluded that he had reached his maximum medical improvement for his injuries and proceeded to medically retire him.

He was granted Social Security Disability benefits. He was also given, by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), a 100% Disability rating for his service-connected conditions on April 5, 2013, as well as special monthly compensation and especially adaptive housing and automotive and adaptive equipment.

Those benefits were terminated, apparently as part of the effort of the Secretary of VA (Secretary) to demonize and terrorize this combat Veteran and his family. The original award of disability benefits was a product of the Disability Evaluation System (DES) Program, a joint initiative between the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and VA. During the process of completing the Army Physical Evaluation Board (PEB). His case was also evaluated for VA disability benefits by VA. A proposed VA disability compensation rating was issued on

October 29, 2012.

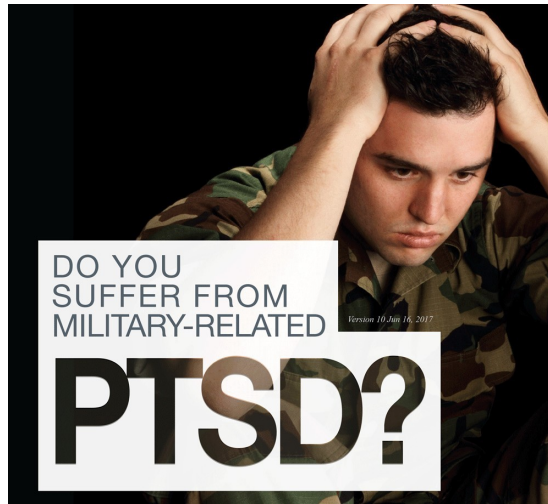
In November of 2017, Justin and his wife were named in criminal indictments filed in the U.S. District Court, Western District of Texas, San Antonio Division, Case No. 5:17-cr-00845-FB. This action was the result of an illegal “witch hunt” on the part of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of the VA. Since that date, the Perez-Gorda family has been subject to tortures and harassments promulgated by the VA OIG, the Federal Courts and the U.S. Marshals Service without due process of law, probable cause, or any of the other elements of a prosecution people are entitled to in this country.

This illegal action by the VA is now at an end since, while being held in federal custody, Mr. Justin Perez-Gorda has died. It should be noted he was never convicted of a crime; it was never proven he (or his wife) had done anything wrong nor were they given the respect and admiration a war Veteran deserves.

It is my hope, you’ll investigate (or have someone investigate) this and report to the public the ongoing illegal actions of the OIG. To all the persecute of Veterans whom have earned their benefits yet, for whatever reason, become the target of revenge and an unlawful systemic process to make them victims of a cruel injustice.

Regards,

Thomas
Thomas E. Bandzul
Legislative Counsel



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

Have a conversation about your risk factors for heart disease

Have a conversation with your provider about your risk factors for heart disease, especially if you are coping with stress, PTSD, or trauma.

[Read More](#)

Mental Stress is like a 'Check Engine Light' Flashing – Don't Ignore It

For one Air Force senior enlisted leader, the problem of "combat stress" and the toll it takes on warfighters – and often

on their families, too – continues to be an issue that the military community struggles to fully understand.

[Read More](#)



COVID-19 and PTSD: Assessing the Pandemic's Toll on Mental Health

Center researchers Robert Pietrzak and Brian Marx talk with Yale about how pandemic-driven stressors have contributed to an increase in psychological distress.

[Read More](#)



Celebrating skilled trade workers for Career and Technical Education Month

February is Career and Technical Education Month, VA's

Education Service wants to celebrate the importance of skilled trade workers by highlighting the alternative education paths that we offer our Veterans, service members and their beneficiaries.

[Read More](#)



Contract Awarded for Largest Overseas U.S. Military Hospital

The contract to build the largest U.S. hospital outside the United States has been signed, marking a significant step forward in progressing the Rhine Ordnance Barracks Medical Center Replacement (ROBMCR) project.

[Read More](#)



The Armed Services Blood Program's "Ready, Set, Donate" 2022 Campaign

Donors who step up to give blood are saving lives. Learn how you can donate at a location near you.

[Watch Video](#)



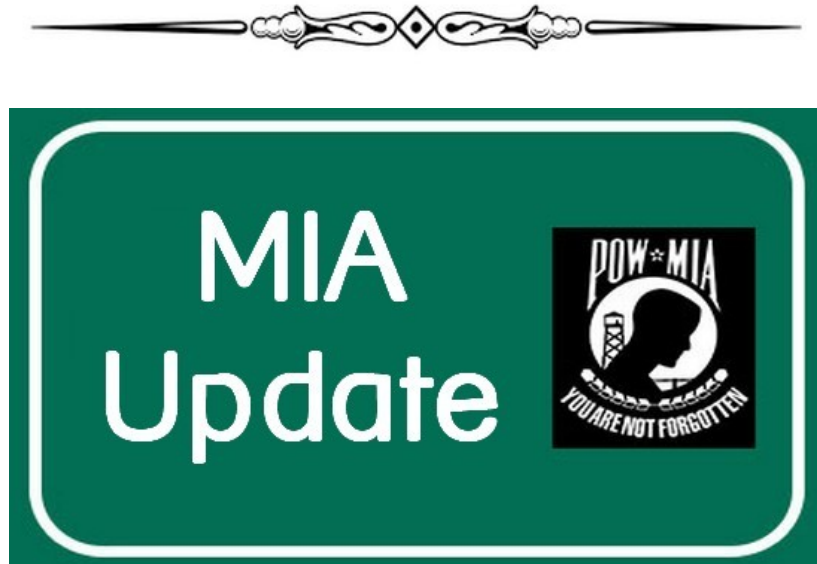
Tax & Credit Information



- 1) IRS announces new online tool to help U.S. withholding agents validate their 1042-S data prior to filing
- 2) More California wildfire relief from IRS: Sept. 15, Oct. 15 deadlines, other dates further extended to Jan. 3 for certain areas
- 3) IRS provides guidance on per diem rates and the temporary 100% deduction for food or beverages from restaurants
- 4) Teachers can deduct out-of-pocket classroom expenses including COVID-19 protective items
- 5) Tax professionals can now order more transcripts from the IRS
- 6) IRS announces changes to retirement plans for 2022
- 7) IRS Advisory Council issues 2021 Annual Report
- 8) IRS unveils new online identity verification process for accessing self-help tools
- 9) IRS offers how-to videos to help taxpayers apply for Offers in Compromise and avoid scams
- 10) IRS: All of Mississippi now qualifies for expanded Hurricane Ida relief; Sept. 15, Oct. 15 deadlines, other dates extended to Jan. 3
- 11) IRS provides answers to states and local governments on taxability and reporting of payments from Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
- 12) Resources to make tax time easier for U.S. service members and veterans
- 13) IRS Criminal Investigation releases annual report highlighting 2,500+ investigations, law enforcement partnerships, Enforcement actions focused on tax and COVID-

related fraud, money laundering, cybercrimes

14) Scam risks remain during pandemic; Security Summit focuses special week on taxpayer, tax professional protection against identity theft



The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced two burial updates and one new identification 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 Shipfitter 1st Class Charles F. Perdue, 32, of Salisbury, Maryland, 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 Perdue. He will be buried May 16, 2022, in Lancaster, California. [Read about Perdue.](#)

Army Pfc. Bill Morrison, 29, of Birmingham, Alabama, was

assigned to Company G, 2nd Battalion, 110th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division. He was reported killed in action on Nov. 8, 1944, after his unit was engaged in battle with German forces in the Raffelsbrand sector of the Hürtgen Forest in Germany. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Morrison will be buried in Spanish Fort, Alabama. The date has yet to be determined. [Read about Morrison.](#)

Army Sgt. Roy C. Delauter, 21, was assigned to Company D, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Delauter.](#)



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