



**THE KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
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MONTHLY REPORTS FOR DECEMBER 2016

The following monthly update for December 2016 is submitted by the Executive Director of the Korean War Veterans Association of the United States of America.



**1. MEMBERSHIP & RECRUITMENT REPORT:** Submitted by Mr. John “Sonny” Edwards - as of 12-28-16

New members December 2016	38	New members TYTD	675
New members December 2015	71	New members LYTD	770
Active members LYTD	13,828		
Active members TYTD	13,090		
Decrease	728		

Deceased comrades TYTD 1255 Avg/Mo 105

Departments with 4 or more this Month FL-5 MO-4

It is with regret to report that this year our deceased comrades is double of new members recruited.

**2. FREE FLU SHOTS:** From now through March 31, 2017, all veterans enrolled in the VA health care system can receive free flu shots at any Walgreens or Duane Reade pharmacy. The joint outreach health initiative is designed to help serve veterans closer to where they reside. Veterans must bring their VA identification cards with them, as well as another photo ID, and complete a short four-question application, which will be used to automatically update their VA Electronic Health Records. No appointments are necessary.

**3. CVS Out, Walgreens In:** As of December 1, 2016, , CVS and CVS pharmacies in Target stores are no longer part of the TRICARE pharmacy network; but Walgreens now is, so beneficiaries need to transfer all

prescription fills or refills from CVS pharmacy to another TRICARE pharmacy to avoid paying the full retail prices. Read more here: <https://www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE/news/walgreens.shtml>.

4. **DIRECT SCHEDULING FOR VA AUDIOLOGY AND OPTOMETRY APPOINTMENTS:** The VA announced it would eliminate a primary care referral requirement for veterans seeking appointments with audiologists or optometrists. The Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative is being piloted throughout the country and is expected to be fully operational within all VA Medical Centers by the end of 2016.
  
5. **VERIFICATION OF MEMBERSHIP DATA:** We are asking all Korean War Veterans Association Members to contact Publishing Concepts (PCI) to update their member information. PCI is a trusted partner of the Korean War Veterans Association of the United States of America. They will be printing your membership information as part of the Member Publication. Please call 1-800-829-4999 (toll free) to verify the accuracy of the data currently listed on file.
  
6. **DOCTORS SAY HOLIDAYS CAN BE A TIME OF DEPRESSION** - By MARK ROUNTREE [mrountree@leavenworthtimes.com](mailto:mrountree@leavenworthtimes.com) - Winter officially began on Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup> marking the shortest day of the year. There was just nine hours and 25 minutes of sunlight during what is known as the winter solstice. Sunrise was at 7:34 a.m. and sunset was at 4:59 p.m. Doctors say shorter days can cause some people to feel depressed. Codi Schale, a psychologist with the Eisenhower VA Medical Center in Leavenworth, said people can experience "winter blues" when there is less daylight. She said a phenomenon called Seasonal Affective Disorder can be experienced by people when the days get shorter, a time when people likely spend more time indoors and there is a decreased level of activity. She said feelings of depression also can be experienced by people around the holidays, especially traditional family holidays like Christmas, which is Sunday. "The additional stress of holiday pressures can exacerbate depression or anxiety," Schale said in an email. "For some, the holidays are a reminder of loved ones lost. For others, the stress of being around people you don't see much is uncomfortable and can result in social comparisons that make people reflect on what they don't have rather than what they do." People can feel stress, anxiety and depression during the holidays if they do not have the support system of a family. There is a difference between the "winter blues" and clinical depression and debilitating anxiety. He said outpatient talk therapy can be an effective way to reduce that stress. There is a difference between the blues and actual depression. The holidays can create extra stress if a person feels that other people are enjoying the holidays more. Every commercial, every movie, you see people spending time together with family during the holidays. But the truth is, most people don't wake up on Christmas day with a new Lexus in their driveway with a bow on top. Some people experience depression during the holidays because "everything is off. The holidays often result in less sleep, less exercise, more visits to crowded stores, numerous parties and social functions, more eating and more drinking. Veterans can feel a sense of depression during the holidays too. Veterans may feel particularly uncomfortable as they are asked personal questions about wartime and combat, and some may feel more comfortable being by themselves or with other veterans over the holidays. Schale said there are several things people can do to ward off depression over the holidays. "If you can identify and reduce unrealistic expectations about the holidays, it can relieve a sense of pressure and help you refocus on enjoying the simple pleasures." She said identifying a few things you are grateful for every day can help with depressive symptoms. She suggested that people who feel anxiety or depression during the holidays seek out ways to be active, including church services, community events or volunteer activities. "Look for ways to connect with others," she said.

# Godspeed, John Glenn

1921 - 2016



11.

COLUMBUS, Ohio — the nation's vice president and a retired Marine Corps general were among the dignitaries, family members and other mourners who choked up Saturday during a memorial tribute to the late space hero John Glenn. Roughly 2,500 people gathered at Mershon Auditorium on the Ohio State University campus for "a celebration of life" for the former fighter pilot, history-making astronaut and longtime Democratic U.S. senator from small-town Ohio. He was remembered not only for bravery, but for his thoughtful consideration for others, his integrity and his patriotic optimism. "I think John defined what it meant to be an American, what we were about, just by how we acted," said Vice President Joe Biden, a former colleague of Glenn's in the U.S. Senate. "It was always about the promise. We were a country of possibility, opportunity, always a belief in tomorrow." Retired USMC Gen. John Dailey said Glenn was "never in it for himself," but always acted for the nation's greater good. Like many others, he recalled Glenn's humility and basic kindness. "We had John for 95 great years and it still wasn't enough," Dailey said. Glenn died Dec. 8 at age 95. He was the first American to orbit the Earth in 1962, and then in 1998 became the oldest person in space at 77. Thousands of people, including Democratic U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, visited the Ohio Statehouse on Friday as Glenn lay in honor. A solemn funeral procession through the center of the capital city carried his casket past more mourners willing to withstand cold and ice.

6. **AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE MEDAL PRESENTATION:**

The Embassy has been backlogged with the number of requests for the Ambassador for Peace Medal. This has caused a longer delay in processing the medal for Korean War Veterans. We will stay on top of this issue and hope to have all requests for the medal processed in a timely manner.

7. **TAXES FROM A TO Z: V IS FOR VETERANS' BENEFITS:** Under the Tax Code, income is reportable and taxable unless otherwise excluded. Fortunately, when it comes to veterans' benefits, those paid under any law, regulation, or administrative practice administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are completely excludable. Excludable benefits for veterans includes educational benefits, including education, training, and subsistence allowances. Likewise, benefits under a dependent-care assistance program are not taxable. Excludable benefits for veterans also include compensation and accommodation for disabilities. Specifically, disability compensation and pension payments for disabilities paid either to veterans or their families as well as grants for homes designed for wheelchair living and for motor vehicles for veterans who lost their sight or the use of their limbs are not taxable. Payments made under the compensated work therapy program are similarly excludable. Death benefits for veterans and their families are also excludable. Veterans' insurance proceeds and dividends paid either to veterans or their beneficiaries, including the proceeds of a veteran's endowment policy paid before death are not taxable, as are death gratuities paid to a survivor of a member of the Armed Forces who died after September 10, 2001. Any interest on those insurance dividends you leave on deposit with the VA are also excludable. Finally, any bonus payment by a state or political subdivision because of a veteran's service in a combat zone is tax free. And remember, it's not just benefits paid to veterans that are excludable. As noted above, those veterans' benefits paid to family members are treated the same as those paid to veterans and are tax free. For more information about taxes and the military, check out [IRS Pub 3, Armed Forces' Tax Guide](#) (downloads as a pdf).

8. **BURIAL BENEFITS REQUIRE VETS TO PLAN:** No one likes to think about death, but if a veteran wants to be buried with military rights, or in a national cemetery, pre-planning is a must. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has a website which includes information about national cemeteries, preparing in advance, donating burial flags and burial benefits for veterans buried in a private cemetery. To insure eligibility of burial in a VA cemetery, discharge papers are required. Family members should be made aware of where these papers are kept. The discharge papers are also required for burial benefits in a private cemetery. The VA has 131 national cemeteries and those eligible for the benefits are entitled to a gravesite at one of the national cemeteries, providing space is available. Opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a government headstone or marker, a burial flag and a Presidential Memorial Certificate are provided at no cost to the family. Burial benefits are also available for spouses and dependents of the veteran in a national cemetery even if they predecease the veteran, according to the website <http://www.cem.va.gov> (click on Veteran Services, then on burial benefits in the drop-down menu). Family members need to contact a funeral home to assist with making burial arrangements at a national cemetery. To schedule a burial, fax documentation to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 1-866-900-6417 and follow up with a phone call to 1-800-535-1117. Many VA national cemeteries display an Avenue of Flags on patriotic holidays and during special events. The Avenue of Flags consists of burial flags donated by the families of deceased Veterans and provide a unique visible tribute. Veterans are entitled to burial benefits when buried in a private cemetery including a government headstone or marker, a burial flag and a Presidential Memorial Certificate at no cost to the family. Some veterans may also be eligible for burial allowances. For more information on eligibility call 1-800-827-1000. Arrangements for military burials in private cemeteries can also be arranged by calling the local VFW or American Legion Post.

9. **VA NATIONAL CEMETERIES NOW OFFERING PRE-NEED ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS**

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced it now provides eligibility determinations for interment in a VA national cemetery prior to the time of need. Through the Pre-Need Determination of Eligibility Program, upon request, individuals can learn if they are eligible for burial or memorialization in a VA national cemetery. “MyVA is about looking at VA from the Veterans' perspective, and

then doing everything we can to make the Veteran Experience effective and seamless,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. “This new program reaffirms our commitment to providing a lifetime of benefits and services for Veterans and their families.”

Interested individuals may submit VA Form 40-10007, Application for Pre-Need Determination of Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery, and supporting documentation, such as a DD Form 214, if readily available, to the VA National Cemetery Scheduling Office by: toll-free fax at 1-855-840-8299; email to [Eligibility.PreNeed@va.gov](mailto:Eligibility.PreNeed@va.gov); or mail to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office, P.O. Box 510543, St. Louis, MO 63151. The VA will review applications and provide written notice of its determination of eligibility. VA will save determinations and supporting documentation in an electronic information system to expedite burial arrangements at the time of need. Because laws and personal circumstances change, upon receipt of a burial request, VA will validate all pre-need determinations in accordance with the laws in effect at that time.

The VA operates 135 national cemeteries and 33 soldiers’ lots in 40 states and Puerto Rico. More than 4 million Americans, including Veterans of every war and conflict, are buried in VA’s national cemeteries. VA also provides funding to establish, expand and maintain 105 Veterans cemeteries in 47 states and territories including tribal trust lands, Guam, and Saipan. For Veterans buried in private or other cemeteries, VA provides headstones, markers or medallions to commemorate their service. In 2016, VA honored more than 345,000 Veterans and their loved ones with memorial benefits in national, state, tribal and private cemeteries.

Eligible individuals are entitled to burial in any open VA national cemetery, opening/closing of the grave, a grave liner, perpetual care of the gravesite, and a government-furnished headstone or marker or niche cover, all at no cost to the family. Veterans are also eligible for a burial flag and may be eligible for a Presidential Memorial Certificate.

Information on VA burial benefits is available from local VA national cemetery offices, from the Internet at [www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov), or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at 800-827-1000. To make burial arrangements at any open VA national cemetery at the time of need, call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 800-535-1117. [Pre-Need+Eligibility++Fact+Sheet-Final.docx](#)

## **10. 7 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT VETERANS AND HEALTHCARE IN 2017**

We are on the precipice of some of the most profound changes in veteran healthcare since the Veterans Administration (VA) was elevated to a cabinet position in 1989. The pent-up reforms needed at the VA combined with the new Administration, have set conditions for massive change. For example, there are 12.5 million non-elderly veterans. Among these, two-thirds of veterans are eligible for VA health care, but only one-third are enrolled. What if they decide to take advantage of their VA healthcare and prescriptions? Only 1 of 4 veterans receive healthcare at the VA. So the veteran healthcare conversation must include non-VA alternatives, as increasingly veterans are combining private healthcare with the VA based upon their needs. Healthcare businesses and government will soon be making very important decisions. These decisions have the potential to improve healthcare for the 23 million military and veterans plus their families. A 2-part study just released, **Veterans: A Significant Force In The New Health Economy**, provides some of these insights needed for veteran-centric decisions. As you consider 2017, here are 7 things you should know about veterans and healthcare.

### **1. The latent veteran healthcare demand**

While the veteran population slowly decreases, the number of veteran patients at the VA is increasing. This is partly a function of increased costs of healthcare. Among elderly American’s, 1 in 3 males are veterans. For just the top five chronic illnesses among veterans, almost two thirds (63%) state that the illness was caused by their military service. As the cost of their care increases, many veterans are turning back to the VA for care. In fact, the well-publicized VA claim backlog was less a function of Iraq/ Afghanistan veterans, but instead Vietnam veterans filing claims to gain healthcare.

### **2. Veterans have incidence of certain chronic conditions with a much higher index compared to the general American population**

You might expect veterans to have a spinal cord injury at a 708 index to the average American. But not that veterans have a 637 index in chronic fatigue syndrome.

Veterans are also 3 times as likely to have diabetes. Veterans index 421 to have headaches compared to the general population - this includes a large female veteran population, which is not normally seen in the headache patients. The \$1.275 billion “Internal analgesic” pharmaceutical category might find that interesting. Veterans index at 416 for having Congestive Heart Failure compared to the average American. The \$238 billion industry treating this condition might consider a “shadow target” targeting veterans with beta blockers, ACE inhibitors, and diuretics.

### **3. Behind these large veteran populations with chronic conditions are targetable profiles**

Knowing the characteristics of a veteran with a condition increases the ability to target them with information on their options for care. In addition, this insight enables CRM to guide veterans to navigate their options and find the best treatment.

### **4. Veterans have more healthcare options, which means they can get products and services through different means**

The average age of a veteran will continue to increase until 2026, when it will start to decrease. As veteran healthcare needs continue to increase, more veterans will take advantage of their VA options. But they won't give up their non-VA care. Veterans will look to offset costs or seek specialists where VA care is strongest. These “hybrids” of VA and non-VA healthcare will grow as veterans are better educated on their options. Right now Veterans have a family physician through Blue Cross, see a specialist through the VA, and get VA prescriptions filled at Walgreens, CVS, Walmart, or the VA. The key will be to keep this experience streamlined for veteran patients to know their options and use the best one for their situation.

### **5. Veterans have fundamentally different patient journeys**

The study, **Veterans: A Significant Force In The New Health Economy**, shows that influenced by different options for care, veterans have different patient journeys than the average American. These options plus technology, which has enabled greater access to health-related information, have shaped these patient journeys- which often differ by chronic condition. This can have significant implications on diagnosis and treatment, so healthcare providers and advertisers meet veterans where they are at. These veteran patient journeys become the blueprint for successful communications and treatment for veterans.

### **6. Outsourcing of VA Healthcare is a game-changer**

Veterans Choice, the current vehicle enabling VA care outsourcing, allows veterans to go to local providers if they are greater than 30 miles from a VA facility or an appointment is greater than 30-days away. The program is set to expire in a year, but it has had good success- especially in the areas of specialists (urologists, podiatrists, etc.). So, it may be a safe assumption that some version of Veterans Choice will continue. In addition, the new Administration has already expressed the intent to “ensure our veterans get the care they need wherever and whenever they need it. No more long drives. No more waiting backlogs. No more excessive red tape. Just the care and support they earned with their service to our country.”

### **7. To treat veteran patients you have to know how to reach them**

Veterans are all around us but more camouflaged than ever. Targetable patient profiles help this, but you need to be empowered with veteran insights and military media expertise to reach veterans. In addition to healthcare professionals, technology and veteran communities, word of mouth is more relevant among veterans.

- 11. TRUMP WEIGHS LETTING VETERANS OPT OUT OF V.A. MEDICAL CARE** - President-elect Donald J. Trump is considering a plan to allow military veterans to opt out of medical care at Veterans Affairs hospitals and instead see private doctors of their choosing, a senior transition official told reporters here on Wednesday. Mr. Trump met with several executives of private hospital systems at his Mar-a-Lago estate on Wednesday. After the meeting, Mr. Trump called out to reporters, saying he wanted to describe his ideas for changes to the Department of Veterans Affairs, but then quickly directed one of his senior aides to describe the proposals under consideration. The official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, provided no details about how the plans would work, how much they would cost, or the possibility of unintended consequences from privatizing part of the V.A.'s sprawling medical system. As a candidate, Mr. Trump repeatedly seized on reports of long waits for doctor visits at V.A. hospitals to criticize Hillary Clinton and President Obama. On Wednesday evening, Mr. Trump told reporters that he was concerned about the impact on veterans' health. “We're working on something to make it great for the veterans,” he said, adding: “People are dying. We're going to fix it properly.” The ideas described by the transition aide on Wednesday echoed vague promises Mr. Trump made on

the campaign trail that veterans would get timely care from either a V.A. facility or a private doctor. The transition official said that Mr. Trump had discussed the possibility of a “public-private option” with the hospital executives. “Some vets love the V.A.,” the official said, and “some vets want to go to the V.A.” The official added that “the idea is to come up with a solution that solves the problem.” Asked whether the president-elect was “advanced” in his thinking on how to confront the V.A.’s problems, the official said, “Of course.” The official then added, referring to the possibility of private care: “It’s one of the options on the table. Definitely an option on the table to have a system where potentially vets can choose” to receive a combination of public and private care or simply opt to go to private doctors. The Department of Veterans Affairs has struggled to provide timely care to many veterans, and even its supporters say it needs an overhaul. News reports in 2014 said that dozens of veterans had died while waiting for care at a V.A. hospital in Phoenix, and that leaders of the agency had hidden delays and collected bonuses. Eric Shinseki, Mr. Obama’s first secretary of veterans affairs, resigned after a White House investigation found similar manipulations at dozens of hospitals. But veterans groups and Democrats strongly oppose any move toward privatization. In an August speech to the Disabled American Veterans, Mr. Obama warned that ideas like the ones floated by Mr. Trump should be rejected. “We cannot outsource and privatize health care for America’s veterans,” Mr. Obama said to applause. “Now, there are folks who keep pushing this. They don’t always come out and say the word ‘privatize,’ but you read what they say, that’s what they mean. And these radical proposals would begin to dismantle the V.A. health care system that millions of veterans depend on every day. And that would hurt veterans.” Mr. Trump met on Wednesday afternoon with John H. Noseworthy, the president of the Mayo Clinic; Paul Rothman, the chief executive of Johns Hopkins Medicine; David Torchiana, the chief executive of Partners HealthCare; Delos Cosgrove, the chief executive of the Cleveland Clinic; and several others. The transition official said Mr. Trump was considering asking members of that group to form an advisory committee to help him reshape the V.A.

## **12. LEGISLATION:**

### **• What the 114th Congress did and didn’t do.**

By MARY CLARE JALONICK - Associated Press - Saturday, December 10, 2016

WASHINGTON (AP) - Congress wrapped up the 114th session on Saturday, December 10, 2016. A tumultuous two years marked by the resignation of a House speaker, a fight over a Supreme Court vacancy, bipartisan bills on health care and education and inaction on immigration and criminal justice. The new Congress will be sworn-in Jan. 3.

### **What Congress passed or approved:**

- ✓ A hard-fought budget and debt agreement that provided two years of relief from unpopular automatic budget cuts and extended the government’s borrowing cap through next March.
- ✓ The end of a 40-year-old ban on crude oil exports.
- ✓ A rescue package for financially strapped Puerto Rico, creating an oversight board to supervise some debt restructuring and negotiate with creditors.
- ✓ A sweeping biomedical bill that would help drug and medical device companies win swifter government approval of their products, boost disease research and drug-abuse spending and revamp federal mental health programs. It would also include money for preventing and treating abuse of addictive drugs like opioids.
- ✓ The first overhaul of the Toxic Substances Control Act since it was approved in 1976.
- ✓ A sweeping rewrite of education law, giving states more power to decide how to use the results of federally mandated math and reading tests in evaluating teachers and schools.
- ✓ An aviation bill that attempts to close gaps in airport security and shorten screening lines.
- ✓ Five-year, \$305-billion highway legislation to address the nation’s aging and congested transportation systems.
- ✓ An extension of a federal loan program that provides low-interest money to the neediest college students.
- ✓ The USA Freedom Act, which extends some expiring surveillance provisions of the USA Patriot Act passed after the 9/11 attacks.
- ✓ A bipartisan measure that recasts how Medicare reimburses doctors for treating over 50 million elderly people.
- ✓ Legislation reviving the federal Export-Import Bank, a small federal agency that makes and guarantees loans to help foreign customers buy U.S. goods.

- ✓ \$1.1 billion to combat the threat of the Zika virus.
- ✓ Defense legislation rebuffing President Barack Obama's attempts to close the prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and blocking the Pentagon from starting a new round of military base closings.
- ✓ Food labeling legislation that will require most food packages to indicate whether they contain genetically modified ingredients.
- ✓ Legislation authorizing hundreds of water projects, including measures to help Flint, Michigan, rid its water of poisonous lead, and to allow more of California's limited water resources to flow to Central Valley farmers hurt by the state's lengthy drought.
- ✓ Expanded law enforcement tools to target sex traffickers.
- ✓ Legislation that would tighten several security requirements of the visa waiver program, which allows citizens of 38 countries to travel to the U.S. without visas.
- ✓ Cyber security legislation that would encourage companies to share cyber-threat information with the government.
- ✓ A renewal of health care and disability payments to 9/11 first responders who worked in the toxic ruins of the World Trade Center.
- ✓ A bill allowing families of Sept. 11 victims to sue Saudi Arabia in U.S. courts for its alleged backing of the attackers, enacted in Obama's first veto override.
- ✓ A permanent ban on state and local government Internet taxes.
- ✓ A bill that boosts government suicide prevention efforts for military veterans.
- ✓ Confirmation of Eric Fanning to be Army secretary, making him the first openly gay leader of a U.S. military service.
- ✓ The election of a new House speaker, Republican Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin.

**What Congress did not pass or approve:**

- Confirmation of Obama's pick for the Supreme Court, Merrick Garland.
  - Confirmation of 51 federal judges nominated by Obama, including 44 district court nominees and seven appeals court nominees.
  - Gun control legislation.
  - Bills that would have halted federal payments to Planned Parenthood, after secretly recorded videos of Planned Parenthood officials discussing tissue donations fueled an uproar among congressional Republicans and abortion opponents.
  - Comprehensive or incremental changes to immigration law.
  - \$1 trillion worth of agency budget bills that will be kicked into next year, complicated by a familiar battle over the balance between Pentagon spending and domestic programs and a desire by Republicans to get a better deal next year from the Trump administration. Congress passed a four-month extension of current spending instead.
  - A bipartisan criminal justice bill that would have reduced some mandatory sentences for low-level drug offenders and increased rehabilitation programs.
  - The first comprehensive energy bill in nearly a decade, which would speed exports of liquefied natural gas and create a new way to budget for wildfires.
  - War powers for Obama to fight Islamic State militants.
  - A bill forcing the president to allow construction of the Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada. Obama rejected the pipeline in 2015 after seven years of indecision.
  - The Trans-Pacific Partnership, a multinational trade agreement involving 11 other Pacific Rim countries. Congress did give the president Trade Promotion Authority, allowing Congress to ratify or reject trade agreements negotiated by the executive branch, but not change or filibuster them.
  - Child nutrition bills that would have scaled back the Obama administration's standards for healthier school meals.
- **DEFENSE BILL UPDATE:** House and Senate conferees negotiated a \$618.7 billion defense policy bill that increased military pay raises from the administration's proposed 1.6 percent to 2.1 percent, which would equal the anticipated rise in the Employment Cost Index (ECI), and mark the first time in four years that military pay

kept pace with the ECI. Other significant provisions would halt planned reductions in active duty Army and Marine Corps forces, keeping end strengths instead at 476,000 and 185,000, respectively; flag officer ranks would be cut by about 12 percent, the majority of them in joint billets; and stripped from the bill are plans to require women, age 18 to 26, to register for the draft. A review of the Selective Service System's continued viability will instead be initiated. The 2017 National Defense Authorization Act is expected to go to floor votes in the House today and in the Senate early next week.

- **CONGRESS ADVANCES VETERANS BILLS:** The Senate passed several veterans bills to honor veterans who were injured or became ill while in service and fund construction projects for VA facilities in Nevada and California. These bills will now go to the House for further consideration. The House also advanced several bills to require the Department of Labor to better recognize efforts made by employers to recruit and retain veterans. The house also passed bills to require VA to provide headstones, markers, or medallions for Medal of Honor recipients who are buried in private cemeteries and send a Presidential Memorial Certificate to the families of deceased veterans; authorize congressional staffers greater access to the records of veterans who ask for help from their member of Congress; and a bill to rename the VA Medical Center in Long Beach, California after Medal of Honor recipient Tibor Rubin. These bills await Senate consideration. Another bill passed by the House to improve VA's Automobile Adaptive Equipment Program now heads to the president's desk for his signature.
- The House of Representatives passed nine bills, two of which have previously passed the Senate. The two that have passed both chambers of Congress and await the president's signature are **S. 3076**, a bill to ensure that veterans with no next-of-kin or who lack the financial resources are provided with a casket or urn; and **S. 3492**, which will name a VA outpatient clinic in Michigan after Colonel Demas T. Craw.

The remaining bills await Senate action. They are: **H.R. 6435** will allow independent investigations at VA medical centers; **H.R. 5099** allows VA to enter into five public-private partnerships to offset the cost of building VA medical centers; **H.R. 4298** directs the Secretary of the Army to place a memorial at Arlington National Cemetery honoring Vietnam era helicopter pilots and crews; **H.R. 5399** will improve accountability of VA doctors; **H.R. 4150** will allow VA to better schedule VA doctors' work hours; **H.R. 4352** calls for a pilot program to allow veterans to self-schedule their appointments; and **H.R. 6416**, a veterans omnibus package that will, among other provisions, allow for toxic exposure research, restore certain educational benefits for National Guard and Reservists and expand homeless veterans' benefits.

- **CONGRESS PASSES SLIMMED-DOWN VETERANS REFORM BILL**By: Leo Shane III, December 13, 2016 - Lawmakers passed a veterans omnibus bill in the waning hours of Congress' legislative session last week, but without many of the most sweeping and controversial provisions the two chambers had struggled with in recent months. Instead, the measure heading to the president's desk is a collection of mostly non-controversial items, including small changes in the benefits appeals process, an extension of education benefits to some war widows and increased access to benefits for homeless veterans. It doesn't include accountability provisions championed by critics of the Department of Veterans Affairs, who insist the bureaucracy does not have the ability to properly discipline criminal employees. It also omits a costly expansion of veteran caregiver benefits and proposed trims to the post-9/11 GI Bill, which several veterans groups had protested. And it doesn't include an overhaul of the benefits appeals process or a consolidation of VA's outside care programs, two priorities that department leaders had pleaded with lawmakers to approve before the end of the year. Still, House and Senate leaders hailed the passage as important steps forward in improving assistance for veterans, noting the changes should improve health care and benefits access. Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., called it "a down payment on the promise and the debt that we owe to veterans." Under the bill — named for retiring House Veterans' Affairs Chairman Jeff Miller, R-Fla., and the Senate committee's former ranking member Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn. — the U.S.

Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims will expand from seven to nine judges for the next three years, to help clear the backlog cases there. It also mandates a host of new reports on the reasons behind that backlog, and would allow the VA to pay some survivor benefits to veterans' family members even if they don't formally apply for the payouts. Burial at VA cemeteries would be expanded to include some reservists with service-connected illnesses and training accidents. Certain education benefits would be expanded to include spouses of troops killed between Sept. 11, 2001, and Jan. 1, 2006, who had previously been ineligible. The health care provisions include new language allowing veterans who served in classified missions to seek mental health treatment without fear of security violations and to ease rules for hiring more mental health specialists. The bill also mandates new research on the potential health effects from toxic exposures on veterans' children, with an eye toward possibly covering those illnesses in the future. Union officials had voiced opposition to the bill over a measure changing how the department sets pay scales for some employees. VA leaders had backed dropping review panels required to set those salaries, and lawmakers ignored those concerns in their final passage. The full measure is available online through [the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee's website](#). The president is expected to sign the measure into law in the coming days.

- **NEW REGULATION DECREASES COST OF OUTPATIENT MEDICATION COPAY FOR MOST VETERANS** Washington – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is amending its regulation on copayments for Veterans' outpatient medications for non-service connected conditions. VA currently charges non-exempt Veterans either \$8 or \$9 for each 30-day or less supply of outpatient medication, and under current regulations, a calculation based on the medication of the Medical Consumer Price Index (CPI-P) would be used to determine the copayment amount in future years. "Switching to a tiered system continues to keep outpatient medication costs low for Veterans," said VA Under Secretary for Health Dr. David J. Shulkin. "Reducing their out-of-pocket costs encourages greater adherence to prescribed outpatient medications and reduces the risk of fragmented care that results when multiple pharmacies are used; another way that VA is providing better service to Veterans." This new regulation eliminates the formula used to calculate future rate increases and establishes three classes of outpatient medications identified as Tier 1, Preferred Generics; Tier 2, Non-Preferred Generics including over-the-counter medications; and Tier 3, Brand Name. Copayment amounts for each tier would be fixed and vary depending upon the class of outpatient medication in the tier. These copayment amounts will be effective February 27, 2017:

\$5 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 1 outpatient medication  
\$8 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 2 outpatient medication  
\$11 for a 30-day or less supply - Tier 3 outpatient medication

These changes apply to Veterans without a service-connected condition, or Veterans with a disability rated less than 50 percent who are receiving outpatient treatment for a non-service connected condition, and whose annual income exceeds the limit set by law. Medication copayments do not apply to former Prisoners of War, catastrophically disabled Veterans, or those covered by other exceptions as set by law.

Copayments stop each calendar year for Veterans in [Priority Groups 2-8](#) once a \$700 cap is reached.

13. **TRICARE PUBLICATIONS UPDATE:** DOD has redesigned TRICARE handbooks, brochures, fact sheets and guides to make them more user friendly and visually appealing. To view the updated publications, visit: [www.tricare.mil/publications](http://www.tricare.mil/publications).
14. **SCAM ALERT: TOP FIVE VETERAN SWINDLES:** Aside from elderly fraud, scams targeting veterans really burns my bacon. Men and women who have proudly served our country are constant targets for scam artists. Swindlers target vets because they know they are drawing guaranteed benefits. While veteran payments are paid over a lifetime, they often aren't enough to pay all of the bills. Financial predators know this. According the the [AARP Fraud Watch Network](#), there are a host of scams aimed at vets. Many of these operations masquerade as charities that claim to benefit vets. Here are the major scams:  
**Bogus sales** – "A scammer claiming to be a deploying service member posts a large ticket item on a classified ad website that he needs to sell right away and at a steep discount. The scammer asks for upfront payment with a wire transfer or gift cards.

**Real estate rip-off** – A scammer posts a fake rental property on a classified ad website offering military discounts. You just need to wire transfer a security deposit to the landlord.

**VA phishing** – A caller claiming to be from the Department of Veterans Affairs calls to “update” your information.

**Fake charities** – Fake charities use names that are close to the names of legitimate charities, often referencing Armed Forces, veterans, or military families.

**Benefits “buyout”** – Scammers will target veterans in need of money by offering cash in exchange for their future disability or pension payments. These buyouts are typically a fraction of the value of the benefit.

**Dubious investment advice** – An “adviser” will tell the veteran she is missing out on benefits, and wants to review her investment portfolio. He’ll then want to put the veteran’s investments in a trust, to appear to have fewer assets and to therefore be eligible for an additional pension.”

Note: The “benefits buyout” scam also goes by the name of “pension advances.” A company will offer to “buy” monthly pension payments in exchange for a lump-sum payment. It’s actually an unregulated, high-interest loan. I’ve written about pension advances several times. Don’t even go near them.

The best way to protect yourself against vet scams? Avoid all mail, email and phone solicitations. If the solicitor claims to be from a charity, check them out on [give.org](http://give.org). The Fraud Watch network also gives the following advice: “Be suspicious anytime you are asked to pay by wire transfer or gift cards. Know that the VA will never call, text or e-mail you to update your information. Make donations directly to the veterans’ organizations you know. And only work with VA-accredited representatives when dealing with VA benefits; you can search for them online at the [VA Office of General Counsel website](http://VA Office of General Counsel website).”

#### **15. REVISIT TO KOREA PROGRAM:**

The Revisit Korea program is over for 2016. Over 350 veterans and family members returned to Korea on the ROK government subsidized program that was commenced in 1975. The big change this year was that the Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (MPVA) approved Korea Defense Veterans, and their families, going for the first time. We have been told that the program will continue in 2017. We don’t receive the actual quotas and specific dates until after the first of the year. However, the months are usually June, July, September, October and December. These quotas go very fast so it’s highly recommended that you submit your registrations ASAP. For more information see: [www.KWVA.org](http://www.KWVA.org) or [www.miltours.com](http://www.miltours.com)

#### **16. THE SAE EDEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN KOREA–The Sae Eden Presbyterian Church is planning an event in Houston, Texas in June 7, 2017. President Thomas Stevens and Past President Larry Kinard will represent the KWVA.**

#### **17. VA LAUNCHES NEW SITE FOR DIGITAL HEALTH PLATFORM - The Department of Veterans Affairs this week launched a new website to raise awareness of the agency’s Digital Health Platform—a cloud-based approach to integrating veterans health data to produce what the agency calls real-time, analytics-driven, personalized care. The new site provides a detailed overview of how the DHP will work, the emerging technologies it will leverage, and provides user case studies to show how veterans will benefit from a comprehensive dashboard that can enable customized care. VA’s Digital Health Platform is the agency’s vision for moving beyond a system centered on a specific electronic health record, or EHR. VA’s current EHR platform, known as VistA, is a 40-year-old system that the agency continues to modernize while it debates a potential commercial replacement. “Much has changed at VA since VistA was first introduced,” states a fact sheet provided to MeriTalk by a VA spokesperson. “The average age of a Veteran has increased from 46 to 60, VA serves 500% more female Veterans, and the suite of specialty services the Department provides, like prosthetics and mental health care, has continued to expand.” Announced earlier this year, VA’s Digital Health Platform is a 25-year strategy that goes well beyond the choice of an EHR, including financial management, CRM, supply chain management, and human resources. According to the new website, “DHP provides a comprehensive dashboard spanning a veteran’s complete health record. DHP is a cloud-based technology platform integrating Veteran data from VA, military and commercial electronic health records (EHRs), applications, devices and wearables to a Veteran’s healthcare team in real-time.” During a Senate hearing in July, VA Chief Information Officer LaVerne Council described the Digital Health Platform as a system of**

systems. “It is not dependent on any particular EHR, and VA can integrate new or existing resources into the system without sacrificing data interoperability. One of the digital health platform’s defining features will be systemwide cloud integration, a marked improvement over the more than 130 instances of VistA that we have today,” Council said. “A decision on the EHR component of DHP will be decided by the department after the business case and cost analysis is complete—as several EHR options are being evaluated,” a VA spokesman said. “DHP is agnostic to an EHR, and during the proof of concept, DHP was shown to work with VistA, Cerner, and Regenstrief GOPHER (a European EHR).” The VA spokesman said the agency is working toward completing the business case and a rough cost estimate for the DHP later this month.

18. **TELL AMERICA PROGRAM:** The Map Poster of the Korean War continues to be requested. The map is available to those participating in the Tell America Program. If you would like maps for your presentations, please contact:  
Director Roy Aldridge, Chairman, Tell America Program  
6544 Grand Ridge, Dr  
El Paso, TX 79912  
Phone: 915-581-4725 ~ Email: [Royaldridge@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Royaldridge@sbcglobal.net)
19. **VETERANS DAY 2017:** Director Paul Cunningham has been appointed Chair of the Veterans Day 2017 Committee. Other members include Director Whitmore and Executive Director Jim Fisher. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please inform Director Cunningham.  
Our urgent interest in this planning lies in the necessity for the Korean War Veterans to prepare for Veterans Day, 2017 when we will be Host VSO.  
The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and agenda items included:
- Review of quotes from caterers for Reception. Polish food items were included in the menu and reflected in the quotes of just under **\$32,000 (this includes all taxes and usage fees)**. This represents the largest single expense.
  - Logistics of setting up the reception area to provide informative information regarding the PLAV, membership applications, National Service Director on Benefits available to veterans. Volunteers to “man” the tables, greeters and personnel to check the names of guests against the issued invitations. (Must meet restrictions and/or rules set by VA) Signage and its display.
  - Invitation Cards for the reception.
  - Ordering Lapel Pins for reception attendees and possibly members who will be unable to attend.
  - Reception location. Women in Military Service Memorial Building. **RENTAL FEE: \$1, 500,00** (SUBJECT TO CHANGE).
  - Determination of Need for a Specific Checking Account for the 2017 Veterans Day Event with the requirement that 2 signatures be required for all checks.
  - Hotels and Transportation needs for Departments. Consideration of “Specials” such as tours and monument visitations. Several area lodging sites had been visited and were discussed.
  - Seating for the Ceremonies at Arlington Amphitheater and Bus information. Early arrival for PLAV is encouraged because of expected crowds. Amphitheater seating is limited and opens to the public on a “first come-first seated” basis after 8:00A
20. **READING OF THE FALLEN:** The Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation has been conducting a reading the names of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice during the Korean War. In 2015, all of the American Servicemen who died during the war had their names announced in a very dignified and solemn ceremony. This year all of the Korean Augmentation to the United States Army soldier’s names who were killed had their names read at the Memorial. **On June 25, 2017, The Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation will read all of the fallen from the Allied Countries who came to the aid of South Korea will have their names read at the Memorial.**



**21. POW/MIA REPORT:** Submitted by Mr. Rocky Harder, KWVA POW/MIA Coordinator. Monthly Teleconference, DPAA-Family Organizations/VSO/MSO

- **MIA Families Sought:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency is seeking families of missing American service members to attend informational update meetings and to collect DNA samples if one is not already on file. Learn more at: <http://www.dpaa.mil/Families/Family-Events/>.
- **Army Master Sgt. Joseph Durakovich,** missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In late December 1950, Durakovich was a member of Company G, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, establishing a defensive position in Pongmyong-ni east of Kuni-ri, North Korea, when they were attacked by the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces (CPVF). The Americans were continually attacked as they withdrew along the main supply route to Samsu-ri, and they encountered a roadblock they could not break through. Following the battle, Durakovich could not be accounted for and was reported missing in action on Nov. 28, 1950. Durakovich's name did not appear on any POW list provided by the CPVF or the North Korean People's Army, and no returning American POWs provided any information concerning Durakovich as a possible prisoner of war. Based on this information, a military review board amended his status to deceased in 1953. In August and September 2002, a Joint U.S. and Korean People's Army recovery team conducted a Joint Recovery Operation at a site in Ung Bong, Village, North Korea, based on information provided by two Korean witnesses. The site was approximately 30 kilometers from where Durakovich was last seen. During the excavation, the team recovered material evidence and possible human remains. DNA analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.
- **Army Sgt. Homer R. Abney,** missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In late November, 1950, Abney was a member of Company A, 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, when his unit was fighting units of the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces in North Korea. By the early morning of Nov. 30, the road from Kunu-ri to Sunch'on was heavily fortified with a series of enemy roadblocks, later named "The Gauntlet." The regiment sustained more casualties than any other unit during the battle, and it was following that battle that Abney was declared missing. The CPVF and North Korean People's Army periodically provided lists of prisoners of war during the war, but none listed Abney. Following the war, three returning American prisoners reported that Abney died at Hofong Camp in March 1951. Based on this information, the U.S. Army declared him deceased as of March 31, 1951. In April and May 2005, a Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (now DPAA) and Korea People's Army Recovery Team, conducted the 37th Joint Field Activity, visiting a site near Pukchin-Tarigol Prisoner of war camp. Possible human remains were found, but the condition of the site indicated it was a second burial site. DNA analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.

- **Army Cpl. Louis A. Damewood** was a member of Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, operating near Hoengsong, South Korea. He was declared missing after his unit attacked an opposition road block on Feb. 13, 1951. Interment services are pending. Read more at: <http://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/Recent-News-Stories/Article/1011982/soldier-missing-from-korean-war-identified-damewood/>.
- **Army Sgt. Stafford L. Morris**, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In late November 1950, Morris was a member of Battery A, 503rd Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division, and located north of the town of Kujang-dong, North Korea. Due to heavy fighting and encroaching Chinese People's Volunteer Force elements from the north, American units were forced to withdraw south through an area that came to be known as "The Gauntlet." On Dec. 1, the battalion began to move down the supply route, under continuous enemy fire. The unit sustained many casualties. Morris' name did not appear on any POW list provided by the CPVF or the North Korean People's Army, however multiple returning American POWs provided any information concerning Morris as a prisoner of war, stating that he died at Hofong Camp, part of Pukchin-Tarigol Camp Cluster, on Jan. 21, 1951. Based on this information, a military review board amended his status to deceased. In April and May 2005, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (now DPAA), and a Korean People's Army Recovery Team conducted the 37th Joint Field Activity in Unsan County, North Korea. A site approximately 12 miles south of Pukchin-Tarigol camp was excavated, and a large amount of remains were recovered. DNA analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.
- **Army Cpl. David T. Nordin, Jr.**, 23, of Los Angeles, will be buried in Kent, Washington, on Dec. 16. Nordin was a member of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division. He was declared missing Nov. 28, 1950, after his unit was attacked by Chinese forces while establishing a position near Unsan, North Korea, as part of a United Nations Command offensive. Read more at: <http://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/Article/1024527/soldier-killed-in-korean-war-accounted-for-nordin/>.
- **Army Cpl. Edward Pool**, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In late November, 1950, Pool was a member of 31st Heavy Mortar Company, 31st Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. Approximately 2,500 U.S. and 700 South Korean soldiers assembled into the 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT), which was deployed east of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea, when it was engaged by overwhelming numbers of Chinese forces. By Dec. 6, the U.S. Army evacuated approximately 1,500 wounded service members; the remaining soldiers had been either captured or killed in enemy territory. Because Pool could not be accounted for by his unit at the end of the battle, he was reported missing in action as of Nov. 30, 1950. Pool's name appeared on a list provided by the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces and Korean People's Army as a prisoner of war, however no information was provided regarding his status. Following the war, one returning American prisoner reported that Pool had died in January 1951. Based on this information, the U.S. Army declared him deceased as of Jan. 31, 1951. Between 1990 and 1994, North Korea returned 208 boxes of commingled human remains to the United States, which we now believe to contain the remains of at least 600 U.S. servicemen who fought during the war. North Korean documents included in the repatriation indicate that some of the remains were recovered from the vicinity where Pool was believed to have died. DNA analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.
- **Army Cpl. Gerald I. Shepler**, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. On Nov. 29, 1950, Shepler was a member of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 187th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, on a reconnaissance patrol. Shepler was the lead scout when the patrol encountered an enemy ambush near Hajoyang-ni, North Korea, during which an enemy mortar round reportedly

exploded within 10 yards of Shepler. Following the battle, Shepler could not be accounted for and he was declared missing in action. Shepler's name did not appear on any list provided by the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces or Korean People's Army as a prisoner of war. Though no returning American prisoners of war provided any information concerning Shepler, testimony from witnesses stated they suspected he was mortally wounded by the mortar explosion. Based on this information, the U.S. Army declared him deceased as of Nov. 29, 1950. DNA analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.

- **Army Cpl. James T. Mainhart**, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In late November 1950, Mainhart was a member of Company I, 31st Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. Approximately 2,500 U.S. and 700 South Korean soldiers assembled into the 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT), which was deployed east of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea, when it was engaged by overwhelming numbers of Chinese forces. By Dec. 6, the U.S. Army evacuated approximately 1,500 wounded service members; the remaining soldiers had been either captured or killed in enemy territory. Because Mainhart could not be accounted for by his unit at the end of the battle, he was reported missing in action as of Nov. 30, 1950. Mainhart's name did not appear on any prisoner of war lists and no repatriated Americans were able to provide any information concerning Mainhart as a prisoner of war. Due to the prolonged lack of evidence, the U.S. Army declared him deceased as of Nov. 30, 1950. Although the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service hoped to recover American remains that remained north of the Korean Demilitarized Zone after the war, administrative details between the United Nations Command and North Korea complicated recovery efforts. An agreement was made and in September and October 1954, in what was known as Operation Glory, remains were returned. However, Mainhart's remains were not included and he was declared non-recoverable. DNA analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending. In September and October 2004, personnel from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (now DPAA), conducted the 36th Joint Recovery Operation with the Korean People's Army in the vicinity of the Chosin River. During the mission, a witness statement reported that remains believed to be American had been found and reburied. Recovery Team 2 found a site that contained material evidence and possible remains of at least five individuals.
- **Army Cpl. George A. Perreault**, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. On Feb. 5, 1951, Perreault was a part of Support Force 21 and assigned to Headquarters Battery, 15th Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division, which was supporting Republic of Korean Army (ROKA) attacks against units of the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces (CPVF) in the area known as the Central Corridor in South Korea. On the evening of February 11, the CPVF launched a massive counterattack against the ROKA regiment. The ROKA withdrew, leaving American units to fight alone at Changbong-ni, until they were forced to withdraw too. After enduring a sustained enemy attack, the Support Force abandoned Hoengsong and moved toward Wonju. Perreault never reported to Wonju and he was reported missing in action on Feb. 13, 1951. A list provided by opposing forces on Dec. 26, 1951 stated that Perreault died as a prisoner of war, though the information could not be confirmed. Additionally, no returning American prisoners of war could provide any information on him. Based on the lack of information of his status, the U.S. Army declared him deceased as of Jan. 18, 1954. DNA analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.
- **Army Cpl. Jules Hauterman**, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In late November, 1950, Hauterman was a medic with the Medical Platoon, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, when his unit was attached to the 31st Regimental Combat Team as one of its infantry battalions for the mission. The 31st RCT advanced to occupy the east side of the Chosin River. For three days and four nights, the unit battled the 80th Division of the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces. The 31st RCT finally conducted a fighting withdraw south for safety at the Marine Base in Hagaru-ri. The convoy was eventually destroyed by the CPVF, and while some escaped across the frozen reservoir, more

than 1,300 were captured or killed. Following the battle, Hauterman could not be accounted for and he was reported missing in action as of Dec. 2, 1950.

The CPVF and North Korean People's Army periodically provided lists of prisoners of war during the war, but none listed Hauterman. Additionally, no returning American prisoners of war reported to have any information regarding Hauterman as a prisoner of war. Based on the lack of information regarding his status, the U.S. Army declared him deceased.

On Sept. 15, 1954, a set of remains reportedly recovered from the East Chosin Reservoir were sent to the Central Identification Laboratory in Kokura, Japan and attempted to make identification. The remains, identified as X-15904, were declared unidentifiable in 1955, and were transferred to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu. On June 13, 2016, the remains identified as "Unknown X-15904" were disinterred and sent to the DPAA laboratory for analysis. Laboratory analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.

- **Army Pfc. Thomas C. Stagg**, killed in the Korean War, has now been accounted for. On Nov. 29, 1950, Stagg was a member of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 187th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, on a reconnaissance patrol. The patrol encountered an enemy ambush near Hajoyang-ni, North Korea. Following the battle, Stagg could not be accounted for and he was declared killed in action. Between 1990 and 1994, North Korea returned 208 boxes of commingled human remains to the United States, which we determined to contain the remains of at least 400 U.S. servicemen who fought during the war. North Korean documents included in the repatriation indicate that some of the remains were recovered from the vicinity where Stagg was believed to have died. Laboratory analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.
- **Army Pfc. Charles C. Follese**, killed in the Korean War, has now been accounted for. On Nov. 29, 1950, Follese was a member of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 187th Airborne Infantry Regiment. Members of the unit went on a reconnaissance patrol and were ambushed by enemy forces. The following day, another patrol, including Follese, were assigned to recover the casualties. This patrol also encountered an enemy ambush near Hajoyang-ni, North Korea. Following the battle, Follese could not be accounted for and he was declared killed in action. Between 1990 and 1994, North Korea returned 208 boxes of commingled human remains to the United States, which we determined to contain the remains of at least 400 U.S. servicemen who fought during the war. North Korean documents included in the repatriation indicate that some of the remains were recovered from the vicinity where Follese was believed to have died. Laboratory analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.
- **Army Sgt. Thomas E. Zimmer**, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In late November, 1950, Zimmer was a member of Battery A, 57th Field Artillery Battalion, 31st Regimental Combat Team, 7th Infantry Division, on the east side of the Chosin River, North Korea, when Chinese People's Volunteer Forces (CPVF) attacked the regiment and forced the unit to withdraw to Hagaru-ri. Many soldiers became surrounded and attempted to escape, but were captured or killed. Zimmer was subsequently declared missing in action as a result of the battle that occurred Dec. 6, 1950.

Zimmer's name did not appear on any lists provided by the CPVF or the Korean People's Army as a prisoner of war, and no returning American prisoners were able to provide any information concerning Zimmer. Based on the lack of information, the U.S. Army declared him deceased as of Dec. 31, 1953. In August and September 2004, a joint U.S. and Korean People's Army recovery team conducted a Joint Recovery Operation in the vicinity of the East Chosin Reservoir, where Zimmer went missing. The team recovered possible human remains and sent them to the DPAA laboratory for analysis. Laboratory analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.

- Army Cpl. Luis P. Torres**, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. On Sept. 1, 1950, Torres was member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, when his battalion had its position overrun by enemy forces along the east bank of the Naktong River, South Korea. During this attack, Torres was reported missing in action near Changyong, South Korea. Torres' name did not appear on any prisoner of war list, but one returning American prisoner of war reported that he believed Torres was held captive by the enemy and was executed. Due to the prolonged lack of evidence, the U.S. Army declared him deceased as of March 3, 1954. Although the U.S. Army Graves Registration Service planned to recover American remains that remained north of the Korean Demilitarized Zone after the war, administrative details between the United Nations Command and North Korea complicated recovery efforts. An agreement was made and in September and October 1954, in what was known as Operation Glory, remains were returned. However, Torres' remains were not included and he was declared non-recoverable. On Dec. 20, 1950, a set of unidentified remains, previously recovered from a shallow grave near Changnyong, were buried in the Miryang United Nations Military Cemetery as "Unknown X-331." In February 1951, the remains were moved to the Tanggok United Nations Military Cemetery. Although Torres was considered a candidate for identification, the remains were not identified due to a lack of substantiating evidence. The remains were then moved to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu and buried as Unknown. On May 16, 2016, the remains were disinterred and sent to the DPAA laboratory for analysis. Laboratory analysis and circumstantial evidence were used in the identification of his remains. Interment services are pending.
- Army Cpl. Joseph N. Pelletier**, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In early February 1951, Pelletier was a member of Headquarters Battery, 15th Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division, when his unit began supporting Republic of Korea (ROK) Army attacks against units of the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces (CPVF) in an area known as the Central Corridor in North Korea. On February 11, the CPVF launched a massive counterattack against the ROK regiment causing them to withdraw, leaving the American units to fight the CPVF at Changbong-ni. The CPVF attacked the Americans on February 12, causing them to withdraw south to Hoengsong. They eventually moved to Wonju, but Pelletier never reported in. The U.S. Army declared him missing in action as of Feb. 13, 1951. Pelletier's name appeared on a list provided by the CPVF and Korean People's Army as a prisoner of war and returning American prisoners of war reported that Pelletier had been a prisoner and died sometime in April 1951 at the "Bean Camp." Based on this information, the U.S. Army declared him deceased as of April 30, 1951. DNA analysis, as well as laboratory analysis, including anthropological and circumstantial evidence, were used in his identification. Interment services are pending.





# Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency



## Progress in Korea as of December 6, 2016

<b>Korean War Statistics:</b> Total unaccounted-for	7,779 <sup>1</sup>
Total joint field activities (JFAs) completed in North Korea: 1996 – present	33
Total joint field activities (JFAs/KFEs) completed in South Korea: 1996 – present	54

<b>Category</b>	<b>Total Each Category</b>	<b>Accounted- for</b>
Remains recovered and repatriated through JFAs	229	126 (55%)
Remains repatriated through North Korean unilateral operations, 1990 – 1994 in 208 boxes <sup>2</sup>	400	161 (40%)
Remains repatriated through North Korean unilateral operations 2007	6	6 (100%)
Remains disinterred from the “Punchbowl” Cemetery in Hawaii, 1999 – present <sup>3</sup>	119	71 (60%)
Remains repatriated through recovery operations in China	1	1 (100%)
Remains repatriated through recovery operations in Japan	1	1 (100%)
Remains repatriated through recovery operations in South Korea, since 1982	21	12 (55%)
<b>Total remains identified and accounted-for, 1982 – present</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>378 (49%)</b>

### Korean War Accounting Efforts on the Peninsula

- Korean War Personnel Accounting Strategy – main avenues of pursuit are:
  - **Resolution of the Live Prisoner Issue.** Finding live Americans is the highest priority of our accounting process. Department of Defense (DoD), with the full support of the U.S. intelligence community, aggressively investigates all credible reports and sightings of alleged American survivors of the Korean War living in North Korea. Since 1995, more than 25,000 defectors from North Korea have been screened for information concerning Americans possibly living in the North. To date, this effort has produced no useful information concerning live Americans. Most reports of live Americans in North Korea pertain to six known U.S. military defectors. Of the six defectors, only one remains alive in North Korea. Four are reported to have died in the North, and one, Sergeant Jenkins, was returned to U.S. control in 2004.
  - **Joint Field Activities (JFAs) in North Korea.** JFAs consist of investigative and recovery operations. The U.S. conducted 33 JFAs in North Korea from 1996 through 2005. The U.S.

<sup>1</sup> This is a working number from the Personnel Missing Korea (PMKOR) list.

<sup>2</sup> 208 boxes of remains received from DPRK unilateral operations; many remains were commingled; possibly 375-400 remains in the 208 boxes.

<sup>3</sup> Original estimate of 866 sets of remains located in Punchbowl when exhumations began in 1999. The Total displayed represents disinterred remains to date.

government pays fair and reasonable compensation for the efforts associated with recovering remains, but does not pay for remains or information.

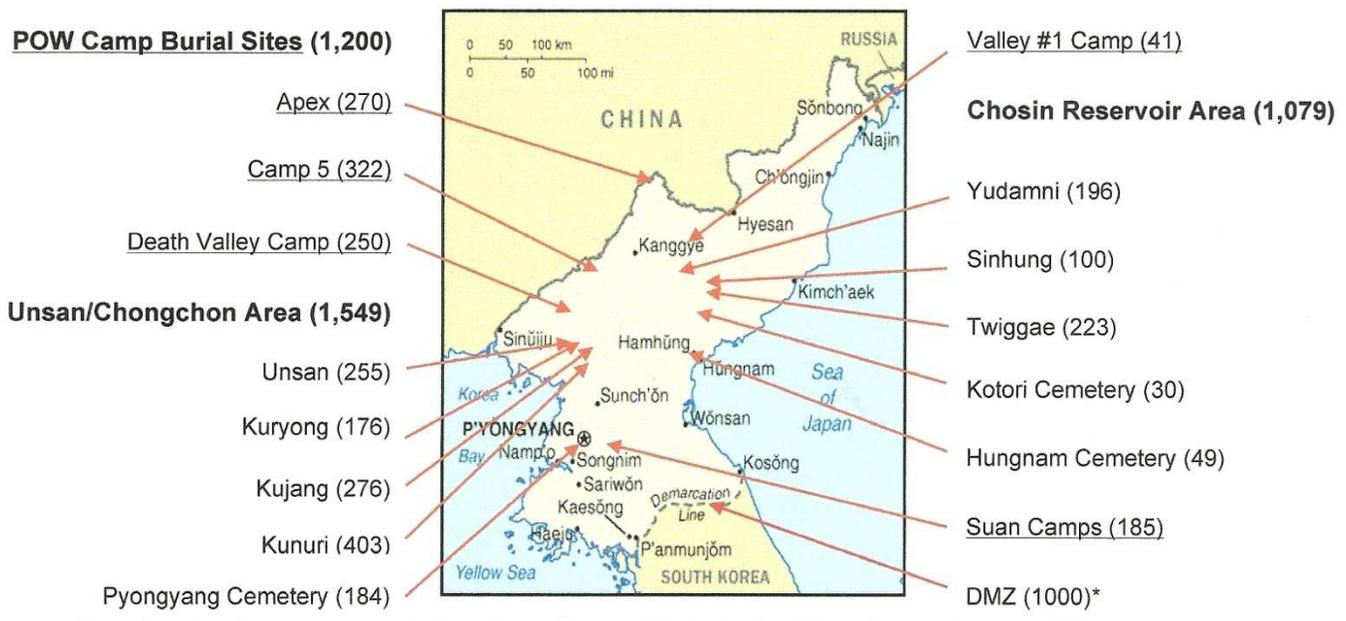
- **Identification of remains already recovered and under U.S. control.** Unidentified Korean War remains are located at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific and at JPAC's Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii. Efforts are underway to identify these remains using DNA and other methods.
- **Investigative and remains recovery operations in South Korea and China.** Approximately 950 remains are located in South Korea and fewer than 20 are known to be in China.
- **Korean War era archives.** DoD continues to conduct archival research in the U.S., South Korea, Russia, Eastern Europe, and China. We have also conducted research in North Korean archives, and currently we have an arrangement with China for the Peoples Liberation Army to search its military records for information on U.S. personnel. Chinese Communist Forces administered and operated the POW camps in North Korea for most of the war.
- **Oral history programs in the U.S., South Korea, Russia, and China.** DoD periodically interviews Korean War veterans in the U.S., South Korea, Russia and China. These efforts are designed to uncover information that will help determine the circumstances of loss for missing servicemen; build our knowledge base of Korean War loss incidents; and gain eyewitness accounts of prison camp life and prisoner movements.

**Cold War Loss-Sea of Japan:** On April 15, 1969, North Korean fighter aircraft shot down a U.S. Navy EC-121 aircraft carrying a crew of 31 over the Sea of Japan. U.S. Navy ships recovered two remains; 29 U.S. service members are still unaccounted-for as a result of this incident.

### **Major Remains Concentrations in North Korea**

Estimated numbers of remains are in parenthesis

\*1954 estimate by U.S. Army Graves Registration Services on number of remains recoverable in DMZ.



**22. POW/MIA FOREVER STAMP:** A MESSAGE FROM TOM THIEL ~ KWVA CID169 Sec, Ed, Web, DoF Web, AL#41. 19147 Park Place Blvd, Eustis, FL 32736 [352-408-6612](tel:352-408-6612), [kwvathiel@gmail.com](mailto:kwvathiel@gmail.com)

There are more than 83,000 MIAs in all wars starting with WWII to the present. According to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, More than 7,800 Americans remain unaccounted-for from the Korean War. They were our brothers and sisters in arms, and U.S. Citizens. The Korean War and Korea Defense Service Veterans of Lake County, Chapter 169 Inc., has pledged to do all that it can to return all MIAs so that their families may gain some peace. We must do still more to keep the public aware of these 83,000 Missing in Action Americans. A First Class POW/MIA Forever Stamp would surely help us do this, and we want to convince the U.S. Postal Service to issue such a stamp. But the Post Office objects. Fortunately, one of our

Korean War brothers, a POW for some 33 months, the late William “Bill” Allen, author of *“My Old Box of Memories,”* had already done a lot of spadework on this effort. But, sadly, Bill was not able to convince the Postal Service. So he went to his Congressman, Gus Bilirakis of Florida's 12th District who in 2013 introduced HR2794, the Perpetual POW/MIA Stamp Act. In December 2015, Mr. Bilirakis reintroduced it as H.R. 3558 with the same name.

I obtained this new information from Congressman Ron DeSantis, of FL 11th District. According to Mr. DeSantis, “This legislation would provide for the issuance of a forever stamp depicting the National League of Families POW/MIA flag to honor members of the Armed Forces who are still prisoners, missing, or unaccounted for.” Mr. DeSantis went on to say “H.R. 3558 has been referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.” Mr. DeSantis continued “As a member of this committee, I will diligently review this legislation with my colleagues and keep your thoughts in mind should this, or any similar measure, come to the House floor for a vote.” Sadly, our legislation is still buried in the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. We sincerely appreciate all that have contacted their U.S. Representatives on behalf of the original bill. But now you need to do it again—contact your Congress person, our FL representatives on the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and leaders of this committee. Please also send this to your Veteran’s Group’s National Level so that this action might be implemented throughout the U.S., not just in Central Florida. Selected addresses follow:

**Congressman Gus Bilirakis** 2187 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 (202) 225-5755; Fax:(202) 225-4085 7132 Little Road New Port Richey, FL 34654 (727) 232-2921; FAX:(727) 232-2923

**Congressman John Mica** 2187 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 (202) 225-4035; Fax:(202) 226-0821 100 East Sybelia Avenue, Suite 340 Maitland, FL 32751-4495 407-657-8080; Fax: 407-657-5353

**Congressman Ron DeSantis** 308 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 202-225-2706; Fax: 202-226-6299 1000 City Center Circle Port Orange, FL 32129 386-756-9798; Fax: 386-756-9903  
United States House Committee on Oversight & Government Reform

**Congressman Jason Chaffetz**, Chairman, UT-3 2236 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-7751 51 S University Ave., Suite 318 Provo, UT 84601 Phone: (801) 851-2500

**Congressman Elijah Cummings**, Ranking Mbr, MD-7 2230 Rayburn HOB Washington, DC 20515 (202) 225-4741; Fax: (202) 225-3178, 1010 Park Avenue Suite 105 Baltimore, MD 21201, (410) 685-9199; Fax: (410) 685-9399

**23. EMBASSY NEWS:** The new Defense Attaché for the Embassy of the Republic of Korea

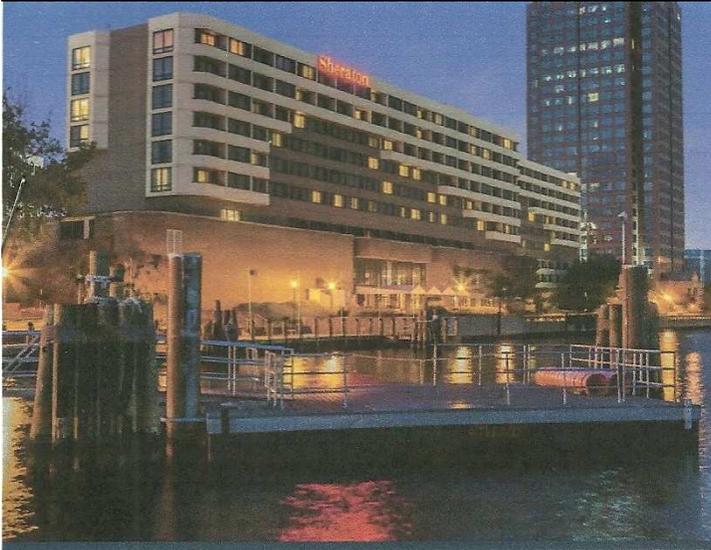
## **Brigadier General PYO, Se Woo**

ROK Defense Attaché to the United States  
Embassy of the Republic of Korea, Washington, D.C.

- **National/ Nationality:** Republic of Korea / Korean
- **Name in full:** PYO, Se Woo
- **Rank & Military Service:** Brigadier General, Army
- **Date & Place of Birth:** 18 May 1966 / Busan
- **Address:** 1315 Summerwood Ct., McLean, VA 22102
- **Educational Experience**
  - BS, U.S. Military Academy (1989)
  - MSFS, Georgetown University (1995)
  - PhD, International Studies, University of South Carolina (2004)
  - CCM-13, US Asia Pacific Center for Security Study (2013)
  - Korea NDU Senior Policymakers Course (2015)
  - Seoul National University International Security Strategy Program (2016)
- **Career**
  - Executive Officer to J3, ROK JCS J3
  - Battalion Commander, 4<sup>th</sup> BN, 125<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 53<sup>rd</sup> DIV
  - US Policy Officer, OPCON Transition Group, ROK JCS J5
  - US Policy Officer, ROK JCS Combined Defense Transition Group (CDTG)
  - Joint Defense Planning Officer, CDTG, ROK JCS J5
  - Regimental Commander, 102<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, 17<sup>th</sup> DIV
  - Command Structure OIC, CDTG, ROK JCS
  - Chief of Policy Division, Combined Forces Command / United Nations Command
  - DCG for Operations, 17<sup>th</sup> ID
  - Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff, C5, CFC / UNC
- **Family:** Wife (Kang, Ae-Kyung), Son (Joong Won), Son (Joong Hyun)
- **Hobby:** Hiking, Tennis
- **Awards:** Meritorious Service Medal (US Army)
- **Contact:** 202-939-5691 (office), Email: sewoopyo@gmail.com



## 24. 2017 KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



**Sheraton**<sup>®</sup>  
NORFOLK WATERSIDE HOTEL

### The Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel looks forward to welcoming the Korean War Veterans Association!

#### **DATES**

October 4th – 8th, 2017 Rates available (3) days pre and post subject to hotel availability

#### **BOOKING LINK**

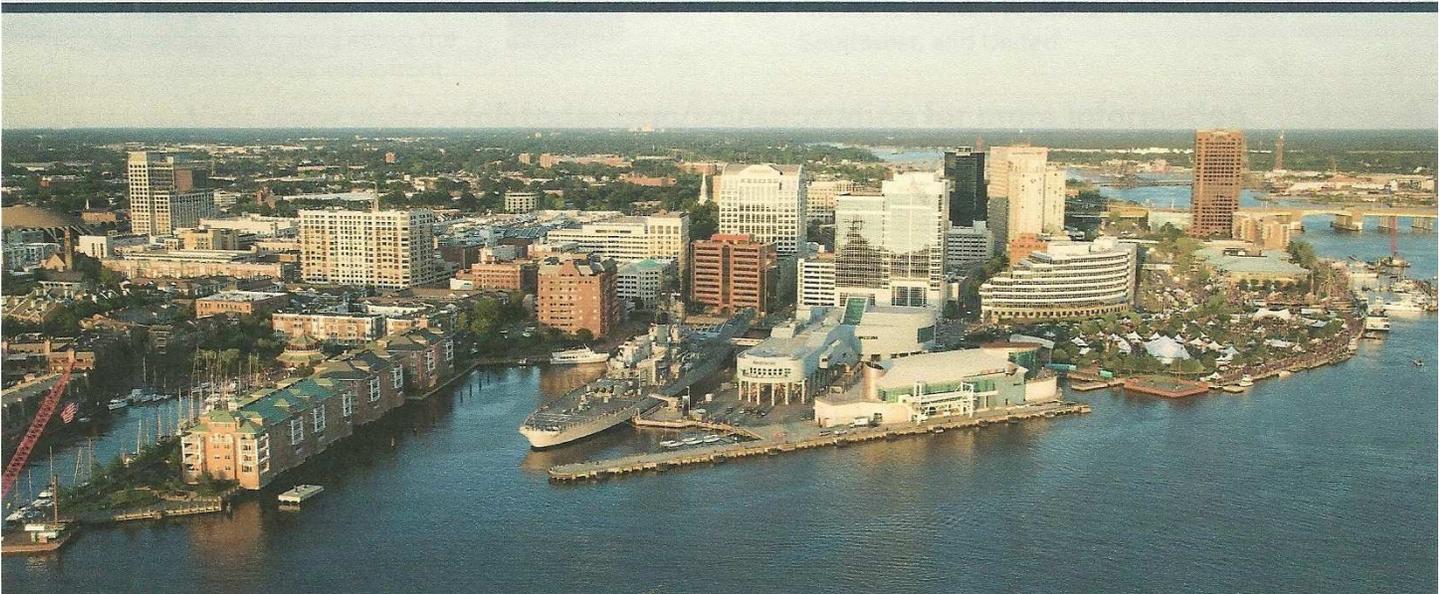
<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/KWVA2017> or call 1-800-325-3535 and ask for the Korean War Veterans Association

#### **RATES**

Standard room at \$104.00 plus tax, Balcony room at \$114.00 plus tax, Club Level king at \$134.00 plus tax. Choice of two queen size beds or one king size bed, harbor view or city view. Club level rooms include access to complimentary continental breakfast and evening hors d'oeuvres.

#### **LOCATION**

Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel 777 Waterside Drive, Norfolk, VA 23510 [www.sheraton.com/norfolk](http://www.sheraton.com/norfolk) (757) 622-6664.



25. **HONOR FLIGHTS:** Honor Flights for the remainder of the year have not been scheduled to the unpredictable weather in Washington, D.C. Honor Flights will resume starting in April 2017.
26. **RESCHEDULED: KWVMF FUND RAISING GALAS:** A Gala Benefit is scheduled for, July 27, 2017, at the Sheila Hotel, Seoul, Korea to raise money for the maintenance program at the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the Wall of Remembrance in Washington, D.C.
27. **Changjin (CHOSIN FEW) MEMORIAL DEDICATION** at Quantico Marine Corps Base (Museum) will likely be dedicated in April of 2017. More information to follow as it is given to us.
28. **NEW MEMORIAL PROPOSED FOR ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY:**

Upper Monument Dimensions:

38" x 10" x 72" (revised 7-7-15)

Monument Base Dimensions:

52" x 18" x 8"

Morse Code (height): 1/2"

Letter Size (height):

Line 1: 2"

Lines 2, 3, 4, 5: 1"

Line 6: 1-1/2"

Emblem Dimensions:

10" x 14"

(approx.)

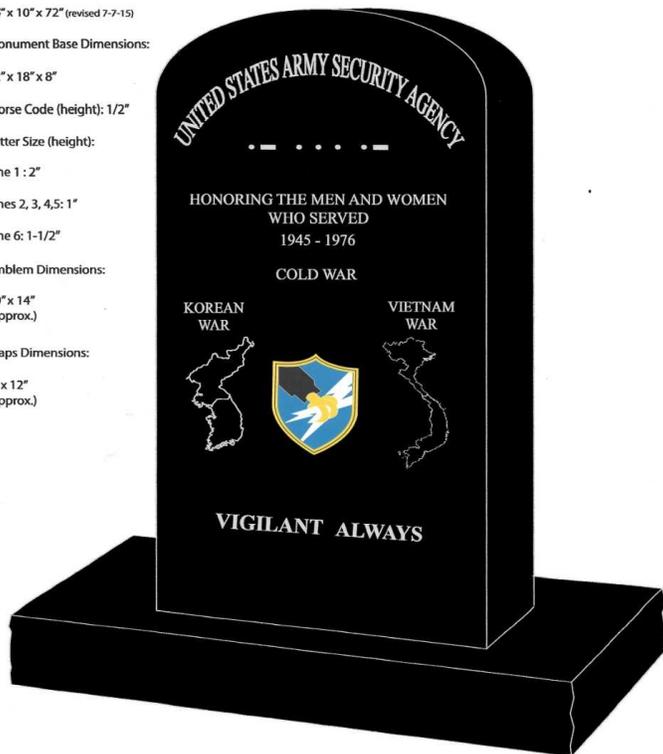
Maps Dimensions:

6" x 12"

(approx.)

Note for Colors:

White areas are recessed



Upper Monument Dimensions:

38" x 10" x 72"

Monument Base Dimensions:

52" x 18" x 8"

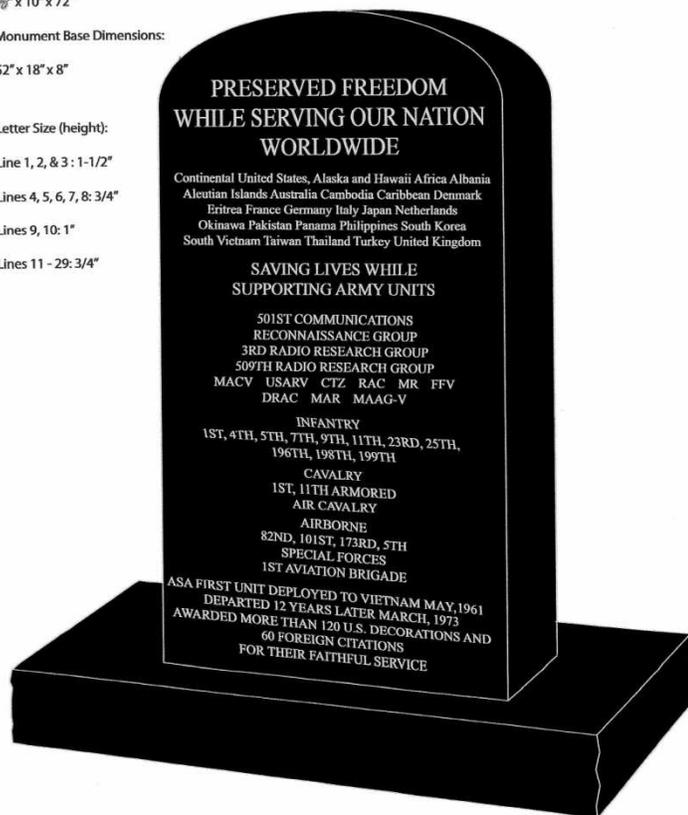
Letter Size (height):

Line 1, 2, & 3: 1-1/2"

Lines 4, 5, 6, 7, 8: 3/4"

Lines 9, 10: 1"

Lines 11 - 29: 3/4"



29. **MASSACUSETTS APPROVES KOREAN DEFENSE VETERANS MONUMENT:** Korea Defense Veterans are about to get their first dedicated monument! It will be on the site of the Korea War Memorial in Charlestown, MA. The memorial was conceived, designed, and constructed by the Korea Veterans of America which is Chapter#299 of the KWVA. Other monuments similar to this one are being planned in the New York/New Jersey area and on the West Coast.

Jeff Brodeur, Second Vice President of the KWVA, was the force behind this effort and through his tireless efforts it will come into being on December 10, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. at the Charlestown site. All are welcome to attend the dedication, and if they choose, they may still make a donation in any amount to its' overall cost. Special thanks go out to Jongwoo Han, PhD., President of the Korean War Legacy Foundation, Inc. and World History Digital Education Foundation, Inc. for their financial support, as well the members of the KWVA who helped make this dream a reality. Membership in the KWVA is open to all who served in Korea at any time from 1950 – present. ([www.kwva.org](http://www.kwva.org))



30.

**PRAYER LIST:**

- Mrs. Virginia Edwards (Sonny's wife) – remission
- COL Bill Weber – Fitting of new prosthesis
- Director George Bruzgis – Operation on his legs – Circulation problems

It is an honor to work with each of you and I hope we continue to look forward to continuing our progress in the New Year.

Respectfully submitted,

*James R. Fisher*

James R. Fisher  
National Executive Director  
Korean War Veterans Association, USA