



**THE KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Washington, D.C.  
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The following monthly update for March 2019 is submitted by the Executive Director of the Korean War Veterans Association of the United States of America.

### **IMPORTANT EVENTS IN 2019**

- Memorial Day at the Korean War Veterans Memorial – May 27, 2019 – Washington, DC
- Start of the War Commemoration – Korean War Veterans Memorial – June 25, 2019 – Washington, DC
- Maryland Honors and Welcomes Home Their Korean War Veterans- July 23, 2019 – Annapolis, MD
- Korean War Veterans Association's General Membership Meeting – July 25 – 28, 2019 – Arlington, VA
- Korean/Cold War Annual Government Briefing – August 1 – 2, 2019 -Arlington, VA
- Veterans Day at the Korean War Veterans Memorial – November 11, 2019 – Washington, DC

### **2019 KWVA Revisit Korea Dates**

The 2019 Korean War Veterans Association's annual Revisit Korea dates have been received. The recap:

22-28 June	Annual "6/25" Commemoration
24-30 July	Armistice Commemoration
25 Sep-1 October	Chosin/Changjin Commemoration
20-26 October	UN Commemoration Seoul and Busan
8-14 November	Seoul and Busan ("Turn toward Busan" Commemoration)

- \* A change - Length of time between revisits reduced from five years to three.
- \* Those currently registered will soon get these dates to choose from.
- \* One veteran and one "companion".
- \* The widow or descendant of a deceased veteran or MIA eligible.
- \* All expenses in Korea paid for. 1/2 the veteran and 1/3 of the companion air paid for. (Reimbursed in Korea.)
- \* A doctors certificate of being able to travel is required.
- \* Death, disability, evacuation and cancellation insurance required.
- \* Those not registered should go to our web site [miltours.com](http://miltours.com) or [KWVA.org](http://KWVA.org), fill out and submit a registration form. We always select **"First come first served!"**

Note: Registration Forms are also in the current issue of all "Graybeards."

For additional information email Jamie Wiedhahn at: [jwiedhahn@miltours.com](mailto:jwiedhahn@miltours.com), phone: 703-590-1295

**PLEASE SHARE THIS WITH YOUR CHAPTER MEMBERS**

## **A Surprised Visitor**



**A Surprise Visitor:** Erin, a former social worker at the Milwaukee VA, deployed to Afghanistan to run a combat stress clinic under the 807th Medical Command. Her grandfather, Pete, a Korean War Veteran was at the Milwaukee VA Medical Center Vet's Club when she surprised him with a visit, back from Afghanistan.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH AND SHARE](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/VeteransAffairs/videos/160623511525412/>

### ● **FUTURE DESTROYER NAMED FOR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT WILLIAM CHARETTE**



By: ***Ben Werner*** March 18, 2019 3:53 PM

*President Dwight D. Eisenhower poses with three men to whom he has just presented the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry in Korean War combat action, at the White House, Washington, D.C., 12 January 1954. Those who received the medal are (from left to right): First Lieutenant Edward R. Schowalter, Jr., U.S. Army, honored for his actions near Kumhwa, Korea, on 14 October 1952; Private First Class*

*Ernest E. West, U.S. Army, honored for his actions near Sataeri, Korea, on 12 October 1952; and Hospital Corpsman Third Class*

*William R. Charette, U.S. Navy, honored for his actions in Korea on 17 March 1953. Official U.S. Navy Photograph, from the collections of the Naval History and Heritage Command.*

The future Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer *William Charette* (DDG-130) will honor a hospital corpsman awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions in the Korean War.

Master Chief William Charette joined the Navy in 1951 and served in Korea as a hospital corpsman attached to Company F, Third Platoon, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Division.

Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer announced the name of the future Arleigh Burke DDG on Monday. General Dynamics Bath Iron Works will build *William Charette*, which will use the Flight III destroyer design with an advanced AN/SPY-6(v) Air and Missile Defense Radar.

“The actions of Hospital Corpsman William Charette will neither be forgotten or diminished,” Spencer said in a statement. “Charette put himself at extreme risk during intense combat to render aid to Marines in need. His efforts saved lives, and I am honored that his legacy will live on in the future USS *William Charette*(DDG-130).”

Charette received his Medal of Honor for actions he took on March 27, 1953, when Chinese and North Korean forces attacked and overran two of three Marine hill outposts. While providing aid to a wounded Marine, an enemy grenade landed near Charette. He shielded the wounded Marine from the blast by placing his body on top of the man he was treating. Charette lost consciousness after the explosion, and then when he regained consciousness he continued providing aid to Marines, including using parts of his torn uniform to dress battle wounds, according to the Navy.

Five enlisted sailors received the Medal of Honor for actions during the Korean War. All were hospital corpsmen attached to Marine Corps units. Charette was the only living enlisted sailor awarded the Medal of Honor. He died on March 18, 2012, from complications from heart surgery, according to the Navy.

## **RETIREE APPRECIATION DAYS**

Attend and receive benefits information, renew acquaintances and ID Cards, get medical checkups, and receive other services. Some RADs include dinners or golf tournaments. For more information, contact the Retirement Services Officer sponsoring the RAD.

<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Contact</u></b>
JB McGuire- Dix-Lakehurst, NJ	April 13	(309) 453-1867
West Point, NY	April 27	(609) 562-2666
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD	April 27	(845) 938-4217
Fort Jackson, SC JB	May 11	(410) 306-2320
Lewis-McChord, WA	May 16	(803) 751-6715
Fort Campbell, KY	May 18	(270) 798-5280
JB Langley- Eustis, VA	May 18	(757) 878-2227
JBER-Richardson	May 18	(907) 384-3500
Fort Buchanan, PR	June 3	(831) 915-7342
Presidio of Monterey, CA	June 8	(787) 707-2984
Rosemount, MN (Twin Cities)	August 15	(763) 516-2931
Fort McCoy, WI	August 16	(608) 388-3716
Camp Zama, Japan	September 6	011-81-46-407-3940
Fort Leonard Wood, MO	September 6	(573) 596-0947

Fort Sill, OK	September 19	(580) 442-2645
Fort Belvoir, VA	September 20	(703) 806-4551
Redstone Arsenal, AL	September 20	(256) 842-2421
Fort Carson, CO	September 21	(719) 526-2840

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Fort Drum, NY	Sep. 21	(315) 772-6434
Fort Bliss, TX	Sep. 28	(915) 569-6233
Fort Lee, VA	Sep. 28	(804) 734-6555
Selfridge, MI	Sep. 28	(586) 239-5580
JB Myer-Henderson Hall, VA	Oct. 4	(703) 696-5948
Carlisle Barracks, PA	Oct. 5	(717) 245-4501
Rock Island, IL	Oct. 5	(563) 445-0191
USAG-Italy	Oct. 11	0039-0444-61-7747
JB Ellington Field-Houston	Oct. 12	(210) 221-9004
USAG-Bavaria	Oct. 15	0964-183-8709
Fort Leavenworth, KS	Oct. 16	(913) 684-2425
USAG-Ansbach	Oct. 16	0981-183-3301
USAG-Stuttgart	Oct. 17	07031-15-3442
USAG-Rheinland-Pfalz/Ramstein	Oct. 18	0631-411-8838
Fort Polk, LA	Oct. 19	(337) 531-0402
Fort Riley, KS	Oct. 19	(785) 239-3320
Fort Wainwright, AK	Oct. 19	(907) 353-2095
USAG-BENELUX-Brussels	Oct. 19	0032-65-44-726
Fort Hood, TX	Oct. 25	(254) 287-5210

• **GARDNER HONORS COLORADO KOREAN WAR VETERANS**

**Washington, D.C.** – Senator Cory Gardner (R-CO) attended and presented remarks at yesterday’s Korean War Medal Peace Medal Ceremony in Aurora, Colorado, alongside the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, Ambassador Harry Harris, and the Republic of Korea Ambassador to the United States, Ambassador Cho Yoon-je. “I’m grateful to have joined Korean Ambassador to the U.S., Cho Yoon-je and U.S. Ambassador for the Republic of Korea, Harry Harris in our great state to recognize Colorado’s Korean War veterans,” **said Senator Gardner.** “Our two countries have a historic partnership forged in blood, and the medals awarded are a symbol of this special relationship and a recognition of the sacrifices that have been made. I’m honored to have played a role in the medal ceremony in Aurora to personally thank our Korean War veterans who fought valiantly for our country, along with their families and loved ones.”



Click [here](#) to download a video statement.

• **JAMES MCCONVILLE, THE ARMY'S NO. 2 GENERAL, NOMINATED AS SERVICE'S NEXT CHIEF OF STAFF**



*Gen. James C. McConville, U.S. Army Vice Chief of Staff, at a Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on readiness of U.S. forces, Feb. 14, 2018 on Capitol Hill. Officials announced Tuesday, March 26, 2019, that McConville will become the Army's next chief of staff. By COREY DICKSTEIN | STARS AND STRIPES*

WASHINGTON — The White House has nominated Army Gen. James McConville to become the service's next chief of staff, officials announced Tuesday during an Association of the United States Army event.

McConville's nomination was sent to the Senate Armed Services Committee late Monday, retired Army Gen. Carter Ham, the president of AUSA, told an audience attending the association's annual Global Force Symposium in Huntsville, Ala. If confirmed by the Senate, McConville would become the 40th Army chief of staff, the service's top general and a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Army and White House officials on Tuesday did not immediately confirm the nomination.

McConville, who has served as the service's vice chief of staff since June 2017, was widely considered the top choice of defense officials to become service chief later this year. He would replace Army Gen. Mark Milley who President Donald Trump announced last year was his choice to become the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff when Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford retires, which could happen by late summer.

The 59-year-old from Quincy, Mass., is a 1981 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in New York. McConville has spent much of his career flying Army helicopters, including the AH-64 Apache, OH-58 Kiowa Warrior and the AH-1 Cobra, according to the Army. Before he became the Army's No. 2 general, he served as its deputy chief of staff for personnel as a three-star general.

Earlier Army assignments sent McConville to command troops serving in the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. As the commander of the Army's 101st Airborne Division, McConville deployed to Afghanistan in late 2012 to command U.S. and NATO forces in the country's eastern region as the United States and its allies began drawing down their forces to move from a combat role into a mission primarily to advise and assist Afghan partners. Earlier in his career, he commanded 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division during a tour in Iraq.

Among dozens of awards and decorations, McConville has twice received the Distinguished Service Medal, holds three Legions of Merit, three Bronze Star Medals, two Air Medals, the Combat Action Badge and Expert Infantryman's Badge, according to his Army biography.

In recent years as the Army's vice chief, McConville has helped shape the Army's policy for preparing for the future. He was instrumental in the establishment of the service's Futures Command, which is focused on modernizing the service's weapons and other assets for potential future wars against a near-peer competitor such as Russia or China.

McConville and his wife, Maria, have three adult children who all serve in the military.

## LT. GEN. DAVID BERGER NOMINATED AS NEXT COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS



*Lt. Gen. David H. Berger speaks during the U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific change of command ceremony at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Aug. 8, 2018. During the ceremony, Berger relinquished command to Lt. Gen. Lewis A. Craparotta. Berger has been nominated to become the next commandant of the Marine Corps.*

By CAITLIN KENNEY | STARS AND STRIPES

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WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump has nominated Lt. Gen. David Berger to be the next commandant of the Marine Corps, the Pentagon announced Wednesday.

His nomination was submitted Tuesday, according to a Senate notice, and it requests that he be promoted to the rank of general. If his nomination is approved, Berger will be the 38th commandant of the Marine Corps.

Berger has been the commanding general of Marine Corps Combat Development Command and the Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration since August. Prior to his current assignment, Berger commanded I Marine Expeditionary Force and U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific.

Gen. Robert Neller, the Marine Corps commandant since 2015, is set to retire this summer after serving for 44 years.

Berger, 59, commissioned in 1981 as an infantry officer after graduating from Tulane University in New Orleans with a bachelor's degree in engineering, according to his Marine Corps biography. He was a battalion operations officer with 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion during Operation Desert Storm and later was an instructor at Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One in Yuma, Ariz. and at III Marine Expeditionary Force Special Operations Training Group in Okinawa, Japan.

He has deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as the commander of Regimental Combat Team 8 in Fallujah, Iraq. In 2012, he deployed to Afghanistan as the commanding general of 1st Marine Division during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Berger has a master's degree in international public policy from Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, D.C. as well as a Master of Science in military studies, according to his biography. He is also a graduate of the Army's Ranger School, Jumpmaster School, the Navy Dive School and the Marine Corps Amphibious Reconnaissance School.

His awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit Medal, and the Combat Action Ribbon.

# Welcome to WASHINGTON DC



## Korean War Veterans Association Annual Meeting July 24 – 28, 2019 Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel 900 South Orme Street Arlington, VA 22204

For Reservations Please call 703-271-6603 (Hanna), Monday through Friday before 3:30PM or Derron Magee, 703-271-6636, Monday through Friday before 6:30PM.

**Ask for the Group Rate: KOREAN WAR VETERAN – JULY 2019**



- Complimentary shuttle to Reagan National Airport, Pentagon City Metro, and Fashion Centre Mall
- Hotel near the Pentagon, National Air Force Memorial and Arlington National Cemetery
- Room Rate is \$119.00 a night plus tax
- Annual Korean War Veterans Membership Meeting and Banquet
- Korean Armistice Day Ceremony at the National Korean War Veterans Memorial
- United States Army Twilight Tattoo and United States Marine Corps Evening Parade



# Korean War Veterans Association Annual Meeting

## Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel

### Arlington, VA 22204

## Agenda

### Wednesday, July 24, 2019

- 9:00AM – 9:00PM Registration: Hotel Foyer
- 6:00PM – 8:30PM Twilight Tattoo ~ U.S. Army ~ Fort Myer, VA
- 8:00PM – 10:00PM Hospitality Room Open

### Thursday, July 25, 2019

- 8:00AM - 5:00PM Registration/Information Desk Open
- 8:00AM – 12:00PM KWVA Board Meeting
- 10:00AM – 5:00PM Interviews: Korean War Veterans
- 1:00PM – 5:00PM Hospitality Room Open
- 6:30PM – 8:00pm Welcome Reception - Hotel

### Friday, July 26, 2019

- 9:00AM - 5:00PM Registration/Information Desk Open
- 9:00AM – 12:00PM KWVA Annual Membership Meeting
- 1:00PM – 5:00PM Hospitality Room Open
- 5:30PM - 9:00PM U.S. Marines: 8<sup>th</sup> and I (Eye) Sunset Parade

### Saturday, July 27, 2019

- 9:00AM - 4:00PM Information Desk Open
- 10:00AM – 11:00AM Armistice Commemoration-Korean War Memorial
- 11:30PM - 3:00PM "Reading the Names" – MOH Citations - KWVM
- 12:30 – 5:00PM Hospitality Room Open ~ Free Time
- 6:00 – 7:00PM KWVA Reception ~ Lobby of Ballroom
- 7:00 – 10:00PM KWVA Banquet ~ Hotel Ballroom

### Sunday, July 28, 2019

- 8:00AM – 9:00AM Memorial Service/Buffer Brunch - Hotel



The following shows various holidays, events and observances that are specific to the United States military, active duty personnel, veterans, reservists and military families (military spouse, military children).

**January United States Military Holidays and Observances:**

3rd Monday in

January: *Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday*

**February United States Military Holidays and Observances:**

February

19th: *Coast Guard Reserves Birthday*

February

20th: *President's Day*

**March United States Military Holidays and Observances:**

March 3rd: *Navy Reserves Birthday*

March 19th: *National Day of Honor*

March 30th: [Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day](#)

**April United States Military Holidays and Observances:**

Entire month of April:

[Month of the Military Child](#)

April 5th: *Gold Star*

*Wives Day*

April 14th: *Air*

*Force Reserve Birthday*

April 23rd: [Army](#)

[Reserves Birthday](#)

**May United States Military Holidays and Observances:**

Entire month of May: [National Military Appreciation Month](#)

May 8th: [V-E Day](#)

2nd Saturday through 3rd Sunday in May: [Armed Forces Week](#)

2nd Friday in May: [Military Spouse Day](#)

3rd Saturday in May: [Armed Forces Day](#)

May 22nd: [Maritime Day](#)

Last Monday in May: [Memorial Day](#)

**June United States Military Holidays and Observances:**

June 6th: [D-Day](#)

[Invasion Anniversary](#)

June 14th:

[U.S. Flag Day](#)

The

week that includes June 14th: *National Flag Week*

June 14th: [US Army Birthday](#)

June 23rd: [United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday](#)

**July United States Military Holidays and Observances:** July 4th:

***Independence Day (4th of July)***

21st: [Department of Veterans Administration Created](#)

27<sup>th</sup> **National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day**

July 29th: [Anniversary of the Army Chaplain Corps](#)

July  
July

**August United States Military Holidays and Observances:**

August 4th: [US Coast Guard \(USCG\) Birthday](#)

August 7th: [Purple Heart Day](#)

August 14th: **V-J Day**

August 14th: [National Spirit of '45 Day](#)

August 16th: [National Airborne Day](#)

August 29th: [Marine Corps Reserve Birthday](#)

**September United States Military Holidays and Observances:** September 11th:

[Patriot Day](#) (9/11 Remembrance Day)

[Constitution Day](#) (or **Citizenship Day**)

18th: [US Air Force \(USAF\) Birthday](#)

Friday in September: [National POW/MIA Recognition Day](#)

Last Sunday in September: **Gold Star Mother's Day**

September 17th:  
September  
3rd

**October United States Military Holidays and Observances:** October 13th: [US](#)

[Navy \(USN\) Birthday](#)

**November United States Military Holidays and Observances:** Entire

month of November: **National Military Family Month**

10th: [U.S. Marine Corps \(USMC\) Birthday](#)

November 11th: [Veteran's Day](#)

November

**December United States Military Holidays and Observances:** December 1st:

[Civil Air Patrol \(USAF Auxiliary\) Birthday](#)

7th: [Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day](#)

December 13th: **US National Guard Birthday**

December 14th: **National Wreaths Across America Day**

December

**AIR FORCE SECRETARY TO RESIGN:** On March 24<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Heather Wilson, officially submitted her resignation to President Donald J. Trump, effective May 31, 2019. Dr. Wilson, who represented New Mexico's 1st Congressional District from 1998-2009, has been named as the next University of Texas – El Paso president. Prior to her current position as the secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Wilson served as the president of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. [Read Dr. Wilson's statement of resignation here.](#)





# **SOCIAL SECURITY NEWS**

Press Release

Wednesday, March 20, 2019  
For Immediate Release

Mark Hinkle, Acting Press Officer  
[press.office@ssa.gov](mailto:press.office@ssa.gov)

## **SOCIAL SECURITY AND OIG LAUNCH PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT CAMPAIGN AGENCY ALERTS PUBLIC ABOUT TELEPHONE IMPERSONATION SCHEME**

The Social Security Administration (SSA) and its Office of the Inspector General (OIG) launched a joint Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign addressing a nationwide telephone impersonation scheme. Social Security and the OIG continue to receive reports from across the country about fraudulent phone calls from people falsely claiming to be Social Security employees. Calls can even “spoof” Social Security’s national customer service number as the incoming number on the caller ID. The new PSAs will air on TV and radio stations across the country to alert the public to remain vigilant against potential fraud.

“We urge you to always be cautious and to avoid providing sensitive information such as your Social Security number or bank account information to unknown people over the phone or Internet,” said Nancy A. Berryhill, Acting Commissioner of Social Security. “If you receive a call and are not expecting one, you must be extra careful – you can always get the caller’s information, hang up, and contact the official phone number of the business or agency the caller claims to represent. Do not reveal personal data to a stranger who calls you.”

Social Security employees do occasionally contact people--generally those who have ongoing business with the agency--by telephone for business purposes. However, Social Security employees **will never** threaten a person or promise a Social Security benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information. In those cases, the call is fraudulent and people should not engage with the caller. If a person receives these calls, he or she should report the information to the OIG Fraud Hotline at **1-800-269-0271** or online at <https://oig.ssa.gov/report>.

“These calls appear to be happening across the country, so we appreciate SSA’s partnership in this national public outreach effort,” said Gail S. Ennis, the Inspector General for the Social Security Administration. “Our message to the public is simply this: If you or someone you know receives a questionable call claiming to be from SSA or the OIG, just hang up.”

The new PSA addressing the telephone impersonation scheme is available online at [www.youtube.com/socialsecurity](http://www.youtube.com/socialsecurity) and below:

*To get more Social Security news, follow the Press Office on Twitter [@SSAPress](https://twitter.com/SSAPress).*

## **SOCIAL SECURITY ANNOUNCES 2.8 PERCENT BENEFIT INCREASE FOR 2019**

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for more than 67 million Americans will increase 2.8 percent in 2019, the Social Security Administration announced today.

The 2.8 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits payable to more than 62 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2019. Increased payments to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 31, 2018. (Note: some people receive both Social Security and SSI benefits). The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Some other adjustments that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages. Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) will increase to \$132,900 from \$128,400.

Social Security and SSI beneficiaries are normally notified by mail in early December about their new benefit amount. This year, for the first time, most people who receive Social Security payments will be able to view their COLA notice online through their *my Social Security* account. People may create or access their *my Social Security* account online at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount).

Information about Medicare changes for 2019, when announced, will be available at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). For Social Security beneficiaries receiving Medicare, Social Security will not be able to compute their new benefit amount until after the Medicare premium amounts for 2019 are announced. Final 2019 benefit amounts will be communicated to beneficiaries in December through the mailed COLA notice and *mySocial Security* Message Center.

The Social Security Act provides for how the COLA is calculated. To read more, please visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/cola](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/cola).

## **GET YOUR BENEFIT STATEMENT ONLINE AS TAX DAY APPROACHES**

The Benefit Statement, also known as the Social Security 1099 (SSA-1099) or 1042S (SSA-1042S), is a tax form mailed each year in January to people who receive Social Security benefits. Your clients can get a copy of their SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S Benefit Statement tax form right now with their personal *mySocial Security* account at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount).

Your clients can also learn more about replacing tax documents by reading our publication "Replace Your Social Security Tax Documents with Ease" [www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/EN-05-10057.pdf](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/EN-05-10057.pdf).

Keep in mind, Social Security benefits may be taxable. Visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/planners/taxes.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/planners/taxes.html) to learn more.

## **Armed Forces Retirement Home Now Accepting Applications**

The Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) – which offers affordable independent living to eligible veterans in its Washington, D.C., and Gulfport, Miss. locations, is now accepting applications for immediate residency. The



2019 the rate for independent living is 46.7% of the resident's gross monthly income or \$1,990.00, whichever is less. Veterans must be able to live independently upon admission to the AFRH.

This means being able to care for personal needs, attend a dining facility for meals, and keep all medical appointments. For those accepted into independent living, we also offer higher levels of care – including assisted living, long-term care, and memory support. 85% of our residents spent a career in the military, retiring honorably in the enlisted ranks following 20 or more years of service to our Nation. Military veterans from each service branch live at the Home. **The largest group represented served during the Korea and Vietnam eras.**

In Washington, DC, AFRH offers residents a scenic, wooded campus just minutes from downtown - home to museums, monuments, and a host of entertainment, sports and other cultural options. Amenities include a nine-hole golf course and driving range, walking paths, stocked fishing ponds, and modern recreation facilities.

In Gulfport, Miss. AFRH offers residents a beautiful view of the Gulf of Mexico, with an outdoor swimming pool, walking path to the beach, reflecting pool, art studio and modern media room. Many veterans choose to live at AFRH for the superior medical, dental and vision care offered, with amenities that include: private rooms with a shower, cable TV, three delicious daily meals prepared by licensed nutritionists in our modern dining facility, a wellness program and deluxe fitness center, movie theater, bowling center and hobby shops. Services include recreational activities and resident day trips, a full-service library, barber shop, 24 / 7 security, beauty salon, computer center, mailboxes, ATM, campus PX/BX and off-campus shuttle and public transportation.

17 Persons are eligible to become AFRH residents who:

Served as members of the Armed Forces, at least one-half of whose service was not active commissioned service (other than as a warrant officer or limited-duty officer)

The following categories will be considered. Veterans (male or female) who are:

- 60 years of age or over; and were discharged or released under honorable conditions with 20 or more years of active service. or
- Have a service-connected disability incurred in the line of duty in the Armed Forces. or
- Served in a war theater during a time of war declared by Congress or were eligible for hostile fire special pay and are suffering from injuries, disease or disability.

Those who served in a women's component of the Armed Forces before June 12, 1948 and are determined to be eligible for admission because of compelling personal circumstances will also be considered.

Married couples who meet eligibility requirements above are welcome, as are nonmilitary spouses of career-retired applicants.

Please call us for details! Veterans who have been convicted of a felony or are not free of drug, alcohol, or psychiatric problems are ineligible to become a resident.

For further information visit: <https://www.afrh.gov>

To request an application, visit: <https://www.afrh.gov/apply> Or contact the Office of Public Affairs at: [admissions@afrh.gov](mailto:admissions@afrh.gov) or 1-800-422- 9988.

AFRH is fully accredited by The Joint Commission and the Commission on Continuing Care Retirement Communities.



# VETERANS AFFAIRS NEWS

- **HOW TO REPORT THE DEATH OF A RETIRED SOLDIER:** Contact the Department of the Army Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operations Center anytime by calling (800) 626-3317. You will be immediately referred to a local Casualty Assistance Center, who will report the death to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service to stop retired pay and initiate the survivor benefits process. When reporting the death, please provide as much of the information below as you have:

- Full name
- Next of kin information
- Social security number and/or service number
- Circumstances surrounding the death
- Retirement date
- Copy of the death certificate
- Retired rank
- Copy of the Statement of Service (Last DD Form 214)



- **LOCATIONS OF VETERANS ADMINISTRATION HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL CENTERS:**

If you are looking for a VA Hospital or Medical Center near you, please click on to the attached site and each hospital and medical center is located under the state you line on.

<https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/allstate.asp>

- **VA ON-LINE INFORMATION SITES:**

- The digital 2017 Benefits Book is here: [https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits\\_book.asp](https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp)
- The Benefits Assistance Service (BAS) has a BAS also has a summary of VA benefits available here: [https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/benefits\\_summary\\_materials.asp](https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/benefits_summary_materials.asp)
- Veteran Data Pocket Card: Attached and at the following link: <https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/pocketcards/fy2018q1.pdf>
- VA Cemetery Factsheet on Weekend Burial: [https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/docs/factsheets/NCA\\_Weekend\\_Burial\\_Program.pdf](https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/docs/factsheets/NCA_Weekend_Burial_Program.pdf)

- **FEDERAL JUDGE IN TEXAS HAS DECLARED THAT THE ALL-MALE MILITARY DRAFT IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL**

A federal judge in Texas has declared that the all-male military draft is unconstitutional, ruling that "the time has passed" for a debate on whether women belong in the military.

The decision is the biggest legal challenge to the Selective Service System since the Supreme Court upheld the draft in 1981. In *Rostker v. Goldberg*, the court ruled that the male-only draft was "fully justified" because women were ineligible for combat roles.

But U.S. District Judge Gray Miller ruled late Friday that while historical restrictions on women serving in combat "may have justified past discrimination," men and women are now equally able to fight. In 2015, the Pentagon lifted all restrictions for women in military service.

## • **VA RELEASES HEALTH CARE INSPECTION REPORTS AND STAFFING DATA FOR MORE THAN 100 COMMUNITY LIVING CENTERS**

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) began publicly posting, for the first time, health care inspection reports and staffing data for its nursing home system.

To date, VA has posted 101 health inspection reports of its 134 Community Living Centers (CLCs) with the remainder scheduled to be posted by October 2019.

The health care inspection reports, which cover April 2018 to present, are available here: <https://www.va.gov/QUALITYOFCARE/apps/aspire/clcsurvey.aspx>. In the future, VA will post the reports annually.

The health care inspection reports show that, in comparison with non-VA facilities rated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), VA has a lower number of low-performing facilities (VA: 17.2 percent, non-VA: 19.7 percent) and a higher number of higher-performing facilities (VA: 17.2 percent, non-VA: 10.8 percent).

“Overall, VA’s nursing home system compares closely with private sector nursing homes, though the department on average cares for sicker and more complex patients in its nursing homes than do private facilities,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie.

Many VA nursing home residents are being treated for conditions such as prostate obstruction, spinal cord injury, mental illness, homelessness, post-traumatic stress disorder, combat injury, terminal illness and other conditions rarely seen in private nursing homes. In fact, 42 percent of 41,076 VA CLC residents in fiscal 2018 had a service-connected disability rating of 50 percent or higher.

When comparing VA CLCs with private sector nursing homes, the VA CLCs care for more complex Veterans with Veteran-specific conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (11.6 percent vs. 0.5 percent) and traumatic brain injury (1.7 percent vs. 0.8 percent) in addition to the VA CLCs providing more hospice-related care to include hospice care (10.3 percent vs. 3.7 percent), chemotherapy (1.2 percent vs. 0.4 percent) and radiation therapy (1.4 percent vs. 0.1 percent).

Further, the overall star rating for VA’s nursing homes compared with the 15,487 private sector nursing homes rated by the CMS shows that VA has a significantly lower percentage of one-star, or lowest rated, facilities than the rest of the nation. VA’s latest ratings show that only eight, roughly 6 percent, of VA’s nursing homes received an overall one-star rating.

For more information about VA nursing homes, see [here](#) and [here](#). **About the reports**

The inspection reports are based on yearly, unannounced inspections conducted by an outside contracted agency. As part of the reports, survey teams look at many aspects of life at VA nursing homes, including:

- The care of residents and the processes used to give that care.
- How the staff and residents interact.
- The nursing home environment.

Surveyors also review residents’ clinical records, interview residents and family members, as well as caregivers and administrative staff.

- **VA ON PATH TO CURE 100,000 VETERANS OF HEPATITIS C**

WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it is on track to eliminate the [hepatitis C virus \(HCV\)](#) in as few as two months, in all Veterans willing and able to be treated.

As of March 3, nearly 116,000 Veterans started all-oral hepatitis C medications in VA, of which 96,654 Veterans completed treatment and have been cured.

“As the largest single provider of HCV care in the U.S., this is terrific news because it means we are within striking range of eliminating hepatitis C among Veterans under the care of the Veterans Health Administration,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Diagnosing, treating and curing hepatitis C virus infection among Veterans has been a significant priority for VA.”

HCV infection can lead to advanced liver disease (ALD), liver cancer and death. Treatment of HCV can prevent development or progression of ALD, greatly improving survival. However, before 2014, HCV treatment required weekly interferon injections for up to a year, with low cure rates (35-55 percent) among Veterans and significant physical and psychiatric side effects leading to frequent early discontinuation.

Up to that time, of the approximately 180,000 Veterans in VA care who had been diagnosed with chronic HCV infection, only 12,000 had been treated and cured, while over 30,000 had developed ALD.

In early 2014, highly effective, less toxic, all-oral, direct-acting antivirals became available, revolutionizing the treatment of HCV. With the support of Congress and other stakeholders, VA implemented an aggressive program to find all undiagnosed Veterans in VA care with HCV — including those who did not know they carried the infection — link them to HCV care, and offer them treatment with these new medications.

At the peak of this effort to rapidly deploy all-oral direct-acting antivirals, VA began treating close to 2,000 Veterans with HCV every week; nearly one treatment started every minute of every work day.

As a result of this historic effort, the overall death rate one year after treatment reduced to 80 percent among Veterans in VA care with HCV. Veterans cured of HCV with these medications were also 84 percent less likely to develop liver cancer.

The announcement cements VA’s position as a national leader in diagnosis and treatment of HCV and marks a major milestone in the nation’s fight against viral hepatitis. VA is on track to treat more than 125,000 Veterans with these lifesaving medications by October. Currently, fewer than 27,000 Veterans in VA care remain to be treated.

All marketed hepatitis C medications are on the [VA National Formulary](#) Hepatitis C medications used today have few side effects and can be administered as a once a day treatment for as little as eight weeks.

For more information, visit <https://www.hepatitis.va.gov/>.

- **VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES DISTRICT REALIGNMENT**

WASHINGTON — Today, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) announced a geographic restructuring, from five districts to four, a change that will align regional offices and special missions more evenly.

The realignment closes the North Atlantic District Office in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and shifts states into more geographically similar areas. The District Office located in St. Louis, Missouri, will now be responsible for the newly realigned Northeast District.

“The VBA district realignment is part of our effort to modernize the organization and become more efficient,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “This transition affects the management oversight and reporting structure for regional office directors, but will not affect day-to-day operations for employees or impact beneficiaries.”

The realignment does not affect the daily operations of any regional office.

After the restructuring, the four district offices will be:

- Northeast District: St. Louis
- Southeast District: Nashville, Tennessee
- Continental District: Denver, Colorado
- Pacific District: Phoenix, Arizona

More information on the VBA district structure is available at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp>.

## • **APPLICATIONS OPENING SOON FOR 2019 NATIONAL VETERANS GOLDEN AGE GAMES**

*Anchorage, Alaska, event kicks off June 5*



**WASHINGTON** — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it will begin accepting applicants on Feb. 25 for the 2018 National Veterans Golden Age Games, scheduled to take place June 5-10 in Anchorage, Alaska.

The National Veterans Golden Age Games is the premier senior adaptive rehabilitation program in the United States, and the only national multievent sports and recreational seniors' competition program designed to improve the quality of life for all older Veterans, including those with a wide range of abilities and disabilities.

The annual competition is one of the most progressive and adaptive rehabilitative senior sports programs in the world, and hundreds of Veterans from across the country are expected to take part.

Veterans ages 55 and older who receive VA health care may complete applications at [www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov](http://www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov). Registration will close once the maximum number of applicants are reached.



“We encourage every Veteran to embrace an active and healthy lifestyle, and this annual event encourages participants to make physical activity a central part of their lives,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “The National Veterans Golden Age Games is a VA rehabilitation event for our senior Veterans who have dedicated themselves to remaining active, healthy, and living the Games’ motto – ‘Fitness for Life.’”



Competitive events include the following: air pistol, air rifle, badminton, basketball, blind disc golf, boccia, bowling, cycling, golf, horseshoes, nine-ball, pickleball, powerwalking, shuffleboard, swimming, table tennis, and track and field.

The games encourage participants to continue in local senior events in their home communities, and every other year serve as a qualifying event for competition in the National Senior Games. The [Alaska VA Healthcare System](#), host of this year's games,

provides care for more than 80,000 Veterans across the state's 586,400 square miles.

For more information, visit [www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov](http://www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov); follow VA Adaptive Sports on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) at @Sports4Vets.

- **VA ANNOUNCES EXPEDITED CLAIMS FOR PURPLE HEART VETERANS AT OVERSIGHT HEARING:**

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert Wilkie and Veterans Health Administration Executive in Charge Dr. Richard Stone testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies on the current improvements to VA customer service, MISSION Act implementation, business transformation, and VA/DOD collaboration. Secretary Wilkie announced that effective in April, VA will provide priority disability benefits claims processing for the initial claims from discharged combat veterans who have been awarded the Purple Heart Medal. Wilkie also said that the state of VA is getting stronger, but there is still an enormous amount of work that needs to be done with veterans' homelessness, opioid safety & reduction efforts, and women's health.

- **SECRETARY WILKIE TESTIFIES BEFORE HOUSE COMMITTEE:** The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs held its first hearing of this Congress to address the future of VA. The name of the hearing was "VA 2030: A Vision for the Future of VA" because Chairman Takano is seeking to look ahead to make improvements within VA over the next decade. At the hearing, VA Secretary Wilkie spoke about the improvements VA has made since his tenure began and how proud he is of his workforce. The topics discussed at the hearing included homelessness, Blue Water Navy veterans, VA infrastructure, women veterans, and many others. The VFW applauds Chairman Takano and Ranking Member Roe for looking for innovative ways to continue to improve VA and seek to avoid future pitfalls. [Watch the hearing.](#)

- **SECRETARY WILKIE STATEMENT ON SIGNING OF THE EXECUTIVE ORDER, "SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION OF ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS AND MILITARY VETERANS INTO THE MERCHANT MARINE"**

WASHINGTON — Today, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie issued the following statement on [President Trump's signing of the Executive Order](#), "Supporting the Transition of Active Duty Service Members and Military Veterans into the Merchant Marine:"

"This executive order means a lot to me personally because my grandfather was a mariner.

"This represents a true win-win for our nation's Veterans and for national security.

"By fast-tracking the transition into the Merchant Marine of trained and credentialed service members, President Trump is meeting an important national security need while providing meaningful, well-paying jobs to our nation's heroes.

"This is another example of out-of-the-box thinking by this President benefiting our nation's Veterans."

- **STATEMENT BY SECRETARY ROBERT WILKIE ON PRESIDENT TRUMP'S FY 2020 BUDGET REQUEST**

WASHINGTON — In President Trump's fiscal year (FY) 2020 budget, he has once again demonstrated his ongoing commitment to Veterans, ensuring greater quality, efficiency and timely service that our Veterans have earned and deserve.

The budget funds our highest priorities, including the Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act (MISSION Act) implementation, Electronic Health Record Modernization, Business

Transformation and Customer Service. It also provides a significant increase for our top clinical priority — suicide prevention.

VA's portion of the budget is based on its solid financial foundation. VA recently received its 20<sup>th</sup> consecutive clean audit opinion, the highest possible, by the Inspector General and a qualified audit firm.

With VA's financial strength we are achieving noticeable results with the resources provided:

- Dartmouth's Annals of Internal Medicine reported that "VA health care is as good, or better, than any care our American people receive in any part of the country."
- Journal of the American Medical Association study found Veterans' access to VA care "appears to have improved between 2014 and 2017 and appears to have surpassed access in the private sector for three of the four specialties evaluated."

VA has rapidly moved beyond being on the cusp of the most significant transformation in VA's history to being fully immersed in the transformation campaign. The FY 2020 budget reflects this reality.

### • **VA strengthens care and benefits for Veterans with \$220 billion budget**

WASHINGTON — President Donald J. Trump is proposing a total of \$220.2 billion in his fiscal year (FY) 2020 budget for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), a 9.6 percent increase above fiscal 2019. "The budget request will ensure the nation's Veterans receive high-quality health care and timely access to benefits and services," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "The budget supports the most significant transformation of VA since its inception, positioning the department as the premier provider for Veterans' services and benefits. This is a significant increase in VA funding and demonstrates the administration's commitment to supporting our Veterans."

#### **Budget highlights**

The FY 2020 budget includes \$97 billion (an increase of \$6.8 billion, or 7.5 percent) in discretionary funding, including resources for health care, benefit administration, and national cemeteries, as well as \$123.2 billion (an increase of \$12.3 billion or 11.1 percent) in mandatory funding above 2019 for benefit programs inclusive of Compensation and Pensions, Readjustment Benefits, Housing and Insurance. This budget provides robust funding for the secretary's top priorities.

MISSION Act: \$8.9 billion for implementation of the [Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act of 2018 \(MISSION Act\)](#) to provide greater choice on where Veterans receive their care, maintain care for current Choice Program users, provide a new urgent care benefit and expand the Caregivers program.

[Electronic Health Record Modernization \(EHRM\)](#): \$1.6 billion (\$496 million above FY 2019) to create and implement a single longitudinal electronic health record for military service members from their active duty to Veteran status, and ensure interoperability with the Department of Defense. The increase will support ongoing activities at the three initial deployment sites and the deployment to further sites, as well as additional site assessments.

Transforming Business Systems: Funds the continued deployment of a modern integrated financial and acquisition management system (\$184.9 million) and implementation of the Defense Medical Logistics Standard Support (\$36.7 million).

Improving Customer Service: \$8.1 million to maintain VA’s trajectory of improving its customer service. The results of a recent customer-experience feedback survey of Veterans regarding their trust of the department’s health care outpatient services showed ”trust scores” for outpatient services increased from 84.7 percent in June 2017 to 87.9 percent in January 2019.

Preventing Veteran Suicide: \$9.4 billion (\$426 million above 2019) for mental health services, which includes \$222 million for suicide-prevention outreach, a \$15.6 million increase over 2019.

Women’s Health: \$547 million (\$42 million above 2019) for gender-specific women’s health care. This increase will help meet VA’s goals of developing Designated Women’s Health Primary Care Providers at every site where women access VA care, and improve the availability and quality of services to women Veterans.

Capital Investments: \$1.6 billion for major and minor construction, including \$410 million for the construction of a new hospital in Louisville, Kentucky, and \$150 million for the Manhattan, New York, medical center.

Budget materials are available here: <https://www.va.gov/budget/products.asp>.

- **75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GI BILL**

Since 1944 the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act, also known as the GI Bill, has impacted of millions of Veterans and their families. The law provided a wide range of benefits to Veterans returning from World War II, including low-cost home loans, education and vocational training, unemployment payments, and an expansion of Veterans' health care. As we celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the GI Bill, we will tell the story of how this legislation has impacted Veterans and their families for generations.



[please share your story.](#)

- **GEORGE H.W. BUSH, BOB WOODWARD AMONG THIS YEAR’S HILLVETS HONOREES**

By: Joshua Axelrod



*Former World War II Navy pilot and President George H.W. Bush passed away in December and will receive a lifetime achievement award for his years of service. (Courtesy Photo)*

Former President George H.W. Bush, a World War II Navy pilot who passed away in December, will receive a lifetime achievement award from the nonprofit group HillVets for his years of service to the country.

Bush, along with legendary Washington Post reporter Bob Woodward and Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie, is included on HillVets’ latest annual list of the 100 most influential people in the military world.

The list highlights active-duty personnel, veterans and military advocates who have proven themselves to be invaluable members of the military community. Previous honorees run the gamut from Taylor Swift and her contributions to military charities in 2017 to Military Times' own Leo Shane last year.

HillVets' list covers a variety of categories ranging from military-affiliated folks in the arts and athletics to businesses that support veterans and political leaders who have demonstrated their commitment to advocating for troops and veterans. Woodward, a Navy vet, is a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist for the Washington Post, most famous for his coverage of the Watergate scandal. HillVets is also recognizing John Kirby, a CNN analyst and former Pentagon spokesman. Also among the honorees is VA Secretary Wilkie, who still serves as an intelligence officer in the Navy reserves. Other honorees from the political realm include Marine vet and Pennsylvania Rep. Conor Lamb, as well as ex-Army helicopter pilot and Illinois Sen. Tammy Duckworth.

HillVets will also be honoring former Marine and WWE star Lacey Evans, Afghanistan veteran and singer-songwriter Sal Gonzalez, Navy officer and Hunt A Killer CEO Ryan Hogan and Student Veterans of America Vice President of Government Affairs Lauren Augustine.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

### • **FLU TIED TO HEART FAILURE WORSENING**

When the number of reported flu cases goes up, so does the number of hospitalizations for heart failure.

A [study in JAMA Cardiology](#) used data on 451,588 people, ages 35 to 84, in four geographic areas over four flu seasons, from 2010 to 2014. The researchers randomly sampled 2,042 hospitalizations for heart failure and 1,599 for heart attack. To track flu activity, they used surveillance data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

After adjusting for region, season, race and ethnicity, age and other variables, they found that for every monthly 5 percent increase in visits to clinicians for flulike symptoms during flu season, there was a 24 percent increase in hospitalizations for heart failure. There was a trend indicating an association with heart attack as well, especially during seasons with the virulent H3N2 subtype of the virus, but that trend did not reach statistical significance.

The researchers calculated that in months with high influenza rates, about 19 percent of hospitalizations for heart failure could be attributable to influenza alone.

“Influenza is not just a one- or two-week illness with some respiratory symptoms,” said the senior author, Orly Vardeny, an associate professor at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. “We need to think about it affecting the person’s underlying health conditions as well. The best way to prevent the flu is to get the flu shot.”

### • **VA TO OFFER NEW KETAMINE-BASED NASAL SPRAY FOR DEPRESSION**



Military.com | By [Patricia Kime](#)

The newest FDA-approved medication to treat severe depression, a nasal spray based on the anesthetic (and misused hallucinogenic party

drug) ketamine, will soon be available to veterans treated within the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#).

In a move that may help thousands of former service members with depression that has not improved with other treatments, VA officials announced Tuesday that the department's doctors are now authorized to prescribe Spravato, the brand name for esketamine, a molecular variation of ketamine.

The decision to offer a drug hailed by many as a breakthrough in treatment for its speedy results -- often relieving symptoms in hours and days, not weeks -- shows the VA's "commitment to seek new ways to provide the best health care available for our nation's veterans," Secretary Robert Wilkie said in a release.

"We're pleased to be able to expand options for Veterans with depression who have not responded to other treatments," Wilkie added.

The treatment will be available to veterans based on a physician's assessment and only will be administered to patients who have tried at least two antidepressant medications and continue to have symptoms of major depressive disorder.

An estimated 16 million Americans have had at least one major episode of depression, and of those, 1 in 3 are considered treatment-resistant. In the veteran population of 20 million, the estimated diagnosis rate of depression is 14 percent -- up to 2.8 million veterans. Between one-third and half of those veterans may be treatment-resistant.

The lack of effective medications for difficult-to-treat patients prompted the Food and Drug Administration to place esketamine on a fast track, expediting its review of the drug to ensure that it went to patent as soon as safely possible, according to administration officials.

"Controlled clinical trials that studied the safety and efficacy of this drug, along with careful review through the FDA's drug approval process, including a robust discussion with our external advisory committees, were important in our decision to approve this treatment," said Dr. Tiffany Farchione, acting director of the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research Division of Psychiatry Products, in a release.

As with any other medication, there are risks. Spravato carries a boxed warning for side effects that include misuse, the reason it is administered under a doctor's supervision. The list of side effects includes sedation and blood pressure spikes and disassociation, such as feelings of physical paralysis and out-of-body experiences. It also can cause suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

Acknowledging the dangers, FDA made esketamine available only through a restricted distribution system.

A veteran prescribed Spravato would inhale the nasal spray at a medical facility while under supervision of a medical provider, and would be monitored for at least two hours after receiving the dose. A typical prescription includes twice-weekly doses the first month, followed by a single dose weekly or biweekly as needed. Spravato cannot be dispensed for home use.

Spravato is made by Janssen Pharmaceuticals, a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson. It is the first major antidepressant medication to hit the market in 30 years.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 25, 2019

**VA and National Multiple Sclerosis Society join forces to enhance health care services for Veterans**  
*Intent to promote whole health and wellness goals of Veterans and families*

**WASHINGTON** — As part of the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) efforts to advance and improve the lives of Veterans living with multiple sclerosis (MS), the department announced its recent partnership with the [National Multiple Sclerosis Society](#).

The partnership, formalized on March 6, will continue to build upon [VA's national network of MS clinical services, education and research](#).

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said VA is committed to working closely with Veterans and their caregivers, community health care professionals, MS advocates and Veterans service organizations to identify new and innovative ways to support this initiative.

“MS can be an overwhelming challenge for those who are fighting the disease and their loved ones who care for them,” Wilkie said. “VA recognizes and values the strength of collaborations with our external partners, which can help increase access to care and lead to a more fulfilled quality of life.”

VA and the National MS Society seek to enhance health services, education, self-efficacy and promote whole health goals of Veterans and their families, by sharing certain resources and collaborating on policy, educational and research initiatives.

“Veterans living with multiple sclerosis need our support,” said Cyndi Zagieboylo, president and CEO of the National MS Society. “This agreement is a very clear commitment from the federal government and the society that we are here for them — and will be here for them.”

According to the [National MS Society](#), nearly 1 million people are living with MS in the United States. Approximately 20,000 Veterans with MS are cared for annually in the Veterans Health Administration. With the 2003 establishment of VA's MS Centers of Excellence, Veterans and their families have access to a national network of regional and support programs to improve their diagnosis and treatment.

For more information about VA's National MS Centers of Excellence, visit [VA Multiple Sclerosis](#).

## • US SOLDIERS WISH FOR MASKS AS AIR POLLUTION SMOTHERS SOUTH KOREA



*Pedestrians wear masks while walking at Osan Air Base, South Korea, Wednesday, March 6, 2019.*

*/ STARS AND STRIPES Published: March 7, 2019*

**YONGSAN GARRISON, South Korea** — With much of South Korea smothered in record levels of fine dust, the streets are full of people wearing masks as protection from the punishing air pollution.

Most American soldiers don't have that option — at least when they're in uniform. The Air Force permits masks when pollution hits a certain level.

Army regulations bar soldiers from wearing the masks, which cover noses and mouths, unless they have a certified medical condition that merits an exception.

That has caused concern among many soldiers and their loved ones as much of South Korea has endured several days of dense pollution that irritates eyes and makes breathing difficult.

"I feel like my husband should be able to wear a mask. I really don't like that," Army wife Alexandra Jackson said as she waited for dinner at the Yongsan Garrison food court.

She and her 10-year-old stepson, King Jackson, both wore masks around their necks. She said her husband also wears one when he's off-duty.

"But when they're in uniform it's against code. I feel like the soldiers should be able to have the protection," she said Tuesday, shortly after a governmental emergency alert beeped on cellphones to warn the air quality was bad and to urge people to wear their masks.

As of Friday, more than 1,650 people had signed [a petition posted on Change.org](#) earlier in the week calling for the policy to be changed so soldiers may wear masks in South Korea.

### Worst air quality

The military has taken measures to confront the growing problem, which experts blame on industrial drift from China and homegrown pollution.

South Korea had the worst air quality among a group of 35 wealthy nations, according to the most recent data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

U.S. Forces Korea, the main command on the divided peninsula, revised its policy two years ago to give commanders at each level more latitude to move training indoors or postpone activities based on air quality. But masks were not allowed.

“Commanders are authorized to adjust training and activities based on air quality. The command recognizes the concerns raised by the community and the decrease in air quality,” said Eighth Army spokeswoman Lt. Col. Peggy Kageleiry.



*Haze surrounds the barracks at Osan Air Base, South Korea, Wednesday, March 6, 2019. MATT KEELER/STARS AND STRIPES*

“Soldiers with medical conditions and a profile requiring masks can wear them with the uniform,” she added.

Bases also keep the communities informed with updates on Facebook and internal alert systems. The problem is also acute at Camp Humphreys, south of Seoul, which is the new home to USFK headquarters.

South Korea has long suffered from a phenomenon known locally as “yellow dust,” which refers to contaminated fine sand particles that blow from the desert regions of China and Mongolia.

But the South, which has morphed into an economic powerhouse after rapid industrialization following the devastation of the 1950-53 Korean War, also generates its own pollution and most of its population of some 25 million lives in urban areas.

“There is a confluence of factors that lead to high levels of particulate matter in Korea,” said James Crawford, a NASA scientist who led a joint Korea-U.S. air quality field study in 2016.

“In public discourse, it is often attributed to transport from China without much further thought,” he told Stars and Stripes in an email. “While I do not discount that transport contributes, local emissions also play a bigger role when conditions are cold and ventilation of pollutants is inhibited.”

Facing rising alarm as his country endured a sixth day of thick haze, President Moon Jae-in issued a series of urgent instructions on Wednesday to try to curb the problem, including a proposed joint project with China to use artificial rain to clean the air.

#### Limiting activities

USFK policy acknowledges the severity of the problem in regulation 40-6, which focuses on limiting outdoor activities under well-defined levels of pollution.

“Poor air quality impacts force health protection, unit safety and readiness, the well-being of USFK personnel and their family members and could jeopardize our ‘fight tonight’ capability,” it says.

The regulation lists six categories, with restrictions on military activity starting when the air is deemed unhealthy:

- Unhealthy — Reduce prolonged or heavy exertion. Take frequent breaks during all outdoor activities.
- Very Unhealthy — Avoid prolonged or heavy exertion. Consider moving activities indoors or rescheduling when air quality is better.
- Hazardous — Avoid all physical activities outdoors.

The Air Force is more lenient thanks to a policy put in place in June 2017 by the 51st Fighter Wing at Osan Air Base, south of Seoul.

It also offers guidelines on the type of masks to wear, saying normal dust and surgical masks are not effective in South Korea because the pollution particulates are very small. It suggests wearing masks with a grade of N-95 or greater, as determined by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, or NIOSH.

“Airmen are permitted to wear certain masks outdoors in uniform when the Air Quality Index is reported as Orange (AQI value of 101-150) or higher,” said 1st Lt. Jackie Jastrzebski, a public affairs officer.

On Tuesday at Yongsan, the AQI hit 207, which is designated as very unhealthy, according to the garrison’s Facebook page.

Staff Sgt. Ricky Cooksey, 30, of Olathe, Kansas, said he suffered more from poor air quality while deployed in Afghanistan.

“It hasn’t bothered me too much here,” the 1st Armored Division soldier said. “I’m more concerned about taking care of the soldiers. If a soldier wants to be able to wear a mask, then they should be able to.”

## Health problems

Air pollution is linked to health problems ranging from eye irritation to upper respiratory symptoms in the short term, and chronic respiratory diseases like asthma in the long term. Children and the elderly are considered particularly vulnerable.

OECD statistics showed that South Korea had levels of dangerous particulate matter called PM2.5 of 25.1 micrograms per cubic meter, compared with 7.4 micrograms per cubic meter in the United States in 2017. PM2.5, also known as fine particulate matter, is monitored because it can harm human health and reduce life expectancy.

Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Paul Kinsey, who transferred to Yongsan in November, recently decided it was time to shell out about \$30 for a mask to filter the harmful particles.

“To me this should be issued if there’s a real concern,” he said, pointing to his new air-filtering mask. “Even if you’re here for a short period of time, you should be able to protect your lungs.”

Tester, Moran Introduce Landmark Veterans Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Bill Senators’ Legislation Builds on VA’s Success, Invests in Innovative Therapy, Expands Rural Access to Care

## **COMMANDER JOHN SCOTT HANNON VETERANS MENTAL HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT**

(U.S. Senate) – U.S. Senators Jon Tester (D-Mont.) and Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) today introduced landmark, bipartisan legislation to improve veterans’ access to mental health care and make sure no veteran life is lost to suicide.

Their bipartisan *Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act* is a comprehensive and aggressive approach to connect more veterans with the mental health care they need and earned. Their bill seeks to improve VA care by bolstering the VA’s mental health workforce and increasing rural or hard-to-reach veterans’ access to VA care, while making sure veterans have access to alternative and local treatment options like animal therapy, outdoor sports and activities, yoga, and acupuncture.

“Mental health is the universal issue facing every veteran, and we need all hands on deck to make sure no veteran is lost to suicide,” said Tester, Ranking Member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee. “Our bill brings together the best ideas from the VA, Congress, veterans, providers, and advocates so our approach to mental health care is aggressive and united. Together, we can put innovative solutions to work to connect more veterans to the life-saving mental health care they earned.”

“One veteran lost to suicide is one too many, and Congress has an obligation to those who have bravely served our nation to fix this tragedy,” said Sen. Moran. “As our servicemembers transition to civilian life, we can ease this difficult process by removing barriers to mental healthcare that our veterans need. This bipartisan legislation, which complements the President’s PREVENTS initiative, would expand efforts in local communities to provide veterans with mental healthcare, would allow the VA to hire and train more professionals in this field and would develop innovative methods for the delivery of this care. Our nation’s heroes deserve the best our nation has to offer and the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act offers critical next steps to preventing veteran suicide.”

It is estimated that more than 20 veterans die by suicide every day. Of those, 14 have received no treatment or care from the VA. The *Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act* will improve outreach to veterans and their mental health care options in five major ways:

1. **Bolster the VA’s mental health workforce to serve more veterans** by giving the VA direct hiring authority for more mental health professions, offering scholarships to mental health professionals to work at Vet Centers, and placing at least one Suicide Prevention Coordinator in every VA hospital.
2. **Improve rural veterans’ access to mental health care** by increasing the number of locations at which veterans can access VA telehealth services and offering grants to non-VA organizations that provide mental health services or alternative treatment to veterans.
3. **Strengthen support and assistance for service members transitioning out of the military** by automatically giving every service member one full year of VA health care when they leave the military and improving services that connect transitioning veterans with career and education opportunities.
4. **Study and invest in innovative and alternative treatment options** by expanding veterans’ access to animal, outdoor, or agri-therapy, yoga, meditation, and acupuncture, and investing in VA research into the impact of living at high altitude on veterans’ suicide risk and identifying and treating mental illness.
5. **Hold the VA accountable for its mental health care and suicide prevention efforts** by examining how the VA manages its suicide prevention resources and how the VA provides seamless care and information sharing for veterans seeking mental health care from both the VA and community providers.

After serving 23 years in the U.S. Navy as a member of the Navy SEALs, Scott Hannon retired to Montana where he received treatment for his invisible wounds of war while helping other veterans find their own paths to recovery. Scott died by suicide on February 25, 2018. More information about Scott’s life and military service is available [HERE](#).

Scott’s parents John and Gretchen Hannon, sister Kim Parrott, and her children Sam and Kessler joined the Senators in a press conference to announce the bill in their son, brother, and uncle’s name.

“Our family is deeply honored to have the Veterans Mental Health Improvement Act named in memory of Commander John Scott Hannon - Soldier, Son, Father, Brother, Uncle. After a full career as a Navy SEAL, John Scott spent his final years advocating for easier access and a broader approach to mental health care,” said Kim Parrott, John Scott’s sister, on behalf of the Hannon family. “This bill is in complete alignment with his beliefs and efforts. Our greatest hope is that this bill will be passed into a law that can provide healing in the lives of tens of thousands of people - veterans, their families, our communities, this nation.”

The bill is endorsed by a growing number of veterans and mental health advocates, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), American Veterans (AMVETS), National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Volunteers of America (VOA), American Psychological Association (APA), and American Association of Suicidology.

## **NEWS PERTAINING TO THE KOREAN PENINSULAR**



### **• NORTH KOREA WITHDRAWS FROM BORDER LIAISON OFFICE-BLOW TO INTER-KOREAN EFFORTS**



*North Korea has withdrawn from a recently established liaison office in a blow to hopes that inter-Korean efforts would continue despite the failure of the U.S.-North Korean nuclear summit.*

By KIM GAMEL | STARS AND STRIPES Published: March 22, 2019

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea withdrew from a recently established liaison office in the border city of Kaesong on Friday, the Unification Ministry said, in a blow to hopes that inter-Korean efforts would continue despite the

failure of the U.S.-North Korean nuclear summit.

The liaison office opened in September to provide a venue to discuss exchanges and cooperation between the two Koreas stemming from the agreement reached by President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un during their first meeting last April.

The two sides began several cross-border initiatives and cultural exchanges, but reconciliation efforts have stalled along with the stalemate in talks between Washington and Pyongyang over efforts to persuade the North to give up its nuclear weapons.

North Korea notified the South during a meeting Friday morning that it was pulling out of the office “in accordance with instructions from the superior authority,” the Unification Ministry said in a statement. The North said it didn’t care if the South Korean side stayed or left and promised to give notice about practical matters later, according to the ministry, which oversees inter-Korean affairs.

“The South Korean government regrets the decision ... and urges the North to return soon so that the South-North joint liaison office can resume normal operations as agreed by the two sides,” the ministry said.

North Korea didn’t give a reason for its decision, but the move comes a day after the U.S. administration slapped two Chinese firms with sanctions for doing business with Pyongyang – the first punishing measures to be issued since President Donald Trump and Kim failed to reach agreement during their Feb. 27-28 summit in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Kaesong is due north of the Demilitarized Zone that has divided the peninsula since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty.

Moon has vowed to try to get North Korea and the United States back to the table, but the adversaries have appeared to harden their positions.

The North has demanded that sanctions be relaxed as a reward for steps it already has taken toward denuclearization, including the suspension of missile and nuclear tests, but the United States insists it will maintain pressure until more progress is made.

The North also warned earlier this month that it was considering halting nuclear talks and lifting its missile-testing moratorium, saying Kim would decide soon.

● **FORMER PRIME MINISTER HWANG KYO-AHN BECOMES THE NEW LEADER OF LIBERTY KOREA PARTY... "WE WILL BEGIN A FIERCE BATTLE TO PROTECT THE CITIZENS AND COUNTRY AGAINST THE TYRANNY OF THE MOON ADMINISTRATION"**

Hwang representative "of the starting march towards victory in next year's general election victory -2022 year regime change" ... Oh Se-hoon 2nd - 3rd gimjintae

top members include Academy of jogyeongtae jeongmigyeong gimgwangrim, Shin Bora won the best young members of sulfur representing "Now we are one "We will collect power for the party and the country." In the shadow of the recent regime of tyranny, in the 43rd day of the party

, reputation enough to get rid chairwoman justice minister in the government and served as prime minister after ... impeachment is doing acting President

The former prime minister (62) was elected as the new ruling party to lead the first opposition party, the Free Korean Party, in the general election next year. The top candidates were Cho Kyung-tae, Jung Mi-kyung, Kim Soon-rye and Kim Kwang-rim.

Former prime minister Hwang Woo-sung was elected as the party's presidential candidate in the presidential race of the Free Korean National Convention held in Kintex, Ilsan, Gyeonggi Province on the afternoon of the 27th.

Hwang said that former Seoul Mayor Oh Se-hoon, who received 46,253 votes (31.1%), received 60,087 votes (50.0%) from the electoral votes and general public opinion survey, and 20,924 votes (18.9%) Kim Jin-tae won the victory.

"I will devote myself to rebuild the Republic of Korea and rebuild the Republic of Korea." "From now on, we will be one." The Free Korean Party is a team. Let's go together and go together. "

"I will start a fierce battle against the tyranny of the Moon Jae-in regime from the moment I go down this stage, and to defend the people and the country," he said. "I will set off with a victory for the election victory next year and the regime change in 2022."

In addition, I will boldly change the freedom of the Korean government to policy parties, civic parties and future political parties. I will raise the flag of innovation and achieve the unification of the right-wing liberty. "Until that day of victory and glory, Until that day, I will go with you all the way. "

Former prime minister Hwang Gyung-hwan, who was elected as party leader at the Free Korean National Convention in Kintex, Goyang City, Gyeonggi Province on the afternoon of the 27th, is greeting the top members who have been elected. (Photo: Yonhap News)

Hwang emphasized the unification at the open press conference after the congressional ceremony, saying, "It is important not to be revived," he said. "It is necessary for our party to unite and broaden the scope. We will be able to come to a lot of young people and we will be able to contribute to integration and proliferation together with various experts. We need innovation for all of these things.

In response to a question on Kim Jin-tae's decision to suspend disciplinary punishment for the upcoming 5.18 hearing in the National Assembly, he said, "I think it will be handled by collecting opinions." Regarding the question of whether to oppose Park Geun-hye's impeachment on the tablet PC in the TV debate, he said, "I have repeatedly said that I respect the Constitutional Court's impeachment decision, and now I want to be committed to the future." He said.

Hwang was born in 1957, the youngest of the six siblings in Sogye - dong, Yongsan - gu, Seoul. His father and mother lived in Yeonbag in Hwanghae Province and worked as a refugee in North Korea during the Korean War. After graduating from Gyeonggi High School in Sungkyunkwan University, Hwang graduated from the Judicial Research and Training Institute in 13 years. He was reputed to be a public security inspector certified by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office, the chief of the Seoul District Public Prosecutor's Office, the second chief of the Seoul District Public Prosecutor's Office, and the second deputy director of the Seoul Central District Public Prosecutor's Office. In 1988, I obtained the nickname "Mr National Security Law" in the book "Commentary on the National Security Law," which is called the Guidelines for Public Security Investigations.

It is the time of Park Geun-hye government that Hwang's representative began to be stamped on the public. He has served as the first Minister of Justice and the Prime Minister since the inauguration of the Park Geun-hye government.

Hwang received a deep trust in former President Park when he pulled out the Constitutional Court 's decision to dissolve the progressive Progressive Party. In an interview with Pen-and-Mike last month, he recalled that he was "imprisoned and punished for violating the National Security Law, and now he is working in the government," he said. You must know. "

Recently, the Democratic Party, along with the government of Moon Jae-in, has been receiving a lot of public attention due to various suspicions and controversies. The new opposition leader, who took control of the party in 43 days after the first opposition party, criticized him for retaliating against the "tyranny" It is noteworthy whether they can properly control the Moon Jae-in regime and lead the next general election to victory.

North Korea summit ends with no deal but Trump's move sent a message that matters – What will Kim do now?

## • A 'PALPABLE AIR OF CALM' ALONG KOREA'S DMZ BUT GROWING CONCERNS ABOUT RISING

REGIONAL RIVALS By: [Geoff Ziezulewicz](#) 1



*Protesters wearing masks of President Donald Trump and North Korean despot Kim Jong-Un stand near the map of Korean Peninsula during a Thursday rally in Seoul that called for the removal of all nuclear weapons from the peninsula. (Lee Jin-man/AP)*

The U.S. military's top officer in South Korea told lawmakers Wednesday that there's a "palpable air of calm on the peninsula" but other officials warned that communist Pyongyang failed to follow through on efforts to make the peace permanent.

Gen. Robert Abrams, head of U.S. Forces Korea, said

today's relative tranquility stands in stark contrast to a few years ago, at the height of North Korea's nuclear and missile tests.

"The tension has reduced significantly," he told the House Armed Services Committee. "Along the demilitarized zone, on the West Sea, the East Sea, along the Northern Limit Line, inside the Joint Security Area, that for the first time since 1976...is now 100 percent demilitarized."

At the same time, U.S. forces continue to closely monitor developments and stand "ready to respond" should the situation change, Adm. Phil Davidson, head of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, told lawmakers.

President Donald J. Trump's decision to meet directly with North Korea's dictator Kim Jong-Un created "an unprecedented opportunity" and has helped in terms of immediate conflict, added Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Affairs Randall Schriver.

But he cautioned that more must be done to hold Pyongyang to its de-nuclearization promises.

"North Korea has not taken steps to fulfill Chairman Kim's pledge," Schriver said. "We're disappointed that they haven't come to the table in a serious manner."

Despite Trump's tweet last Friday announcing the removal of additional sanctions against North Korea — an announcement the White House reportedly walked back — Schriver said such sanctions help keep pressure on Kim's regime.

"As I understand it, none of the sanctions have been removed or changed since the tweet," he told lawmakers.

The military leaders declined to detail in an open hearing intelligence about North Korea's ongoing ballistic missile and nuclear activities, but Abrams said the observed activity "is inconsistent with de-nuclearization."

While North Korea's proliferation programs remain an immediate concern for lawmakers and the Pentagon, the chief strategic problem over the long term remains the rise of China, Russia and other regional powers.

There are 160 Chinese, Russian and North Korean submarines operating inside Indo-Pacific Command's waters today, with "potential adversary submarine activity" tripling since 2008, Davidson noted in a statement provided to the committee before the hearing.

And despite the looming retirement of Los Angeles-class boats, Davidson said the Navy retains the underwater advantage.

For now.

"The undersea domain, despite the capacity shortfalls, is an area where we hold an asymmetric advantage over all our adversaries," he said. "It's a critical advantage we need to extend. The capacity limitations as we go down over the course of the next several years is indeed a threat to day-to-day operations."

When it comes to increasingly assertive Chinese territorial claims on international waters in the South China Sea, Davidson encouraged other nations to conduct their own freedom of navigation operations, or FONOPs, to remind Beijing that they're global shipping lanes open to all vessels.

"It demonstrates that it's an international concern to maintain that open sea and air space," he said. "We welcome people to do it unilaterally."

## • COAST GUARD CUTTER KEEPS EYE ON NORTH KOREA DURING PATROL OF EAST CHINA SEA



*The Coast Guard cutter Bertholf patrols the Western Pacific, Jan. 22, 2019.*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A U.S. Coast Guard cutter tasked with enforcing United Nations sanctions against North Korea completed a patrol of the East China Sea earlier this month.

The cutter Bertholf arrived March 3 at Sasebo Naval Base, according to a statement issued Monday by U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area.

The U.N. Security Council has imposed a number of economic sanctions on North Korea in response to its developing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

The Coast Guard helps enforce those sanctions by keeping a lookout for prohibited ship-to-ship transfers of fuel, such as coal, and goods.



*Capt. John Driscoll of the Coast Guard cutter Bertholf speaks to officers from Japan's coast guard on the ship's flight deck, Feb. 7, 2019.*

*JOHN MASSON/U.S. COAST GUARD*

The Coast Guard did not say whether the Bertholf had interrupted any illicit transfers.

The Bertholf, first of the Coast Guard's new National Security cutters, left its homeport of Alameda, Calif., with its crew of 170 on Jan. 20 for deployment in the Western Pacific.

The cutter's presence also reinforces the U.S. commitment to keeping the East China Sea open to navigation, according to the Coast Guard.

"The United States is a Pacific nation," Vice Adm. Linda Fagan, commander of the Coast Guard Pacific Area, said in the statement. "We have deep and long-standing ties with our partners in the region, and more importantly, we share a strong commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, governed by a rules-based international system that promotes peace, security, prosperity and sovereignty of all nations." Prior to its patrol in the East China Sea, the Bertholf hosted Japan Coast Guard officers aboard the ship during a visit to Yokosuka.

"The U.S. Coast Guard is proud to operate with our Pacific counterparts," Fagan said. "Together we are dedicated to enhancing our capabilities and strengthening maritime governance and security while promoting individual sovereignty." The Bertholf is operating under the tactical command of the 7th Fleet during its Pacific deployment.

### • **PRESIDENT TRUMP WALKS AWAY FROM NEGOTIATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA**

President Trump walks away from negotiations with North Korea, and underscores goal of meaningful commitment to denuclearization.

The Hanoi Summit was the latest gambit in President Trump's unprecedented diplomatic effort to negotiate away North Korea's nuclear weapons. It concluded without a signing ceremony. That's neither a loss nor a win for the president.

### • **BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL WEAPONS: THE OTHER THREATS FROM NORTH KOREA** *By: Beverly Banks,*



*U.S. soldiers wear chemical warfare gear during a joint military exercise with South Korea at a US Army base in Dongducheon, 40kms north of Seoul, on March 3, 2011, aimed to simulate the detection and disposal of North Korea's chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons. (Jung Yeon-je/AFP via Getty Images)*

When it comes to North Korea, all eyes are on nuclear weapons, but the lack of attention toward chemical and biological capabilities weakens defense against potential attacks, according to experts in the field.

After the [breakdown of talks](#) between the United States and Pyongyang last week, the future of not only nuclear weapons but biological and chemical weapons is uncertain.

"The real terrorists threats, primarily when you talk about weapons of mass destruction — nuclear, chemical and biological — are chemical weapons, biological diseases and radioactive materials," said Paul Walker, vice chairman of the board of directors for the Arms Control Association. Walker, who has worked in the international security field for more than 40 years, said chemical and biological agents are the biggest threats facing society today.

In the new Congress, lawmakers have paid particular attention to nuclear weapons. The House Armed Services Committee is holding a hearing on nuclear deterrence policies today and their counterparts on the Senate Armed Services Committee held a similar hearing on nukes last week. Neither panel plans to hold a hearing on chemical or biological weapons in the near future, according to committee staff members.

Jenifer Mackby, a senior fellow at the Federation for American Scientists, said that while the image of the mushroom cloud at Hiroshima and Nagasaki makes people fear the use of nuclear weapons, there is little public knowledge about biological weapons.

“With biological weapons, people don’t pay that much attention to it and, in fact, they probably don’t even have a clue what it might be or how it could be put into action,” Mackby said.

The U.S. intelligence community has made mention, albeit briefly, of North Korea’s chemical and biological programs. During the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence hearing in January, intelligence community leaders reiterated how the advancements of weapons of mass destruction threaten U.S. and global safety.

John Parachini, a senior policy analyst at the Rand Corporation, recently wrote an article about the limited intelligence the United States has on North Korea’s biological weapons programs. He said the United States does not have concrete proof of North Korea’s biological capabilities.

“Based on the evidence we have in the open source environment, I think it’s hard to tell they may have capabilities,” Parachini said. “But the evidence we have as revealed in the Worldwide Threats statements from the U.S. intelligence community over the years have varied and have used cautionary language like they may have capabilities.”

Unlike biological weapons, the United States does have more intelligence and understandings of North Korea’s chemical weapons program. The U.S. intelligence community’s 2019 Worldwide Threat Assessment noted that North Korea “used chemical weapons on the battlefield or in assassination operations during the past two years.”

Gary Ackerman, an associate professor with the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity at the University of Albany, said North Korea has a sizable chemical weapons arsenal that poses a threat to neighboring countries like South Korea.

“There’s still a fair amount of evidence that they have one of the largest chemical weapons arsenals that’s around at the moment so North Korea is a huge threat in terms of chemical weapons,” Ackerman said. “I’d say that largest state-level threat in terms of chemical weapons in the world.”



### **North Korea says it will never give up nukes unless US removes threat**

North Korea's stance may put future talks with the U.S. in jeopardy.

**By: Kim Tong-Hyung, The Associated Press**

There are multilateral treaties that hold states accountable for these weapons. The Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention have established international norms against the use, production, distribution, and stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons. The Biological Weapons Convention has 182 members while the Chemical Weapons Convention has 193.

Walker said North Korea signed the Biological Weapons Convention through ascension, but it has not signed the Chemical Weapons Convention. In addition to North Korea, Israel, Egypt and South Sudan have not ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention.

“All of your major players have signed and ratified,” said Walker, who was a staff member for House Armed Services Chairman Ron Dellums in the 1990s. “The one important country missing is North Korea today.”

Ackerman said the absence of North Korea’s membership in the Chemical Weapons Convention may be a strategy to keep the United States and other countries guessing when it comes to the actual size of their chemical weapons program.

While the probability of a biological or chemical weapons attack is low, Parachini said continuing to initiate talks with North Korea helps the United States get a better sense of Pyongyang’s biological and chemical capabilities.

“In order to keep that probability low and to understand that potential danger,” Parachini said. “What’s ideal is to get more transparency and so that’s where the current dialogue with North Korea is important even if its focused on their nuclear and missile programs.”

## **UN EXPERTS: NORTH KOREA HASN'T STOPPED NUKE AND MISSILE PROGRAMS**



*This July 28, 2017, picture released from North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency, shows North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile Hwasong-14 being launched at an undisclosed location in North Korea. (AFP via Getty Images)*

UNITED NATIONS — North Korea has not stopped its nuclear and missile programs and is violating U.N. sanctions including by “a massive increase in illicit ship-to-ship transfers of petroleum products,” U.N. experts said in a new report.

A summary of the report by experts monitoring U.N. sanctions against North Korea, which was sent to the Security Council Friday night and obtained by The Associated Press, said North Korea is also violating sanctions by transferring coal at sea and flouting an arms embargo and financial sanctions.

The panel of experts said North Korea attempted to sell small arms and light weapons and other military equipment via foreign intermediaries, including Syrian arms traffickers in the case of Houthi Shiite rebels in Yemen as well as Libya and Sudan. The report also said North Korea has continued

The panel said it is continuing to investigate sanctioned individuals, companies and other entities in Asia that clandestinely procured centrifuges for North Korea's nuclear program and attempted to sell a wide range of military equipment to governments and armed groups in the Middle East and Africa.

The Security Council first imposed sanctions on North Korea after its first nuclear test in 2006 and has made them tougher and tougher in response to further nuclear tests and its increasingly sophisticated ballistic missile program.

Many diplomats and analysts credit the sanctions, which have sharply cut North Korea's exports and imports, with helping promote the thaw in relations between North Korea and South Korea as well as the June meeting between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

But the report said North Korea "has not stopped its nuclear and missiles programs" and continues to defy the sanctions resolutions.

The experts said ship-to-ship transfers of petroleum products, oil and coal involve "increasingly sophisticated evasion techniques."

These include turning off Automatic Identification Systems, which are required to be on at all times under international regulations, physically disguising North Korean tankers, using small unregistered vessels, illegally changing names, carrying out night transfers and using additional vessels to trans-ship cargo, the report said.

The United States said last month that North Korea is illegally smuggling refined petroleum products into the country beyond the quota of 500,000 barrels per year allowed under U.N. sanctions.

U.S. documents sent to the Security Council committee monitoring sanctions against North Korea cite 89 instances between Jan. 1 and May 30, in which North Korean tankers likely delivered refined products "illicitly procured" via ship-to-ship transfers. The documents say that even if each tanker delivered only one-third of its listed capacity, the total volume would be above the 500,000 barrel annual quota. If loaded at around 90 percent, the U.S. said the tankers would have delivered nearly 1.4 million barrels of refined products to North Korea, almost triple the quota.

The experts said if the report is accurate, North Korea is violating sanctions and all countries "would have to immediately halt all such transfers" to North Korea.

As for U.N. financial sanctions, the report said they are among the most poorly implemented and evaded measures.

The experts said individuals empowered to act for North Korean financial institutions operate in at least five countries, which weren't named, "with seeming impunity."

- **NORTH KOREA SAYS IT HAS TESTED 'ULTRAMODERN TACTICAL WEAPON'** By: The Associated Press



*North Korea tested a "newly developed high-tech tactical" weapon, according to state-run media on Friday. Pictured: North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un, center, visits Samjiyon County on Oct. 30, 2018. (KCNA via AFP via Getty Images)*

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un observed the successful test of “a newly developed ultramodern tactical weapon,” the nation’s state media reported Friday, though it didn’t describe what sort of weapon it was.

It didn’t appear to be a [nuclear or missile-related test](#), a string of which last year had many fearing war before the North turned to engagement and diplomacy early this year. Still, any mention of weapons testing could influence the direction of currently stalled diplomacy between Washington and Pyongyang that’s meant to rid the North of its [nuclear weapons](#).

The North hasn’t publicly tested any weapons since November of last year, but in recent days Pyongyang reportedly expressed anger at South Korea’s resumption of [small-scale military drills](#) with the United States, and Friday’s announcement could be in response to those drills.

Even if the test was a message for Washington and Seoul, Friday’s report from the North was noticeably less belligerent than past announcements of weapons tests, and didn’t focus on North Korean claims of U.S. and South Korean hostility.

It’s the first publicly known field inspection of a weapons test by Kim Jong Un since he observed the testing of the Hwasong-15 intercontinental ballistic missile in November of last year, according to South Korea’s Unification Ministry.

The North said the test took place at the Academy of National Defense Science and that Kim couldn’t suppress his “passionate joy” at the success of the test. He was described as “so excited to say that another great work was done by the defense scientists and munitions industrial workers to increase the defense capability of the country.”

The North said this new, unspecified weapon has been under development for a long time and will help strengthen the combat power of its army.

Last year’s string of increasingly powerful weapons tests, many experts believe, put the North on the brink of a viable arsenal of nuclear-tipped missiles that can target anywhere in the mainland United States.

Diplomacy has stalled since a June summit between President Donald Trump and Kim in Singapore, with Washington pushing for more action on nuclear disarmament and the North insisting that the U.S. first approve a

peace declaration formally ending the Korean War. Trump and Kim are both interested in another summit, but it's unclear when it might happen.

- **TRUMP, KIM JONG UN'S VIETNAM SUMMIT JOINS LONG LIST OF KEY MOMENTS BETWEEN WORLD LEADERS: A TIMELINE**

Second, the “substantial progress” possibility. This would entail North Korea to put something new on the table -- like a list accounting for all their nuclear assets.

Third, the “nothing-burger” possibility, in which the two leaders just agree to keep talking.

Fourth, the “backtracking” possibility, with the U.S. agreeing to ease sanctions or make other concessions solely to keep Kim at the negotiating table.

Of these options, only number four was bad. The ongoing pressure campaign is what actually protects us and our allies from the threat of North Korea's nuclear weapons. To relax the pressure before Kim gives up his nukes would put Americans at risk. Thankfully, the president stuck to his negotiating objectives, holding out for substantive progress on denuclearization before giving up anything. Kim came to Hanoi with the same old demands in hand. He continues to insist his regime get substantive sanctions relief before taking any substantive steps toward denuclearization. This came as no surprise. North Korean negotiators believed they could get something from Trump if they could just get him to the table. They didn't believe U.S. negotiators who told them the president wouldn't compromise on the pressure campaign. Kim came to Hanoi to test that proposition. The U.S. walks away with some respect for Kim's resolve. Trump likes a serious negotiation. Trump's team also gets two-fer. They looked tough, and they get to keep the negotiating track open. The question now is: What happens next? Both sides will go home, assess what happened, and decide where to go from here. Since both nations have invested substantially in the negotiating process, it would make no sense for North Korea to throw that away and go back to issuing fruitless threats. Nor would it be wise for North Korea to resume taking provocative acts. Not only would that undermine the goodwill Kim has built-up, it would actually make the U.S. look wise for not trusting Kim's professions of good intentions and improved behavior. Rather, Kim now knows he has a serious negotiating partner. He will have to consider how to negotiate seriously in the future

- **TRUMP ADMINISTRATION TO END MAJOR MILITARY EXERCISES WITH SOUTH KOREA: REPORT**

By: Joshua Axelrod



*Senior defense officials told NBC News that those two exercises were both for ensuring troops from both countries remained vigilant and for deterring potential aggression from neighboring North Korea. (Lance Cpl. Andrew M. Blanco/Marine Corps)*

The Trump administration is set to announce the end of

large-scale drills the U.S. military conducts with South Korea every spring, according to a new report.

Two U.S. defense officials told NBC News Friday about the impending announcement. Their report indicated that the two drills in question — which are referred to as Key Resolve and Foal Eagle — will eventually be replaced with smaller-scale training exercises tailored to specific missions.

The Pentagon had announced in November that the U.S. was still scheduled to participate in Foal Eagle, though in a diminished capacity. This decision appears to have cancelled it altogether.

Opting to end these drills with South Korea is part of President Donald Trump’s plan to foster a more positive relationship with North Korea, the officials said.

Senior defense officials told NBC News that those two exercises were both for ensuring troops from both countries remained vigilant and for deterring potential aggression from neighboring North Korea.

“The U.S. has identified ways to mitigate potential readiness concerns by looking at required mission tasks versus having to conduct large-scale exercises,” one official told NBC News.

Trump has previously tweeted that he considers these “war games” with South Korea to be a waste of money.

Those tweets came a day after then-Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said there were no plans to cancel future joint-training exercises with South Korea.

In October, the U.S. suspended “Vigilant Ace,” an annual air exercise held every December.

As of late January, the U.S. and South Korea were gridlocked on a new deal to share the costs of housing the 28,000 American troops stationed in that country.

Trump just met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Vietnam. In the lead-up to their summit, South Korean officials expressed concern about the future of their alliance with the U.S.

In December, Pyongyang announced that it would not give up its arsenal of nuclear weapons until it no longer considered the U.S. to be what it called a nuclear threat.

## **US TROOP WITHDRAWALS AREN'T ON THE TABLE FOR TRUMP'S NORTH KOREA PEACE TALKS-FOR NOW**

**By: [Leo Shane III](#)**

WASHINGTON — Senior administration officials say U.S. troop withdrawals from the Korean Peninsula won't be on the planned agenda for next week's peace talks. Whether President Donald Trump decides to add them in remains to be seen. Trump is scheduled to meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un next week for a second face-to-face summit aimed at bringing the rogue regime in line with international standards, including ending their nuclear weapons program.

The meeting, scheduled in Vietnam on Feb. 27-28, builds off the meeting between the two men last June and will follow the same format, according to White House officials. That means limited public visibility into the specifics of the talks, beyond what the leaders say after the fact.

But in remarks at Stanford University late last month, U.S. Special Envoy for North Korea Stephen Biegun said that the topic of withdrawing American forces from South Korea in exchange for denuclearization would not be on the table at the event.

“So we are not involved in any diplomatic discussion, full stop, that would suggest this tradeoff,” he said. “It has never been discussed ... Sustaining the future of that (U.S.-South Korea) alliance is something that both sides have to fully commit themselves to.”

Senior administration officials reiterated that message in the lead up to this peace summit, saying that the U.S. military presence in South Korea and the wider Pacific region will not be a bargaining chip in the talks.

But Trump in the past has broached the topic himself. Last year, he ordered a pause to some joint military exercises between the two countries to allow North Korea more political space to enact reforms.

He has also argued that the U.S. troop presence there is costly and potentially a drain on other military priorities. But he said in a CBS interview earlier this month that he had “no plans” to move the forces.

• **TRUMP TRYING TO MAKE SURE NORTH KOREA’S KIM JONG UN GETS ‘WHAT HE WANTS,’ SOUTH KOREAN LEADER SAYS**

The U.S. president says he has a "very friendly view" of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

*By: Hyung-Jin Kim*

Earlier this month, South Korean leaders reached a new cost-sharing agreement with U.S. officials for the 28,500 American troops stationed there. South Korean authorities will provide about \$1 billion a year to cover expenses related to that military footprint.



On Wednesday, Trump said he was optimistic that the next round of talks between the country could produce significant benefits for the region.

“I wouldn’t be surprised to see something work out,” he said. “As an economic power, because of its location ... if you look on a map and you see Russia, China, and right in the middle of everything is South Korea, and North Korea right smack in the middle. Tremendous potential for economic well-being, long term.”

On Thursday, the chairman of the House’s Intelligence, Armed Services and Foreign Affairs committees sent a letter to the White House criticizing officials for not including lawmakers in more of the planning of the event and for failing to properly brief Congress on the North Korea situation since the last summit.

“There is no legitimate reason for having failed to provide regular, senior-level briefings to the relevant committees of jurisdiction on a matter of such significance to our national security,” the three men wrote. “A summit that amounts to little more than spectacle will further erode the public confidence and the credibility of the United States, an outcome that we all wish to avoid.”

The U.S. and South Korea have reached a tentative cost-sharing agreement for the continued presence of U.S. troops there, the U.S. State Department confirmed Tuesday.

South Korea has been providing about \$848 million a year to support the costs of helping approximately 28,500 U.S. troops on the Korean Peninsula, under an agreement that expired in December. CNN reported Monday that under the terms of the new agreement, Korea would pay roughly \$1 billion a year.

“The United States and the Republic of Korea have reached an agreement in principle on a new Special Measures Agreement,” the State Department said in a statement. “Both sides are committed to working out remaining technical issues as quickly as possible.”

The announcement of the agreement came on the eve of President Donald Trump’s State of the Union address. Getting allies to pay more for their own defenses has been a key theme of the president’s agenda since his campaign, and it was one of the reasons Trump cited for canceling major war game exercises between the U.S. and Seoul last year.

This weekend during a pre-Super Bowl interview with CBS, Trump said he was intent on keeping U.S. forces there, even as he negotiates with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on a potential denuclearization agreement.

“We haven’t talked about anything else,” Trump told CBS. “Maybe someday. I mean who knows. But you know it’s very expensive to keep troops there. You do know that. We have 40,000 troops in South Korea, it’s very expensive. But I have no plans, I’ve never even discussed removing them.”

- **DEADLOCK OVER COST OF US TROOPS IN SOUTH KOREA ISN’T HALTING MILITARY OPS, -- FOR NOW, BUT WORKERS FACE FURLOUGH** *President Trump reportedly wants the Republic of Korea to pay up to double the current amount to host 28,000 U.S. troops based in the country.*

*By: Kyle Rempfer*



*A U.S. M1A2 tank crosses a river during a U.S.-South Korea joint river crossing exercise in the border county of Yeoncheon, northeast of Seoul, on Dec. 10, 2015. The U.S. and South Korea remain at an impasse over how they share the cost of funding U.S. troops there.*

The U.S. and Republic of Korea have been working to negotiate a deal regarding how to share the cost of hosting the more than 28,000 American troops based in the country.

And while the negotiations have failed to reconcile differences over the past year, the halt in funding won’t impact military operations, though Korean workers on U.S. bases may be put on leave this spring.

The Wall Street Journal reported in December that President Donald Trump wants South Korea to pay up to double the current amount — between \$1.2 billion and \$1.6 billion per year for five more years. South Korean officials are opposed to the increase, the Journal reported, and the two governments are not close to an agreement.

The negotiations are over the Special Measures Agreement, or SMA, a five-year contract between the U.S. and South Korea that expired Dec. 31. The agreement previously required South Korea to pay about half of the estimated annual cost of hosting U.S. troops, or roughly \$830 million per year.

“There is currently no impact to military operations,” Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Chris Logan said in a statement to Military Times. “Both sides seek a swift conclusion to SMA discussions to mitigate a possible lapse in contributions that directly support compensation for nearly 9,000 members of the [U.S. Forces Korea] Korean workforce.”

“[U.S. Forces Korea] will ensure our [Korean National] and [Korean Service Corps] employees have adequate time to prepare for a potential furlough,” Logan added. “We value our Korean national workforce and their contribution to the Alliance.”

In preparing for a possible lapse in SMA funding, U.S. Forces Korea notified the ROK Ministry of Employment and Labor and Korean Employees’ Union of the timeline for a potential furlough on Nov. 7, according to the Pentagon.

Reuters previously reported that the U.S. military warned Korean workers that they may be put on leave in mid-April if no deal is reached.

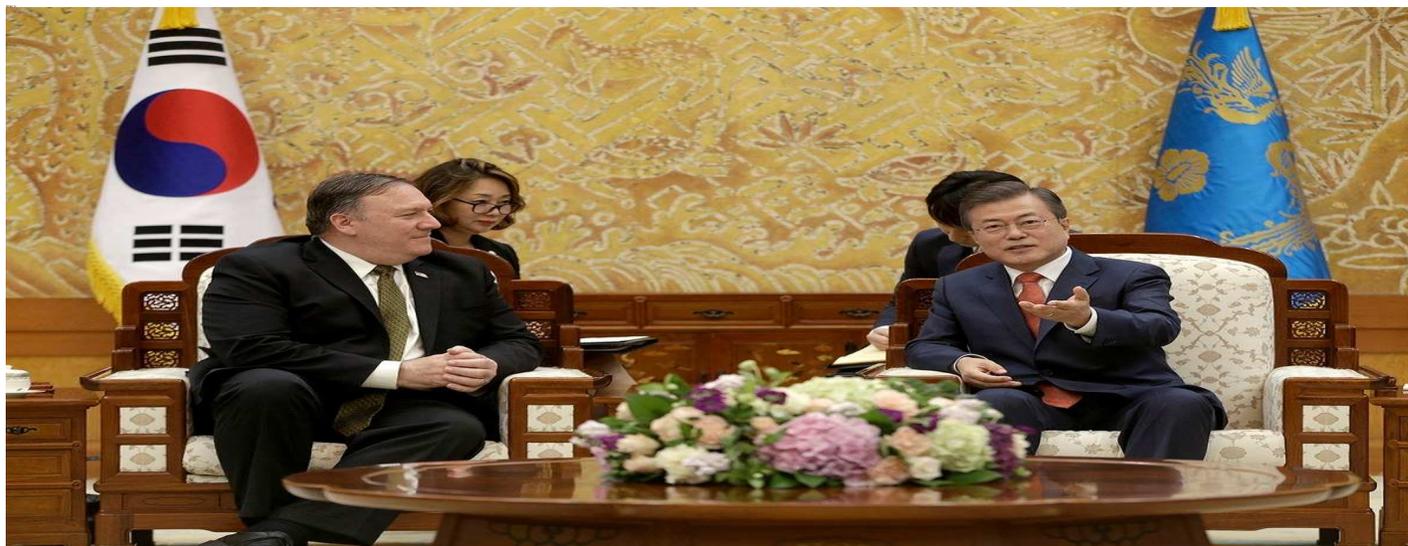
“The Special Measures Agreement is extremely important to both sides and we continue to work toward a mutually beneficial agreement,” Logan said. “Since collaboration is ongoing it would be inappropriate to discuss details before an agreement has been reached.”

Since 1991, South Korea has helped offset the costs of stationing U.S. forces through the SMA mechanism, according to the State Department. The current agreement has been underway for the past several years.

Rotating U.S. troops have been posted in South Korea since the 1950 Korean War.

## ● **UNITED STATES - SOUTH KOREA REACH COST SHARING AGREEMENT ON TROOP PRESENCE**

By: [Tara Copp](#)



*South Korean President Moon Jae-in, right, talks with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during a meeting at the presidential Blue House in Seoul, South Korea, Sunday, Oct. 7, 2018. (Ahn Young-joon/Pool via AP)*

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- **SOUTH KOREA SEEKS 'STAKEHOLDER' ROLE AS KIM, TRUMP EYE DEAL TO SHAPE PENINSULA'S FATE**

HANOI (Reuters) - South Korean officials, wary of being left on the sidelines as the leaders of North Korea and the United States seek to clinch a deal that could shape the future of the Korean peninsula, are cautiously carving out a presence at the summit venue.

In a bid to raise its profile, South Korea has dispatched at least two dozen officials to the Vietnamese capital Hanoi, opened its own press center, and even arranged for a South Korean bakery chain to offer free snacks to journalists covering the summit.

Last year’s dramatic detente between the two Koreas was instrumental in bringing about an unprecedented meeting between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Singapore last June, during which they vowed to work toward denuclearization.

With little progress since, Trump and Kim will meet again in Hanoi on Wednesday and Thursday, amid mounting pressure for concrete results. A team of more than 20 officials from various agencies in President Moon Jae-in’s administration are in Hanoi for the summit. Among them is nuclear envoy Lee Do-hoon, who has met several times since last week with his U.S. counterpart Stephen Biegun leading working-level talks with North Korea for the summit, officials said. Tuesday, the South Korean government held an opening ceremony for its own, spacious press room connected to an international media center run by Vietnam, hosting a roundtable with pro-engagement academics and celebrating the second summit between Trump and Kim as a chance to promote peace.

It also brought in Paris Baguette, a South Korean bakery chain with presence in Vietnam, to the international media center to offer free sandwiches, snacks and drinks for journalists.

Seoul tasked the state-funded Korea Press Foundation, instead of a full-fledged state agency, with operating the media center in part not to undermine host Vietnam, an official said.

“We are not a stranger here and would want to help, but wouldn’t look so pretty if the Blue House took charge since it’s their summit,” the official said on anonymity due to the sensitivity of the issue.

The efforts are in line with a pledge by Moon, who said Trump asked him last year to act as “chief negotiator”

between Washington and Pyongyang, and to play the role of the “main stakeholder” on peninsula issues. On Monday, Moon vowed not to be left “on the periphery” but take the lead in officially ending the 1950-53 Korean War and fostering a peace regime.

“We’re the masters of the Korean Peninsula’s destiny,” he told a meeting with senior aides.

Moon is hoping the summit will help advance Seoul’s plans to reconnect road and rail links with the North and reopen a joint factory park and tourism zone. Those efforts have been hampered by sanctions imposed over the North’s nuclear and missile programs.

The United States has resisted North Korea’s calls for easing sanctions in return for some of its initial steps to curb its weapons programs, while expressing discontent that inter-Korean ties may be moving too fast. Last week, Moon offered to “ease the burden” on the United States during a phone call with Trump by providing concessions to the North via inter-Korean economic projects. “Denuclearization may take a long time, but we’re happy as long as the upcoming summit speeds it up,” another South Korean official said, asking anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

### **PUSHING AHEAD WITH INCHEON LANDING OPERATION DAMAGE COMPENSATION...THE RULING PARTY RECALLS HISTORY ACCORDING TO ITS PREFERENCE**



*Incheon Landing, 1950-9-15. General MacArthur in the middle. Wolmi Island in the background.*

*How far can the reparations for historical events expand?*

On March 15, 2019, the Incheon City Council passed the “Ordinance on the Livelihood Stabilization Support for the Victims of the Past” (과거사 피해 주민 생활안전 지원 조례안), which was given to the “Wolmi Island Natives” (월미도 원주민) or their heirs who suffered from landing operations in Incheon. The Incheon City Council’s position is that it is necessary to compensate the Wolmi Island natives who died or had to leave their hometowns due to UN forces bombing during the Incheon landing operation on September 15, 1950. [Note: Wolmi Island is no longer an island as it is physically connected to the City of Incheon by land reclamation.] [Note: After North Korea invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950, North Koreans built extensive military fortifications and earthworks on Wolmi Island. “Wolmi...became ‘out of bounds’ to the local populace.” This suggests that Wolmi Island became a fortress and no civilians were allowed there. See [here](#) for further details.] Some NGOs in the Incheon area have been claiming compensation for damage by the UN while executing the Incheon landing operation. The full-blown discussion on damage compensation began in 2006, when the Uri Party (predecessor to Deobureo Minjoo Party) lawmaker Han Kwang-won (한광원) and others introduced the “Special Law related to Wolmido Incident Fact Finding and Compensation for the Victimized Residents” (월미도 사건 진상규명 및 피해 주민 보상에 관한 특별법). However, in the absence of any further progress, the “Measures

to Return Wolmi Island Natives to Hometown Committee” (월미도 원주민 귀향대책위원회) filed a claims lawsuit at the Incheon District Court in February 2011, demanding “the Ministry of National Defense, City of Incheon, the U.S. government, and the UN” compensate ₩3,000,000 (\$2,600) per each Wolmi Island native household for a total of ₩135,000,000” (\$119,000), and lost. The government asserted that “there’s no land registry or other basis [that support] the assertion that those who claim they lived on the Wolmi Island actually lived there.” Those [who say they are] Wolmi Island natives countered that “the data was lost due to Incheon Landing Operation.”

This is the third time that the Incheon City Council has attempted to enact ordinances on this issue. Ahn Byung-bae (안병배), Deobureo Minjoo Party lawmaker, tried to designate two ordinances in 2011 and 2014, but was rejected because they conflict with the higher law. However, the ordinance was enacted this year after the Ministry of Government Legislation provided an authoritative interpretation that “the issue of livelihood stabilization support for Wolmi Island victims who are residents of Incheon is the duty of local self-government.” Currently, 34 of the 37 Incheon City Council members are of Deobureo Minjoo Party, and all seven of the Planning and Administrative Committee are Deobureo Minjoo Party members.

However, there were criticisms of “excessive application” of the ordinance designation. A history expert who asked for anonymity said, “even after World War II, Belgium and other countries were in ruin, but there was no case for compensation for damages from military operations.” [truncated]

A spokesman for the Liberty Korea Party, Jeon Hee-kyung (전희경), said, “If we have to compensate for the damage from the Incheon Landing, then it’s only right to make a compensation claim against the North Korean regime that [started] the Korean War, causing enormous damage. She criticized stating “the Moon Jae-in administration cannot say a word to the war criminal North Korean [regime], but acts in concert with non-governmental groups that demand compensation from the UN, which helped us. Is that the ‘just’ society that the Moon administration talked about?”

Registration form and related information for the families of the 1894 Donghak Peasant Revolution

(동학농민혁명) Participants Registration Form and related information.[Photo Donghak Peasant Revolution Memorial Foundation]

Prior to this, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (문화체육관광부) has made a “Committee for

Restoring the Honor of the Donghak Peasant Revolution (동학농민혁명) Participants” since September last year, and this was also criticized. [Note: Donghak Peasant Revolution occurred in 1894 during the Chosun Dynasty. It is also known as the Donghak Peasant Movement, Peasant Revolt of 1894, and Gabo Peasant Revolution.]

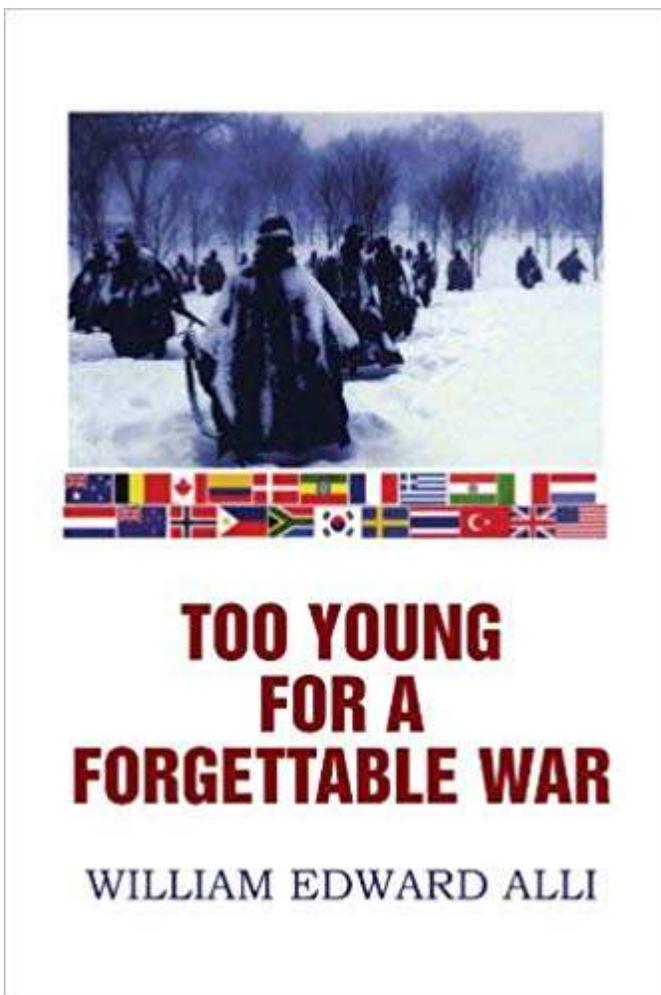
Lawmakers in Honam [South West provinces of Jelloa] area passed the revised bill, which lifted the restriction on the application period. [truncated]

However, there is a controversy over whether it was appropriate to spend tax revenue on an event that happened 124 years ago during the Chosun Dynasty. A person affiliated with Liberty Korea Party said “at this rate, the talk of compensation for the Japanese Invasion of Korea in 1592 [임진왜란] or the four incidences of Sahwa [4대사화, the purging of classical scholars in 1498, 1504, 1519, and 1545 during the Chosun Dynasty] would emerge,” and continued, “the Minjoo Party has no [capability to make] people’s lives better, so they keep hanging on to past events.”

Source of this

article: <https://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=sec&sid1=001&oid=025&aid=0002893443>

## THIS MONTHS BOOK REVIEWS



History shows that the world avoided World War III, partly because of the impact of the Korean War. That standoff war led to rules of engagement, which guided the West and the Soviet Union for nearly forty years, ending with the Soviet collapse. The protagonists had decided that they would allow no regional conflict to set off a worldwide nuclear war between them.

*Too Young for a Forgettable War* follows the journey of an eighteen-year old, fresh out of high school and activated for duty in a distant war. His is a coming-of-age story in the most dangerous of environments. The dangers turn out to be not only from the enemy weapons but even those of a United Nations ally, whose soldiers mistakenly arrest him as an enemy agent, clearly a justification for his execution.

Returning to America, he hopes to forget the trauma of his experiences. Decades later, he travels back to Korea and is finally able to come to terms with his wartime experiences.

Readers will find parallels between that war veterans and those of Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The author and his fellow veterans reveal vivid personal experiences that extend our knowledge and, perhaps,

our empathy with those who served, regardless of age, in any war however forgettable.

### About the Author

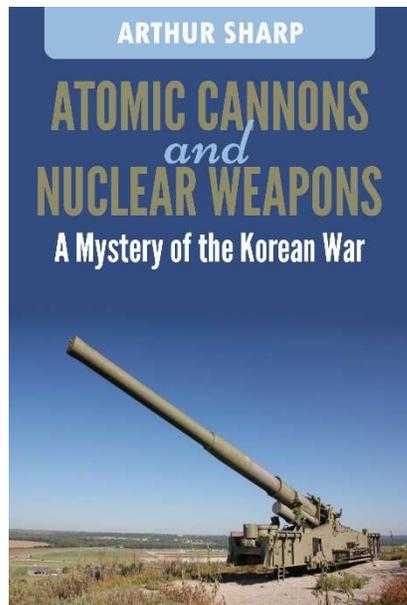
William Edward Alli is a retired federal government employee and worked in Washington DC as an economist, manpower development planner, and management analyst. He served as a U.S. foreign-

service officer in Pakistan and authored a bilingual dictionary (Basic Urdu and English Wordbook) for the US Agency for International Development.

He is on the Board of Directors for the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation, Washington, D.C.

**ATOMIC CANNONS AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS: A MYSTERY OF THE KOREAN WAR** by noted author/historian Arthur G. Sharp is now available in paperback.

This little-known piece of Korean War history examines the use of nuclear weapons in the Korean War with a two-part focus: political and military leaders' views of their deterrent viability, especially as psychological tools, and the development of an atomic cannon as a part of the United States' military's arsenal. The story of the "mysterious" cannon is told through the eyes of the Soldiers and Marines on the ground who swore it was deployed to and fired in Korea during the war—or maybe not. Therein lies the mystery.



Here is what critics are saying:

“A superb account of a war that ended in a fog of mystery. The author delved into military operations by the U.S. Army with the positioning of atomic cannons in Korea to counter the vast number of Chinese troops coming across the border. After reading this book, I came to realize how fragile our world is and the realization that the next confrontation between two nations will be atomic warfare. The author may not have intended it as a wake-up call, but it should be required reading for every member doing public service in Washington D.C. and every student studying Political Science in college and university.”

-Wolfgang

Ryan

*Author and Amazon*

*Critic*

“Arthur Sharp brought his writing skill to this important nook and it's timely indeed. One thinks of B-52 bombers as the delivering agent for nuclear warheads by the U.S. Air Force, but it would do any American adversary well to read this

book to become acquainted with the broad arsenal of the U.S. Army and the foot soldiers on the ground. What a timely reminder to those thinking of doing bad things to the United States.”

-Donagh Bracken

*Author, The Words of War*

**Atomic Cannons and Nuclear Weapons: A Mystery of the Korean War** is available in soft cover and ebook format from [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com), and other outlets.

Signed soft cover copies can be ordered directly from the author: Arthur G. Sharp, 2473 New Haven Circle, Sun City Center, FL 33573-7141 or via email at [sharp\\_arthur\\_g@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sharp_arthur_g@sbcglobal.net).

Cost: \$22, including shipping and handling.

## **AUTHOR BIO**

Arthur G. Sharp, a resident of Sun City Center, FL, is the author of eighteen books and 2,500 articles on a variety of topics. Two of his most recent books merit special attention: *Atomic Cannons and Nuclear Weapons: A Mystery of the Korean War* and *Joey: The Street Fox of Newark*. He edits the Korean War Veterans Association's 80-page bimonthly magazine *The Graybeards*, the 1st Marine Division Association's quarterly 32-page publication *The Old Breed News*, and the Chosin Few Association's quarterly magazine, *The Chosin Digest*. Sharp, who holds B.A. (University of Hartford) and M.A. (Trinity College, Hartford, CT) degrees in history, served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1958-62. He also taught various business and liberal arts courses for over 30 years at the college/university level.

## ATOMIC CANNONS SYNOPSIS

### **“Atomic Cannons and Nuclear Weapons: A Mystery of the Korean War.”**

Americans have worried for over seven decades about the coming of the second nuclear war. They can stop worrying. It has already been fought. That is the underlying theme in “Atomic Cannons and Nuclear Weapons: A Mystery of the Korean War,” which is based on in-depth historical research and eyewitness remembrances from veterans of the war.

During the 1950-1953 Korean War the United States used nuclear weapons as a psychological threat to intimidate North Korea and its allies, China and Russia, and get them to the peace talk table. There is some evidence, albeit circumstantial, that the U.S. may have actually employed them. Maybe not. In either case, this book explains how the Korean War became the second nuclear war, an historical event that has flown under historians’ radar for over sixty years, and unravels the mystery of whether any nuclear weapons were employed.

As the book explains, the U.S. government and its allies were extremely concerned post-WWII about the future of nuclear war. The world had seen firsthand following the atomic bomb blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 and how devastating nuclear warfare could be, and it dreaded a repeat. Nevertheless, between the end of WWII and 1949, the U.S. embarked on a program to develop more powerful nuclear weapons, including an atomic cannon that could also fire conventional shells. That program led to the second nuclear war.

At the time, the U.S. was the only country in the world with nuclear weapons capability. Government and military leaders did not anticipate another war anytime soon. Then, two critical events happened: Russia implemented its own nuclear weapons program in 1949 and North Korea invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950 in an effort to unite the divided countries under communist rule. Twenty-one UN countries, led by the U.S., joined to protect South Korea. By mid-1951 the war became a stalemate reminiscent of the trench warfare of WWI.

The Chinese and North Korean refused to engage seriously in peace talks as the stalemate dragged on. U.S. and UN military and political leaders sought a way to end it. President Truman, his successor, President Eisenhower, who was elected in 1952, and General Douglas MacArthur, the U.S. commander in Korea until he was replaced in April 1951, threatened the communists with nuclear attacks if they did not engage in peace talks.

There was evidence the U.S. was serious. It had deployed nuclear bombs to Kadena, Okinawa and aboard naval vessels and trained air crews on how to use them. In fact, it was during these deployments that the only casualties incurred in the Korean War from nuclear weapons happened. One of the planes carrying atomic bombs from Fairfield-Suisun AFB, California to Guam crashed shortly after take-off on August 5, 1950, killing and wounding 180 people. And, MacArthur developed a plan to use thirty or so atomic bombs as tactical weapons, although his strategy, which might have killed as many allied troops as enemy troops, was not revealed until after his death in 1954.

The communists sloughed off the threats, even after the U.S. successfully test fired a nuclear cannon known as “Atomic Annie” in May 1953 and hinted broadly to China and North Korea through carefully selected diplomatic channels that it would not hesitate to introduce it on the battlefield. UN troops caught wind of the rumors about the planned distribution of the nuclear weapons and based their hopes on their use as a way to end the war. Some soldiers’ minds worked overtime as they turned rumors into sightings—which may or may not have been real.

Multiple accounts in the book from warfighters in Korea between 1950 and 1953 demonstrate indisputably that the U.S. military deployed at least one atomic bomb and a couple atomic cannons—or did it? Were the eyewitnesses seeing atomic cannons or other artillery pieces that looked like them? Were they mistaking large bombs for atomic blasts? Were they basing what they saw and heard more on hopes of getting home quicker than on reality? The answers to those questions can unlock a major mystery of the Korean War: were atomic weapons actually used or were they simply psychological threats?

Either way nuclear weapons played a significant role in the Korean War. As “Atomic Cannons and Nuclear Weapons: a mystery of the Korean War” suggests, the Korean War was the world’s second nuclear war, and that is no mystery.

# KOREAN WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL WALL OF REMEMBRANCE

Help us commemorate those who served and sacrificed.

To make a contribution, please visit:



[WWW.KOREANWARVETSMEMORIAL.ORG](http://WWW.KOREANWARVETSMEMORIAL.ORG)

The Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit, tax exempt foundation chartered in the District of Columbia as a 501C3 Foundation.

Donations made to the Foundation are justified as a tax deduction by the donor

## • KOREAN WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL WALL OF REMEMBRANCE

Are you aware that the Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation (a non-profit Foundation chartered in the District of Columbia) is seeking funding to place the names of the 36,574 fallen veterans on a Wall of Remembrance (WOR) to be added to the National Korean War Veterans Memorial in our Nation's Capital, so as to honor all who gave their all during that War? That Wall of Remembrance will finally give credence to the Memorial's theme that "Freedom is not Free." Just as Huntsville honors its veterans from every war, so will the Foundation honor our nation's veterans fallen in battle during the Korean War.

Someone once said that "our nation owes a debt to its fallen heroes that we can never fully repay, but we can honor their sacrifice" and that the Foundation seeks to do. It was just last December when the Foundation's efforts to shepherd legislation through numerous Congresses finally succeeded in having the legislation signed into law (Public Law 114-230) to build that Wall - using solely private, tax-deductible, funding. If you are interested in writing another or follow up story on particularly the Korean War Veterans to let your community know of the Foundation's efforts, please get back in touch with me.



# DPAA News



## DPAA ANNUAL MEETINGS

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) conducts periodic updates and annual government briefings for families of American servicemembers who are missing in action (MIA). These events are designed to keep family members informed of the U.S. government's worldwide mission to account for those still missing and to discuss in detail the latest information available about their specific cases.

At the annual and monthly update meetings, speakers include senior officials, experts, and scientists who work in the wide range of tasks associated with the POW/MIA mission. During the meetings, there are formal presentations, question and answer sessions, and one-one-one discussions between government officials and family members.

DoD has conducted these update programs since 1995, reaching more than 17,000 family members face-to-face.

**Family Updates:** Up to eight times a year, government officials meet with MIA family members who live within a 350-mile radius of major metropolitan areas across the country. These meetings are designed to address the individual needs of the family members while bringing information to their communities. Government officials also meet one-on-one with family members to discuss the details of each of their cases. About 150-200 family members and 30 government officials attend each meeting.

**Annual Briefings:** Two briefings are held annually in the Washington, D.C. area. One is for Vietnam War families and the other is for **Korean and Cold War families**. The location of these events makes it possible for senior government officials to attend and for families to access Washington-based offices related to POW/MIA matters. At these briefings, family members have the opportunity to meet with numerous civilian and military specialists of the government whose expertise includes: foreign government negotiation, formulation of national policy, remains recovery and identification, DNA science, archival research and intelligence analysis.

2019 Family Update Schedule*	
Date	Location
January 26	Birmingham, AL
March 23	San Jose, CA
March 23	San Antonio, TX
April 27	Salt Lake City, UT
May 18	Omaha, NE
June 19-22	Washington, D.C.**
August 01-02	Washington, D.C.***
September 07	Dayton, OH

2020 Family Update Schedule*	
Date	Location
November 16	San Juan, PR
January 25	Las Vegas, NV
March 22	Portland, OR
March 21	Miami, FL
April 18	Little Rock, AR
May 16	Chicago, IL
June 17-20	Washington, D.C.**
August 6-7	Washington, D.C.***
September 12	Colorado Springs, CO

*\* Family Member Updates are tentative and subject to change*

*\*\*\* The Korean and Cold War Annual Government Briefings*

REGISTER NOW

**The Family Updates are tailored to meet the needs of attendees representing losses from all conflicts.**

**Please register early so that analysts may prepare to discuss your specific cases.**

- [Hotel Information](#)
- [Casualty Office Contacts](#)
- [Sample Agenda](#)

**MIA UPDATE:** This week, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced new identifications. Returning home with full military honors are:

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26, 2019 — **Army Cpl. Benjamin W. Scott**, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on Feb. 20, 2019.

In July 1950, Scott was a member of Company M, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, engaging in combat actions against the North Korean forces in the vicinity of Choch'iwon, South Korea. Scott was declared missing in action on July 12, 1950.

DPAA is grateful to the Department of Veterans Affairs for their partnership in this mission.

Scott's name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, along with the others who are missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

For more information about DPAA, visit [www.dpaa.mil](http://www.dpaa.mil), find us on social media at [www.facebook.com/dodpaa](https://www.facebook.com/dodpaa), or call 703-699-1420/1169.

Scott's personnel profile can be viewed at <https://dpaa.secure.force.com/dpaaProfile?id=a0Jt00000095DNDEA2>

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that **Army Master Sgt. Charlie J. Mares**, 30, of Waelder, Texas, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on Feb. 4, 2019.

In July 1950, Mares was a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, engaged in combat against the Korean People's Army. Mares was reported missing in action following the battle, fought near Kwonbin-ni, South Korea, on July 31, 1950.

In May 1951, a set of remains located in the vicinity of where Mares was lost, arrived at the Central Identification Unit in Kokura, Japan. The remains, designated X-1273 Tanggok, could not be identified, and were transferred to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, known as the Punchbowl, in Honolulu, where they were buried as an Unknown.

In October 2018, DPAA disinterred Unknown X-1273 from the Punchbowl, and sent the remains to the laboratory for analysis.

To identify Mares' remains, scientists from DPAA used anthropological and chest radiograph comparison analysis, as well as circumstantial and material evidence.

DPAA is grateful to the Department of Veterans Affairs for their partnership in this mission.

Today, 7,663 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War. Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously returned by North Korean officials or recovered from North Korea by American recovery teams. Mares' name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, along with the others who are missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

For family contact information, contact the Army Service Casualty office at (800) 892-2490.

Mares will be buried March 29, 2019, in Cistern, Texas.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26, 2019 — **Army Cpl. Benjamin W. Scott**, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on Feb. 20, 2019.

In July 1950, Scott was a member of Company M, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, engaging in combat actions against the North Korean forces in the vicinity of Choch'iwon, South Korea. Scott was declared missing in action on July 12, 1950.

DPAA is grateful to the Department of Veterans Affairs for their partnership in this mission.

Scott's name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, along with the others who are missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

For more information about DPAA, visit [www.dpaa.mil](http://www.dpaa.mil), find us on social media at [www.facebook.com/dodpaa](https://www.facebook.com/dodpaa), or call 703-699-1420/1169.

Scott's personnel profile can be viewed at <https://dpaa.secure.force.com/dpaaProfile?id=a0Jt00000095DNDEA2>

WASHINGTON, Feb. 22, 2019 — **Army Capt. Rufus J. Hyman**, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on Feb. 20, 2019.

In July 1950, Hyman was an infantry officer with Company A, 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, engaging in combat actions against the North Korean People's Army in the vicinity of Kwonbin-ni, South Korea. Hyman was declared missing in action on July 30, 1950.

DPAA is grateful to the Department of Veterans Affairs for their partnership in this mission.

Hyman's name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, along with the others who are missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for. For more information about DPAA, visit [www.dpaa.mil](http://www.dpaa.mil), find us on social media at [www.facebook.com/dodpaa](https://www.facebook.com/dodpaa), or call 703-699-1420/1169.

Hyman's personnel profile can be viewed at <https://dpaa.secure.force.com/dpaaProfile?id=a0Jt000000BFeG0EAL>

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that **Army Pfc. James C. Williams**, 19, of Alton, Illinois, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on Dec. 20, 2018.

On July 20, 1950, Williams was a member of Medical Company, 34th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, when he was killed in action near Taejon, South Korea. Multiple eye witnesses stated that Williams was killed while trying to transport patients from the Taejon Air Strip. Fellow Soldiers returned Williams' remains to the collection point, however the 34th Infantry Regiment's Medical Company was ordered to withdraw, and during the hasty withdrawal, his remains and those of numerous service members were left behind. Despite multiple attempts to recover Williams' remains, he was declared non-recoverable on Jan. 16, 1956.

A set of remains, designated Unknown X-218 Taejon, was recovered from the vicinity of Taejon, along with the remains of three other individuals who were later identified as members of either the 34th Infantry Regiment or 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division. Unknown X-218 Taejon could not be identified and was interred at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, known as the Punchbowl, in Honolulu.

On March 12, 2018, Unknown X-218 Taejon was disinterred from the Punchbowl and sent to the DPAA laboratory for analysis.

To identify Williams' remains, scientists from DPAA and the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System used

mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) analysis, dental and anthropological analysis, as well as circumstantial and material evidence.

DPAA is grateful to Department of Veterans Affairs for their partnership in this mission.

Today, 7,666 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War. Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously returned by North Korean officials or recovered from North Korea by American recovery teams. Williams' name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, along with the others who are missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

For family contact information, contact the Army Service Casualty office at (800) 892-2490.

Williams will be buried July 19, 2019, in West Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for Americans who went missing while serving our country, visit the DPAA website at [www.dpaa.mil](http://www.dpaa.mil), find us on social media at [www.facebook.com/dodpaa](https://www.facebook.com/dodpaa) or call (703) 699-1420/1169.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25, 2019 — **Army Cpl. Stephen P. Nemec**, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on July 13, 2018.

In late 1950, Nemec was a member of Company A, 1st Battalion 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, engaged in heavy fighting against the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces (CPVF) at Turtle Head's Bend, near the village of Unsan, North Korea. According to historical reports, Nemec was killed in action on Nov. 2, 1950, and was buried at United Nation's Military Cemetery (UNMC) Pyongyang. As the United Nations' situation in North Korea worsened, circumstances forced the closure of the cemetery on Dec. 3, 1950, and those buried there could not be recovered. DPAA is grateful to the Department of Veterans Affairs for their partnership in this mission.

Nemec's name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, along with the others who are missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for. For more information about DPAA, visit [www.dpaa.mil](http://www.dpaa.mil), find us on social media at [www.facebook.com/dodpaa](https://www.facebook.com/dodpaa), or call 703-699-1420/1169.

Nemec's personnel profile can be viewed at <https://dpaa.secure.force.com/dpaaProfile?id=a0Jt000001EhJQdEAN>

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that **Army Cpl. John G. Krebs, 19**, of Sterling, Illinois, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on Dec. 17, 2018.

(This identification was initially announced on Dec. 20, 2018.)

On July 11, 1950, Krebs was a member of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, engaged in combat operations against the North Korean People's Army south of Chonui, South Korea, when he was declared missing in action.

In February 1951, the American Graves Registration Services recovered five sets of remains from northwest of Chonui in the village of Kujong-ni. Two sets of remains were identified; the other three were unidentifiable and designated as Unknowns and buried in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, known as the Punchbowl.

In December 1953, Krebs was declared deceased.

In September 2018, Unknown X-491 Tanggok was disinterred from the Punchbowl and sent to the DPAA laboratory for analysis.

To identify Krebs' remains, scientists from DPAA used dental, anthropological and chest radiograph comparison analysis, as well as circumstantial and material evidence.

DPAA is grateful to Department of Veterans Affairs for their partnership in this mission.

WASHINGTON- **Army Pfc. Herschel M. Riggs**, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on March 21, 2019.

(Official DoD release will be updated following Primary Next of Kin briefing.)

In July 1950, Riggs was an infantryman with Headquarters Company, 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division,

involved in combat actions against North Korean forces near Taejon, South Korea. Riggs was declared missing in

action on July 16, 1950, when he could not be accounted for by his unit. Following numerous battlefield searches, the

American Graves Registration Service was unable to locate Riggs' remains and he was declared deceased on July 31,

1953.

DPAA is grateful to the Department of Veterans Affairs for their partnership in this mission.

WASHINGTON — The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today

that **Army Cpl. Benjamin W. Scott, 19**, of Alamo, Mississippi, killed during the Korean

War, was accounted for on Feb. 20, 2019.

(This identification was initially announced on Feb. 26, 2019.) In July 1950, Scott was a

member of Company M, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, engaging in combat actions

against the North Korean forces in the vicinity of Choch'iwon, South Korea. Scott was declared missing in action

on July 12, 1950.

In May 1952, remains were found in the vicinity of where Scott was last seen. The remains were designated X-5556

Tangkok and were sent to the Central Identification Unit in Japan for identification. Unable to be identified, the

remains were sent to the National Cemetery of the Pacific, known as the Punchbowl, in Honolulu, and buried as an

Unknown. On Oct. 30, 2017, DPAA disinterred Unknown X-5556 from the Punchbowl for identification.

To identify Scott's remains, scientists from DPAA used dental and anthropological analysis, as well as



circumstantial and material evidence. Additionally, scientists from the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System used mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) analysis.

DPAA is grateful to the Department of Veterans Affairs for their partnership in this mission.

Today, 7,662 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War. Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously returned by North Korean officials or recovered from North Korea by American recovery teams. Scott's name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, along with the others who are missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

For family contact information, contact the Army Service Casualty office at (800) 892-2490.

Scott will be buried April 13, 2019, in Atwood, Tennessee.

• **FAMED MUSICIAN ANDRE PREVIN DIES FAMED COMPOSER, MUSICIAN, GERMAN AMERICAN ANDRE PREVIN DIES**



Korean War era veteran Famed musician Andre Previn dies Famed composer, musician, German American Andre Previn died Feb. 28 at the age of 89... Previn was involved in music for over 50 films and won four Academy Awards for his work. He came to prominence by arranging and composing film scores. Previn described himself as a musician who played jazz, not a jazz musician. But he proved to be a gifted jazz piano interpreter and arranger of songs from the “great American songbook,” winning the respect of prominent dedicated jazz artists. Previn was a full time employee at MGM. He was drafted in 1950 at the outbreak of the Korean War and served with the U.S. Sixth Army Band at the Presidio of San Francisco, Previn returned to Hollywood in 1953 and focused on musical scores and jazz. While in San Francisco with the Army band, he took private conducting lessons from Pierre Monteux, then conductor of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.

• **U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND REPUBLIC OF KOREA AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S. TO VISIT KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL IN SAN FRANCISCO**

On Thursday, March 21, Republic of Korea Ambassador to the United States Cho Yoon-je, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cho\\_Yoon-je](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cho_Yoon-je), and U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea Harry Harris, <https://kr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulate/seoul/ambassador/visited> the Korean War Memorial in San Francisco. The brief ceremony will take place from 10:30 to 11:00 am at the Memorial, which is at the junction of Sheridan

Avenue and Lincoln Boulevard in the Presidio, adjacent to the San Francisco National Cemetery, where 2,273 Americans who fought in the Korean War are interred.

The ambassadors were welcomed by the officers and directors of the Korean War Memorial Foundation of San Francisco (KWMF), the organization that raised the funding to build the Memorial in 2016. They met with several local Korean War veterans, and then laid a wreath at the Memorial wall in commemoration of all who served and sacrificed in the war.

The two men are on a multi-city “Ambassadors’ Dialogue” tour across the country, a program hosted since 1992 by the Korean Economic Institute (KEI) to provide an opportunity for the two nations’ ambassadors to get to know each other and discuss the U.S.-Korea alliance. Ambassadors Cho and Harris will be accompanied by their spouses, as well as by Ambassador Kathleen Stephens, President and CEO of KEI, and former U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea from 2008 to 2011.

PLEASE NOTE: Print or broadcast interviews with the ambassadors must be cleared in advance with the U.S. State Department. Interested parties should do so as soon as possible. To arrange interviews, contact:

Other questions? Contact: Yong Kwon Gerard Parker Director of Communication, KEI Executive Director, KWMF (512) 897-6214 (415) 250-8518 [yk@keia.org](mailto:yk@keia.org) [gerardvparker@gmail.com](mailto:gerardvparker@gmail.com) <http://www.kwmf.org/>

## DIRECTORIES

### U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA Regional Office (Benefits)	800.827.1000	VA.gov
Office of the Secretary	202.273.4800	VA.gov
Office of the Inspector General	202.461.4702	<a href="https://www.va.gov/oig">https://www.va.gov/oig</a>
Office of the National Cemetery System	202.461.6240	<a href="http://www.cem.va.gov">www.cem.va.gov</a>
Arlington National Cemetery	703.607.8585	<a href="http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil">www.arlingtoncemetery.mil</a>
Board of Veterans Appeals	202.565.5436	<a href="http://www.bva.va.gov">www.bva.va.gov</a>
Central Office (Main Switchboard)	202.273.5400	
Funeral Arrangements & Eligibility	703.607.8585	<a href="http://www.cem.va.gov">www.cem.va.gov</a>
Government Life Insurance	800.669.8477	<a href="http://www.insurance.va.gov">www.insurance.va.gov</a>
Personal Locator	202.273.4950	

### Other Veteran Government Agencies

Department of Defense	703.545.6700	<a href="https://www.defense.gov">https://www.defense.gov</a>
Veterans Employment & Training Office	202.693.4700	<a href="https://www.dol.gov/vets">https://www.dol.gov/vets</a>
Small Business Administration (VA)	202.205.6600	<a href="https://www.sba.gov">https://www.sba.gov</a>

### Congressional Committees

Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs	202.224.9126	<a href="http://www.veterans.senate.gov">www.veterans.senate.gov</a>
House Committee on Veterans Affairs	202.225.3527	<a href="https://veterans.house.gov">https://veterans.house.gov</a>
Congressional Rural Health Care Coalition	202.225.6600	<a href="http://www.ruralhealthinfo.org">www.ruralhealthinfo.org</a>

### Other Veteran Related Offices and Agencies

U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims	202.418.3453	<a href="http://uscourts.cavc.gov">uscourts.cavc.gov</a>
Questions on specific Cases	202.501.5970	
National Organization for Vets Advocates (Attorneys)	877.483.8238	<a href="https://vetadvocates.org">https://vetadvocates.org</a>
USO	888.484.3876	<a href="https://www.uso.org">https://www.uso.org</a>

### POW/MIA

Department of Defense, POW/MIA Affairs	703.699.1169	<a href="http://www.dpaa.mil/">http://www.dpaa.mil/</a>
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### Incarcerated Veteran

Federal Bureau of Prisons	202.307.3198	<a href="https://www.bop.gov">https://www.bop.gov</a>
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### PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)

VA Readjustment Counseling Service	202.273.8967	<a href="http://www.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-details/317">www.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-details/317</a>
VA PTSD Information	802.296.6300	<a href="http://www.ptsd.va.gov">www.ptsd.va.gov</a>
VA PTSD Help – In Crisis – Suicide Prevention	800.273.8255	<a href="http://www.veteranscrisisline.net">www.veteranscrisisline.net</a>
National Center for PTSD – Behavioral Science Division	857.364.4172	<a href="http://www.ptsd.va.gov/PTSD/about/divisions">www.ptsd.va.gov/PTSD/about/divisions</a>

### Locator and Reunion Services

Army Worldwide Locator	866.771.6357	<a href="http://hqdainet.army.mil/mpsa/per_locator.htm">hqdainet.army.mil/mpsa/per_locator.htm</a>
Navy Times Locator Services	901.874.3388	<a href="https://www.navytimes.com">https://www.navytimes.com</a>
Personnel Locator	800.333.4636	

### Archives

Air Force Support Office	202.404.2264	<a href="http://www.afhistory.af.mil">www.afhistory.af.mil</a>
Marine Corps Historical Office	703.432.4877	<a href="http://guides.grc.usmcu.edu/archives">guides.grc.usmcu.edu/archives</a>
National Archives – Military Records	866.272.6272	<a href="http://www.archives.gov/research/military">www.archives.gov/research/military</a>
Naval Historical Center (Operations Archives)	202.433.3170	<a href="http://www.history.navy.mil">www.history.navy.mil</a>
United States Army Center of Military History	866.272.6272	<a href="http://www.history.army.mil">www.history.army.mil</a>

### Women Veterans

Women in Military Service-America Memorial Foundation	703.533.1155	<a href="http://www.womensmemorial.org">www.womensmemorial.org</a>
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**Arlington National Cemetery:** (877) 907-8585  
<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil>

**Armed Forces Retirement Home:** (800) 422-9988; <http://www.afrh.gov>

**Army & Air Force Exchange Service:** [www.shopmyexchange.com](http://www.shopmyexchange.com) **Army**

**Echoes:** <http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/echoes>  
Editor's e-mail address: [ArmyEchoes@mail.mil](mailto:ArmyEchoes@mail.mil)

**Army Echoes Blog:** <http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/blog>

**Army Emergency Relief:** (866) 878-6378; <http://www.aerhq.org>

**Army Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/USArmy>

**Army Flickr:** <http://www.flickr.com/photos/soldiersmediacenter/>

**Army Homepage:** <http://www.army.mil>

**Army Live Blog:** <http://armylive.dodlive.mil/>

**Army mobile phone apps:** <http://www.army.mil/mobile/>

**Army Retirement Services:** <http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement>

**Army Stand To!:** <http://www.army.mil/standto/>

**Army Lodging Program:** (877) 711-8326; <http://www.pal.army.mil>  
Reservations: <http://www.ihgarmyhotels.com>

**Army Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/USArmy/>

**Army YouTube:** <http://www.youtube.com/usarmy>

**Casualty Assistance Checklist for Retired Soldiers:** <http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/docs/Post/CasualtyAssistanceChecklist.pdf>

**Chief of Staff, Army Retired Soldier Council:**  
<http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/RetireeCouncil>

**Combat-Related Special Compensation:** (866) 281-3254 opt.4;  
<https://www.hrc.army.mil/TAGD/CRSC>

**Commissary:** <http://www.commissaries.com>

**Concurrent Retired & Disability Pay:** (800) 321-1080,  
<http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/disability/crdp.html>

**Consumer Financial Protection Bureau:** (855) 411-2372  
<http://www.consumerfinance.gov/>

**Death — Report a Retired Soldier's Death:** Call HQDA Casualty Operations Center, (800) 626-3317; from overseas, call (502) 613-3317 collect.  
<https://www.hrc.army.mil/TAGD/Reporting%20A%20Death>

**DS Logon:** <https://myaccess.dmdc.osd.mil/identitymanagement/>

**Funeral Honors (Military):** Army Coordinator: (502) 613-8218  
<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/mfh/>

**ID Card Facilities:** (800) 538-9552; Nearest facility: [www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl)

**Legal Assistance Locator (Military):** <http://legalassistance.law.af.mil/content/locator.php>

**Long Term Care Insurance:** (800) 582-3337 <http://www.ltcfeds.com/>

**MyArmyBenefits:** <http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/>  
Help Desk: (888) 721-2769 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST Monday - Friday);

**Survivor Outreach Services:** (855) 707-2769, <https://www.sos.army.mil/>

**Reserve Component Retirements** (888) 276-9472  
<https://www.hrc.army.mil/TAGD/Reserve%20Component%20Retirements>

**RC Application for Retired Pay:** Human Resources Command; ATTN: AHRC-PDR-RCR; 1600 Spearhead Division Ave.; Dept 482; Ft Knox, KY 40122-5402; (888) 276-9472; download the application from:  
<https://www.hrc.army.mil/Default.aspx?ID=13664>

**Soldiers Magazine:** <http://soldiers.dodlive.mil/>

**Space-Available Travel:** <http://www.amc.af.mil/Home/AMC-Travel-Site>

**Soldier for Life on Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/CSASoldierForLife](http://www.facebook.com/CSASoldierForLife)

#### **Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act:**

<http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/usfspa>



**U. S. Army Retired Lapel Button and Badge:** Type "Soldier for Life"

into the search box at <https://www.shopmyexchange.com>

**Veterans Service Records** — Replace DD Form 214, awards:

Retired 4/1/1996 or later: Visit <http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/>, Click on "Army White Pages" at the bottom, then log in. Next click on "Click Here to Access Your Army Record."

Retired 3/31/1996 or earlier: Call Human Resources Command at (888) 276-9472 or visit <http://vetrecs.archives.gov> National Personnel Records Center (Military Personnel Records); 1 Archive Drive. St. Louis, MO 63138-1002

**DFAS** (800) 321-1080 (M-F, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST) <http://www.dfas.mil/>  
myPay (888) 332-7411; <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>  
Retiree/Annuitant web page <http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary.html>

**Social Security** (800) 772-1213 <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/>; If overseas, contact the American Embassy/consulate, or visit <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/foreign/phones.html>.

**Medicare** (800) 633-4227 <http://www.medicare.gov>

**TRICARE** <http://www.tricare.mil>

**Health Beneficiary Counseling Assistance Coordinator:**

<http://www.tricare.mil/bcacdcao>, or nearest military treatment facility

**TRICARE North:** (877) 874-2273; <http://www.hnfs.com>; CT, DC, DE, IL, IN, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, VA, WI, WV, some ZIPs in IA, MO, TN

**TRICARE South:** (800) 444-5445; <http://www.humana-military.com/>  
AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, OK, SC, TN (except 35 TN ZIP codes near Ft Campbell), and TX (except the extreme SW El Paso area)

**TRICARE West:** (877) 988-9378; <https://www.uhcmilitarywest.com/>; AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, IA (except 82 Iowa ZIP codes near Rock Island, IL) KS, MO (except the St. Louis area), MN, MT, ND, NE, NM, NV, OR, SD, SW TX, UT, WA, WY

**TRICARE Overseas:** (888) 777-8343; <http://www.tricare-overseas.com>

**TRICARE for Life:** (866) 773-0404; TDD (866) 773-0405

<http://tricare.mil/Plans/HealthPlans/TFL.aspx>

**TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery:** (877) 363-1296;  
<http://www.tricare.mil/homedelivery/>

**TRICARE Network Pharmacy:** (877) 363-1303; <http://www.express-scripts.com>

**TRICARE Retiree Dental Plan:** (888) 838-8737; <http://www.TRDP.org>

**US Family Health Plan:** <http://www.usfhp.com/>

**Armed Forces Recreation Centers** <http://www.armymwr.com>

**Hale Koa Hotel, Hawaii:** (800) 367-6027; <http://halekoa.com>

**Edelweiss Resort, Bavaria:** 011-49-8821-9440  
<http://www.edelweisslodgeandresort.com>

**Shades of Green, Florida:** (888) 593-2242; (407) 824-3665  
<http://www.shadesofgreen.org/reservations.htm>

**Dragon Hill, Korea:** 011-822-790-0016 <http://www.dragonhillodge.com>

**Veterans Affairs (VA) Information** <http://www.va.gov>

**Burial & Memorial Benefits:** <http://www.cem.va.gov/> (877) 907-8199

**Benefits and Services:** (800) 827-1000 (Retired Soldiers overseas should contact the American Embassy/consulate); TDD (800) 829-4833  
<http://benefits.va.gov/benefits/>

**GI Bill:** (888) 442-4551; <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>

**Health Care Benefits:** (877) 222-8387; <http://www.va.gov/health>

**Insurance:** SGLI/VGLI: (800) 419-1473; All other insurance: (800) 669-8477

**Sister Service Publications for Retired Service Members**

**Air Force Afterburner:** <http://www.Retirees.af.mil/afterburner/>

**Coast Guard Evening Colors:** <http://www.uscg.mil/ppc/retnews/>

**Marine Corps Semper Fi:** <https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/> then click Career/Retired Marines, then Semper Fidelis Newsletter

**Navy Shift Colors:** <http://www.navy.mil/> then click Links/Shift Colors

Respectfully submitted,

*James R. Fisher*

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