



MILITARY OFFICERS CALL
Sun City Center Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
 P. O. Box 5693, Sun City Center, FL. 33571



Volume 33 Number 9 **September 2018**

SEPTEMBER SPEAKER

John E. McLaughlin, COL USA (Ret.)



President's Message
Benny Blackshire, LTC USA (Ret)

Welcome Back! I hope this is the message I can extend to you as we return to the meeting and luncheon on September 5th. After trips to Texas, Virginia, and Ohio in July and August, it will be good to settle in and get back to the normal routine. We are looking to a great line up of speakers for the fall. Come out for the September meeting and hear Col. John McLaughlin speak about cyber security and what's happening in our world today. Then in October we have Major Robert Ura, Hillsborough County Sheriffs Office, as our guest speaker. Major Ura has been in law enforcement for over 20 years and is a proud veteran of the USAF. November will bring Col. Ronald Rook, USMC (Ret) as our speaker. You will not want to miss any of these dynamic speakers.

In December we will have the installation of officers for 2019. Next month, in the October issue of the Newsletter, we will be publishing a list of the Nominating Committees recommendations for the 2019 officers. If anyone would like to be considered for one of the positions or would like to nominate someone for the positions, please contact me with your request or with any questions you may have. We will be voting on the recommended slate at the annual meeting on November 7. We can also use some new members for the membership committee. Contact Jim Haney if you are interested in joining this group.

In closing I want to thank Patricia and Sam Rorer for taking over the merchandise sales. Patricia will have a new supply of MOAA shirts available at the next meeting with all sizes available. Stop by her table as you come into the meeting and check out all the MOAA merchandise.



John E. McLaughlin currently serves as a consultant and keynote speaker on strategic, operational and tactical C4I and cyber. Prior to this role, he most recently served as the Director of C4 Operations, United States Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. There, his responsibilities included providing operating and defending the Special Operation Forces (SOF) Information Environment (SIE) and all SOF Networks in support of global SOF operations.

Throughout his career, John has served in several key leadership and staff positions both CONUS and OCONUS. His assignments include deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Haiti in addition to forward stationing in countries such as Korea and Panama. Other assignments include: Company Commander and Group S6, 4th Psychological Operations Group, Fort Bragg, NC; Battalion S6, 1-75th Ranger Regiment, Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah, GA; Brigade S6, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC; Assistant Division Signal Officer, and Battalion Executive Officer, 82nd Signal Battalion, 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC; Regimental Signal Officer, 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Benning, GA; Battalion Commander, 112th Signal Battalion, United States Army Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, NC; Battalion Commander, Joint Communications Unit, Fort Bragg, NC; and Brigade Commander, DISA Global, Scott AFB IL.

Prior to commissioning, John earned a Bachelors of Arts in History from the University of Texas at Austin. He has since earned a Master of Science in National Resource Strategy from the Eisenhower School of the National Defense University and a Cyber Leader Certificate from the NDU ICollege. Additional education includes U.S. Army Airborne School and Ranger School, the Army Command and General Staff College, and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Since retiring in late 2017, John has established his own independent consulting and keynote speaking firm, IPR Consulting LLC, specializing in Enterprise Operations and defense, Cyber Security, Satellite Operations, NETOPS and other C4I related areas. He currently serves as the AFCEA Tampa/St Petersburg Chapter President, where he leads efforts to establish Tampa as a cybersecurity Center of Excellence.

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Vets May Wait Longer to See Private Doctor Than a VA Provider: Report



The Veterans Choice Program for private health care is in such bad shape that the bill backed by President Donald Trump to fix it will be difficult to implement even if done right, according to the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office.

The Choice program was aimed at reducing wait times through increased access to private health care, but the GAO's performance audit conducted from April 2016 through May 2018 found that, in many cases, veterans would have been better off making appointments at VA facilities.

"Timeliness of appointments is an essential component of quality health care," the report said, but poor management and bookkeeping under the Choice program can result in veterans waiting up to 70 days to see a private doctor.

In 2016, the average wait for a private appointment was 51 days, the GAO said, although the VA eligibility rules made private care an option when the veteran had to wait 30 days to see a VA doctor.

The GAO report warned that staff shortages, bureaucratic roadblocks and poor communication between the VA and private doctors under the existing Choice program make a quick fix unlikely.

In its response to the report, the VA said that the GAO's recommendation on urgent care "is no longer needed because VHA has resolved the issue with the new CCN (Community Care Network) contract."

Under the new contract, VHA staff will have responsibility for scheduling community care appointments with providers, as opposed to the old system in which administrators routed referrals to the TPAs (third-party administrators), the VA said.

In the transition from Choice to the VA Mission Act, the VA will also set up a new referral and authorizations system that will be called "Health Share Referral Manager (HSRM)."

Its major proponents have acknowledged that the VA Mission Act and the overhaul of Choice will be difficult to implement.

At a panel discussion sponsored by the Concerned Veterans for America, which lobbied hard for the expansion of private care, Rep. Phil Roe, R-Tennessee, chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, said that putting the VA Mission Act into effect will sorely test the VA.

"Let me tell you, it is a painful thing to do," Roe said. "This is a massive undertaking. It could be very disruptive to the VA. It's humongous."

Editors' note: it looks more and more like the VA Mission Act, and its new Community Care Network will not be an easy fix. Both monetarily and administratively, it could be a nightmare.

Veterans Groups Are Now Pledging to Serve Community With New Creed



Eleven veterans organizations have adopted a "Veteran's Creed" that acknowledges pride of service and a continuing shared commitment to values that strengthen the nation.

The fourth tenet of the creed states that "I continue to serve my community, my country and my fellow veterans."

The creed, which was adopted on Flag Day at an event at the Reserve Officers Association, was the result of extensive discussions among veterans groups that began last fall at

Georgetown University.

"The creed will help prepare veterans for their productive civilian lives," said Dr. Joel Kupersmith, Director of Veterans' Initiatives at Georgetown University.

Retired Army Gen. George W. Case, Jr., the former Army chief of staff and commander of Multi-National Force Iraq, said the creed may motivate veterans to continue to give back.

"I believe the Veteran's Creed could remind veterans of what they miss about their service and encourage them to continue to make a difference in their communities and across our country," he said. "We need their talents."

The Veteran's Creed, similar to the Army's Soldier's Creed, was intended to underline the "altruistic ethos of veterans themselves." *Editor's note: It seems to me that the veterans in SCC, although they may not be aware of the "creed," are are doing an outstanding job contributing their talents to help serve the needs of the community.*

VA backs off suicide study that indicated thousands of unreported military deaths



Veterans Affairs officials are walking back a new suicide study which appeared to show thousands of unreported military deaths in recent years, saying differences among classifications of service members led to confusion in the statistics.

At issue is an update to VA's annual National Suicide Data Report, a massive collaboration between the department, defense researchers and census analysts which has found that roughly 20 veterans a day take their own lives. That figure has held steady from 2008 to 2015, the latest year data is available.

But for the first time, this year's update to the report breaks down those figures into veterans receiving VA health care (about six individuals a day), veterans not using the department's health services (11 a day), and a group including active-duty troops, guardsmen and reservists (four a day).

That calculation would put the official Defense Department suicide total among troops at close to 1,400 for 2015, about 900 higher than what military officials had previously reported.

Several news outlets noted the sudden data spike following the report's release. VA officials acknowledged that their military figures are misleading.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

The Membership Committee Chair is providing the following to update the Chapter membership regarding our Chapter LOE & MOAA rewards. Also, this article will list new Chapter members.

- 187 Chapter members
- 127 LIFE members
- 27 PREMIUM members
- 15 BASIC members
- 18 non-MOAA members

New Chapter member(s) last month:

REMINDER: The Chapter reimburses \$100 to members upgrading to LIFE when LIFE certificate is presented to the Treasurer.

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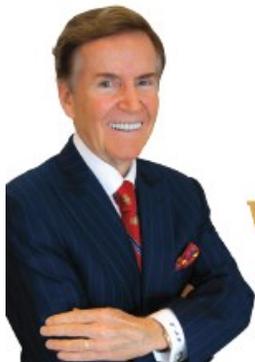


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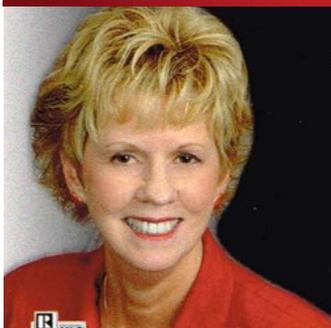
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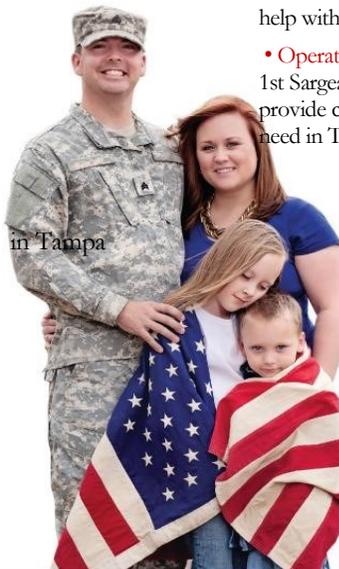


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- **Service Dogs** for veterans with PTSD and other traumatic injuries.
- **Homeless Prevention for Women Veterans:** help with rent, child care and licensing training.
- **Operation Warm Heart**, administered by the 1st Sergeants Group at MacDill AFB, who provide commissary vouchers for soldiers in need in Tampa.
- **Scholarships and Leadership Programs** for students from military families
- **Operation Helping Hand:** monthly support for military families of wounded servicemen and women at the James A. Haley VA Hospital .



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Member of the Month

Charles E. Brown, Maj. USMCR



Occupation: Retired attorney, formerly corporate practice with Delphi Automotive Systems and General Motors Legal Staffs with focus on litigation, internal reviews and investigations and automotive supplier contract negotiations.

Divisional Counsel for Delphi Energy & Chassis; prior to corporate world, previously served as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Northern District of Georgia, and as a Trial Attorney with the United States Department of Justice, Criminal Division.

Active member of the State Bars of Georgia and Michigan; inactive member California; (Not admitted in Florida).

Education

B.S., Michigan State University, 1972; J.D., Emory University, 1975.

Military Service

U.S. Marine Corps, September 21, 1966 to April 30, 1969.

Vietnam: June 1967 to February 2, 1968 with 26th Marines and 7 months with 3rd Combined Action Group, Combined Action Platoon, Hotel 8 in Loc Dien, Thua Thien Province, Vietnam.

Rank at Discharge: Sergeant (E-5)
MOS: 0351.

U.S. Marine Corps June 15, 1975 — June 14, 1978.

Judge Advocate, MCB, Camp Pendleton, California.

Rank: Captain

Duties: Trial and Defense Counsel in General and Special Court Martials.

Rank in Reserves: Major

Valencia Lakes resident for 6 years since July 2012.

Desert Storm memorial to be built on National Mall near Vietnam Wall



The National Desert Storm War Memorial will be located on the National Mall just steps away from the Lincoln Memorial and Vietnam Veterans Me-

morial Wall, after a federal commission approved the site on Thursday.

The move ends a debate of more than three years over where the newest combat memorial should be located. Supporters have been advocating for a site on the National Mall for years, and earlier this year that plan got support from the National Capital Planning Commission.

But the prominent location still needed approval from the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts to finalize the plan, an agreement that was not guaranteed given that space on the 146-acre site in the center of the nation's capital is closely managed. The panel has given its approval.

VA Burial Benefits



To pay lasting tribute to the service and sacrifice of Veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers benefits for burial in a VA national cemetery or a private cemetery. Qualified Veterans receive a government-furnished headstone or marker, grave liner, perpetual care of the gravesite, burial flag and a Presidential Memorial Certificate. Spouses and other eligible family members may be buried in VA national cemeteries as well. For more information, visit the <https://www.military.com/benefits/burial-and-memorial> section.

Sun City Center MOAA Website

Don't forget to visit our new website. The link to the website is: <http://moaaf.org/chapters/SunCity/> You will find much membership information, photos, calendar of events, past newsletters and more. If you would like to suggest topics for inclusion contact Jim Haney at jghaney1@gmail.com

Publisher/Editor

CAPT Frank Kepley, USN (Ret)

We need your input about member activities associated with MOAA and articles of interest to the military community. Contact Frank at:

dkepley@tampabay.rr.com 813-642-0801



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LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Frank Kepley, CAPT USN (Ret)

MOAA Joins Veterans Groups In Calling for MISSION Act Funding (From MOAA Newsletter)

More than 30 national military and veterans service organizations joined forces June 19 to send a letter to Senate leaders, urging them to support a bipartisan amendment to exempt funding for the VA Mission Act from sequestration.

Many of our members are aware the VA Mission Act was signed into law by the President earlier this month. Barely had the ink dried on the bill before headlines starting hitting the airwaves reporting problems with paying for the massive reform bill.

While Congress agreed on funding until October, lawmakers were unable to agree how to fund the bill for FY 2019 and beyond.

In a last attempt to secure long-term funding for the VA Mission Act, Shelby and Leahy's amendment would allow Congress to provide sufficient funds without triggering sequestration or requiring cuts to other VA health care programs.

The amendment allows funding currently appropriated through the VA's Veterans Choice Program to be moved from a mandatory account - one usually designated for entitlement programs to pay for VA benefits - to a discretionary one where the VA funds its medical programs and services.

However, moving the money to a discretionary account means funding must fall below the budget caps Congress established earlier this year for a two-year funding deal.

"MOAA and other military and veterans service organizations have spent significant time and effort compelling Congress to pass the legislation and to provide the VA with sufficient resources to implement the VA MISSION Act," says retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, MOAA's President and CEO. "It is imperative the VA not be forced to choose between fully funding its own hospitals and clinics versus community care programs for veterans who would otherwise be forced to wait too long or travel too far to access VA care. There is a developing trend of robbing Peter to pay Paul that we unfortunately are seeing far too often as we work new legislation."

Editor's note: It is important that all members send this MOAA suggested message to your senators: <http://takeaction.moaa.org/moaa/app/write-a-letter?2&engagementId=485723>

VA secretary nominee promises care for all vets, including transgender veterans

WASHINGTON — Veterans Affairs Secretary nominee Robert Wilkie promised lawmakers that suicide prevention will remain the department's top clinical priority and

transgender veterans will not see any benefits changes if he is confirmed for the post

Wilkie, 55, was advanced by the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on July 10. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., voted against Wilkie, the first time a senator has opposed a VA secretary nominee since the department was reorganized into a Cabinet-level post 30 years ago.

Wilkie is an Air Force Reserve colonel who previously spent time in the Navy Reserve and currently works as the Pentagon's top personnel and readiness official. He served as the acting VA secretary for two months following the firing of David Shulkin from that Cabinet post in March.

During his confirmation hearing Wilkie received strong support from most members of the Senate veterans committee, who characterized him as a stabilizing force for the embattled agency.

Senate confirms Robert Wilkie as next VA secretary, but with opposition



Senators overwhelmingly approved Robert Wilkie as the next Veterans Affairs secretary, but the move came with political dissent for the first time in the department's 30-year history.

The final vote of 86-9 wasn't enough to seriously jeopardize Wilkie's chances of taking over as the 10th VA secretary. But it did mark the first time since the agency became a Cabinet-level department that any senator has voted against a nominee for the top VA job — a post that usually rises above partisan congressional fights.

One of Wilkie's biggest responsibilities in the next year will be crafting new community care rules allowing veterans more access to private-sector doctors, a process that is expected to spur even more heated debate.

Wilkie's confirmation ends four months of leadership turmoil at VA, a department that boasts a budget of nearly \$200 billion and more than 350,000 employees.

He has received generally positive reviews from veterans groups in recent months as a stabilizing force for a department that has seen significant turmoil since the start of 2018.

The new secretary also outlined his top department priorities in that Senate event, promising to offer "world-class customer service" at VA, expanding veterans access to medical care outside the VA system, reducing disability claims backlogs and reforming human resources systems.

In a statement, American Legion National Commander Denise Rohan praised the move and said her staff is focused on working with the new secretary "to ensure America's veterans receive the healthcare, education, and other benefits they have earned."

Editor's note: He has been reassuring veterans that he will not try to privatize the VA.

JOIN TODAY

Not a member of MOAA? When you join MOAA, you become part of the strongest advocate for our military's personnel and their families. The stronger our membership is, the stronger our voice becomes. Consider joining today because every voice counts.

17,000 MOAA Members Rallied Together to Prevent TRICARE Fee Increases

From MOAA Military Officer

The House and Senate came out July 23 with combined FY 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which they negotiated during the last several weeks.

MOAA was hyper-focused on a Senate-backed provision to significantly raise TRICARE fees for retired beneficiaries under age 65. We were pleasantly surprised to see the provision to end grandfathering and raise TRICARE fees did not make it in the final bill.

Many in Congress also saw these increases as an erosion of military beneficiaries' earned benefits, which have been earned through careers of service and sacrifice. MOAA is grateful for the opportunities to meet with Congressional leaders to discuss the impact these fee increases would have had on millions of beneficiaries. Specifically, meetings with Senate Armed Services Committee Ranking Member, Senator Jack Reed (D-Rhode Island), Chair Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) of the House Armed Services Committee, Chair Mike Coffman (R-Colo.), and Ranking Member Jackie Speier (D-Calif.) from the Military Personnel Subcommittee, led to the support necessary to ensure these increases were not in the final bill.

The critical exclusion from the legislation is an enormous success, and largely is successful thanks to the many MOAA members who took the time to write their elected officials. Congress' inboxes were flooded with over 17,000 MOAA-suggested messages explaining that yet another round of fee increases was unacceptable for TRICARE beneficiaries. This mass swell of grassroots support, combined with many thousands more messages from our partners in The Military Coalition, all culminated in shaping the conversation as the defense bill went to the conference committee.

While this victory may prove to be only a reprieve in the larger budget battles to come, it is indeed an important one. The mobilization of our MOAA members combined with a supportive Congress put the ball over the goal line.

West Point superintendent responds to outrage over pro-Communist former cadet



Since photos surfaced in late September of a now-second lieutenant sporting a Che Guevara T-shirt under his uniform at West Point's 2016 graduation and commissioning ceremony, West Point and the Army have drawn the ire of everyone from active-duty soldiers to a Florida senator.

Second Lt. Spenser Rapone, who is assigned to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, is under investigation for his subversive political views by both his unit and West Point.

USMA's investigation is focusing on "policies and procedures as they pertain to then-Cadet Rapone's time at USMA, and USMA's determination of his suitability for graduation and commissioning," West Point superintendent Lt. Gen. Robert Casle wrote.

Update: Whatever happened to that communist lieutenant? The Army won't say.

Last October, some old tweets of a West Point cadet in a Che Guevara shirt sparked outrage across the country.

The soldier pictured, now 2nd Lt. Spenser Rapone, had been openly serving as an avowed communist supporting the downfall of the U.S. government.

Both the United States Military Academy and his current command, the 10th Mountain Division, launched investigations into his conduct.

Those inquiries are finished, the Army said in a statement Tuesday — but that is all they would say.

"Due to privacy act restrictions, we are limited in what information we can provide," Lt. Col. Nina Hill, an Army spokeswoman, told reporters. "We can confirm, however, that the Army conducted a full investigation and that appropriate action was taken."

At the time, the Army confirmed that he had previously been an enlisted soldier and a member of the 75th Ranger Regiment, with one Afghanistan deployment, but that he had been "removed for standards."

Officials also confirmed that, following his commissioning, he had failed out of Ranger school before being assigned to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

But the service declined to disclose what investigators found, how Rapone had been disciplined, or even if he has been allowed to stay in the service.

"We now consider the matter closed," Hill said.

The Army's statement comes days after some media outlets reported that Rapone had received an other than honorable discharge from the Army. In fact, he did.

Congress finalizes \$717 billion defense budget authorization months ahead of schedule

WASHINGTON — Senators gave final approval to the annual defense authorization bill, sending the \$717 billion budget package to the White House to become law in the next few weeks.

The move marks the 58th consecutive year Congress has approved the military spending policy measure and the earliest that lawmakers have finished the work in 41 years. Typically, lawmakers labor until late fall before reaching agreement on the legislation.

It sets the military pay raise at 2.6 percent starting next January, adds 15,600 more troops to services' overall end strength, and boosts aircraft and ship purchases above what the White House had requested.

It also gives lawmakers a solid legislative victory to tout before voters in the lead-up to the November mid-term elections, and some parliamentary breathing room they hope can lead to progress on appropriations bills in the next few weeks.

Trump takes aim at federal bureaucracy with new executive orders rolling back civil-service protections



President Trump moved to roll back civil-service protections that federal employees have enjoyed for a generation, making it easier to fire poor performers, curtailing time employees can be paid for union work and directing agencies to negotiate tougher union contracts.

The changes require agencies to negotiate union contracts in less than a year. And they direct managers to move more aggressively to fire poor performers or employees involved in misconduct, limiting to one month a last-chance grace period for an appeal.

Agencies must also disclose details about an employee's record to other federal offices considering hiring someone who has been fired or disciplined.

The changes also upend a long tradition of basing layoffs on seniority. Agencies can now take performance into consideration, as well.

Public employee unions said that Trump's orders amounted to an attack on federal workers and that they were contemplating legal action to halt them.

Editor's note: Having worked in the VA system for 15 years and unsuccessfully confronting the inability to eliminate substandard performers, I never thought I would live long enough to see these critical changes take place. Of course, as they say, it ain't over till the fat lady (union) sings.

Senate bill calls for Medicare Part D electronic prior authorization



Three U.S. senators have introduced legislation that would provide for the use of electronic prior authorization in Medicare Part D, a process that requests additional information about whether a patient needs or meets clinical criteria for a

medication in order for it to be covered by the insurance plan.

Currently, prior authorization is completed through paper forms, faxes and telephone calls. However, the Electronic Prior Authorization in Medicare Part D Act—introduced by Senators Pat Roberts (R-Kan.), Tom Carper (D-Del.), and Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa)—calls for the use of electronic prior authorization (ePA) through a common electronic system so that patients can receive faster access to alternatives to opioid medications for chronic and acute pain, as well as improved access to medication-assisted treatment to treat opiate addiction.

“Switching to an electronic system will help people get access to the prescriptions already prescribed to them by their doctors,” said Roberts. “By streamlining the process, we can help ensure that Medicare patients who are trying to fill prescriptions for opioid use disorders encounter less hurdles to get the medicine they need to help stop this serious addiction.” “Private insurers, doctors and pharmacies are already using ePA to great success—decreasing pro-

vider burden and limiting the potential for medication mismanagement, including in cases of powerful opioids,” said Joel White, executive director of the HITN Opioid Safety Alliance. It is past time we bring that same technology into the Medicare space.”

Reports: Google won't renew Pentagon contract to use AI



SAN FRANCISCO — Google won't renew a contract with the Pentagon that provides the company's artificially intelligent algorithms to interpret video images and improve the targeting of drone strikes.

That's according to reports in Gizmodo, BuzzFeed, and The New York Times.

The reports said Google Cloud business head Diane Greene told employees of the decision not to renew the 18-month deal past the end of 2019, when the current contract ends.

Google representatives did not respond to a request for comment.

The so-called Project Maven had riled Google employees, including several who quit and thousands of others who signed a petition asking CEO Sundar Pichai to cancel the project and enact a policy renouncing the use of Google technology in warfare.

Editor's note: Patriotism at its finest.

Going BRAC-less: What to Do with the US Military's Excess Property



After six straight years of fruitless pleas for permission to close unneeded bases, the Pentagon is changing course. Though Defense Secretary James Mattis testi-

fied in October that almost 20 percent of the Pentagon's real property is surplus and a burden, the 2019 defense budget proposal doesn't formally request a new BRAC round. Instead, Defense Department Comptroller David Norquist suggested in February that he would be looking for new ways to work with jobs-conscious lawmakers and new ways to use the excess property.

Fortunately, the Pentagon, and particularly the services, do not have to look far to find a second path that may be amenable to lawmakers, particularly those who support such efforts. Enhanced use leases — essentially, deals to allow private developers to access federal property — were added to the Pentagon's toolkit in the 1990s and have been used successfully for decades.

The Pentagon and Congress should also go a step further to identify areas — to include entire installations — where communities and the private sector could purchase unneeded military land, fully titled. While there are many benefits to leasing, some opportunities require a complete transfer of property for the deal to have a sound business case.

The Pentagon, the private sector, and Congress all have a role to play in ensuring such efforts are a success.

Severe Bleeding Tied to Synthetic Cannabinoids, CDC Warns



More than 200 people in nine states have developed serious, unexplained bleeding linked to synthetic cannabinoids thought to be laced with rat poison, federal health officials with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said today.

Since the first case was identified in Illinois on March 3, 2018, state health departments have now reported 202 cases of potentially life-threatening vitamin K-dependent antagonist coagulopathy after using synthetic cannabinoids. Five individuals have died. The CDC previously reported 94 cases in five states and two deaths.

Synthetic cannabinoids are sold under a variety of names, including K2 and Spice. Adverse effects from the use of synthetic cannabinoids vary and can include neurologic, psychiatric, and other physical signs and symptoms.

Some patients were asymptomatic or presented with complaints unrelated to bleeding but were found to have "numerical coagulopathy," which may put the patient at risk for bleeding complications associated with injuries and invasive or surgical procedures. "Patients should be considered high-risk for coagulopathy if they have reported use of or are suspected of using synthetic cannabinoids," the CDC advises.

Editor's note: Just when we think we have a possible replacement for opioids, this problem pops up. But this is related to synthetic cannabinoids.

Appeals court tosses veterans' lawsuits over burn pits



Military veterans who claim that the use of open burn pits during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan caused myriad health problems cannot move forward with dozens of lawsuits against a military contractor, a federal appeals court ruled.

A three-judge panel of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with a federal judge in Maryland, who last year threw out the lawsuits brought against KBR, a former Halliburton Corp. subsidiary.

More than 60 lawsuits allege that KBR's practice of dumping tires, batteries, medical waste and other materials into open burn pits created harmful smoke that caused neurological problems, cancers and other health issues in more than 800 service members. The lawsuits, which were filed in multiple districts around the country and then consolidated, also alleged that at least 12 service members died from illnesses caused by the burn pits.

Susan Burke, a lawyer for the service members, argued that KBR repeatedly violated the terms of its contract with the military to handle waste disposal. She said KBR also disobeyed a military directive against burning hazardous materials.

Burke said she and the veterans are disappointed in the court's ruling. She declined to say whether they plan to ask the U.S. Supreme Court to hear the case.

VHA Innovation podcast describes how VA is leading the way in 3D printing



VHA's innovation podcast, VHA Innovation Ecosystem (VHA:IE), is back with a series looking at the ways VA is advancing Veteran care by using 3D printing in innovative and cutting-edge ways.

Through interviews with three 3D printing programs at VA, the episode explores how this growing technology is changing the way VA and the health care industry function, from giving surgeons new ways to prepare for surgery to creating brand new orthotics for disabled Veterans.

Innovation Specialist Scott Bryant discusses VHA's growing 3D printing network and efforts across VA to share and collaborate on 3D printing projects. By doing this, VA can easily share 3D printed models across the system so less expensive, high quality, quickly produced prosthetics and tools can be used by any hospital.

The program has been so successful that the Department of Defense is collaborating with VA to see how a network like this can help the military as well.

An incredible non-profit, e-NABLE, and its founder, Jen Owen has a program that enables creators around the world to share their 3D printed models publicly and easily so that anyone can use them.

Through their efforts, people around the world have collaborated on ways to help improve open source 3D printable designs for hands and arms for those who were born missing fingers or who have lost them due to war, disease or natural disaster.

Verizon's new military discount could save you \$40 a month



Service members, veterans and Gold Star family members are eligible to save up to \$40 a month on their cellphone plans under a military discount program launched by Verizon.

The deal offers \$15 off the regular monthly price of one phone line, \$30 off two lines and \$40 off three lines under any of Verizon's three "unlimited" plans. Those plans start at \$40 a month, per line.

Eligible customers also can receive a \$200 gift card when they activate a new 4G LTE smartphone on a new line. The deal can be used more than once; a military family of four can get \$800 for opening a four-line plan with four new phones, for instance.

Verizon also will offer a 15 percent discount to military members, veterans and military families on other phone plans, as well as discounts up to 25 percent on some accessories purchased via the company's My Verizon portal.

To receive the monthly savings, customers must enroll in Verizon's Auto Pay program and use paperless billing. They'll also need to provide proof of service:

Those in uniform can provide a military-issued email address, a military pay stub or a Servicemembers Civil Relief Act Status Report.

Veterans can provide a DD 214, a veteran's identification card, a military retiree account statement or a VetRewards card from Veterans Advantage, a program that offers military discounts from a variety of businesses.

<https://www.militarytimes.com/pay-benefits/discount-depot/>

FAA Hiring Scandal Barely Registers with the Media



This is a long article but one that needs to be read. The Fox Business Network launched a six-month investigation into the Federal Aviation Administration's hiring practices — an investigation revealing complicity between the FAA and diversity groups such as the National

Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NBCFAE). The findings were revealed on “The Willis Report” on FBN.

The investigation resulted in an article by Adam Shapiro, exposing a story of corruption and attempts to stoke favoritism, where an FAA employee and head of an NBCFAE chapter worked to increase the likelihood that minority candidates would succeed under the FAA's new hiring practices.

Ironically, one minority applicant, Matthew Douglas, a Native American, received “a perfect score, 100, on the FAA's old screening test called the Air Traffic Selection and Training exam, or AT-SAT,” Shapiro reports. The FAA disregarded Douglas' scores and the scores and qualifications of about 3,000 other graduates from accredited programs, according to Shapiro.

“Like several other young men and women pursuing air traffic control degrees, Douglas borrowed thousands of dollars, \$30,000 in his case, to earn an FAA accredited degree from programs the FAA calls Collegiate Training Initiative or CTI Schools,” writes Shapiro. “The FAA created the CTI program more than 20 years ago to provide the agency with a reliable source of qualified air traffic control applicants.”

Shapiro points out that “it takes several years of study to acquire the complex skills necessary to become an air traffic controller, or ATC. It's considered among the highest pressured jobs in America.”

What happened to Douglas is yet another scandal of the previous administration, though no one in the media is calling it that. It's one thing to lower standards when you're filling positions at the Department of Commerce, or adding another bureaucrat at the Department of Transportation, where people's lives are not at stake on a moment-by-moment basis. But doing so for air traffic controllers is truly an outrage and a scandal.

The FAA threw out the AT-SAT scores and CTI qualifications of an estimated 3,000 CTI graduates and military veterans who were all previously designated ‘well qualified’ to become air traffic controllers. The FAA told them all to start over. But this time, when they applied for a job, their college degrees and previous military experience would mean nothing. They would now compete with thousands of people the agency calls ‘off the street hires;’ anyone who wants to, can walk in off the street without any previous training and apply for an air traffic control job. The FAA's only requirements, to apply, are be a U.S. citizen, have a high school diploma, speak English and pass the FAA's new BQ, Biographical Questionnaire.

Even worse, Snow and other NBCFAE officials conducted workshops showing NBCFAE associate members... the correct answers to select on the [questionnaire] as well as key words to use on their resumés in order to be selected by FAA hiring personnel who were also NBCFAE members,” reports Shapiro.

In addition, according to Shapiro, “Candidates were, and still are, allowed to take the test unsupervised, on their own time and on their home computers over a two week period.”

Editor's note: Update — the above criteria have just been dumped and aptitude, education, experience and training are once again the criteria for hiring air traffic controllers. The media outcry, in particular the Tucker Carlson program, has resulted in the reversal.

A \$12 million ‘colossal mistake’: botched VA disabled vet project enrages lawmakers

In 2015, the Veterans Affairs Department started tackling a project more than a decade overdue: bringing its rehabilitation program for disabled veterans into the 21st century by converting its paper-based case management system to a digital one.

Three years and \$12 million later, there's not much to show for it.

VA officials didn't realize until December 2017 that there was a major glitch with the new electronic management system for the department's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program. The project came to a halt in February after it failed to pass the necessary user tests, and officials are now considering the best way to move forward — including by pulling the plug entirely and starting over with a commercial product instead of continuing to build one in-house.

Lawmakers from both parties were visibly frustrated, saying the project had “gone off the rails” and calling it a “failure” and “colossal mistake.” One questioned whether VA's leaders really prioritize the program, which provided employment services to more than 132,000 veterans with service-connected disabilities last fiscal year.

Heather Ansley, acting associate executive director of government relations for the 18,000-member Paralyzed Veterans of America, told Military Times “the need for a paperless system is real.” And whether it was an employee or a process that failed, “it's important for VA to figure out what happened and to make sure that it doesn't happen again.”

Rep. Beto O'Rourke, D-Texas, said this situation does not inspire confidence in the VA.

“I think as we try to foster a culture of accountability and excellence for the delivery of care and earned benefits to veterans, to see this kind of money wasted, this lack of performance, it just undermines veterans' and their families' faith in the VA,” he said.

House lawmakers tasked the VA with providing an updated budget and completion date for the project.

Navy drops negligent homicide charge against Fitzgerald CO



The Navy will no longer pursue negligent homicide charges against Cmdr. Bryce Benson, who commanded the destroyer Fitzgerald when it collided with a merchant vessel just more than a year ago, killing seven sailors.

Service officials also announced Tuesday that two of the Fitz's junior officers will not face a negligent homicide charge in connection to the June 17, 2017, catastrophe.

It was decided that they will face *negligent dereliction of duty* resulting in death, negligent dereliction of duty and negligent hazarding of a vessel charges at a general court-martial, according to a Navy statement.

These developments mark the service's latest reconsideration of negligent homicide charges in the case of the Fitz and the John S. McCain collision, which happened less than two months later and killed another 10 sailors.

“The evidence now before Admiral Caldwell was the same evidence that initially caused him to bring a negligent homicide charge against Commander Benson,” the attorneys said in a statement. “A fair trial will reveal the remaining dereliction of duty charges are likewise unsupported by the facts.”

Editor's note: Again, given the lack of training the Navy provided the junior officers before sending them to sea, this decision was certainly appropriate.

Chinese hackers steal sensitive Navy program data



Cyberattacks sponsored by the Chinese government infiltrated a U.S. Navy contractor's computers, allowing digital thieves to access sensitive data related to secret Navy projects on a submarine anti-ship missile.

The information stolen was stored on the contractor's unclassified network despite being "highly sensitive nature," according to information obtained by the Washington Post.

According to the report, 614 gigabytes of material on a closely held project known as Sea Dragon were taken. Contracted for the military organization Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Sea Dragon aims to develop a supersonic anti-ship missile for use on U.S. submarines.

China has increasingly grown not only as an economic cyberthreat, but an online menace to national security as well.

American Legion In Turmoil As Top Exec Resigns Over Background Questions



American Legion executive tapped to assume the organization's top administrative position resigned abruptly on Wednesday amid allegations that she exaggerated her professional and academic credentials.

Verna L. Jones, 53, tendered her resignation just as she was about to take over for Daniel S. Wheeler, a Vietnam War veteran who has served as the Legion's National Adjutant since 2008. Sources say that a cursory background check, required for her promotion, could not verify that Jones had a law degree or was ever licensed to practice law.

Jones' colleagues seem to have been completely blindsided by her sudden departure — and also by the discovery that one of the Legion's most cherished members, a woman highly regarded in policy circles for her strength of character and unyielding commitment to veterans advocacy, wasn't entirely the person she has long advertised herself to be.

A representative for the North Carolina State Bar told Task & Purpose it had no record of a Verna Jones as a bar admittee. "If they're not in the database, they're not licensed to practice law in North Carolina," the representative said.

The Legion's human resources director emailed the organization's entire staff with an urgent request. "Please submit copies of your college transcripts and certifications to the HR Office at your earliest convenience," it read. "If you have elected to take the voluntary separation agreement, please ignore this request."

Study: To fix Air Force pilot shortage, look to contractors — and forget about warrant officers

The Air Force should make greater use of contractors to bolster its pilot training capabilities as it works to fix its festering Pilot shortfall once and for all, according to a new

report.

Researchers from the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies argue in their paper titled "Protecting the 'Pipeline': Overcoming the Air Force's Pilot Shortage," reviving the long-defunct warrant officer program would do nothing to fix the shortage of pilots, and Air Force leaders should reject the idea.

The Mitchell Institute argued that to fill the gap in instructor pilots necessary to train new pilots — without poaching from front-line squadrons that still need to fly missions — the Air Force needs to find "innovative uses of contractors in the training pipeline."

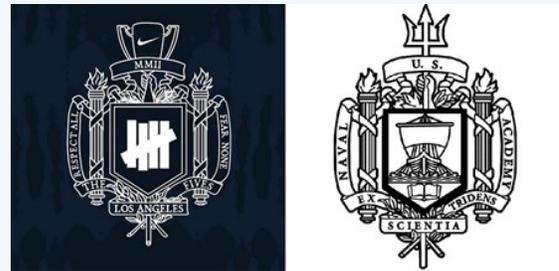
This could include adding contract instructor pilots to supplement Air Force instructors, to having an entire undergraduate pilot training base managed by contractors.

And, the paper said, the Navy uses contract flight instructors — who are often veterans — and the Army supplements its undergraduate flight instruction with civilians and contractors, without the quality of instruction suffering.

Bringing back warrant officers wouldn't address the more pressing concerns about pilot training capacity, the paper said. Nor would it address the difficulties in absorbing new pilots into the shrunken force of 56 fighter squadrons, down from about 134 fighter squadrons during the Gulf War.

There's no indication warrant officers would have higher rates of retention than commissioned officers, the paper said — and it could end up being even worse.

Nike cancels new sportswear line after found copying Naval Academy crest



Sportswear mogul Nike announced the cancellation of a new clothing line Friday following outrage over the striking resemblance of the line's logo to the historic Naval Academy crest.

"We recently were made aware of our logo being included into a design that has been previously used by one of our longstanding partners," Nike said in a statement on Friday. "We have always respected the U.S. Navy and its Academy and have been a longtime supporter of the military. We do not feel it is appropriate to move forward with the collection. We apologize to anyone who was offended."

The logo was originally unveiled on social media accounts and immediately spurred outrage among military buffs who recognized the similarity to the Naval Academy's coat of arms. The logo and the coat of arms both depict a shield bordered by columns. In the logo, Nike's signature tally marks are printed on the shield, whereas in the crest, the shield features an approaching ship.

During the ordeal, Nike faced serious boycott threats on social media, including among Naval Academy grads.

'SOBERING' SHORTFALLS FOUND IN JUNIOR OFFICERS



In underway bridge navigation simulators fleetwide between January and March, of the 164 officers who were evaluated, only 27 passed with “no concerns.” Another 108 completed with “some concerns” and 29 had

“significant concerns,” according to the message, which was released by the Navy’s top surface warfare officer Vice Adm. Richard Brown.

Brown, who leads Naval Surface Force Pacific, termed the results “sobering.”

The evaluations raise distressing questions about the level of ship handling training junior officers get both prior to their arrival at their first command and when they arrive.

- Officers struggled with operating radars and the associated tools at hand, an issue that emerged in the wake of the Fitzgerald accident.
- Officers had a firm grasp of the international rules of the road for navigating ships at sea, but struggled to apply them practically during watch standing, especially in low-visibility situations.
- Most officers were able to keep clear of close encounters with other ships in the simulator, but those who found themselves in extremis “were often ill-equipped to take immediate action to avoid collisions” — a factor that was a direct contributor to the loss of life in both the John S. McCain and Fitzgerald collisions in 2017.

“I have every confidence in our current generation of Junior Officers,” Brown said. “We owe them the training and tools necessary to become expert Mariners.”

Editor’s note: Unless sequestration raises its ugly head again, hopefully the money will be available to properly train people before they are ordered to their respective ships.

U.S. Mint opens sales for World War I centennial coin



The U.S. Mint has opened sales for the 2018 World War I Centennial Silver Dollar. The new coin honors the 100th anniversary of U.S. participation in World War I.

A ceremonial “first purchase” of the coin was made at U.S. Mint Headquarters by retired Army Col. Gerald York, grandson of famous World War I hero Sgt. Alvin York. He made the first purchase at the Mint’s lobby gift shop in Washington, D.C.

Speaking for the co-sponsors, Rep. Doug Lamborn, R-Colo. said, “The World War I centennial coin honors the sacrifice of more than 4 million Americans who served in uniform, and more than 100,000 who gave their lives. As we approach the 100th anniversary of the armistice marking the end of World War I, this coin serves as an appropriate tribute to veterans who made America and the world a safer place to live.”

The obverse design of the collectible silver dollar is titled “Soldier’s Charge” and depicts an almost stone-like soldier grip-

ping a rifle. Barbed wire twines are featured in the lower right-hand side of the design. The wire design element continues onto the reverse side in a design titled “Poppies in the Wire,” which features abstract poppies mixed in with barbed wire. Barbed wire was part of the trench warfare of World War I, and poppies are the symbolic flower of veteran remembrance, a tradition that began during the war.

The World War I Centennial Silver Dollar will be produced in limited quantities, and will be available for purchase online through Dec. 28, 2018.

The Navy SEALs are now open to women but no one has stepped forward



A few women soldiers have earned the Army’s coveted Ranger badge. A female Marine will be the first woman to enter MARSOC’s grueling selection process. But no women have stepped up to join the Navy’s most elite combat units more than a

month after they formally opened.

No women have applied to join the Navy’s most elite units, but leadership says that’s to be expected.

The training pipeline for Navy SEALs and special warfare combat-craft crewmen opened in early March, the same week of Recruit Training Command’s latest special warfare screening panel, but no women made that deadline.

The next board convenes in June, which could put women currently in boot camp in Naval Special Warfare Preparatory School in September and then Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL training in December, per Naval Special Warfare’s integration plan.

To date, however, no women have taken that first step, the Navy’s top officer said.

CNO Adm. John Richardson stated that the standards will remain the same for both genders.

Marine ground combat arms unit gets its first woman commander

A historic change of command took place June 22 aboard Camp Pendleton, California, as the first woman to command a Marine ground combat arms unit took charge.

Lt. Col. Michelle I. Macander took over as commanding officer of 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division from Lt. Col. Christopher M. Haar, during a ceremony held aboard Camp Pendleton.

Macander is now the first female Marine to command a ground combat arms unit.

The Corps has slowly been making progress in gender integration across the combat arms as female Marines begin to fill out jobs and units that were previously closed to women.

Florida Council of Chapters Communiqué June 2018 Issue

See what the other Chapters are doing. The *Florida Council of Chapter’s* newsletter, the “*Communiqué*” can be accessed by clicking on the link below. After you click the link and then click *Allow*, it may take a minute or so for the newsletter to pop up. It is worth the wait.

Apr2014.pdfhttp:www.moaafi.org/communiqué

Editor—Polly Parks. Send articles and photos to:

Polly Parks pparks@igc.org

VA secretary nominee promises more medical choices for vets, but not privatization



WASHINGTON — Veterans Affairs secretary nominee Robert Wilkie pledged to make that department more customer friendly and better integrated with outside health care systems without “privatizing” veterans services in a subdued Senate confirmation

hearing on Wednesday.

Wilkie, President Donald Trump’s third pick to lead the massive VA bureaucracy, said if he is confirmed his priorities would be to improve veterans access to medical care, reduce the backlog of benefits payments, reform the department’s human resources systems and “improve the culture” at VA.

“Many of the issues I encountered as acting secretary were not with the quality of medical care but with getting our veterans through the door to reach that care,” he told senators. “Those problems are administrative and bureaucratic — that is where VA must go.”

The biggest of those issues is expected to be implementation of the recently passed VA Mission Act, which includes an overhaul of the department’s community care programs.

Critics have said administration officials are pushing too aggressively to send federal money to private-sector doctors for veterans care, hollowing out the VA health system. Wilkie defended the idea, saying that the law still leaves department officials at the center of planning for veterans health care.

But he also said that veterans need to have broader access to medical care, whether that means more department options, more telehealth opportunities, or taxpayer-funded appointments in the community.

First National Native American Veterans Memorial will follow Marine vet’s design



A Marine veteran and member of the southern Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes was named the winner of a seven-month international contest to design the first national monument to Native American veterans.

Harvey Pratt’s design — named “Warriors’ Circle of Honor” — was picked unanimously by an eight-member jury appointed by the National Museum of the American Indian, according to the Washington Post.

Of the five finalists, the jury decided Pratt’s design was most universal of all tribes and traditions and best suited to honor the roughly 140,000 U.S. veterans who are American Indian or Alaska Native.

Pratt’s design contains several features that impressed the committee. In the center of the memorial is a steel circle, a significant symbol of life and cyclicity common to many tribes. The memorial also contains beating drums, sacred fires and cleansing water, items involved in many Native American ceremonies.

The Post reports that the memorial is projected to cost \$8 million and is slated to open on the grounds of the American Indian museum in late 2020.

Group Files IG Complaint Against Navy Over Bible in POW/MIA Display



CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa -- An organization that lobbies against promoting religion within the Armed Forces has filed an inspector general complaint against the U.S. Navy over a Bible that was included in a POW/MIA “Missing Man” table display at the U.S.

Naval Hospital Okinawa.

The complaint seeks removal of the book from the display, eliminating language about the Bible and the phrase “one nation under God” from an accompanying explanatory placard, an investigation into how the book came to be displayed, who authorized it and “appropriate disciplinary measures administered to those responsible.”

MRFF (Military Religious Freedom Foundation) first filed a complaint about the display with Rear Adm. Paul Pearigen, Navy Medicine West commander, on April 5. The Navy later said it investigated the matter but found that including the Bible was “consistent with Department of the Navy and Department of Defense guidance, as well as the U.S. Constitution.”

The official Navy or Defense Department stance on Bibles being included in POW/MIA “Missing Man” table displays remains unclear. However, a report on the Navy’s website from 2014 describes the Bible as being an official part of the display.

The fight to remove religious articles from POW/MIA “Missing Man” tables is nothing new for MRFF. The group has been successful in other cases, the latest in November when it forced the Denver VA Medical Center to remove religious items from a display.

Editor’s note: You knew it was just a matter of time. We can only hope that DoD and/or the Navy does not succumb to their demands, but alas, odds are they will.

Update — they did.



IN MEMORIAM

No deceased members reported for August

Monthly Member and Board Meetings

**Luncheon: Wednesday Sept. 5th, 2018 11:00 am
Florida Room**

**Board Meeting: Wednesday Sept 12th, 10:00am
Trinity Baptist Church**

**Membership Committee Mtg. Club Renaissance
3rd Wednesday Sept. 19th, 2018**

Army investigators issue warning about 'virtual kidnapping' scam



The scam usually involves a phone call in which the caller claims to have taken a child or a loved one. The caller says something like "I've kidnapped your kid. Send money or the kid dies," according to CID.

Victims of this scam have reported hearing screams, crying or pleas for help, all effects that are fake to persuade the victims to respond to the demands.

The scammers appear to choose their victims randomly. "They dial sequential numbers until the call is answered by someone they can shock into believing that their child has been kidnapped," CID officials said in a release. "The caller's approach is forceful, well scripted and can be very convincing."

If you get such a call, the CID advises trying to end the phone call and then confirm the safety of the person who the caller claims to have taken, or ask the caller to put the child on the phone.

Do not confirm or tell them any details about you or your family, officials say.

Remember the scammers work on fear and impulsiveness to try to coerce "ransom" money from their victims. If you need to buy time, ask the caller to repeat the requests and tell them you need time to respond, officials advise.

If you do suspect a real kidnapping is taking place, do not hesitate to contact the nearest FBI office, CID or law enforcement agency.

Aspirin may help treat Alzheimer's: Study



WASHINGTON: Low dose aspirin may help treat Alzheimer's by enabling cells in the brain to clear away a toxic protein responsible for the disease, a study on mice has found.

"The results of our study identify a possible new role for one of the most widely used, common, over the counter medications in the world," said Kalipada Pahan, a professor at Rush University Medical Center in the US.

The researchers gave aspirin orally for a month to genetically modified mice with Alzheimer's pathology, then evaluated the amount of amyloid plaque in the parts of the brain affected most by Alzheimer's disease.

They found that the aspirin medications augmented TFEB, stimulated lysosomes and decreased amyloid plaque pathology in the mice.

"This research study adds another potential benefit to aspirin's already established uses for pain relief and for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases," said Pahan.

Editor's Note: I have seen other reports on this exciting possibility.

Low Testosterone Linked to Sugar-Sweetened Beverages



Sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) intake is associated with low serum testosterone levels among men aged 20–39 years in the United States, according to investigators.

A study of 545 men in this age group who participated in the 2011–2012 NationHealth and Nutrition Examination Survey, showed

a decrease in testosterone levels associated with SSB intake.

VA Includes Florida Hospital in National Audit of Radiology Practices



TAMPA – Federal investigators are looking into allegations that officials at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital canceled hundreds of patient radiology exams without following safety guidelines and then tried to cover it up.

The exams had been ordered to determine patient health and had gone unfilled for more than 60 days. The allegations were made by four Haley radiology technicians who have filed a sexual harassment and intimidation lawsuit against the hospital.

In court documents and in complaints to investigative agencies, the four plaintiffs liken the cancellations to a 2014 scandal at the Phoenix veterans hospital, where patients died awaiting medical procedures. The delays in Phoenix were covered up through appointment documents.

The review of the allegations against Haley is part of a nationwide audit of radiology practices at Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals to determine whether the VA "processes radiology requests in a timely manner and appropriately manages canceled requests," said Michael Nacincik, a spokesman with the agency's Office of Inspector General.

The plaintiffs say the moves affected patient care at Haley. But it was unclear whether any patients were harmed by having their exams canceled. The plaintiffs make no such link, in part "because they are denied access to that information," said their attorney, Joseph Magri of Tampa.

Haley officials say concerns about radiology exams have been reviewed previously and found to have no basis.

A list of 1,234 patients that Mitchell-Davis provided shows veterans were not receiving diagnostic exams due to "short staffing and inept leadership in radiology," according to court documents.

The allegations about the radiology exams arise from a lawsuit filed in August 2016 by Mitchell-Davis and fellow radiology technicians Erin Tonkyro, Dana Strauser and Yenny Hernandez. They say they have been the victims of sexual harassment at Haley since 2008 and were retaliated against for complaining.

The hospital, in court documents, has denied those allegations and sought to have the case dismissed before trial.

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North Campus SCC**

Reservations no later than 6 p.m.

Sunday, Sept 2nd, 2018

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Military Officers Association of America
Post Office Box 5693
Sun City Center, FL 33571-5693

GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR VETERANS MEMORIAL



Memorial backers (see text below for names)



Veterans Memorial Committee and other supporters



April Kerbow singing National Anthem



Bill Hodges conversing with Walt Cawein

Sun City Center breaks ground for Veterans Memorial

The Sun City Center Charitable Foundation, Inc. in cooperation with local military and community organizations are committed to seeing the construction of a Veterans Memorial in Sun City Center (SCC). The Memorial will honor the past, current and future SCC male and female veterans and their families while at the same time promote civic pride.

The groundbreaking ceremony was held at the Sun City Center Community Hall on July 17, 2018. Bill Hodges, the MC, introduced Walt Cawein, the Memorial Committee Chairman, who provided the background information on the inception of the project. When Walt first moved to Sun City Center one of the first things he observed was the absence of any type of memorial honoring our past and present veterans. He decided to see if he could change that circumstance and contacted the SCC Charitable Foundation, who readily agreed to help fund the project. Cawein then formed a Memorial Committee and they, along with other interested individuals, began to work out the details of the endeavor. It was determined that the project would be funded by donations and the purchasing of commemorative engraved bricks. The response has been more than enthusiastic, and several significant donations have been made as well as a high volume of bricks sold. The generous donations and brick purchases resulted in the groundbreaking ceremony with plans to finish and dedicate the Memorial in early November.

Five of the groundbreakers are shown with shovels in the above photo. From left, Adam Stine, Stine Corporation, our General Contractor; Mark Johnson, Dykes-Johnson Architects, our Architect; John Luper, President of the SCC Community Association; Walt Cawein, Chairman, SCC Veterans Memorial Committee; and Dallas Tuthill, a 5 Star Donor.

The committee welcomes all donors and no donation is considered too small to appreciate. Names of all donors will be recorded in the Memorial's historical documents, and Four and Five-star donors will also receive special recognition at the dedication ceremony. The purchase of a commemorative engraved brick is a perfect way to pay tribute to the courage and sacrifice of our beloved veterans.

The total cost of the Memorial is estimated to be \$100,000. To make a donation or purchase an engraved brick visit www.charitablefoundationscc.org



MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

MOAA: The SCC Chapter of The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) membership is granted to Army; Navy; Marines; Air Force; Coast Guard; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Public Health; the National; Guard or Reserve components both active or retired; and former officers and Warrant Officers who were separated under acceptable conditions.

MISSION: The mission of Sun City Center FL chapter shall be to promote the purposes and objectives of the Military Officers Association of America; foster fraternal relation among retired, active duty and former officers of active duty, retired and reserve components personnel of the uniformed services and their dependents and survivors; provide useful services for members and their dependents and survivors and serve the community and the nation.

MEETINGS: A meeting is held monthly (except July/August) in the Atrium building in the Florida room at 11:00 a.m. and includes lunch and a guest speaker.

ACTIVITIES: Coordinate and sponsor Annual Memorial Day ceremony; provide awards and honorariums to outstanding JROTC Cadets; contributed to Operation Warm Heart and Helping Hand; contribute to My Warriors Place; provide funds for MOAA scholarships and participate in numerous community activities.

Additional information can be obtained by calling 813-642-0801 or e-mailing dkepley@tampabay.rr.com. You can also contact us by mail at Frank Kepley, 815 Freedom Plaza Circle, Apt 104 Sun City Center Fl. 33573.



Sun City Center Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
P.O. Box 5693
Sun City Center, FL. 33571-5693

Place Stamp
Here.

Or Current Resident

Air Force Birthday Sept 18, 2018 HAPPY 71st BIRTHDAY



Sept 18, 1947

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Opinions presented herein are those of the individual and not necessarily of the Chapter. Commercial solicitation of members using membership rolls and/or rosters is prohibited. Some articles may be taken from MOAA and DoD publications. The Chapter is tax exempt under Section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Codes.

THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE WORLD WARS (MOWW)
INVITES YOU TO OUR ANNUAL



**SUN CITY CENTER
VETERANS DAY
MILITARY BALL**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10th, 2018
4:30 P.M. UNTIL 9 P.M.**

**THE BALL WILL FEATURE A PATRIOTIC PROGRAM
HORS D'OEUVRES - A SERVED DINNER
ENTERTAINMENT AND DANCING**

BYOB (GLASSES AND ICE PROVIDED)

THERE WILL BE A GIFT FOR EVERYONE

**SUN CITY CENTER COMMUNITY HALL
1910 S. PEBBLE BEACH BLVD.**

**OPEN TO ALL - NO MILITARY SERVICE REQUIRED
FORMAL DRESS ENCOURAGED - MILITARY, BLACK TIE ,
DARK BUSINESS SUIT**

**\$60.00 PER PERSON - CHECKS PAYABLE TO MOWW
SELF APPOINTED TABLE CAPTAIN CAN RESERVE A
TABLE OF EIGHT WITH A \$120.00 DEPOSIT
TICKETS OBTAINED FROM JOHN GLYNN
glynstewart@yahoo.com (813)260-3910**