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**1. VFW to Deliver Veterans' Voice to Congress:** More than 500 members of the VFW and its Auxiliary are arriving in the nation's capital this weekend to urge their respective members of Congress to end sequestration and to continue improving the programs and services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. VFW National Commander Keith Harman is set to present the [VFW's legislative priorities](#) on Wednesday at 10 a.m. before a special joint hearing of the Senate and House Committees on Veterans' Affairs in room G-50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. Regarding the sequester, he said the two-year budget agreement will bring temporary funding stability, but it won't end the continued threat of sequestration on a military that is still at war with an all-volunteer force that is fighting with less training and overused equipment. "We need our troops to keep their heads in the fight instead of wondering about the well-being of their families back at home," he said. Harman will also call for the quick passage of the *Caring for Veterans Act of 2017*, and urge enhancements to other programs, such as expanding caregiver benefits to pre-9/11 families, increase gender-specific services and peer-to-peer support groups, end the so called "Widow's Tax," and extend toxic exposure presumptions for wherever Agent Orange was used, stored or transported, among many others. [Read more here.](#)

**2. State of VA Health Care Survey:** Your feedback is critical to improving the care veterans have earned. Make sure your voice is heard, take the VFW's [State of VA Health Care Survey](#).

**3. Frelinghuysen to Receive VFW Congressional Award:** Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.) has been selected to receive the 2018 VFW Congressional Award for his unwavering support of veterans, service members and their families, as well as for strengthening the Department of Defense, boosting national intelligence capabilities, and for providing an enhanced and more accountable Department of Veterans Affairs. The congressman is chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. He is also a Vietnam veteran who served with the

Army's 93rd Engineer Battalion (Construction) in the Mekong Delta, and is a Life member of VFW Post 3401 in Morris Plains, N.J.

**4. Legislative Conference to be Livestreamed:** The VFW will once again livestream this year's conference. Visit [www.vfw.org/VFWDC2018](http://www.vfw.org/VFWDC2018) on Monday at 6 p.m. EST to watch the Voice of Democracy Parade of Winners, plus a delayed viewing of the VFW national commander's congressional testimony Wednesday afternoon. Look for #VFWDC2018 on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and be sure to visit [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) for all the latest legislative conference updates beginning Sunday.

**5. State of the Coast Guard:** On Thursday, VFW National Commander Keith Harman and VFW members, joined Commandant of the Coast Guard ADM Paul F. Zukunft, Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard ADM Charles Michel, and other representatives from the Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security for the 2018 State of the Coast Guard presentation at the National Press Club. In his speech, ADM Zukunft talked about the acquisition of a new heavy icebreaker, the addition of a new cyber systems major at the Coast Guard Academy, sexual assault prevention within the service, and the support provided by the Coast Guard in the wake of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria. [Watch the full speech.](#)

**6. Veterans Legislation Roundup:** This week Senate passed three pieces of legislation supported by the VFW — [S.2372](#), the *Veterans Cemetery Benefit Correction Act*, [S. 2248](#), and [H.R. 3656](#). S.2372, which was introduced by Senate Committee of Veterans' Affairs Chairman Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), requires the Department of the Interior to provide outer burial receptacles for veterans remains buried in cemeteries administered by the National Park Service (NPS). S.2248, which was introduced by Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs Ranking Member Jon Tester (D-Mont.), authorizes the VA to provide burial benefits for spouses and children of veterans who are buried in tribal cemeteries. H.R.3656, which was introduced by Representative Jim Banks (R-Ind.-3), expands VA headstones and markers eligibility for children of veterans. The bill will eliminate an inconsistency in the dates of eligibility, which results in certain spouses being eligible but not dependent children. H.R. 3656 will now head to the president's desk to be signed into law. The VFW thanks Senators Isakson and Tester and Representatives Banks for their steadfast dedication to veterans.

**7. MIA Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has announced the identification of five American service members who had been missing in action from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Marine Corps Pfc. Arnold J. Harrison**, 19, of Detroit, Mich., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried March 2, in Dallas, Texas. Harrison was assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division. On Nov. 20, 1943, Harrison's unit landed on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll against stiff Japanese resistance. Over several days of intense fighting, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed. Harrison was killed on the first day of the battle. [Read about Harrison.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. Lamar E. Newman**, 19, of Griffin, Ga., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried March 2, in his hometown. Newman was a member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. In November 1950, his unit took part in a defensive operation in the vicinity of the village of Kujang, North Korea. The division

suffered heavy losses, with many soldiers going missing or being killed or captured. Newman went missing on Nov. 27, 1950, near the village of Kujang as a result of heavy fighting. [Read about Newman.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. Leroy W. Bryant**, 22, of Autreyville, Ga., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried March 9, in Columbus, Ohio. Bryant was a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. On Feb. 6, 1951, Bryant's unit was tasked to determine the location and strength of enemy forces in the town of Yonghyon-ni, South Korea. They were attacked by enemy forces and forced to withdraw. Bryant could not be accounted for after the attack and was declared missing in action. Bryant's name later appeared on a list of Americans who died while in custody of communist forces, informally known as the "Christmas List." Following the war, a returning prisoner from Bryant's regiment reported he was told Bryant died while being marched north to prisoner of war Camp 1, located along the Yalu River, near the village of Changsong. [Read about Bryant.](#)

-- **Navy Electrician's Mate 3rd Class George H. Gibson** was assigned to the USS Oklahoma, which was moored off Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when Japanese aircraft attacked his ship on Dec. 7, 1941. Gibson was one of 429 crewmen killed in the attack. Interment services are pending. [Read about Gibson.](#)

-- **Army Lt. Col. Robert G. Nopp**, an OV-1C pilot, was assigned to the 131st Aviation Company. On July 13, 1966, Nopp flew a night surveillance mission from Phu Bai Airfield over Attapu Province, Laos. Flying through heavy thunderstorms, radar and radio contact were lost with the aircraft, which was not uncommon due to the mountainous terrain in that part of Laos. When the aircraft did not return as scheduled, search efforts were initiated, but no crash site was found. Interment services are pending. [Read about Nopp.](#)

**To sign up new veterans' advocates, click here: <http://capwiz.com/vfw/mlm/signup.htm>.**

**As always, we want to hear your advocacy stories. To share your stories or photos with us, simply email them directly to [yfwac@vfw.org](mailto:yfwac@vfw.org).**