



July 3, 2019

Happy Independence Day

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1. Veterans Benefits Forum: On Tuesday, July 23, 2019, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., during the 120th VFW National Convention in Orlando, Fla., the VFW will host its third annual Veterans Benefits Forum. During the forum, leadership of the VA Veterans Benefits Administration, who oversee veterans benefits such as the GI Bill, disability compensation, and survivor benefits; VA National Cemetery Administration, who manage VA's 136 national cemeteries; VA Veterans Health Administration, who operate VA's network of more than 1,200 health care facilities; DOD Health Affairs, who oversee the Military Health System, including the TRICARE programs; and Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training, who govern veterans employment programs across the country, will update service members, veterans, and their families on recent changes and improvements to care and benefits. [Learn more about the 120th VFW National Convention.](#) [Download the new mobile events app.](#)

2. President Trump Visits DMZ: On Sunday, President Trump became the first commander-in-chief to cross the demarcation line dividing North and South Korea. After exchanging greetings with North Korea's Kim Jong-un, the two walked back across the border to discuss a potential third bilateral summit along with South Korean president Moon Jae-in. Following their hour long meeting, President Trump stated that he and Mr. Kim had agreed to resume negotiations in the next few weeks, and that Mr. Stephen Biegun will remain in place as the U.S. Special Representative to North Korea.

3. Assistance with Vocational Rehabilitation: The VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program, commonly known as Voc Rehab, is an excellent benefit that is not utilized by as many eligible veterans who may need it. VR&E services can assist eligible veterans with resume development skills, job search training, employment accommodations, and education in order to keep employed through different avenues. The VR&E program offers individual counselors to accommodate the different needs of the clients they serve. The VFW encourages all veterans to learn more about VR&E services and see if you may be eligible for this great benefit. [Learn more.](#)

4. VA Video Appointments: Veterans who use VA can now book appointments with their providers to be seen on the VA Video Connect app in lieu of face-to-face appointments. The app

provides a secure video connection through a camera phone, computer, or tablet and gives direct, real-time access to health care teams. VA Video Connect has successfully enabled thousands of veterans to receive services while reducing their travel and wait times. Through a partnership with VA, T-Mobile and Verizon Wireless have offered its customers the ability to access the VA Video Connect app without incurring data charges. [Learn more.](#)

5. MIA Update: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has announced the identifications of two American servicemen who had been missing and unaccounted for from WWII and the Korean War. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Army Pfc. David C. Wilkes** was a member of Company D, 1st Battalion 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. Approximately 2,500 U.S. and 700 South Korean soldiers assembled into the 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT), which was deployed east of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea, when it was attacked by overwhelming numbers of Chinese forces. Wilkes was initially reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, when he could not be accounted for after the withdrawal, but his status was later amended to killed in action. Interment services are pending. [Read about Wilkes.](#)

-- **Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. Kenneth W. Likens** was a member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. In Nov. 1943, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed, and more than 2,000 were wounded during the fighting. Likens died on the third day of the battle, Nov. 22, 1943. He was reported to have been buried in the East Division Cemetery, which was eventually renamed to Cemetery #33. Interment services are pending. [Read about Likens.](#)

To sign up new veterans' advocates, visit: <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 vfwac@vfw.org.

To view this week's and previous editions, visit: <http://www.vfw.org/actioncorpsweekly>.