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1. VFW Attends Presidential Signing of the National POW/MIA Flag Act: On Thursday, VFW Washington Office Executive Director B.J. Lawrence stood in solidarity with the Veteran Service Organization community as U.S. President Donald J. Trump signed the *National POW/MIA Flag Act* into law. The law requires the POW/MIA flag to be displayed whenever the American flag is displayed at prominent federal properties. “This is a historic victory for every man and woman who courageously defended this nation and remain unaccounted for,” said VFW National Commander William “Doc” Schmitz. “Today’s presidential signing and the daily display of the POW/MIA flag at all prominent federal properties now serves as a daily reminder that these heroes, and their families, are forever etched in our DNA.” [Read the VFW statement.](#)

2. Legislation Introduced to Help Veterans Exposed to Burn Pits: Representative Raul Ruiz (D-Calif.) introduced VFW-supported H.R. 4574, the *Veterans’ Right to Breathe Act*. Rep. Ruiz introduced this bipartisan bill with Representatives Joaquin Castro (D-Texas) and Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.). This important legislation would establish a presumption of service connection for veterans who were exposed to burn pits for nine pulmonary diseases including asthma, pneumonia, and chronic bronchiolitis. “For years the VFW has been calling for the connection of research and presumptive illnesses surrounding open air burn pits,” said National Legislative Service Deputy Director Pat Murray. “The *Veterans’ Right to Breathe Act* is a great step in making sure veterans affected by toxins from burn pits are finally provided the care and benefits they deserve.” The VFW thanks all cosponsors for their efforts to improve benefits and health care for veterans exposed to burn pits. [Learn more.](#)

3. VFW Surpasses \$9B in Benefits for Our Veterans Nationwide: VFW Service Officers recovered more than \$9 billion in benefits for veterans for the first time this past fiscal year. VFW Service Officers were responsible for the recovery of a total of \$9,059,726,902 for veterans, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. “This is a true testament to the dedication and service our VFW Service Officers have for every veteran he or she comes in contact with,” said VFW National Commander William “Doc” Schmitz. “Our veterans deserve nothing but the absolute-best customer service experience that our organization has proven to deliver day-in and day-out.” [Read more.](#)

4. TRICARE Open Season: TRICARE Open Season will run from Nov. 11 to Dec. 9, 2019. It is important to note that new retirees have only one year to enroll for TRICARE Prime. If they forget to enroll in TRICARE Prime, individuals are no longer going to be automatically enrolled into TRICARE Select and will have to wait for the next Open Season enrollment period. Individuals already enrolled can change their TRICARE coverage. [Learn more.](#)

5. Veterans Day Discounts and Freebies: As a display of gratitude and appreciation, community partners around the nation have joined together on Veterans Day to honor servicemen and women, veterans, and their families for their sacrifice and dedication to this nation. [Walgreens](#) will be offering a 20 percent discount for military service members, veterans and their families Nov. 8-11. Participating [Sport Clips](#) locations will be offering free haircuts to active-duty U.S. service members and veterans on Monday, Nov. 11. [More Veterans Day discounts.](#)

6. MIA Update: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced two new identifications, and five burial updates for service members who have been missing and unaccounted-for from WWII and the Korean War. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Marine Corps Cpl. Thomas H. Cooper**, 22, of Omaha, Nebraska, was a member of Company A, 2nd Amphibious Tractor Battalion, 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 an attempt to secure the island. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed, including Cooper, who died on the first day of battle, Nov. 20, 1943. Interment services are pending. [Read about Cooper.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. Horace H. Middleton**, 20, of Northumberland, Pennsylvania, was a member of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), also known as Merrill's Marauders, as an infantryman in the China-Burma-India Theater. After taking the airfield in Myitkyina, Burma, from the Japanese on May 17, 1944. Middleton's battalion was tasked with holding the airfield and taking part in the siege of Myitkyina. Middleton was killed during fighting on July 12, 1944. Interment services are pending. [Read about Middleton.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. Harold K. Knight**, 20, of Erie, Pennsylvania, was a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 31st Infantry Regiment, 31st Regimental Combat Team. His unit was engaged in intense fighting with the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces, near the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea, from Nov. 27 - Dec. 1, 1950. Witness accounts noted that Knight was killed in action Nov. 25, 1950. Knight is tentatively scheduled to be buried in the spring or summer of 2020 in Pennsylvania. [Read about Knight.](#)

-- **U.S. Army 1st Lt. George S. Crisp**, 24, of Alba, Texas, was killed during the Korean War. Crisp was a member of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. His unit was engaged in intense fighting with the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces at Sinhung-ri, near the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. He was reported to have last been seen near Hagaru-ri, but his remains could not be located. The U.S. Army declared Crisp deceased as of Dec. 12, 1950. Crisp will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. The date has yet to be determined. [Read about Crisp.](#)

-- **U.S. Army Cpl. Earl W. Duncan**, 23, of McAdenville, North Carolina, was killed during the Korean War. Duncan was a member of Company D, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, 31st Regimental Combat Team. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2,

1950, in the vicinity of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Duncan will be buried Nov. 30, 2019, in Gastonia, North Carolina. [Read about Duncan.](#)

-- **Marine Corps Pfc. Harry C. Morrissey**, 27, of Everett, Massachusetts, was a member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division. On Oct. 9, 1942, Morrissey's unit was part of the main offensive action in the Battle of Guadalcanal. Morrissey was killed in action during the two-month battle. He and two other Marines from his battalion were interred in graves atop Hill 73. Morrissey will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. The date has yet to be determined. [Read about Morrissey.](#)

-- **Army Sgt. Walter H. Tobin, Jr.**, 22, of Glen Lake, Michigan, was a member of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, 31st Regimental Combat Team. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, when enemy forces attacked his unit near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. His remains could not be recovered following the attack. Tobin will be buried Nov. 14, 2019, in Glen Arbor, Mich. [Read about Tobin.](#)

7. Correction: In the November 1, 2019 edition of the Action Corps Weekly (Item #5 American Troops Continue to be Identified) it was incorrectly reported that then VFW Commander-in-Chief B.J. Lawrence sent a letter to President Trump urging him to include the return of American remains as a discussion point with Kim Jong Un in advance of the June 12, 2018, Singapore summit. In fact, it was then VFW Commander-in-Chief Keith Harman who signed the letter to the president requesting POW/MIA issue be a part of discussions with North Korea. The Action Corps Weekly regrets the error.

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>.