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1. VFW Thanks Taiwanese Government for Generous Donation: On Monday, Veterans of Foreign Wars Washington Office Executive Director B.J. Lawrence met with Hsiao Bi-khim, Taiwan's de facto ambassador to the United States. The two met at the VFW Washington Office where Lawrence thanked her for the wonderful and generous donation of 250,000 medical masks from the Taiwanese government. The masks are scheduled to be delivered over the next few days to VFW Departments and the veteran community around the world to help keep them healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. VFW Participates in Agent Orange Press Conference: VFW National Legislative Service Deputy Director Matthew Doyle participated in a virtual press conference hosted by Rep. Josh Harder (D-CA). The purpose was to urge Congress to add bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and parkinsonism to the list of presumptive conditions associated with Agent Orange exposure. A provision to add these conditions is currently included in [S. 4049](#), the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021*. Doyle stated, "Many of our Vietnam veteran members believe that VA thinks it's too expensive to care for them. The evidence regarding these conditions is conclusive – no more studies are needed. Any additional, unnecessary delay is a breach of our nation's promise to care for its veterans." [Watch the press conference.](#)

3. Unprecedented Poll Worker Shortage: Healthy elections require poll workers, the majority of whom are over the age of 60. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, election officials are reporting an unprecedented shortage. Without sufficient numbers of poll workers, it is possible that polling locations could have long lines, lack of staff to assist voters, and possible closures of polling locations. The VFW encourages any member, advocate, or supporter, who is healthy and willing, to consider becoming a poll worker for the general election in November. The [Stanford-MIT Healthy Election Project](#) has partnered with local organizations like Power the Polls, which helps to follow up with applicants, confirm their commitment, and assist them in completing the process. If you sign up through this [special VFW link](#), you will be contacted by Power the Polls, a partner organization, or your local election administrators.

4. Gulf Coast States Eligible for Emergency Prescription Refills: Tropical Storm Marco and Hurricane Laura made landfall this week on the Gulf Coast. In response, TRICARE added Florida, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Georgia to the list of states eligible for emergency prescription refills. You may obtain a prescription refill by bringing your prescription bottle to any TRICARE retail network pharmacy. [Learn more.](#)

5. Military Family Members and Retirees to Receive New ID Cards: Active-duty military family members, retirees and their family members will get new ID cards as they renew or replace their IDs over the next five years. It will be similar to the common access card used by military personnel and DOD civilian personnel, without the chip. Unless your ID card is about to expire, there is no need to rush to get the new card, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Read more.](#)

6. TRICARE Select Enrollment Fee to Start Jan. 1: DOD announced that TRICARE Select Group A retirees will be required to pay an enrollment fee beginning on Jan. 1, 2021. Congress directed the *Defense Health Agency in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017* to implement TRICARE Select retiree enrollment fees, but delayed the implementation. Group A is comprised of retirees and their family members if the sponsor's initial enlistment or appointment occurred before Jan. 1, 2018. The enrollment fee is waived for medically retired individuals and their family members, and for survivors of active-duty deaths. During [TRICARE Open Season](#), which will run from Nov. 9 to Dec. 14, beneficiaries must set up an allotment with their regional contractors for the enrollment fee to begin on Jan. 1, 2021. Beneficiaries who do not set up their allotment by the deadline will be unenrolled due to nonpayment, and will have 90 days from the termination date to request reinstatement. [Learn more.](#)

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

- **Navy Seaman 1st Class Carl S. Johnson**, 20, was assigned to the battleship USS West Virginia, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS West Virginia sustained multiple torpedo hits, but timely counter-flooding measures taken by the crew prevented it from capsizing, and it came to rest on the shallow harbor floor. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 106 crewmen, including Johnson. Interment services are pending. [Read about Johnson.](#)
- **Navy Fire Controlman 2nd Class George Gilbert**, 20, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Gilbert. Interment services are pending. [Read about Gilbert.](#)
- **Navy Coxswain Layton T. Banks**, 20, of Dallas, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Banks. Banks will be buried Oct. 24, 2020, in Plano, Texas. [Read about Banks.](#)
- **Navy Fireman 1st Class Frank E. Nicoles**, 24, of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was

attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS Oklahoma sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen, including Nicoles. Nicoles' family has yet to decide on a funeral date or location. [Read about Nicoles.](#)

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