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**1. HVAC Conducts Oversight Hearing on VA Telehealth:** On Tuesday, members of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs Technology Modernization and Health Subcommittees, VA, and VSOs discussed the expansion and impact of VA telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic. VFW National Legislative Service Associate Director Tammy Barlet stated according to data from a COVID-19 survey conducted by the VFW VA converted many routine care appointments to telehealth. "Telehealth overcomes longstanding barriers, allowing veterans to maintain their continuum care with providers they trust" she said. [Watch the hearing.](#)

**2. Take the VFW 2020 Voter Survey:** Today there are 2.1 million U.S. service members and 20 million veterans. Including spouses, surviving parents, and voting age children, this powerful voting bloc exceeds 100 million. With another federal election year upon us, the VFW believes it is important to survey our members and supporters to better understand your voting habits. The 10-question survey, which should take about two minutes to complete, will run through June 30, 2020. Your feedback is important to the VFW. [Take the survey.](#)

**3. TRICARE Select Enrollment Fees Beginning 2021:** Starting in 2021, some military retirees will have enrollment fees for the first time. This group includes those using TRICARE Select, who are under 65 years old, and who joined the military before 2018. The monthly fee for an individual is \$12.50 and \$25 for a family. Defense health officials stated these veterans will receive communication from their regional contractors with instructions on how to set up payments. It is important to note that failure to pay will mean loss of coverage until the following open enrollment period. [Learn more.](#)

**4. Complete the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry:** All veterans who served in eligible locations should include their information in the [Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pits Registry](#). Participation in the registry is very important as it will allow VA to track burn pit exposure and draw inferences regarding associated adverse health effects. Exposure to burn pits may be associated with respiratory conditions such as asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD). Recently, VA stated that veterans with underlying respiratory conditions [may be at greater risk](#) for developing

complications related to COVID-19. Service members and veterans who have already signed up for the registry should make sure that their contact information, phone number, address, and email are up-to-date.

**5. IRS Extends Deadlines for Disaster Situations:** On Tuesday, the IRS announced that victims of the April tornadoes, severe storms, and flooding that took place in parts of Mississippi, Tennessee and South Carolina will have until Oct. 15, 2020, to file individual and business tax returns. The IRS is offering this relief to areas designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as qualifying for individual assistance. [Find the current list of eligible localities.](#)

**6. MIA Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced four new identifications 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:

-- **Navy Fire Controlman 3rd Class Robert T. Stout**, 21, 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 Stout. Interment services are pending. [Read about Stout.](#)

-- **Marine Corps Pfc. John M. Fahy**, 19, was a member of Company D, 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 an attempt to secure the island. Over several days of intense fighting at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded, while the Japanese were virtually annihilated. Fahy died on the third day of battle, Nov. 22, 1943. Interment services are pending. [Read about Fahy.](#)

-- **Army Master Sgt. James L. Quong**, 30, was an Army Reserve captain in World War II but gave up his commission to join the Regular Army as a master sergeant in the Korean War, he was a member of Company D, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Dec. 2, 1950, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Quong.](#)

-- **Army Cpl. Francis J. Rochon**, 21, was a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action on Sept. 1, 1950, near Changnyeong, South Korea. The Army officially declared Rochon deceased on Dec. 31, 1953, and declared his remains non-recoverable Jan. 16, 1956. Interment services are pending. [Read about Rochon.](#)

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