



ACTION CORPS WEEKLY



September 13, 2021



VFW Visits National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial: On Wednesday, VFW National Commander Fritz Mihelcic and VFW Washington Office Executive Director B.J. Lawrence visited the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial in Arlington, Virginia. On behalf of the 1.5 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary they presented a wreath in honor of those who lost their lives during the terrorist attack on Sept. 11, 2001. The ceremony was followed by a brief tour of the memorial by a member of the Pentagon Honor Guard who spoke about its design and meaning and how it relates to the tragic events from 20 years ago. On Saturday, Mihelcic traveled to Mount Airy, Maryland, for a 9/11 commemoration ceremony and the renaming of VFW Post 10076 in honor of Chief Warrant Officer 4 Bill Ruth, who was the Post commander when he and 183 people were killed in the 9/11 attack at the Pentagon.

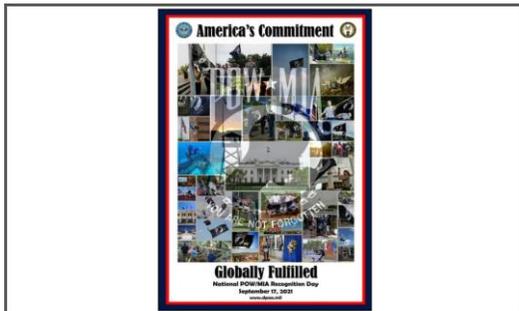


Former Defense Secretaries Back VFW-Supported GWOT Memorial Bill: Six former Defense Department secretaries who served during the past 20 years of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) have written an op-ed calling for a national memorial to honor the service members of America's longest running war. VFW-supported [H.R. 1115](#), the *Global War on Terrorism Memorial Location Act*, which has been stalled in Congress, would allow a GWOT Memorial to be constructed in a currently restricted area of the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The VFW believes this memorial is now due and belongs with the existing war memorials for WWII, Korea and Vietnam. [Read the op-ed.](#)



Substance Use Disorder and Suicide: VHA-enrolled veterans diagnosed with substance use disorders (SUD) had higher rates of suicide than those with depression or PTSD according to the [2020 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report](#).

Spreading awareness and reducing the stigma related to SUD is important in addressing and eliminating veteran suicide. Resources are available for anyone who needs help and can be instrumental in preventing someone from reaching the crisis point. VA's [SUD Program](#) offers specific treatment programs in many states. However, VA is dedicated to providing access for all veterans and areas without the program still offer SUD treatment. For any veteran in crisis, you are not alone. The Veterans Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by phone (1.800.273.8255, press 1), text (838255), or online chat by visiting [VeteransCrisisLine.net](#).



National POW/MIA Recognition Day: The nation sets aside the third Friday in September to remember our former POWs and our MIAs. On Friday, Sept. 17, 2021, we reflect on the more than 140,000 Americans who were captured in battle and the more than 82,000 Americans who remain missing and unaccounted-for since World War II.



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

-- **Navy Seaman 1st Class Joe R. Nightingale, 20**, of Kalamazoo, Michigan, 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 Nightingale. He will be buried on Dec. 7, 2021, in Augusta, Michigan. [Read about Nightingale.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 1st Class Wesley E. Graham, 21**, of Watervliet, Michigan, 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 Graham. He will be buried on Oct. 27, 2021, in Augusta, Michigan. [Read about Graham.](#)

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