



ACTION CORPUS WEEKLY



February 28, 2022



Take Action Now on Toxic Exposures:

Comprehensive toxic exposure legislation will be brought to the House floor this week. [H.R.3967](#), the *Honoring our PACT Act of 2021*, would help Post-9/11 veterans, Persian Gulf War veterans, K2 veterans, Atomic veterans, and Vietnam veterans, including those who served in Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. This historic legislation would help millions of veterans by establishing a permanent presumptive framework to address any toxic exposure, foreign or domestic, past, present, and future. It would provide VA health care access for all veterans exposed to hazards, create a concession of exposure for airborne toxins, and establish a list of presumptive conditions associated with burn pits and other exposures. Contact your representative and tell them to vote **YES** as soon as the *Honoring our PACT Act* is brought to the House floor. Toxic-exposed veterans cannot afford to wait any longer for health care and benefits. [Click to take action!](#)



VFW Virtual March Legislative Conference: The VFW March Legislative Conference will take place Feb. 28 – Mar. 2. Although the format will be virtual again this year, rest assured we will make sure that veterans' voices are heard on Capitol Hill. Our National Legislative Committee members will lead their department delegations along with their department's VFW-SVA Fellows to present the VFW's legislative priorities to members of Congress and their staffers. VFW National Commander Matthew "Fritz" Mihelcic will testify before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs on Wednesday, March 2, at 2:00 p.m. EST. [Watch the hearing.](#)



Student Veteran Enrollment Verification: Under new guidance, students receiving Post-9/11 GI Bill housing payments are now required to verify enrollment to VA by the end of each month. Students may opt-in to text message verification to ensure seamless receipt of their Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) payments. [Learn more](#) about the enrollment verification process.



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

-- **Army Sgt. Roy C. Delauter, 21**, of Smithsburg, Maryland, was assigned to Company D, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported killed in action on Dec. 1, 1950, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. Following the battle, his remains could not be recovered. Delauter will be buried in his hometown, on April 22, 2022. [Read about Delauter.](#)

-- **Army 1st Lt. Myles W. Esmay, 21**, of Utica, New York, was assigned to Company B, 236th Engineer Combat Battalion, reinforcing the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional). He was reported killed in action on June 7, 1944, on the last day of fighting against Japanese forces at Namkwi village as part of the siege of Myitkyina, Myanmar (Burma). Following the battle, his remains could not be identified. Esmay will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. The date has yet to be determined. [Read about Esmay.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces 1st Lt. John J. Heffernan Jr., 24**, of Brooklyn, New York, was assigned to 490th Bomb Squadron, 341st Bomb Group, 10th Air Force. On Feb. 22, 1944, the B-25G Mitchell bomber on which Heffernan was serving as a navigator burst into flames and crashed near Letpadaung, Myanmar (Burma). Following the war, his remains could not be identified. Heffernan will be buried in Middle Village, New York. The date has yet to be determined. [Read about Heffernan.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 1st Class James R. Ward, 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 Ward. Interment services are pending. [Read about Ward.](#)

-- **Army Cpl. William M. Zoellick, 18**, was assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. He was captured on Nov. 30, 1950, after his unit was attacked by the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces. Zoellick was reported to have been a POW in Camp #1, and died on Feb. 27, 1951. Interment services are pending. [Read about Zoellick.](#)

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