



ACTION CORPUS WEEKLY



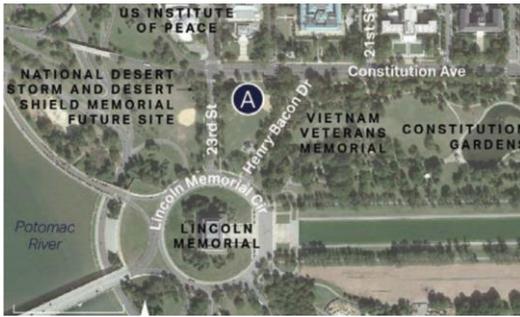
April 24, 2023



Health Subcommittee Oversight Hearing: The House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health held a hearing on providing veterans access to life-saving substance abuse disorder treatment. Witnesses from VA answered questions on its policies and procedures regarding substance abuse treatment programs, wait times, and access to care. Subcommittee Chairwoman Miller-Meeks (IA-02) said, "Our country has been experiencing a substance abuse and overdose epidemic, we are seeing historic highs, and our nation's veterans are not immune. One death from substance use disorder is too many." [Watch the hearing.](#)



Access to Care Expansion: President Biden signed an executive order that directs nearly every cabinet-level agency to expand access to care. The directives for VA include improving access to home-based care for veterans who require assistance with daily living activities, and consideration of expanding its Veteran Directed Care program to all 172 VA Medical Centers by the end of fiscal year 2024. This program is a vital resource for certain veterans who require support due to their service-connected injuries or illnesses. [Read the executive order.](#)



Global War on Terrorism Memorial Site Selected: The VFW-championed *Global War on Terrorism Memorial Location Act* that became law in 2021 authorized its construction on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The National Capital Planning Commission has now authorized the Global War on Terrorism Memorial Foundation to begin designing the memorial for the Site A location, which is situated north of the Lincoln Memorial between the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the site of the future National Desert Storm and Desert Shield Memorial. The Foundation is now able to proceed to steps 13-19 of the 24-step memorial construction process after being in steps 9-12 since August 2017.



Report on DOD Suicide Prevention and Response Programs: Established in May 2022, the Suicide Prevention and Response Independent Review Committee (SPRIRC) recently released its report following a comprehensive review of related DOD programs. The SPRIRC, which is comprised of ten subject matter experts, visited nine domestic and overseas military installations and spoke with nearly 3,000 stakeholders including service members and families, civilian personnel, and representatives from the military and veteran community. It concluded that the limited response to date to suicide within DOD has resulted in persistent elevated rates, and SPRIRC made 127 recommendations for DOD to review and act upon. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin subsequently released a memorandum outlining the Pentagon's next steps and planned actions to address the report findings. [Read the SPRIRC report.](#) [Read the Secretary of Defense memorandum.](#)



MIA Update: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced two burial updates for service members who have been missing and unaccounted-for from WWII and Korea. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:
--Army Sgt. Richard E. Crotty, 22, of Geneva, Illinois, was a member of Easy Company, 2nd Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment. On Sept. 1, 1950, he was reported missing in action. The Army issued a presumptive finding of death on Dec. 31, 1953. He will be buried in Peoria, Illinois, on April 29, 2023. [Read about Crotty.](#)

--Army Air Forces 1st Lt. John B. Thomas, 23, of Rochester, New York, was assigned to the 345th Bombardment Squadron, 98th Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On August 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator he was piloting was hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire and crashed during Operation Tidal Wave. He will be buried in North Rose, New York, on May 20, 2023. [Read about Thomas.](#)

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