

July 15, 2024



VFW Speaks at Press Conference: The VFW proudly stood alongside partner Veterans Service Organizations, supporters, and advocates to urge for swift passage of the *Major Richard Star Act*. America's veterans have served and sacrificed for this country, and the VFW is calling upon Congress to pass this commonsense bill to finally take care of the veterans who were wounded in service.



House Subcommittee Pending Legislation Hearing: VFW National Legislative Associate Director Nancy Springer provided a statement for the record regarding several bills discussed during a House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs hearing. Overall, the legislation pertains to modernizing and improving the delivery of benefits to veterans and survivors. More specifically, these bills aim to safeguard VA claimants and certain veterans' due process rights, expand burial authorities, broaden the use of automated tools in VA claims processing, and update survivor benefits. [Read the testimony](#) or [watch the hearing](#), which begins at the 8:40 mark.



Afghanistan War Commission Begins Its Work: The bipartisan legislative Afghanistan War Commission (AWC) was established by the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022*. Co-chairs Shamila N. Chaudhary and Dr. Colin F. Jackson have announced the AWC will hold its first public hearing on Friday, July 19, 2024, beginning at 10:00 a.m. EDT, at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Washington Office, located at 200 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, D.C. Commissioners will hear

testimony from expert witnesses comprising two panels. [Learn more](#) or [watch the hearing](#).



VA Life Insurance Programs: Life insurance can provide enduring financial security for veterans and their families. However, due to pre-existing conditions, some veterans have difficulty obtaining affordable life insurance in the commercial marketplace. To bridge that gap, VA offers a variety of financially tailorable insurance policy options, including a guaranteed acceptance plan specifically designed for veterans with service-connected disabilities. [Read more](#) about VA's life insurance programs and benefits.



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

-- **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Allan W. Knepper, 27**, of Lewiston, Idaho, was with the 49th Fighter Squadron, 14th Fighter Group. He went missing in action on July 10, 1943. He will be buried in his hometown on Aug. 2, 2024. [Read about Knepper](#).

-- **Army Pvt. 1st Class Alcario V. Flores, 37**, of Coolidge, Arizona, was assigned to Company G, 2nd Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division. He was killed in action on Jan. 21, 1945. He will be buried in Tempe, Arizona, on Aug. 3, 2024. [Read about Flores](#).

-- **Army Sgt. Sam A. Prince, 28**, of Clovis, New Mexico, was a member of Headquarters Battery, 200th Coast Artillery Regiment. He was among those captured during the surrender of the Bataan peninsula on April 9, 1942, and died while a prisoner of war on Sept. 22 that same year. He will be buried in his hometown on Aug. 8, 2024. [Read about Prince](#).

-- **Army Corporal Jesse L. Mitchell, 22**, of Shawnee, Oklahoma, was a member of C Company, 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division. He died while a prisoner of war in summer 1951. He will be buried in his hometown on Oct. 12, 2024. [Read about Mitchell](#).

-- **Army Pvt. William A. Smith, 21**, of Syracuse, Missouri, was assigned to Company C, 149th Engineer Combat Battalion. He was killed in action on June 6, 1944, enroute to Omaha Beach in Normandy.

He will be buried in St. Louis, Missouri, on Nov. 11, 2024. [Read about Smith.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. Frank J. Tedone, 23**, of Hartford, Connecticut, was a member of the 436th Bombardment Squadron, 7th Bombardment Group. He went missing in action on Dec. 1, 1943. He will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, on a date to be determined. [Read about Tedone.](#)

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