



# ACTION CORPUS WEEKLY



September 26, 2022



**Senate Hearing on Recruiting and Retention:** VFW National Legislative Associate Director Brittany Dymond provided a statement for the record to the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Personnel regarding military recruiting and retention. She conveyed the importance of military quality of life as it pertains to both the retention of current service members and recruitment of new ones. “Like any occupation, benefit packages will always fall short if individuals’ basic needs, or those of their family members, are inconsistently satisfied,” said Dymond. Sexual assault and harassment, military housing issues, and food insecurity were among the topics highlighted. She also illustrated the clear connection between successful military transition and future generations’ decisions to serve. [Watch the hearing](#) or [read the testimony](#).



**VFW Attends Roundtable with House Leaders:** The VFW attended a veterans organization roundtable hosted by House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs Ranking Member Mike Bost (R-IL). VFW Assistant Legislative Director Kristina Keenan expressed the need to crack down on predatory claim consultants as more veterans seek VA benefits due to the passage of the PACT Act. She thanked Rep. Jake Ellzey (R-TX) for being the original cosponsor of [H.R. 8736](#), *Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act* or GUARD VA Benefits Act. This VFW-supported bill would reinstate penalties for charging veterans and survivors unauthorized fees to assist with claims for VA benefits. Keenan also expressed the need for more resources for Vet Centers to provide services in rural areas including mental health services, and more

data from VA to better understand veterans at risk of dying by suicide.



**2022 VA Suicide Prevention Report Released:** VA released its [2022 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report](#). The number of veterans who died by suicide in 2020 is the lowest annual number since 2006. According to the report, suicide was the second leading cause of death of veterans under the age of 45. The VFW has advocated for many years for VA to include all VA benefits usage in this report. The 2022 report shows data beyond the clinical interactions and provides a somewhat clearer picture of veterans who have no interaction with VA. “The problem of veteran suicide is a complex one that deserves serious study and academic rigor. I think the nation owes our veterans that much,” said VFW National Commander Tim Borland. [Read more.](#)



**No-Cost Flu Vaccines:** The CDC estimates 5,000 to 14,000 flu deaths occurred in the last year. Eligible veterans can receive a no-cost flu vaccine from Sept. 1, 2022, to April 30, 2023. Use the [VA locator](#) to find a VA facility, pharmacy, or urgent care location near you. It is recommended that you call ahead to ensure availability. [Read more.](#)



**MIA Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced five burial updates and seventeen 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 Pfc. Melvin J. Little Bear, 21**, of Standing Rock, South Dakota, was assigned to A Battery, 15th Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division. On Feb. 13, 1951, he was reported missing in action after his unit was attacked by the Chinese People’s Volunteer Forces near Changbong-ni, South Korea. Little Bear had been captured and was a prisoner of war at POW Camp No. 1. Subsequent reports and information from the Chinese and North Korean forces indicated he died in captivity on or about July 21, 1951. He will be buried on Sept. 30, 2022, in McLaughlin, South Dakota. [Read about Little Bear.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. John L. Ferguson, 20**, of Flanagan, Illinois, was assigned to the 28th Material Squadron, U.S. Army Air Forces, when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands in December 1941. Intense fighting continued until the surrender of the Bataan peninsula in 1942. Ferguson was among those captured and held at the Cabanatuan POW Camp, where he reportedly died on Dec. 10, 1942, and was buried. He will be buried on Oct. 1, 2022, in Gridley, Illinois. [Read about Ferguson.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 2nd Class Pete Turk, 20**, of Scammon, Kansas, was assigned to the battleship USS California, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The USS California sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to catch fire and slowly flood. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 104 crewmen, including Turk. He will be buried on Oct. 17, 2022, in Manhattan, Kansas. [Read about Turk.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. Moses F. Tate, 23**, of Seneca, Kansas, was assigned to the 415th Bombardment Squadron, 98th Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft on which Tate was a gunner crashed as a result of anti-aircraft fire during Operation Tidal Wave. Following the war, his remains could not be identified. He will be buried on Oct. 27, 2022, in Springfield, Missouri. [Read about Tate.](#)

-- **Army Air Force Staff Sgt. Roy Carney, 20**, of Electra, Texas, was assigned to the 345th Bombardment Squadron, 98th Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft on which Carney was a gunner crashed as a result of anti-aircraft fire during Operation Tidal Wave. Following the war, his remains could not be identified. He will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, on a date yet to be determined. [Read about Carney.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Wayne L. Dyer, 22**, was assigned to the 569th Bombardment Squadron, 390th Bombardment Group, 13th Bombardment Wing, 3rd Air Division. On May 29, 1944, the B-17G Flying Fortress bomber on which Dyer was serving as the navigator was shot down by enemy fighters northeast of Leipzig, Germany. His body was not recovered, nor was there evidence of him surviving or being a prisoner of war. A finding of death was issued a year after the crash. Interment services are pending. [Read about Dyer.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Melvin B. Meyer, 25**, was assigned to the 569th Bombardment Squadron, 390th Bombardment Group, 13th Bombardment Wing, 3rd Air Division, 8th Air Force. On May 29, 1944, the B-17G Flying Fortress bomber on which Meyer was serving as bombardier was shot down by enemy fighters northeast of Leipzig, Germany. His body was not recovered, nor was there evidence of him surviving or being a prisoner of war. A finding of death was issued a year after the crash. Interment services are pending. [Read about Meyer.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Carl D. Nesbitt, 23**, was assigned to the 569th Bombardment Squadron, 390th Bombardment Group, 13th Bombardment Wing, 3rd Air Division, 8th Air Force. On May 29, 1944, the B-17G Flying Fortress bomber on which Nesbitt was piloting was shot down by enemy fighters northeast of Leipzig, Germany. His body was not recovered, nor was there evidence of him surviving or being a prisoner of war. A finding of death was issued a year after the crash. Interment services are pending. [Read about Nesbitt.](#)

-- **Army Pvt. Robert R. Gruwell, 20**, was assigned to Company G, 3rd Battalion, 517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team. On Aug. 15, 1944, his unit landed on the southern coast of France as part of Operation Dragoon. Gruwell's unit landed near Callian in the early morning, and he went missing sometime that day between Callian and LeMuy. He was never reported as a prisoner of war and no remains were recovered. His status was changed to killed in action on May 15, 1945. Interment services are pending. [Read about Gruwell.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Francis V. Montemurro, 25**, was assigned to the 345th Bombardment Squadron, 98th Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft on which Montemurro was serving as navigator crashed as a result of anti-aircraft fire during Operation Tidal Wave. His remains could not be identified following the war. Interment services are pending. [Read about Montemurro.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces Tech Sgt. James M. Howie, 24**, was assigned to the 345th Bombardment Squadron, 98th Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft on which Howie was serving as radio operator crashed as a result of anti-aircraft fire during Operation Tidal Wave. His remains could not be identified following the war. Interment services are pending. [Read about Howie.](#)

-- **Army Cpl. Franklin H. Bennett, 20**, was assigned to the 54th Signal Maintenance Company when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands in December 1941. Intense fighting continued until the surrender of the Bataan peninsula in 1942. He was among those captured and held at the Cabanatuan POW Camp, where he reportedly died on July 19, 1942, and was buried. Interment services are pending. [Read about Bennett.](#)

-- **Army Cpl. Joe A. Vinyard, 23**, was assigned to Company A, 774th Tank Battalion, as a crewmember on an M4 Sherman Tank. In December 1944, his unit was engaged in battle with German forces near Gey, Germany, in Hürtgen Forest, when his tank was hit by an 88-mm round. The crew bailed out of the tank, but when they regrouped a few minutes later, Vinyard was missing. He was never reported as a prisoner of war and no remains were recovered. A presumptive finding of death was issued in April 1946. Interment services are pending. [Read about Vinyard.](#)

-- **Army Cpl. Clark E. Worline, 20**, was assigned to Company C, 2nd Chemical Mortar Battalion, 8th U.S. Army. On Nov. 26, 1950, he was reported missing in action after fighting against the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces near Sinjang, North Korea. Interment services are pending. [Read about Worline.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Theodore F. Scarborough, 21**, was assigned to the 345th Bombardment Squadron, 98th Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft on which Scarborough was serving as bombardier crashed as a result of anti-aircraft fire during Operation Tidal Wave. His remains could not be identified following the war. Interment services are pending. [Read about Scarborough.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces Tech Sgt. Ralph E. Richardson, 21**, was assigned to the 329th Bombardment Squadron, 93rd Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft on which Scarborough was serving as radio operator crashed as a result of anti-aircraft fire during Operation Tidal Wave. His remains could not be identified following the war. Interment services are pending. [Read about Richardson.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. Ralph D. Kolb, 19**, was assigned to the 343rd Bombardment Squadron, 98th Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force. On Aug. 1, 1943, the B-24 Liberator aircraft on which Scarborough was serving as radio operator crashed as a result of anti-aircraft fire during Operation Tidal

Wave. His remains could not be identified following the war. Interment services are pending. [Read about Kolb.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. Clinton P. Koloski, 21**, was assigned to Company A, 36th Engineer Combat Regiment. On Jan. 14, 1945, his unit was on patrol near Obermuhlthal, France, when it encountered German soldiers in fortified positions. Koloski was killed during the fighting and his body was unable to be immediately recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Koloski.](#)

-- **Army Sgt. Thaddeus S. Matuszak, 31**, was assigned to Company K, 11th Infantry Regiment, 5th Infantry Division. In September 1944, his unit was part of a larger force ordered to cross the Moselle River near Dornot and take up a position. They held their position against German attacks. The unit was allowed to retreat on the night of Sept. 10 into the morning of the Sept. 11. Matuszak was reported missing that night and his body was unable to be recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Matuszak.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. Mark P. Wilson, 20**, was assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 112th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division. On Nov. 8, 1944, his unit was tasked with holding the town of Kommerscheidt, Germany, in the Hürtgen Forest, when he was reported missing in action. Wilson was never reported as a prisoner of war and no remains were recovered. He was declared killed in action following the war. Interment services are pending. [Read about Wilson.](#)

-- **Army Cpl. Joseph H. Gunnoe, 21**, was assigned to Company G, 112th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division. On Nov. 6, 1944, he was likely killed as his unit was driven from Vossenack, Germany, in the Hürtgen Forest, by a German attack. Gunnoe was never reported as a prisoner of war and no remains were recovered. He was declared killed in action following the war. Interment services are pending. [Read about Gunnoe.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. Ithiel E. Whatley, 19**, was assigned to Company M, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division. On July 12, 1950, he was reported missing in action after his unit was engaged in a fighting withdrawal south of Chochi'won, South Korea, toward the Kum River. Whatley was never reported as a prisoner of war and no remains were recovered. The Army issued a presumptive finding of death on Jan. 4, 1954. Interment services are pending. [Read about Whatley.](#)

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