

March 15, 2014

1. Denied a Medal of Honor, a worthy soldier finds out why decades later.
2. Japan testing drums dug up on Camp Foster for toxins.
3. Air Force leaders detail force cuts, defend religion policies.
4. New policy allows Navy to send some sailors back to sea early.
5. Army used Thrift Savings Plan in fake e-mail to test cybersecurity awareness.
6. Congress seeks independence for Gulf War illness board.
7. Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki says agency is open and accountable, then clams up.
8. Congress Wants to Shield Veterans From Another Government Shutdown.
9. VA is Competing for the Pentagon's Electronic Health Record Contract.
10. Women Veterans Summit is April 17.
11. Vet Groups Question \$1 Billion VA Jobs Program.
12. Will more money for VA fix the IT 'deficiencies'?
13. Concerned Vets to testify before congress.
14. Servicemen and women: VA care for older veterans has different approach.
15. VA Mobile Vet Center to offer counseling services in Paragould, Walnut Ridge.
16. A look around the Dallas VA Hospital.
17. McGuire VA hospital shows off \$8 million renovation to laundry.
18. VA clinic moving to MCLB.
19. Wisconsin delegation pushes VA on claims backlog.
20. Experts: Veterans' Disability Programs Need Reform.
21. Homeless vets forced to leave: Where will they go?
22. On flag protests, court takes the VA's word.
23. New, more secure veterans ID cards coming.
24. Prison inmates join new American Legion post in Indiana.
25. VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as March 15, 2014:
26. Today in History:

March 15, 2014

1. [Denied a Medal of Honor, a worthy soldier finds out why decades later.](#) Again and again, over the decades, John "Mac" MacFarland searched lists of Medal of Honor recipients, looking for Santiago Jesse Erevia's name. He feared that his recommendation had failed to capture Erevia's extraordinary heroism.
2. [Japan testing drums dug up on Camp Foster for toxins.](#) About 12 objects — what is thought to be a mix of culvert pipes, a wheel assembly and a drum — were discovered during a Japanese cultural assets survey at a construction site for facilities related to the new U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa.
3. [Air Force leaders detail force cuts, defend religion policies.](#) Air Force leaders detailed future force cuts and defended the service's religious accommodation practices after coming under attack from conservative lawmakers at a congressional budget hearing.
4. [New policy allows Navy to send some sailors back to sea early.](#) The policy allows the Navy to pull some enlisted sailors from shore duty early when sea duty vacancies outnumber the sailors available.
5. [Army used Thrift Savings Plan in fake e-mail to test cybersecurity awareness.](#) An ominous e-mail message landed in the inboxes of a small group of U.S. Army employees last month, warning of a security breach in their federal retirement plans and urging them to log in and check their accounts. The e-mail was a fake.
6. [Congress seeks independence for Gulf War illness board.](#) [Hyperlink to Article USA Today:](#) Two representatives introduced an act Friday seeking more autonomy for a board that provides oversight on Gulf War illness research after Veterans Affairs limited the board's charge.
7. [Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki says agency is open and accountable, then clams up.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Washington Examiner:](#) Openness and accountability are important to maintain the public's trust in the [Department of Veterans Affairs](#), Secretary [Eric Shinseki](#) told a congressional committee Thursday.
8. [Congress Wants to Shield Veterans From Another Government Shutdown.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Government Executive:](#) During the last government shutdown, lawmakers feared veterans were days away from not receiving their disability checks.

March 15, 2014

9. [VA is Competing for the Pentagon's Electronic Health Record Contract.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **NextGov:** The Veterans Affairs Department plans to enter its next generation electronic health record into the competition for the Defense Department's EHR job, VA Secretary Eric Shinseki told a hearing of the House Veterans Affairs Committee Thursday.
10. [Women Veterans Summit is April 17.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Salisbury Post:** The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the N.C. Division of Veterans Affairs are partnering to host a Women Veterans Summit and Expo on April 17. The Summit will take place from 8 a.m. until 6:30 p.m. at the N.C. National Guard Joint Forces Headquarters in Raleigh.
11. [Vet Groups Question \\$1 Billion VA Jobs Program.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Military.com:** The administration is again hoping to establish a major veterans' employment program that would see thousands of former service members employed in public sector jobs across the country.
12. [Will more money for VA fix the IT 'deficiencies'?](#) [Hyperlink to Above Article](#) **Federal Computer Week:** The Department of Veterans Affairs wants to spend more money in 2015 on information technology, but will another \$180 million – a 5 percent increase to \$4.03 billion – be enough to shore up VA's highly publicized IT vulnerabilities?
13. [Concerned Vets to testify before congress.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Times-Georgian:** Two combat veterans from Tallapoosa plan to testify before a congressional committee soon on behalf of the VA Management Accountability Act of 2014, which would hold higher-ups in the Veterans Administration accountable for delivering improved services to veterans.
14. [Servicemen and women: VA care for older veterans has different approach.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Houston Chronicle:** With this change of focus, however, the in-home caregiver is responsible for more of the older veteran's care, and the VA is addressing this with additional services.
15. [VA Mobile Vet Center to offer counseling services in Paragould, Walnut Ridge.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **KAIT-TV:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Mobile Vet Center will visit Lawrence County on March 18 and Greene County on March 19.

March 15, 2014

16. [A look around the Dallas VA Hospital.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Dallas Business Journal:** The Veterans Affairs of North Texas Health Care System will open a 35-bed psychiatric unit in early June, and officials at the South Dallas hospital took the opportunity to showcase that and other parts of the facility on a media tour Friday.
17. [McGuire VA hospital shows off \\$8 million renovation to laundry.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Richmond Times-Dispatch:** Albert Boyd, textile care manager at McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical Center, demonstrated how laundry center workers there used to have to feed sheets into a machine for ironing.
18. [VA clinic moving to MCLB.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **WALB-TV (Video):** It's been a work in progress, but veterans and active duty military in South Georgia will begin to see healthcare improvements as early as next month.
19. [Wisconsin delegation pushes VA on claims backlog.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Oshkosh Northwestern:** The Milwaukee Regional Office of the Department of Veterans Affairs is one of the best in the country these days at processing veterans' disability and pension benefit claims.
20. [Experts: Veterans' Disability Programs Need Reform.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Weekly Standard:** Daniel Gade lost his right leg in Iraq. But Gade, an assistant professor of political science at the U.S. Military Academy, does not consider himself disabled. Instead, he uses himself as an example of how the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs often inaccurately assesses disability.
21. [Homeless vets forced to leave: Where will they go?](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **KGUN-TV (Video):** Homeless in a Northwest side wash -- forced to leave -- but where will they go?
22. [On flag protests, court takes the VA's word.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **San Francisco Chronicle:** The Department of Veterans Affairs has rules prohibiting the "posting of materials" on its property without prior approval.
23. [New, more secure veterans ID cards coming.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Newsday:** Veterans enrolled in VA Health Care should be on the lookout for a new ID card.
24. [Prison inmates join new American Legion post in Indiana.](#) Wearing khaki-colored matching uniforms, more than 20 veterans inside a maximum-security prison in Indiana stood tall to salute the flag of the United States at an event that welcomed them as new American Legion members.

March 15, 2014

25. VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as March 15, 2014:

- **March 25, 2014.** SAC-MILCON-VA FY15 Budget Hearing.
- **March 25, 2014.** HVAC, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity will hold a hearing on Veterans Affairs Bills.
 - H.R. 2942 — A bill to amend Title 38, United States Code, to reestablish the Professional Certification and Licensure Advisory Committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
 - H.R. 3056 — A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program on the provision of outreach and support services to veterans pursuing higher education under the Post 9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
 - H.R. 3614 — A bill to amend Title 38, United States Code, to improve the recognition by states of skills learned in the military by a Veteran when issuing licenses and credentials.
 - H.R. 4031 — Department of Veterans Affairs Management Accountability Act of 2014.
 - H.R. 4037 — A bill to amend Title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to training and rehabilitation for Veterans with service-connected disabilities, and for other purposes.
 - H.R. 4038 — A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make certain improvements in the information technology of the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs to process claims more efficiently, and for other purposes.
 - H.R. 4147 — Student Veterans IT Upgrade Act.
 - H.R. 4150 — Veterans Employment and Training Service Longitudinal Study Act of 2014.
 - H.R. 4151 — Veterans Education Survey Act of 2014.
- **March 25, 2014.** HVAC O&I will hold legislative hearing with issues related to construction, health, and other matters.
 - *HR 3593* – Mandating arrangement with US Army Corps of Engineers for three major construction projects
 - *Draft bill* – informed consent for psychotropic drugs
 - *Draft bill* – oversight of contracts with service-disabled veteran owned small businesses
 - *Draft bill* –Gulf War Illness
 - *Draft bill* –Improve information security by implementing actions to improve transparency and governance
 - *Draft bill* –Biological implant protocol and procurement
- **March 26, 2014.** House Veterans' Affairs Committee and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee will hold a joint hearing to receive the legislative presentations of The American Legion.

March 15, 2014

- **March 26, 2014:** HVAC DAMA will hold a Legislative Hearing on bills related to NCA and VBA.
 - HR 2018 – Honor Those Who Served Act
 - HR 2088 – Centers for Excellence
 - HR 2119 – Veterans Access to Speedy Review (Video Hearing)
 - HR 2529 – Veterans Spouse Equal Treatment Act
 - HR 3671 – NCA Medallion Bill
 - HR 3876 – Burial with Dignity Act
 - HR 4095 – Annual COLA
 - HR 4102 – Require Payment for Accrued Benefits to Veterans Estate
 - HR 4141 – Expand Enhanced Use Leases to Cemeteries
 - HR 4191 – Quicker Veterans Benefits Delivery Act (REVISED)

- **March 27, 2014.** HAC-MILCON-VA FY15 Budget Hearing.

- **March 27, 2014.** HVAC Health intends to hold a Legislative Hearing on health related bills.
 - H.R. 183 – The Veterans Dog Training Therapy Act
 - H.R. 2527 – Veterans counseling and treatment for sexual trauma that occurred during inactive duty training
 - H.R. 2661 – The Veterans Access to Timely Medical Appointments Act
 - H.R. 2974 – To provide for the eligibility for beneficiary travel for veterans seeking treatment or care for military sexual trauma in specialized outpatient or residential programs at facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes
 - H.R. 3387 – The Classified Veterans Access to Care Act
 - H.R. 3508 – Qualifications of hearing aid specialists
 - H.R. 3180 – To include contracts and grants for residential care for veterans in the exception to the requirement that the Federal Government recover a portion of the value of certain projects (Kaptur)
 - H.R. 3831 – The Veterans Dialysis Pilot Program Review Act of 2014 (Roe)
 - H.R. 4198 – The Appropriate Care for Disabled Veterans Act
 - DRAFT – To authorize major medical facility projects for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2014 and for other purposes. (VA FY14 Construction Package)

26. Today in History:

- [1493](#) – [Christopher Columbus](#) returns to [Spain](#) after his first trip to the [Americas](#).
- [1781](#) – [American Revolutionary War: Battle of Guilford Courthouse](#) – Near present-day [Greensboro, North Carolina](#), 1,900 [British](#) troops under General [Charles Cornwallis](#) defeat an American force numbering 4,400.

March 15, 2014

- [1783](#) – In an emotional speech in [Newburgh, New York](#), [George Washington](#) asks his officers not to support the [Newburgh Conspiracy](#). The plea is successful and the threatened [coup d'état](#) never takes place.
- [1820](#) – [Maine](#) becomes the 23rd [U.S. state](#).
- [1848](#) – A [revolution breaks out in Hungary](#). The [Habsburg](#) rulers are compelled to meet the demands of the Reform party.
- [1864](#) – [American Civil War](#): The [Red River Campaign](#) : U.S. Navy fleet arrives at [Alexandria, Louisiana](#).
- [1875](#) – [Archbishop of New York John McCloskey](#) is named the first [cardinal](#) in the United States.
- [1888](#) – Start of the [Anglo-Tibetan War of 1888](#).
- [1906](#) – [Rolls-Royce Limited](#) is incorporated.
- [1916](#) – [President Woodrow Wilson](#) sends 4,800 United States troops over the [U.S.-Mexico border](#) to [pursue Pancho Villa](#).
- [1917](#) – [Tsar Nicholas II of Russia](#) abdicates the [Russian](#) throne and his brother the Grand Duke becomes Tsar.
- [1922](#) – After [Egypt](#) gains nominal independence from the United Kingdom, [Fuad I](#) becomes [King of Egypt](#).
- [1926](#) – The dictator [Theodoros Pangalos](#) is elected President of Greece without opposition.
- [1931](#) – [SS Viking](#) explodes off [Newfoundland](#), killing 27 of the 147 on board.
- [1933](#) – [Austrian](#) Chancellor [Engelbert Dollfuss](#) keeps members of the [National Council](#) from convening, starting the [austrofascist](#) dictatorship.
- [1935](#) – [Percy Shaw](#) founded his company Reflecting Roadstuds Limited to make "[cat's eye](#)"s
- [1939](#) – World War II: [German](#) troops occupy the remaining part of [Bohemia](#) and [Moravia](#); [Czechoslovakia](#) ceases to exist.
- 1939 – [Carpatho-Ukraine](#) declares itself an independent republic, but is annexed by [Hungary](#) the next day.
- [1943](#) – World War II: [Third Battle of Kharkov](#) – the Germans retake the city of [Kharkov](#) from the [Soviet](#) armies in bitter street fighting.
- [1945](#) – World War II: Soviet forces begin an [offensive](#) to push Germans from [Upper Silesia](#).
- [1952](#) – In [Cilaos, Réunion](#), 1870 mm (73 inches) of [rain](#) falls in a 24-hour period, setting a new world record (March 15 through March 16).
- [1956](#) – [My Fair Lady](#) receives its premiere performance on Broadway at the Mark Hellinger Theatre.
- [1961](#) – [South Africa](#) withdraws from the [Commonwealth of Nations](#).
- [1965](#) – President [Lyndon B. Johnson](#), responding to the [Selma](#) crisis, tells [U.S. Congress](#) "We shall overcome" while advocating the [Voting Rights Act](#).
- [1978](#) – [Somalia](#) and [Ethiopia](#) signed a truce to end the [Ethiopian-Somali War](#).
- [1985](#) – The first [Internet domain name](#) is registered ([symbolics.com](#)).
- 1985 – [Brazilian military dictatorship](#) ends.
- [1986](#) – [Hotel New World Disaster](#): Thirty-three people die when the Hotel New World in Singapore collapses.
- [1990](#) – [Mikhail Gorbachev](#) is elected as the first [President of the Soviet Union](#).
- [1991](#) – The [Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany](#) comes into effect, granting full sovereignty to the [Federal Republic of Germany](#).
- [2011](#) – Beginning of the [Syrian civil war](#).