

# March 18, 2014

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2. Navy SEALs take control of hijacked tanker in Mediterranean.
3. NATO, Ukrainian minister talk closer ties in wake of Crimea referendum.
4. Seoul: NKorea test-fires 25 short-range rockets .
5. Hawaii to lose more than \$200M for military construction.
6. Army general pleads guilty in sex case, says 'I failed her' as leader.
7. Marijuana study in veterans wins federal backing.
8. Eric Shinseki, Secretary, Veterans Affairs Department.
9. VA To Compete for Pentagon's EHR Contract, Official Says.
10. Eric Shinseki: VA Seeks to Adopt Commercial Software for EHR Architecture.
11. New tool helps veterans and military with education benefits.
12. More veterans taking advantage of Post-9/11 GI Bill.
13. Lawsuit filed against VA Pittsburgh over Legionnaires' outbreak.
14. Rep. Flores pushes to name Waco VA hospital after WWII hero Doris Miller.
15. UPDATE: Quarantine lifted at Boise VA Medical Center's extended-care building.
16. Despite Trauma, Talents Shine At VA Hospital.
17. Mobile centers for veterans at Stockton Tuesday.
18. Ohio job fair offers help for vets who are ex-cons.
19. Widow faces setback in benefits battle.
20. Paralympics, at Peace as Wars Wind Down.
21. Last Sochi Shot: Three Combat Amputees Take Aim at Gold.
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1. [Heroics detailed for 24 soon to receive Medal of Honor](#). Spc. Santiago J. Erevia had orders to tend the wounded while the rest of the platoon pressed on attacking. But when he and the men under his care came under fire from four nearby Viet Cong bunkers on May 21, 1969, Erevia didn't dive for cover.
2. [Navy SEALs take control of hijacked tanker in Mediterranean](#). A team of U.S. Navy SEALs seized control early Monday of a commercial tanker that was hijacked in the Mediterranean earlier this month by a small group of armed Libyan men, the Defense Department said.
3. [NATO, Ukrainian minister talk closer ties in wake of Crimea referendum](#). NATO will forge closer ties with Ukraine and intensify efforts to help build up the country's military, the alliance's secretary general said Monday, a day after a controversial referendum in Crimea on secession.
4. [Seoul: NKorea test-fires 25 short-range rockets](#). North Korea fired 25 short-range rockets into the sea off its east coast Sunday in an apparent continuation of protests against ongoing U.S.-South Korean military drills, South Korean officials said.
5. [Hawaii to lose more than \\$200M for military construction](#). More than half of the \$449.5 million in projected military construction for Hawaii was axed from the Defense Department's 2015 budget request, and some other programs are being reduced or eliminated as the Pentagon starts to roll out the latest round of cuts.
6. [Army general pleads guilty in sex case, says 'I failed her' as leader](#). Brig. Gen. Jeffery Sinclair formally pleaded guilty Monday to maltreating a subordinate under his command, telling a military judge in halting voice that he deceived her during their illicit three-year affair and caused her "emotional distress."
7. [Marijuana study in veterans wins federal backing](#). The federal government has signed off on a long-delayed study looking at marijuana as a treatment for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder, a development that drug researchers are hailing as a major shift in U.S. policy.
8. [Eric Shinseki, Secretary, Veterans Affairs Department](#). [Hyperlink to Article WFED-AM - Federal News Radio \(Audio\)](#): The Department of Veterans Affairs wants an extra \$10 billion in its overall budget for fiscal 2015. That would supply the agency with more than \$160 billion. VA Secretary Eric Shinseki tells the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee about his agency's 2015 budget request.

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9. [VA To Compete for Pentagon's EHR Contract, Official Says](#). [Hyperlink to Article](#) **iHealthBeat**: On Thursday, Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki told lawmakers that VA plans to submit an advanced version of its electronic health record system as part of the competitive bidding process to replace the Department of Defense's current EHR system, EHR Intelligence reports.
10. [Eric Shinseki: VA Seeks to Adopt Commercial Software for EHR Architecture](#). [Hyperlink to Article](#) **ExecutiveGov**: The Department of Veterans Affairs is seeking to upgrade its existing electronic health record system as the Defense Department holds a competition to upgrade the Pentagon's EHR system, Nextgov reported Thursday.
11. [New tool helps veterans and military with education benefits](#). [Hyperlink to Article](#) **AL.com**: A new online GI Bill Comparison Tool makes it easier for veterans, service members and dependents to calculate their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and learn more about the VA's approved colleges, universities and other education and training programs across the country.
12. [More veterans taking advantage of Post-9/11 GI Bill](#). [Hyperlink to Article](#) **McClatchy**: Since the Post-9/11 GI Bill was fully enacted in 2009, South Carolina, for example, saw the number of such students increase 89 percent, according to an analysis of VA data... Nationwide, the increase from fiscal 2009 to fiscal 2012 – the last year data was available - was 67 percent, from 564,487 students to 945,052.
13. [Lawsuit filed against VA Pittsburgh over Legionnaires' outbreak](#). [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**: A Vietnam veteran who volunteered at the Veterans Affairs' University Drive hospital contracted Legionnaires' disease, the man says in a lawsuit filed Monday in federal court.
14. [Rep. Flores pushes to name Waco VA hospital after WWII hero Doris Miller](#). [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Waco Tribune-Herald**: U.S. Rep. Bill Flores is mounting an effort to rename the Waco Veterans Affairs Medical Center in honor of World War II veteran and Waco native Doris Miller.
15. [UPDATE: Quarantine lifted at Boise VA Medical Center's extended-care building](#). [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Idaho Statesman**: The Community Living Center building at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center campus in Boise was quarantined for more than a week — no visitors allowed in — due to a highly contagious virus, possibly norovirus. The quarantine was lifted Monday morning, a VA spokesman said.

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16. [Despite Trauma, Talents Shine At VA Hospital.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Vermont Public Radio (Audio):** Once or twice a year, veterans share the spotlight at the VA Hospital in White River Junction, competing for the chance to move on to national competition in the visual and performing arts. As their work shows, even the most traumatic events can become fodder for compelling art.
  
17. [Mobile centers for veterans at Stockton Tuesday.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Press of Atlantic City:** Two Mobile Vet Centers will be on campus at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey today... Coordinated by the Office of the Dean of Students and Veteran Affairs, the MVCs provide readjustment counseling and information resources for student veterans and help them make the difficult transition between military and civilian life.
  
18. [Ohio job fair offers help for vets who are ex-cons.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **San Francisco Chronicle (AP):** Officials in the Dayton area plan a job fair catering to military veterans — including those who have felony convictions... The event on Wednesday in Dayton is being sponsored jointly by the Montgomery County Office of Ex-Offender Re-entry and the Dayton-Veterans Affairs Medical Center.
  
19. [Widow faces setback in benefits battle.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Tennessean:** When Betty Osborne heard about World War II Marine veteran Millard Sells fighting for nearly two decades to get his veteran's disability benefits, she could only shake her head.
  
20. [Paralympics, at Peace as Wars Wind Down.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The New York Times:** A dozen years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, years of grenades and land mines and roadside bombs, left thousands of American soldiers and their allies without limbs. Many of them regained a sense of self after being introduced to adaptive sports, enjoying life outside the constraints of wheelchairs or prosthetic legs.
  
21. [Last Sochi Shot: Three Combat Amputees Take Aim at Gold.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **NBCNews.com:** The trio -- two retired Marines wounded in Afghanistan and a former U.S. soldier severely injured in Iraq -- proudly dubs itself the "Ugly Hockey Line." As a unit that separately weathered enemy fire, they're embracing a new mission at the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi: shut down the opponents' top scorers and finally claim gold in Russia.

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22. [Stanislaus van service delivers vets to health care. Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Modesto Bee:** Respect flows both ways when Joe Madden drives aging and ailing military veterans to Bay Area clinics... For five years, Madden used his own car and gas to cart others, often older, to Department of Veterans Affairs clinics in Livermore and Palo Alto.
23. [Routt County sees higher demand for transportation to nearest hospital for veterans. Hyperlink to Article](#) **Steamboat Pilot & Today:** And with a recent uptick in the number of veterans who need help making the trip, Stanko said it may be time to take another look at the local veterans transportation system that largely has stayed static for the past 12 years.
24. **VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as March 18, 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.

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- **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 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

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- 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)

## 25. Today in History:

- [1644](#) – The [Third Anglo-Powhatan War](#) begins in the [Colony of Virginia](#).
- [1741](#) – New York governor [George Clarke](#)'s complex at [Fort George](#) is burned in an arson attack, starting the [New York Conspiracy of 1741](#).
- [1766](#) – [American Revolution](#): The [British Parliament](#) repeals the [Stamp Act](#).
- [1834](#) – [Six farm labourers](#) from [Tolpuddle](#), [Dorset](#), England are sentenced to be transported to Australia for forming a [trade union](#).
- [1848](#) – [March Revolution](#): in Berlin there is a struggle between citizens and military, costing about 300 lives.
- [1850](#) – [American Express](#) is founded by [Henry Wells](#) and [William Fargo](#).
- [1865](#) – [American Civil War](#): The [Congress of the Confederate States](#) adjourns for the last time.
- [1871](#) – Declaration of the [Paris Commune](#); President of the French Republic, [Adolphe Thiers](#), orders the evacuation of Paris.
- [1874](#) – Hawaii signs a treaty with the United States granting exclusive [trade](#) rights.
- [1892](#) – Former Governor General [Lord Stanley](#) pledges to donate a [silver](#) challenge cup, later named after him, as an award for the best [hockey](#) team in Canada the [Stanley Cup](#).
- [1913](#) – King [George I of Greece](#) is [assassinated](#) in the recently liberated city of [Thessaloniki](#).
- [1915](#) – [World War I](#): During the [Battle of Gallipoli](#), three [battleships](#) are sunk during a failed British and French [naval attack on the Dardanelles](#).
- [1922](#) – In India, [Mohandas Gandhi](#) is sentenced to six years in [prison](#) for [civil disobedience](#). He serves only 2 years.
- [1925](#) – The [Tri-State Tornado](#) hits the Midwestern states of [Missouri](#), [Illinois](#), and [Indiana](#), killing 695 people.
- [1937](#) – The [New London School explosion](#) in [New London, Texas](#), kills 300 people, mostly children.
- 1937 – [Spanish Civil War](#): Spanish Republican forces defeat the [Italians](#) at the [Battle of Guadalajara](#).
- 1937 – The [human-powered aircraft](#), [Pedaliante](#), flies 1 kilometre (0.62 mi) outside [Milan](#).
- [1938](#) – Mexico nationalizes all foreign-owned [oil](#) properties within its borders.
- [1940](#) – [World War II: Axis Powers](#) – [Adolf Hitler](#) and [Benito Mussolini](#) meet at the [Brenner Pass](#) in the [Alps](#) and agree to form an alliance against France and the United Kingdom.

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- [1942](#) – The [War Relocation Authority](#) is established in the United States to take Japanese Americans into custody.
- [1944](#) – The eruption of [Mount Vesuvius](#) in Italy kills 26 people and causes thousands to flee their homes.
- [1945](#) – World War II: 1,250 American bombers attack Berlin.
- [1946](#) – [Diplomatic relations](#) between [Switzerland](#) and the [Soviet Union](#) are established.
- [1948](#) – Soviet consultants leave Yugoslavia in the first sign of the [Tito-Stalin split](#).
- [1959](#) – [President Dwight D. Eisenhower](#) signs a bill into law allowing for Hawaiian statehood, which would become official on [August 21](#).
- [1962](#) – The [Evian Accords](#) end the [Algerian War of Independence](#), which had begun in 1954.
- [1965](#) – [Cosmonaut Aleksei Leonov](#), leaving his spacecraft [Voskhod 2](#) for 12 minutes, becomes the first person to [walk in space](#).
- [1967](#) – The [supertanker Torrey Canyon](#) runs aground off the Cornish coast.
- [1968](#) – [Gold standard](#): The [U.S. Congress](#) repeals the requirement for a gold reserve to back [US currency](#).
- [1969](#) – The United States begins [secretly bombing](#) the [Sihanouk Trail](#) in [Cambodia](#), used by [communist forces](#) to infiltrate [South Vietnam](#).
- [1970](#) – [Lon Nol](#) ousts Prince [Norodom Sihanouk](#) of [Cambodia](#).
- 1970 – The [U.S. postal strike of 1970](#) begins, one of the largest [wildcat strikes](#) in U.S. history.
- [1971](#) – In [Peru](#) a [landslide](#) crashes into [Lake Yanahuani](#), killing 200 people at the mining camp of Chungar.
- [1974](#) – [Oil embargo crisis](#): Most [OPEC](#) nations end a five-month oil [embargo](#) against the United States, Europe and Japan.
- [1980](#) – At [Plesetsk Cosmodrome](#) in Russia, 50 people are killed by an explosion of a [Vostok-2M](#) rocket on its launch pad during a fueling operation.
- [1989](#) – In [Egypt](#), a 4,400-year-old [mummy](#) is found near the [Pyramid of Cheops](#).
- [1990](#) – Germans in the [German Democratic Republic](#) vote in the [first democratic elections](#) in the former communist dictatorship.
- 1990 – In the largest [art theft](#) in US history, 12 paintings, collectively worth around \$300 million, are stolen from the [Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum](#) in [Boston, Massachusetts](#).
- [1992](#) – In a national referendum white South Africans vote overwhelmingly in favor of ending the racist policy of [Apartheid](#).
- [1994](#) – [Bosnia's Bosniaks](#) and [Croats](#) sign the [Washington Agreement](#), ending war between the [Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia](#) and the [Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), and establishing the [Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina](#).
- [1996](#) – A [nightclub fire](#) in [Quezon City, Philippines](#) kills 162 people.
- [1997](#) – The tail of a Russian [Antonov An-24](#) charter plane breaks off while en route to Turkey causing the plane to crash and killing all 50 people on board and leading to the grounding of all An-24s.