

November 15, 2013

1. **Veterans and the Affordable Care Act.**
2. **Military Update: New budget cut options include military pay, veterans.**
3. **Caregiver homicides: Case touches a sadly familiar nerve.**
4. **US Navy carrier arrives in Philippines, more help on the way.**
5. **Senators jockey on opposing bills to curb military sexual assault.**
6. **Air Force officer acquitted of groping; could face military punishment.**
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1. [Veterans and the Affordable Care Act](#). The national debate over health insurance has added a layer of complexity for veterans seeking medical care, so it pays to know your options.
2. [Military Update: New budget cut options include military pay, veterans](#). The Congressional Budget Office on Wednesday released a report of more than 100 options for reducing budget deficits. It's a timely product as House and Senate conferees strive to negotiate by mid-December a new debt-cutting deal to replace automatic budget cuts of sequestration.
3. [Caregiver homicides: Case touches a sadly familiar nerve](#). A red flag rises whenever a caregiver kills a son or daughter with disabilities. Such cases often involve minor children and parents who deem the young lives not worth living, or the burdens of care too great.
4. [US Navy carrier arrives in Philippines, more help on the way](#). The George Washington carrier group arrived Thursday in the Leyte Gulf vicinity, signaling the start of full-scale typhoon relief operations in the Philippines by the U.S. military.
5. [Senators jockey on opposing bills to curb military sexual assault](#). Three senators opposed to the idea of removing prosecutorial decisions from the chain of command on Thursday announced new amendments to their bill aimed at reducing sexual assault in the military.
6. [Air Force officer acquitted of groping; could face military punishment](#). The former head of the Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office was acquitted in civilian court Wednesday of assault and battery against a woman who said he had grabbed her buttocks, but Lt. Col. Jeffrey Krusinski could still face military discipline.
7. [DOD Seeks Value, Quality in Modernizing Health Records System](#). The Defense Department's senior official leading the competitive acquisition to modernize its health care management system has said he's committed to ensuring the best value for taxpayer dollars while safeguarding quality of care. Speaking yesterday at an Armed Forces Communications and ...

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8. [VA, DoD climb the stairs to interoperability together.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#)
Federal News Radio: Leaders in the healthcare community are thinking of ways they can use data to improve the quality of health care. The departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense have joined forces to create VistA Evolution, a system that allows the exchange of electronic health records information between the two.

9. [VA should keep Battle Mountain Sanitarium.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Rapid City Journal:** A new report from the National Trust for Historic Preservation says the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs doesn't care for the historic buildings it owns and wastes money constructing new facilities to replace them. One of its examples is the Battle Mountain Sanitarium in Hot Springs.

10. [Former Veterans Affairs Psychiatrist Pleads Guilty to Medicare Fraud.](#) Brooklyn VA Psychiatrist Admits To Falsely Billing Medicare, Agrees To Forfeit \$1.2M in Illegal Payments

11. [Doctor Warns of Threat to Vets at VA Hospitals.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#)
Military.com: A physician formerly with the VA hospital in Jackson, Miss. warned lawmakers on Wednesday that a department proposal to permit all nurse practitioners to function independently and without physician supervision is a recipe for disaster.

12. [American Legion is "appalled" by conditions at Jackson VA facility.](#)
EIN News The hearing, held by the House Veterans Affairs' Subcommittee on Oversight ... A July report made by the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) found that 75 ...

13. [Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center honored for quality and safety.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **The Tuscaloosa News:** The Tuscaloosa Veterans Affairs Medical Center has been recognized as a top performer in quality and safety for the second year in a row.

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14. [The South Texas Veterans Health Care System \(STVHCS\) was recently named Top Performer.](#) The leading accreditor of health care organizations in America Key Quality Measures® by The Joint Commission has named the South Texas Veterans Health Care System as Top Performer. Only four acute-care hospitals in San Antonio made the list: South Texas Veterans Health Care System, Methodist Hospital, Methodist Stone Oak Hospital and Nix Health Care System. Of these, STVHCS is the only one recognized for top performance in the areas of Heart Attack, Heart Failure, Pneumonia, and Surgical Care; of the seven VA health care systems in the state, South Texas is the only one who made the list. The ratings are based on an aggregation of accountability measure data reported to The Joint Commission during the 2012 calendar year. The list of Top Performer organizations increased by 77 percent from last year; it represents 33 percent of all Joint Commission-accredited hospitals reporting 2012 accountability measure performance data. The Joint Commission recognized the health care system for exemplary performance in using evidence-based clinical processes that are shown to improve care for certain conditions. The clinical processes focus on care for heart attack, pneumonia, surgery, children's asthma, stroke and venous thromboembolism, as well as inpatient psychiatric services. New, this year, is a category for immunization for pneumonia and influenza.

15. [Syracuse-area veteran with post-traumatic stress disorder fights to keep his 2-year-old son.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Post-Standard:** When a pool cue fell in a crowded restaurant, Shaun Portaleos heard the crack of a gunshot. He crouched to his knees and ducked. His family laughed. But the discharged Marine heard an echo of war.

16. [Homeless Women Vets Find Comfort, Hope.](#) The Wade Park Domiciliary is a unique partnership between the Cleveland VA Medical Center and Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio, a marriage that may be

17. [Veterans Affairs Gives Money to Local Organization.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **KULR-TV (Video):** Veterans Day was this week, and the federal government is showing its support of our veterans. Montana Senators Max Baucus and John Tester announced Thursday that the Department of Veterans Affairs will give \$22,000 to a local organization.

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18. [VA Pledges Nearly \\$14 Million To End Veteran Homelessness.](#) **Hyperlink to Story The Huffington Post:** The Department of Veteran Affairs has pledged nearly \$14 million in its ongoing effort to end veteran homelessness by 2015. The VA announced on Tuesday that it will allocate \$8.8 million in grants to rehabilitate current housing projects and buy new vans.

19. [2013 World Diabetes Day and National Diabetes Month.](#) On November 14, World Diabetes Day—and during National Diabetes Month-- we join with individuals living with diabetes, their families, advocates, and health care professionals to raise awareness of this devastating ...

20. [AZ veterans finding road blocks to civilian work.](#) WFSB U.S. Navy veteran Jacky Alaniz, a single mother, was laid off by Lockheed ... U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs to end homelessness among veterans by 2015.) ... He only knew about the job fair for veterans because

21. [Md. Dept. of Veteran Affairs Opens Easton Service Center.](#) WBOC TV 16 The department says the Easton Service Center intends to get benefits from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Department of Defense, State of Maryland, ...

22. [Italian village dedicates joint memorial to American, Italian soldier.](#) First Sgt. Michael Curry and Italian Carabinieri Denis Frison shared many things in common. Both were well-decorated paratroopers who deployed repeatedly, spoke English fluently and enjoyed life in this small Italian town.

23. [On the ice, veterans' disabilities vanish.](#) **Hyperlink to Story Buffalo News:** Michael Lindhurst lost both legs when he stepped on a land mine in Vietnam in 1969. Brent Billings suffered a severe ligament tear in his wrist while working on an aircraft weapons system in the Persian Gulf in 2006. Now they're on the same team, two men from different wars and eras, 42 years apart in age.

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24. VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as November 15, 2013:

- **November 19, 2013.** Senate Veterans Affairs Committee will hold a markup to consider pending legislation.
- **November 20, 2013.** House Veterans Affairs Committee will mark up pending legislation.
 - Draft Bill - Department of Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Lease Authorization Act of 2013.
 - H.R. 272 - A bill to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense joint outpatient clinic to be constructed in Marina, Calif., as the "General William H. Gourley Federal Outpatient Clinic: A Joint VA-DOD Health Care Facility."
 - H.R. 1402 - Veterans Paralympic Act of 2013.
- **November 20, 2013. (Rescheduled)** HVAC will conduct an oversight hearing entitled "Building VA's Future – Confronting Persistent Challenges in VA Major Construction and Lease Programs."
- **December 11, 2013.** SVAC will hold a hearing on claims transformation and efforts at reducing the backlog. The hearing will build upon the claims hearing SVAC held in March.

25. Today in History:

- [1688](#) – The [Glorious Revolution](#) begins: [William of Orange](#) lands at [Brixham](#).
- [1705](#) – [Battle of Zsibó](#) - [Austrian-Danish](#) victory over the [Kurucs \(Hungarians\)](#)
- [1777](#) – [American Revolutionary War](#): After 16 months of debate the [Continental Congress](#) approves the [Articles of Confederation](#).
- [1791](#) – The first U.S Catholic college, [Georgetown University](#), opens its doors.
- [1806](#) – [Pike expedition](#): Lieutenant [Zebulon Pike](#) sees a distant mountain peak while near the [Colorado](#) foothills of the [Rocky Mountains](#) (it is later named [Pikes Peak](#)).
- [1864](#) – [American Civil War](#): Union General [William Tecumseh Sherman](#) burns [Atlanta, Georgia](#) and starts [Sherman's March to the Sea](#).
- [1914](#) – [Harry Turner](#) becomes the first player to die from game-related injuries in the "[Ohio League](#)", the direct predecessor to the [National Football League](#).
- [1920](#) – First assembly of the [League of Nations](#) is held in [Geneva](#), Switzerland.
- [1922](#) – Over 1,000 are [massacred](#) during a general strike in [Guayaquil](#), Ecuador.
- [1923](#) – The [German Rentenmark](#) is introduced in Germany to counter [hyperinflation](#) in the [Weimar Republic](#).
- [1926](#) – The [NBC](#) radio network opens with 24 stations.
- [1935](#) – [Manuel L. Quezon](#) is inaugurated as the second [President of the Philippines](#).
- [1939](#) – In Washington, D.C., US President [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) lays the cornerstone of the [Jefferson Memorial](#).
- [1942](#) – [World War II](#): First flight of the [Heinkel He 219](#).
- [1942](#) – World War II: The [Battle of Guadalcanal](#) ends in a decisive [Allied](#) victory.

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- [1943](#) – [Holocaust](#): German [SS](#) leader [Heinrich Himmler](#) orders that [Gypsies](#) are to be put "on the same level as [Jews](#) and placed in [concentration camps](#)". (see [Porajmos](#))
- [1949](#) – [Nathuram Godse](#) and [Narayan Apte](#) are executed for assassinating [Mahatma Gandhi](#).
- [1951](#) – Greek resistance leader [Nikos Beloyannis](#), along with 11 resistance members, is sentenced to death by the [court-martial](#).
- [1959](#) – The murders of the Clutter Family in [Holcomb, Kansas](#) which inspired Truman Capote's non-fiction book [In Cold Blood](#).
- [1966](#) – [Project Gemini](#): [Gemini 12](#) completes the program's final mission, when it splashes down safely in the Atlantic Ocean.
- [1967](#) – The only fatality of the [North American X-15](#) program occurs during the [191st flight](#) when Air Force test pilot [Michael J. Adams](#) loses control of his aircraft which is destroyed mid-air over the [Mojave Desert](#).
- [1969](#) – [Cold War](#): The [Soviet submarine K-19](#) collides with the American submarine [USS Gato](#) in the [Barents Sea](#).
- [1969](#) – [Vietnam War](#): In Washington, D.C., 250,000-500,000 protesters staged a peaceful demonstration against the war, including a symbolic "March Against Death".
- [1971](#) – [Intel](#) releases the world's first commercial single-chip [microprocessor](#), the [4004](#).
- [1976](#) – [René Lévesque](#) and the [Parti Québécois](#) take power to become the first [Quebec](#) government of the 20th century clearly in favor of [independence](#).
- [1979](#) – A package from the Unabomber [Ted Kaczynski](#) begins smoking in the cargo hold of a flight from [Chicago, Illinois](#) to Washington, D.C., forcing the plane to make an emergency landing.
- [1983](#) – [Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus](#) is founded. Recognized only by Turkey.
- [1985](#) – A research assistant is injured when a package from the Unabomber addressed to a [University of Michigan](#) professor explodes.
- [1985](#) – The [Anglo-Irish Agreement](#) is signed at [Hillsborough Castle](#) by [British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher](#) and Irish [Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald](#).
- [1987](#) – In [Braşov](#), Romania, [workers rebel](#) against the communist regime of [Nicolae Ceauşescu](#).
- [1988](#) – In the [Soviet Union](#), the unmanned [Shuttle Buran](#) makes its only space flight.
- [1988](#) – [Israeli–Palestinian conflict](#): An independent [State of Palestine](#) is proclaimed by the [Palestinian National Council](#).
- [1990](#) – [Space Shuttle program](#): [Space Shuttle Atlantis](#) launches with flight [STS-38](#).
- [1990](#) – The [People's Republic of Bulgaria](#) is disestablished and a new republican government is instituted.
- [2002](#) – [Hu Jintao](#) becomes [General Secretary of the Communist Party of China](#) and a new 9-members [Politburo Standing Committee](#) is inaugurated.
- [2003](#) – The first day of the [2003 Istanbul bombings](#), in which two car bombs, targeting two synagogues, explode, killing 25 people and wounding about 300. Additional bombings follow on November 20.
- [2006](#) – [Al Jazeera English](#) launches worldwide.
- [2007](#) – [Cyclone Sidr](#) hits Bangladesh, killing an estimated 5,000 people and destroys parts of the world's largest [mangrove](#) forest, the [Sundarbans](#).
- [2012](#) – [Xi Jinping](#) becomes [General Secretary of the Communist Party of China](#) and a new 7-members [Politburo Standing Committee](#) is inaugurated.