

# January 27, 2014

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9. Elder Law: Congress likely to change Veterans Affairs benefits this year.
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1. [Vietnam vet a symbol of overcoming VA delays.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Sun Sentinel:** A Vietnam War veteran from Fort Lauderdale who suffered severe burns in combat and financial hardship back home will be watching from the House gallery Tuesday night when President Barack Obama delivers his State of the Union address... Jeff Colaiacovo will represent all American service members, but especially the hundreds of thousands who endure bureaucratic snags and delays when seeking disability benefits.
2. [In State of the Union, military often takes a back seat.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Stars and Stripes:** Military watchers are hoping the president's State of the Union speech Tuesday will feature lengthy passages about the war in Afghanistan, the recent reductions in military retirement pay or the veterans claims backlog.
3. [Are U.S. Veterans Selfish?](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Time (Swampland):** Besides, in the overall scheme of government spending, the veterans make a fair point: civilian entitlements, including Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid have ballooned, while dollars dedicated to defense have shrunk markedly as a share of the federal budget.
4. [US prepared to evacuate Americans if needed during Sochi Olympics.](#) With just two weeks before the opening of the Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia, there has been an increase in reports of security threats, a senior administration official said Friday.
5. [US aid for Afghanistan cut deeply by Congress.](#) With no perceptible opposition from the Obama administration, Congress has quietly downscaled Washington's ambitions for the final year of the Afghan war, substantially curtailing development aid and military assistance plans ahead of the U.S. troop pullout.
6. [Top commander in Afghanistan to ask Obama to keep 10K troops there.](#) Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr., who commands all international forces in Afghanistan, is making an unscheduled trip to the White House from his Kabul headquarters to make his case face to face.
7. [Naval Academy superintendent defends prosecution of assault case.](#) The superintendent of the Naval Academy told a military judge Friday that his decision to prosecute a midshipman in a high-profile sexual assault case was not influenced by politicians, public pressure or his military supervisors.

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8. [Fort Bragg community aims to go on offensive if BRAC round occurs.](#) If another round of base realignment and closure is on the horizon, the Fort Bragg community aims to go on the offensive.
  
9. [Elder Law: Congress likely to change Veterans Affairs benefits this year.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette:** While only a small percentage of the millions of veterans and their families use the Aid and Attendance benefit offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, it is clearly a vital program for those in need of medically related assistance with their daily activities.
  
10. [At VHA, Doctors, Nurses Clash on Oversight.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Wall Street Journal:** The Veterans Health Administration is taking heavy fire from doctor groups over a proposal to let nurses with advanced training practice medicine without physician supervision throughout the VHA system—even in states where laws require more oversight.
  
11. [Afghan war vets, St. Louis researchers seek answers on head injuries.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **St. Louis Post-Dispatch:** Katherine Helmick, deputy director of the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center in Silver Spring, Md., which was created by the government after the first Gulf War, stressed the importance of detection. Without it, soldiers perform worse on the battlefield. Then, as veterans, life can be different for them and their families.
  
12. [Iowan co-founded group that trains therapy dogs to aid those with PTSD.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Omaha World-Herald:** Chaney and Hatala were featured Sunday during a presentation by Retrieving Freedom Inc., a nonprofit organization with locations in Iowa and Mississippi that matches therapy dogs with veterans battling PTSD. Dogs are also trained to serve children with autism.
  
13. [Service dogs should be allowed at VA hospital.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Billings Gazette:** The Americans with Disability Act is of no help because the VA is a federal entity and can make up their own policy. I have had my service dog at both private and VA hospitals overnight without problem. Why is it an issue here in Montana?

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14. [For injured veteran, war continues even at home.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Stars and Stripes \(The Virginian-Pilot\)](#): People with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury often land in the news when violence erupts, but the reality is, thousands struggle quietly in day-to-day battles that never cross the public's radar screen.
  
15. [Medication can alleviate PTSD, nightmares.](#) [Hyperlink to Article The Daily Courier](#): My husband returned from Iraq with severe PTSD a few years ago... His doctors at the VA put him on a medication called Prazosin... Not only have his nightmares and sleep improved but even his daytime symptoms of agitation, withdrawal and flashbacks have also improved.
  
16. [Film helps women soldiers find safety at home.](#) [Hyperlink to Article USA Today \(Florida Today\)](#): The women in the film and in the audience said that when they seek help from the VA they want private, dignified access with a separate waiting room from men and more female health care providers.
  
17. [Therapy options grow for wounded veterans.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Orange County Register](#): Whatever it is, it's working in a way traditional government-provided health care can't always, said Carole Katz, the founder of the Long Beach chapter of Project Healing Waters, a therapy organization that uses fly fishing to treat wounded veterans. Membership fluctuates between 20 and 25 veterans, most with symptoms of PTSD, Katz said.
  
18. [Jerry Davich: War widow gets an education from VA.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Post-Tribune](#): "Prior to starting school, I was told by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that my school would be paid for and I would also get a monthly stipend to help with childcare and gas," she said. But after her first semester, she noticed that her tuition bill was not paid.
  
19. [Our Opinion: We should be ashamed.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Brattleboro Reformer](#): Earlier this week, Vermont's own Bernie Sanders introduced a Veterans Affairs bill in the U.S. Senate that would address many of the shortfalls in the care we provide for our wounded warriors.

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20. [Veterans program at prison. Hyperlink to Article](#) **Lincoln Journal Star:** In 1989, Veterans Affairs mental health staff (volunteer) came into the Nebraska State Penitentiary to provide veteran-specific mental health treatment. The highly trained, highly dedicated staff were a Godsend.
  
21. [State to help veterans hone financial skills. Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Enterprise:** For instance, Carlisle said some veterans don't know they can have their taxes filed professionally for free, while others may be unaware of certain post 9/11 GI benefits for education costs or first-time home buying.
  
22. [Vets tackle painful issues. Hyperlink to Article](#) **Times Union:** Suicide among veterans, along with jobs and benefit cuts, were among the chief topics of concern Saturday at the Legion's annual Midwinter Conference at The Desmond.
  
23. [The last salute: Veterans can expect specific funeral protocol. Hyperlink to Article](#) **Pensacola News Journal:** Not that Barrancas and the military honor guards attending funerals there don't do a good job. "They handle everything just right," said Dennis S. Trahan, owner of Trahan Family Funeral Home in Pensacola, who often arranges veterans' burial services. "And Barrancas treats everybody the same, generals and enlisted, there's no difference."
  
24. [Wal-Mart encouraging veterans to apply for 80 positions at expanded Grandville store. Hyperlink to Article](#) **Mlive.com:** The Arkansas-based retailer says it has hired more than 20,000 veterans since the Memorial Day 2013 launch of its Veterans Welcome Home Commitment, a pledge to offer a job to any qualified veteran who has been honorably discharged within the past 12 months.
  
25. [Homeless Vet Name Daniel. Hyperlink to Video](#) The 0:39 clip features the individual profile of a Homeless Veteran named Daniel and the local VA response.
  
26. [Telethon fundraiser in West Haven to benefit New Haven veterans displaced by fire. Hyperlink to Article](#) **New Haven Register:** The fire that swept through a home on Highland Street two weeks ago left two veterans homeless and now they are reaching out to the public to help get them back on their feet.

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27. [VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System honored for patient care. Hyperlink to Article Ann Arbor Journal](#): VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System (VAAAHS) celebrated being the first healthcare organization to be awarded Planetree Silver Merit recognition for Significant Advancement in Patient-Centered Care with a special award ceremony featuring presentations by veterans and their loved ones who have received health care at the Ann Arbor VA.
  
28. ['Homebrew for Heroes' thanks the troops.](#) On Christmas Day 2012, Craig Gilbreath's brother broke the news that his family that he was about to be deployed to Afghanistan -- his third Army deployment. Gilbreath wanted to do something unique to honor his service. A longtime homebrewer, Gilbreath hit on an idea that involves beer.
  
29. [USS Monitor work goes dark as US dollars dwindle.](#) When the turret of the USS Monitor was hoisted from the ocean floor in 2002, the real heavy lifting was just beginning: conserving and restoring more than 200 tons of Civil War ironclad artifacts.
  
30. [Annie's Mailbox: Join 'National Salute to Veteran Patients.](#) Herald and News - Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) operates 151 hospitals, 134 community ... For all of us, there is no higher calling. ....
  
31. [Maj. Gen. Nicholson donates WWII book to 82nd Airborne Division museum.](#) The commanding general of the 82nd Airborne Division has donated a special book to the division's museum.
  
32. [Volunteers needed to drive veterans in Missoula, Bitterroot valleys. Hyperlink to Article The Missoulian](#): With the number of volunteers dwindling, the Disabled American Veterans transportation service of Montana is reaching out to the public for support.
  
33. **VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as January 27, 2014:**
  - **January 28, 2014.** House Committee on Veterans' Affairs will hold a hearing entitled "What can the Federal Government Learn from the Private Sector's Successful Approach to Hiring Veterans?"
  
  - **February 5, 2014.** HVAC-DAMA will hold a hearing entitled, "Beyond Transformation: Reviewing Current Status and Secondary Effects of VBA Technology."

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- **February 25, 2014.** House Veterans' Affairs Committee (Chairman Miller, R-Fla.) will hold a hearing to receive a legislative presentation of the Disabled American Veterans.
- **March 5, 2014.** House Veterans' Affairs Committee (Chairman Miller, R-Fla.) and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee (Chairman Sanders, I-Vt.) will hold a joint hearing to receive the legislative presentation of Veterans of Foreign Wars.
- **March 6, 2014.** House Veterans' Affairs Committee and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee will hold a joint hearing to receive the legislative presentations of Veterans Organizations.
- **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.

## 34. Today in History:

- [1776](#) – [American Revolutionary War](#): [Henry Knox](#)'s "[noble train of artillery](#)" arrives in [Cambridge, Massachusetts](#).
- [1785](#) – The [University of Georgia](#) is founded, the first public university in the United States.
- [1825](#) – The [U.S. Congress](#) approves [Indian Territory](#) (in what is present-day [Oklahoma](#)), clearing the way for forced relocation of the [Eastern Indians](#) on the "[Trail of Tears](#)".
- [1868](#) – [Boshin War](#): The [Battle of Toba-Fushimi](#) between forces of the [Tokugawa shogunate](#) and pro-[Imperial](#) factions begins, which will end in defeat for the shogunate, and is a pivotal point in the [Meiji Restoration](#).
- [1869](#) – Boshin War: Tokugawa rebels establish the [Ezo Republic](#) in [Hokkaidō](#).
- [1888](#) – The [National Geographic Society](#) is founded in Washington, D.C.
- [1939](#) – First flight of the [Lockheed P-38 Lightning](#).
- [1943](#) – [World War II](#): The VIII Bomber Command dispatched ninety-one B-17s and B-24s to attack the U-Boat construction yards at [Wilhemshaven](#), Germany. This was the first American bombing attack on Germany of the war.
- [1944](#) – World War II: The 900-day [Siege of Leningrad](#) is lifted.
- [1945](#) – World War II: The [Red Army](#) liberates the remained inmates of the [Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp](#) built by the Nazi Germans on the territory of Poland.
- [1951](#) – [Nuclear testing](#) at the [Nevada Test Site](#) begins with a one-kiloton bomb dropped on [Frenchman Flat](#).
- [1961](#) – [Soviet](#) submarine [S-80](#) sinks with all hands lost.
- [1967](#) – [Astronauts](#) [Gus Grissom](#), [Edward White](#) and [Roger Chaffee](#) are killed in a fire during a test of their [Apollo 1](#) spacecraft at the [Kennedy Space Center](#), [Florida](#).
- 1967 – The United States, United Kingdom, and [Soviet Union](#) sign the [Outer Space Treaty](#) in [Washington, D.C.](#), banning deployment of [nuclear weapons](#) in space, and limiting use of the [Moon](#) and other [celestial bodies](#) to peaceful purposes.

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- [1973](#) – The [Paris Peace Accords](#) officially end the [Vietnam War](#). Colonel [William Nolde](#) is killed in action becoming the conflict's last recorded American combat casualty.
- [1974](#) – The [Brisbane River](#) breaches its banks causing [the largest flood](#) to affect the city of [Brisbane](#) in the 20th century.
- [1980](#) – Through cooperation between the U.S. and Canadian governments, six American diplomats secretly escape [hostilities](#) in [Iran](#) in the culmination of the [Canadian Caper](#).
- [1983](#) – The pilot shaft of the [Seikan Tunnel](#), the world's longest sub-aqueous tunnel (53.85 km) between the Japanese islands of [Honshū](#) and [Hokkaidō](#), breaks through.
- [1984](#) – Pop singer [Michael Jackson](#) suffers second degree burns to his scalp during the filming of a [Pepsi](#) commercial in the [Shrine Auditorium](#).
- [1993](#) – American-born [sumo](#) wrestler [Akebono Tarō](#) becomes the first foreigner to be promoted to the sport's highest rank of [yokozuna](#).
- [1996](#) – In a [military coup](#) Colonel [Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara](#) deposes the first democratically elected president of [Niger](#), [Mahamane Ousmane](#).
- 1996 – Germany first observes [International Holocaust Remembrance Day](#).
- [2002](#) – [An explosion](#) at a military storage facility in [Lagos](#), [Nigeria](#), kills at least 1,100 people and displaces over 20,000 others.
- [2003](#) – The first selections for the [National Recording Registry](#) are announced by the [Library of Congress](#).
- [2006](#) – [Western Union](#) discontinues its [Telegram](#) and Commercial Messaging services.
- [2010](#) – The [2009 Honduran constitutional crisis](#) ends when [Porfirio Lobo Sosa](#) becomes the new [President of Honduras](#).
- [2011](#) – [Arab Spring](#): The [Yemeni Revolution](#) begins as over 16,000 protestors demonstrate in [Sana'a](#).
- [2013](#) – 241 people die in a [nightclub fire](#) in the city of [Santa Maria](#), [Brazil](#).