

# February 3, 2014

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2. Navy christens ship named for astronaut John Glenn.
3. In Munich, a war weary West confronts new threats.
4. Suicides in the Army declined sharply in 2013.
5. Veteran suicide rates up, Health Center sensitive to cultural shifts.
6. The Lone Survivor Is Turning Retreats Into a Way Forward.
7. Army looks to replenish its Catholic chaplain ranks.
8. Hagel, Kerry at Munich Security Conference say US remains engaged around the world.
9. NATO leaders say Afghan troops need more training.
10. Female veterans salute their sisters-in-arms.
11. Seven years later, breakthroughs and hope at the Intrepid Center.
12. VA bills aim at outbreaks.
13. Veterans Affairs Delays Caused 19 Deaths, Numerous Injuries.
14. VA Hospital finds ways to tame MRSA super bug; hospitals urged to follow example.
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20. Success of Maine veterans court inspires plan to expand.
21. South Carolina looks to join fight against fake veterans.
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23. Homeless vet gets life back together at PSC.
24. Four Homeless Veterans Finally Receive Burial.
25. On this hallowed ground: Unclaimed veterans laid to rest at National Cemetery.
26. Veterans cemetery gets final approval.
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28. New housing for Navajo veterans move forward.
29. Veterans group seeks action to cut backlog of claims.

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31. Florida GI Bill would slash tuition costs for vets.
32. Veteran who has faced tough times makes it his goal to help other veterans.
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34. Push for new national cemeteries, as veteran deaths bring sites near capacity.
35. VETERANS' CORNER: VA acquires Colorado land for new cemetery.
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1. [DOD's budget guru stepping down.](#) Robert Hale, the Pentagon's Chief Financial Officer, will step down as soon as his successor is in place, he announced Friday.
2. [Navy christens ship named for astronaut John Glenn.](#) The former Ohio senator was in San Diego on Saturday for the ceremony at General Dynamics' National Steel and Shipbuilding Company, along with his wife and daughter.
3. [In Munich, a war weary West confronts new threats.](#) A deep sense of war weariness marked the mood during three days of talks in Munich, where international leaders tacitly acknowledged the era of grand military interventions is ending, even as they grappled with how to approach a growing list of festering global hotspots.
4. [Suicides in the Army declined sharply in 2013.](#) Scientists may never know precisely what led to a steep rise in suicides that Defense Secretary Leon Panetta described as an epidemic.
5. [Veteran suicide rates up, Health Center sensitive to cultural shifts.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Red & Black:](#) A recent report revealed new statistics about suicide rates of veterans, especially those between the ages of 18 and 24
6. [The Lone Survivor Is Turning Retreats Into a Way Forward.](#) [Hyperlink to Article The New York Times:](#) As a result of the movie's popularity, the Lone Survivor Foundation, the nonprofit Mr. Luttrell started in 2010 to help veterans and their families transition to civilian life, has experienced heightened interest and an increase in applications from veterans seeking to participate in the foundation's retreats.
7. [Army looks to replenish its Catholic chaplain ranks.](#) Two Army chaplains, Col. Gary Studniewski, command chaplain of U.S. Army North (Fifth Army), and Lt. Col. Jose Herrera, who is stationed at Fort Carson, Colo., talk about the effort to add to their ranks of chaplains.
8. [Hagel, Kerry at Munich Security Conference say US remains engaged around the world.](#) U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Secretary of State John Kerry both energetically refuted concerns by some that the U.S. is "withdrawing" not only from Afghanistan, but into isolationism.

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9. [NATO leaders say Afghan troops need more training.](#) Afghanistan's police force and army still need more training to handle the country's security on their own, making it critical for a new security agreement to be signed to allow international forces to remain after 2014, NATO's top two leaders said Saturday.
10. [Female veterans salute their sisters-in-arms.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Gazette:** Patriots of all ages gathered at Disabled American Veterans Chapter 26 last month for a program saluting U.S. women who have served their country at home and abroad.
11. [Seven years later, breakthroughs and hope at the Intrepid Center.](#) Former Army Staff Sgt. Cleve Molden has lived in pain, taken prescription drugs and despaired since injuring an ankle nearly eight years ago during a rocket attack on his base in Iraq.
12. [VA bills aim at outbreaks.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review:** The House of Representatives next week will consider legislation that would require veterans hospitals to disclose cases of infectious disease promptly to state and local health officials.
13. [Veterans Affairs Delays Caused 19 Deaths, Numerous Injuries.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Business Insider:** Delays in diagnosis or treatment within the Department of Veterans Affairs health care system resulted in 19 patient deaths and 63 injuries nationwide, according to documents obtained by CNN and The Tampa Tribune.
14. [VA Hospital finds ways to tame MRSA super bug; hospitals urged to follow example.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Louisville Courier-Journal:** Before 2007, the potentially deadly super bug MRSA stalked patients at the Louisville Veterans Affairs Medical Center — with infection rates 20 times higher than they are today.
15. [Editorial: Physicians elude Colmery-O'Neil.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Topeka Capital-Journal:** Officials with the Veterans Affairs Eastern Kansas Health Care System say closure of the emergency room at the Colmery-O'Neil VA Medical Center here in Topeka is a temporary thing.
16. [Wilmington VA gradually rolling out services for veterans.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Wilmington Star-News:** The 81,000 square-foot health care center, which had been planned for 10 years, opened quietly last March and then held a grand opening with fanfare, oversized scissors and smiling politicians in April... Nine months later, the building is equipped but largely unused as only about half of the 220 employees have started their jobs.

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17. [Vets say clinic expansion falls short.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Record:** A long-awaited expansion to a health clinic outside Stockton is open for business, but local veterans advocates say it falls short of expectations.
18. [Preserving sanitarium important for veterans care.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Rapid City Journal: FORUM:** We are at a critical juncture in the fight to save Battle Mountain Sanitarium. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently announced that it will move forward with assessing the proposed closure of the Hot Springs medical facility pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
19. [New veterans court on the way.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Herald-Sun:** The court would focus exclusively on war veterans, some of whom commit misdemeanors, such as trespassing and shoplifting, because of mental problems created by combat.
20. [Success of Maine veterans court inspires plan to expand.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Portland Press Herald:** Bentley said he was in such a foggy state of mind in 2011 that he hardly recalls robbing pharmacies in Springvale and Rochester, N.H. But he knows for sure that if it weren't for the intensive support and supervision afterward in a pilot Veterans Treatment Court in Augusta that he would have gone right back to a life of drug addiction after serving prison time for his crimes.
21. [South Carolina looks to join fight against fake veterans.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Augusta Chronicle:** The legislation would establish a \$500 fine and a 30-day prison sentence for any person who "knowingly and falsely" represents themselves as a U.S. veteran... In fiscal year 2013, the Department of Veterans Affairs provided more than \$59 billion in compensation benefits and more than \$5 billion in pension payments to 4.5 million veterans and survivors nationwide, according to federal data.
22. [Herald investigates: PTSD and violence.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Killeen Daily Herald:** The Veterans Affairs National Center for PTSD estimates 15 percent of all veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. That's nearly double the occurrence in the general population.
23. [Homeless vet gets life back together at PSC.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Times of Northwest Indiana:** A once homeless veteran is turning into a true success story at Prairie State College.

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24. [Four Homeless Veterans Finally Receive Burial. Hyperlink to Above Article](#) **WIBW-TV (Video)**: Friday marked the final chapter for four veterans whose bodies laid in the Shawnee Co. Morgue for months - until a state veterans group stepped in - and have now all been buried with honors at Leavenworth National Cemetery.
25. [On this hallowed ground: Unclaimed veterans laid to rest at National Cemetery. Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Leavenworth Times**: Snow fell lightly against the backdrop of hard grey skies Friday morning at Leavenworth National Cemetery as current and past veterans paid final respect to four comrades who died last year and whose remains went unclaimed.
26. [Veterans cemetery gets final approval. Hyperlink to Article](#) **The New Jersey Herald**: The New Jersey Cemetery Board approved the application at a meeting early in January conditioned on the state receiving the \$75,000 for the Maintenance and Preservation Trust Fund set up for the cemetery.
27. [From homeless in Humboldt to White House: Eureka veteran tells how PG&E program changed his life. Hyperlink to Article](#) **Times-Standard**: Once homeless, Erick Varela was given the honor of announcing President Barack Obama at a White House discussion on long-term unemployment this week.
28. [New housing for Navajo veterans move forward. Hyperlink to Article](#) **Farmington Daily Times**: Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed the contract last week to authorize the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs to partner with Home Depot in Farmington to receive housing materials to build 75 homes across the reservation.
29. [Veterans group seeks action to cut backlog of claims. Hyperlink to Article](#) **USA Today**: In a report to be released Monday, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) group recommends several ways it says will speed up claim processing, many of the ideas already supported and sought by the Department of Veterans Affairs.
30. [New Website Helps Student Veterans Report Abuse. Hyperlink to Article](#) **About.com**: Student veterans can now report attempts by colleges to take advantage of them and their GI Bill educational benefits on a new website from the departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense.

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31. [Florida GI Bill would slash tuition costs for vets.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Tampa Tribune](#): Lawmakers are poised to approve a "Florida GI Bill," offering tuition assistance to National Guard members and veterans returning to civilian life in the Sunshine State.
32. [Veteran who has faced tough times makes it his goal to help other veterans.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Buffalo News \(News Niagara Reporter\)](#): Post 9/11, the VA really started to focus more on the veterans. Before that, the facilities were outdated, and they didn't have the support they have today. The whole system has changed a lot in 15 years.
33. [DAUGAARD: Operation Reach All Veterans.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Rapid City Journal](#): If you come to visit the state Capitol Building, you'll probably notice the table in the hall across from my office door. This table is staffed by people who work for the state Department of Veterans Affairs and they will be at the Capitol Building throughout the legislative session as one effort to find veterans who may not be aware of the benefits they've earned.
34. [Push for new national cemeteries, as veteran deaths bring sites near capacity.](#) [Hyperlink to Article FOXNews.com \(Video\)](#): National cemeteries across the country are starting to reach capacity amid an increase in the number of veterans dying -- fueling a push for the government to approve new sites, particularly in states that don't have any.
35. [VETERANS' CORNER: VA acquires Colorado land for new cemetery.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Weatherford Democrat](#): Land has been purchased by the Department of Veterans Affairs in Colorado for a new national cemetery.
36. [Minnesota aims to end homeless among veterans](#) . Bemidji Pioneer - By MPR News Today at 12:41 a.m. ... State and local officials say ending homelessness among veterans is not ... With numbers that small, ten Broek said, it's possible to reach out to every single homeless veteran, determine what's ... The federal Department of Veterans Affairs has set a goal of ending ...
37. [3 properties in Pittsburgh region listed as endangered.](#) [Hyperlink to Article Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#): Preservation Pennsylvania, the nonprofit organization focused on historic preservation, released its annual list last week that includes nine endangered properties, topped by the Coraopolis Station, the 168-acre Veterans Administration Highland Drive campus in Lincoln-Lemington and Altman's Mill in Saltsburg, Indiana County.

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38. [Military Olympians: Army sending 6 athletes to Sochi.](#) Of the 230 athletes on Team USA competing at the Sochi Olympics next week, six will be military athletes from the Army World Class Athlete Program.
  
39. [Veterans' Corner column: Help available to get benefits.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Victoria Advocate:** The Disabled American Veterans Chapter 169 Victoria Service Office assists veterans and their families each year.
  
40. [Veterans' organizations recruiting new members.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Stars and Stripes (Kokomo Tribune):** The American Legion is the largest wartime veterans service organization with about 2.5 million members in nearly 14,000 posts in nearly every community in the U.S. The Legion, established by an act of Congress in 1919, was instrumental in getting the original GI Bill through Congress and the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
  
41. [VA Art Show To Be Held In S. Falls.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan:** The Sioux Falls VA Health Care System encourages veterans who want to share their artistic side to enter visual art, creative writing, music, drama, comedy, dance and other art for the local competition for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.
  
42. [Four Chaplains, World War II heroes, recalled at rite at VA.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Republican:** A commemorative service was held at the U.S. Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Leeds to honor four chaplains who are remembered for their selfless reactions as the ship sunk.
  
43. **VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as February 3, 2014:**
  - **February 5, 2014.** HVAC-DAMA will hold a hearing entitled, "Beyond Transformation: Reviewing Current Status and Secondary Effects of VBA Technology."
  - **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.



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- **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.

## 44. Today in History:

- [1690](#) – The colony of [Massachusetts](#) issues the first [paper money](#) in [America](#).
- [1706](#) – During the [Battle of Fraustadt](#) [Swedish](#) forces defeat a superior [Saxon-Polish-Russian](#) force by deploying a [double envelopment](#).
- [1781](#) – [American Revolutionary War](#): [British](#) forces [seize](#) the [Dutch](#)-owned [Caribbean](#) island [Sint Eustatius](#).
- [1783](#) – [American Revolutionary War](#): [Spain](#) recognizes [United States](#) independence.
- [1787](#) – Militia led by General [Benjamin Lincoln](#) crush the remnants of [Shays' Rebellion](#) in [Petersham, Massachusetts](#).
- [1807](#) – A British military force, under Brigadier-General Sir [Samuel Auchmuty](#) captures the city of [Montevideo](#), then part of the [Spanish Empire](#) now the capital of [Uruguay](#).
- [1809](#) – The [Illinois Territory](#) is created.
- [1813](#) – [José de San Martín](#) defeats a Spanish royalist army at the [Battle of San Lorenzo](#), part of the [Argentine War of Independence](#).
- [1834](#) – [Wake Forest University](#) is established.
- [1852](#) – [Justo José de Urquiza](#) defeats [Juan Manuel de Rosas](#) at the [Battle of Caseros](#).
- [1870](#) – The [Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution](#) is ratified, guaranteeing voting rights to citizens regardless of race.
- [1900](#) – [Governor of Kentucky William Goebel](#) dies of wound sustained in an assassination attempt three days earlier in [Frankfort, Kentucky](#).
- [1913](#) – The [Sixteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution](#) is ratified, authorizing the [Federal government](#) to impose and collect an [income tax](#).
- [1917](#) – [World War I](#): The [United States](#) breaks off diplomatic relations with [Germany](#) a day after the latter announced a new policy of unrestricted [submarine warfare](#).
- [1918](#) – The [Twin Peaks Tunnel](#) in [San Francisco, California](#) begins service as the longest [streetcar](#) tunnel in the world at 11,920 feet (3,633 meters) long.
- [1931](#) – The [Hawke's Bay earthquake](#), [New Zealand](#)'s worst natural disaster, kills 258.
- [1943](#) – The [USAT Dorchester](#) is sunk by a German U-boat. Only 230 of 902 men aboard survived. The Chapel of the Four Chaplains, dedicated by President [Harry Truman](#), is one of many memorials established to commemorate the [Four Chaplains](#) story.
- [1944](#) – [World War II](#): During the [Gilbert and Marshall Islands campaign](#), U.S. [Army](#) and [Marine](#) forces [seize Kwajalein Atoll](#) from the defending [Japanese](#) garrison.
- [1945](#) – World War II: As part of [Operation Thunderclap](#), 1,000 [B-17s](#) of the [Eighth Air Force](#) bomb Berlin, a raid which kills between 2,500 to 3,000 and [dehouses](#) another 120,000.
- 1945 – World War II: The [United States](#) and the [Philippine Commonwealth](#) begin a [month-long battle](#) to retake [Manila](#) from [Japan](#).

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- [1947](#) – The lowest temperature in [North America](#) is recorded in [Snag, Yukon](#).
- [1959](#) – Death of rock and roll musicians [Buddy Holly](#), [Ritchie Valens](#), and [J. P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson](#), in a [plane crash](#) near [Clear Lake, Iowa](#).
- [1960](#) – [British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan](#) speaks of the "a [wind of change](#)" of increasing national consciousness blowing through colonial [Africa](#), signalling that his Government is likely to support decolonisation.
- [1961](#) – The [United States Air Forces](#) begins [Operation Looking Glass](#), and over the next 30 years, a "Doomsday Plane" is always in the air, with the capability of taking direct control of the United States' bombers and missiles in the event of the destruction of the [SAC's](#) command post.
- [1961](#) – A protest by agricultural workers in [Baixa de Cassanje, Portuguese Angola](#), [turns into a revolt](#), opening the [Angolan War of Independence](#), the first of the [Portuguese Colonial Wars](#).
- [1966](#) – The unmanned [Soviet Luna 9](#) spacecraft makes the first controlled rocket-assisted landing on the [Moon](#).
- [1967](#) – [Ronald Ryan](#), the last person to be executed in [Australia](#), is hanged in [Pentridge Prison, Melbourne](#).
- [1969](#) – In [Cairo](#), [Yasser Arafat](#) is appointed [Palestine Liberation Organization](#) leader at the [Palestinian National Congress](#).
- [1971](#) – [New York Police](#) Officer [Frank Serpico](#) is shot during a drug bust in [Brooklyn](#) and survives to later testify against police corruption. Many believe the incident proves that NYPD officers tried to kill him.
- [1972](#) – The first day of the seven-day [1972 Iran blizzard](#), which would kill at least 4,000 people, making it the [deadliest snowstorm in history](#).
- [1984](#) – [John Buster](#) and the research team at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center announce history's first [embryo transfer](#), from one woman to another resulting in a live birth.
- [1984](#) – [Space Shuttle program](#): [STS-41-B](#) is launched using [Space Shuttle Challenger](#).
- [1989](#) – After a [stroke](#) two weeks previous, [South African President P. W. Botha](#) resigns as leader of the [National Party](#), but stays on as president for six more months.
- [1989](#) – A military coup overthrows [Alfredo Stroessner](#), dictator of [Paraguay](#) since [1954](#).
- [1995](#) – Astronaut [Eileen Collins](#) becomes the first woman to pilot the [Space Shuttle](#) as mission [STS-63](#) gets underway from [Kennedy Space Center](#) in [Florida](#).
- [1998](#) – [Karla Faye Tucker](#) is executed in [Texas](#) becoming the first woman executed in the [United States](#) since [1984](#).
- [1998](#) – [Cavalese cable car disaster](#): a [United States Military](#) pilot causes the death of 20 people when his low-flying plane cuts the cable of a cable-car near [Trento, Italy](#).
- [2007](#) – A [Baghdad market bombing](#) kills at least 135 people and injures a further 339.