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1. [Phantom debts and fake collection notices.](#) Imagine getting an official-looking letter — with a seal, signed by a judge — that says you owe a lot of money for an unpaid
2. [Elizabeth Warren: Let's Stop Scamming Our Vets.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Mother Jones:** This week, Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) introduced legislation along with Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) that would protect elderly veterans from financial scams and sketchy financial advisers.
3. [Military working dog in Afghanistan is MIA.](#) A NATO spokesman confirmed that a military working dog went missing in Afghanistan, lending some credence to a Taliban claim.
4. [Air Force will convene early retirement board for some officers in June.](#) The Air Force will convene an Enhanced Selective Early Retirement Board on June 16 to consider early retirement for eligible officers, according to the Air Force Personnel Center.
5. [Hagel worried unethical servicemembers 'stain the honor' of US military.](#) Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel is concerned that a series of ethical lapses by servicemembers might be indicators of a systemic problem within the U.S. military, Pentagon Press Secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby told reporters at the Defense Department Wednesday.
6. [Survivors of chemical attack want stronger US role.](#) Tears welling in her eyes, Syrian refugee Amineh Sawan said Thursday that Americans are too focused on the use of chemical weapons by the regime of President Bashar Assad.
7. [Military pensions and Boehner's debt-ceiling idea.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Washington Post:** Regardless of which proposal finally wins approval, one group will come away with a clear victory: military retirees. Veterans groups have estimated that restoring the previous pension rate would prevent some of those individuals from losing out on up to \$80,000 in retirement savings.

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8. [With Pension Cuts Looming, Vets Get Mobilized](#). [Hyperlink to Audio](#)- **NPR (Audio)**: When it became clear that the congressional budget deal included a cut to military pensions, veterans service organizations sprang into action. The question now is whether the powerful lobby will be able to roll back the cuts in the pensions.
9. [Craig Newmark's Badge of Honor: VA 'Nerd-in-Residence'](#). [Hyperlink to Audio](#) **Government Executive (Audio)**: Newmark noted that one of his most important roles at VA is to stand up for and publicize the people who are doing good work at the agency. If no one hears about it, it's as if it hasn't happened, he said.
10. [DOD Electronic Health Records Help VA Disability Claims](#). The Defense Department has made troops' health records electronically available to the Veterans Affairs Department to speed up the adjudication of disability claims, a DOD health information technology official said. Now in place for service members who have ...
11. [Groups: Billions more needed to address veterans' health care, benefits issues](#).
The federal government will fall well short of meeting veterans' health care and benefits needs in the coming years, several leading veterans service organizations said this week, and tens of billions of dollars in additional spending will be needed to adequately address the issue.
12. [Groups call for increased VA spending in advance of Obama's 2015 budget](#). [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Washington Post**: Four of the nation's leading veterans organizations this week proposed a budget plan that calls for increased spending on veterans programs in 2015 and beyond.
13. [VA Accused of Changing Rules to Reach Goals](#). [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Military.com**: Longtime allies of the Department of Veterans Affairs directed some tough-love at the agency on Wednesday, accusing its leadership of playing games with Congress and creating policies to make the claims backlog look healthier than it is.
14. [Legion: VA should keep informal claims](#). [Hyperlink to Article](#) **American Legion**: The American Legion testified at a Feb. 5 hearing on Capitol Hill that focused on the technological transformation of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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15. [What causes PTSD? Researchers come closer to finding out.](#) **Hyperlink to Article The Daily Caller:** Researchers from San Diego and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, studied the links between PTSD and mild traumatic brain injury (TBI) among Marines stationed at Camp Pendleton
16. [Kaiser, VHA partner on connected health best practices.](#) **Hyperlink to Article mHealthNews:** Kaiser Permanente and the Veterans Health Administration announced on February 3 a partnership to research and share best practices in four areas. In addition to connected health and virtual care, the categories include: genomics, the care of veterans who are also Kaiser members, and analytics to leverage innovative uses of large data and population management.
17. [Report notes more problems at Dorn VA Medical Center.](#) **Hyperlink to Article The State:** The management of the Dorn VA Medical Center did a lousy job of keeping its operating rooms staffed and reacting to infection problems, according to a report from the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General.
18. [Conn. Governor pledges to end homelessness for veterans by 2016.](#) **Hyperlink to Article San Francisco Chronicle (AP):** A coalition of groups seeking to eliminate homelessness among Connecticut veterans cheered Gov. [Dannel P. Malloy](#)'s decision Thursday to include money in his budget proposal for a new security deposit program to help homeless vets.
19. [Minnesota aims to end homelessness among veterans.](#) **Hyperlink to Article Post-Bulletin:** In just one year, Minnesota could find a place to stay for every homeless veteran and solve a problem that once seemed intractable.
20. [Hot Springs woman named to SD veterans commission.](#) **Hyperlink to Article Rapid City Journal (AP):** A southwest South Dakota woman and retired lieutenant colonel has been appointed to the state's Veterans Commission.
21. [VA volunteer files suit, says he contracted Legionnaires disease at Oakland hospital.](#) **Hyperlink to Article Pittsburgh Post-Gazette:** A Hill District man who volunteered as a greeter at the Veterans Administration University Drive hospital contracted Legionnaires' disease, he claimed in a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court today.

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22. [Volunteer drivers make difference in veterans' lives.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Tulsa World:** For Lee Ellsworth, volunteering for the Disabled American Veterans transportation network was an easy decision. He knew there was a need, and he had the time.

23. [VA set to break ground on new Sanford Community Based Outpatient Clinic.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **Sanford Herald:** VA and community officials will gather in Sanford Feb. 7 to break ground for the new Sanford Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC).

24. [Colorado Springs soon to be home to first VA cemetery.](#) KXRM The land for the cemetery, just purchased last month in southeast Colorado Springs by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has been one in the ...

25. [Gulfport VA added to National Register of Historic Places.](#) [Hyperlink to Article](#) **The Sun Herald:** The old Veteran Affairs property on U.S. 90, now known as Centennial Plaza, has been added to the National Register of Historic Places.

26. [A heartbreaking story of a woman and her Marine, as told by Facebook.](#) As Facebook looks back at the last decade, one particularly heart-wrenching story a woman and her Marine boyfriend who was killed in Afghanistan has emerged.

27. [GI Joe, the world's first action figure, turns 50.](#) . The birthday of what's called the world's first action figure is being celebrated this month by collectors and the toy maker that introduced it just before the nation plunged into the quagmire that would become the Vietnam War — a storm it seems to have weathered pretty well.

28. **VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as February 7, 2014:**
 - **February 20, 2014.** HVAC Health will be holding a field hearing in Camarillo, California.

 - **February 25, 2014.** House Veterans' Affairs Committee and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee will hold a hearing to receive a legislative presentation of the Disabled American Veterans.

 - **February 27, 2014.** Hearing of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs (HVAC EO) entitled, "VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program: Further Performance and Workload Management Improvements Needed."

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- **March 5, 2014.** House Veterans' Affairs Committee and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee 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: BVA, JWV, MOPH, AMVETS, TREA, MOAA, VVA, NGUAS and NASDVA.
- **March 12, 2014.** House Veterans' Affairs Committee and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee will hold a joint hearing to receive the legislative presentations of Veterans Organizations: PVA, IAVA, GSW, WWP, FRA, AFSA, NCAO, AXPOW.
- **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.

29. Today in History:

- [1783](#) – [American Revolutionary War](#): French and Spanish forces lift the [Great Siege of Gibraltar](#).
- [1795](#) – The [11th Amendment](#) to the [United States Constitution](#) is [ratified](#).
- [1807](#) – [Napoleonic Wars](#): [Battle of Eylau](#) – [Napoléon's French Empire](#) begins fighting against [Russian](#) and [Prussian](#) forces of the [Fourth Coalition](#) at Eylau, [Poland](#).
- [1813](#) – [Action of 7 February 1813](#): stalemate two evenly matched [frigates](#) from the [French Navy](#) and the British [Royal Navy](#), [Aréthuse](#) and [HMS Amelia](#).
- [1819](#) – Sir Thomas [Stamford Raffles](#) leaves [Singapore](#) after just taking it over, leaving it in the hands of [William Farquhar](#).
- [1842](#) – [Battle of Debre Tabor](#): Ras [Ali Alula](#), Regent of the [Emperor of Ethiopia](#) defeats warlord Wube Haile Maryam of Semien.
- [1863](#) – [HMS Orpheus](#) sinks off the coast of [Auckland](#), [New Zealand](#), killing 189.
- [1894](#) – The [Cripple Creek miner's strike](#), led by the [Western Federation of Miners](#), begins in [Cripple Creek, Colorado](#).
- [1897](#) – [Greco-Turkish War](#): The first full-scale battle takes place when the [Greek](#) expeditionary force in [Crete](#) defeats a 4,000-strong [Ottoman](#) force at [Livadeia](#).
- [1898](#) – [Émile Zola](#) is brought to trial for [libel](#) for publishing [J'Accuse](#).
- [1900](#) – [Second Boer War](#): [British](#) troops fail in their [third attempt](#) to lift the [Siege of Ladysmith](#).
- [1904](#) – A [fire](#) in [Baltimore, Maryland](#) destroys over 1,500 buildings in 30 hours.
- [1907](#) – The [Mud March](#) is the first large procession organized by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS).
- [1935](#) – The classic board game [Monopoly](#) is invented.
- [1940](#) – The second full length animated [Walt Disney](#) film, [Pinocchio](#), premieres.
- [1943](#) – [Imperial Japanese naval](#) forces complete the evacuation of [Imperial Japanese Army](#) troops from [Guadalcanal](#) during [Operation Ke](#), ending Japanese attempts to retake the island from [Allied](#) forces in the [Guadalcanal Campaign](#).

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- [1944](#) – [World War II](#): In [Anzio, Italy](#), [German](#) forces launch a counteroffensive during the Allied [Operation Shingle](#).
- [1951](#) – [Korean War](#): [Sancheong-Hamyang massacre](#)
- [1962](#) – The [United States bans](#) all [Cuban](#) imports and exports.
- [1964](#) – [The Beatles](#) first arrive in the United States. Their performance on [The Ed Sullivan Show](#) two days later would mark the beginning of the [British Invasion](#).
- [1974](#) – [Grenada](#) gains independence from the [United Kingdom](#).
- [1976](#) – [Darryl Sittler](#) sets an NHL record for scoring 10 points in a single game.
- [1979](#) – [Pluto](#) moves inside [Neptune's](#) orbit for the first time since either was discovered.
- [1984](#) – [Space Shuttle program](#): [STS-41-B](#) Mission – [Astronauts Bruce McCandless II](#) and [Robert L. Stewart](#) make the first untethered [space walk](#) using the [Manned Maneuvering Unit](#) (MMU).
- [1986](#) – Twenty-eight years of one-family rule end in [Haiti](#), when [President Jean-Claude Duvalier](#) flees the [Caribbean](#) nation.
- [1990](#) – [Dissolution of the Soviet Union](#): The [Central Committee](#) of the [Soviet Communist Party](#) agrees to give up its monopoly on power.
- [1991](#) – [Haiti's](#) first democratically-elected president, [Jean-Bertrand Aristide](#), is sworn in.
- [1992](#) – The [Maastricht Treaty](#) is signed, leading to the creation of the [European Union](#).
- [1995](#) – [Ramzi Yousef](#), the mastermind of the [1993 World Trade Center](#) bombing, is arrested in [Islamabad, Pakistan](#).
- [1999](#) – [Crown Prince Abdullah](#) becomes the King of [Jordan](#) on the death of his father, King [Hussein](#).
- [2009](#) – [Bushfires in Victoria](#) left 173 dead in the worst natural disaster in Australia's history.
- [2012](#) – President [Mohamed Nasheed](#) of the [Republic of Maldives](#) resigns, after 23 days of anti-governmental protests calling for the release of Chief Judge unlawfully arrested by the military.
- [2013](#) – At least 53 people are killed when a [bus and truck collide](#) near [Chibombo, Zambia](#).