

# June 21, 2013

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3. **In Afghanistan, US military scraps billions in equipment.**
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1. [Gandolfini covered veterans' issues in HBO documentaries.](#) James Gandolfini, best known for his body of work on the HBO drama series "The Sopranos," also produced two documentaries on veterans' issues for the cable network before his death Wednesday at the age of 51.
2. [Hagel: Women in combat the 'right thing' — if they can do it.](#) Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel told troops in Nebraska that integrating women into combat positions is "the right thing," but said the Defense Department won't be artificially easing requirements to pave the way.
3. [In Afghanistan, US military scraps billions in equipment.](#) Facing a tight withdrawal deadline and tough terrain, the U.S. military has destroyed more than 170 million pounds of vehicles and other military equipment as it rushes to wind down its role in the Afghanistan war by the end of 2014.
4. [Cutler Man Sentenced to 3 Years in Prison for Ripping Off the Fed.](#) [WABI](#) He was also ordered to pay nearly \$143,000 dollars back to the US Department of Veterans Affairs. Prosecutors say he falsely claimed to be unemployed and unable to work because of disabilities when he was actually working as a fisherman, painter and ...
5. [Ga. man sentenced to 2 years in prison for using disabled veteran.](#) [The Republic](#) Authorities say Singleton created two businesses in the man's name and entered into contracts with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Agriculture, the United States Coast Guard and the United States Army Corps of Engineers. Officials ...
6. [Progress Being Made in Processing Disability Claims.](#) [Afro American](#) I joined U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-MD) in January to demand Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Eric Shinseki take immediate steps to address the outstanding claims. I recently toured the Baltimore VA Regional Office and I am ...
7. [Veterans Affairs Department Shows Progress On Disability Claims Backlog.](#) [Huffington Post](#) U.S. Secretary of Veteran Affairs Eric Shinseki testifies during a hearing before the House Armed Services Committee and House Veterans' Affairs Committee July 25, 2012 on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. The hearing was focused on 'Back From the ...

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8. [VA reduces backlog of disability claims.](#) [Winston-Salem Journal](#) The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is chipping away at a massive inventory of disability claims for veterans, reducing the number of claims considered backlogged by about 15 percent in recent weeks. Republican legislators are ...
9. [VA Offices Receive Digital Medical File Mgmt System.](#) [ExecutiveGov](#) The U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs completed a \$105 million project last week to provide an electronic database to 56 regional offices for storing, organizing and updating disability claims, Nextgov reported Monday. Bob Brewin writes the VA ...
10. [VA claims system now in all regional offices.](#) [FierceHealthIT](#) The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs this week introduced a new application that enables disability compensation claims to be processed more quickly, in a more end-to-end electronic environment--and it's urging veterans and their representatives to ...
11. [House bill would let more vets get private care.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#)  
**Army Times:** An Arizona lawmaker wants to expand veterans' access to private health care by requiring the Veterans Affairs Department to make the best interest of the patient a priority when deciding whether contracted care is appropriate.
12. [VA Says 'eBenefits' Portal to Speed Up Claims.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#)  
**Military.com:** The Department of Veterans Affairs on Tuesday said it has a new online application that will enable faster processing of disability claims. Key to new portal's efficiency will be veterans, working with veterans' service organizations such as The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, and the American Legion filing so-called Fully Developed Claims: those with all documents and medical records necessary for claims officials to make a decision.
13. [VA Integrates Electronic System to Speed Claims Processing.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#)  
**NextGov:** The Veterans Affairs Department has integrated its eBenefits portal with its automated Veterans Benefits Management System in an effort department officials say will expedite claims processing.
14. [Rep. Bill Flores holds meeting on disability claims backlog and its effect on Texas veterans.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#)  
**Houston Chronicle:** The Texas delegation met with Veterans Benefits Administration's Undersecretary Allison Hickey Tuesday to discuss the backlog of disability claims for Texas veterans.

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15. [Should state help feds clear backlog of veterans' claims? \*\*Hyperlink to Story\*\*](#) **The Sacramento Bee:** California's veterans definitely deserve better and faster service than they're getting on their disability and other claims. But should the state spend taxpayers' money on what is a federal responsibility?
16. [As VA works to eliminate one backlog, one more might emerge. \*\*Hyperlink to Story\*\*](#) **Federal News Radio (Audio):** Over the past several months, the Department of Veterans Affairs has taken several steps to dig out of a large backlog of disability claims, including imposing mandatory overtime for its employees and a new strategy to tackle the oldest claims first.
17. [The Dysfunction That Is Veterans Affairs. \*\*Hyperlink to Story\*\*](#) **The Huffington Post:** If you follow news reports about the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), you know the department has come in for some rough weather in recent months.
18. [Shinseki's critics will eat their words. \*\*Hyperlink to Story\*\*](#) **The Hill:** There is nearly universal agreement that too many American veterans are made to languish unnecessarily under the current Department of Veterans Affairs claims backlog.
19. [As women prepare to enter combat, VA call center focuses on female veterans. \*\*Hyperlink to Story\*\*](#) **Democrat and Chronicle:** With a dramatic increase in the number of women serving in the military, a new hotline just for women is now up and running in Canandaigua to help female veterans from across the nation find and use services available to them.
20. [VA to review regulations governing small business contracting program. \*\*Hyperlink to Story\*\*](#) **Washington Business Journal:** Veteran owners of small businesses might see some respite from what many have described as an arduous, unfair process used by the Department of Veterans Affairs to determine who's eligible to bid on set-aside contracts: The VA is apparently committed to making the verification process more efficient and less burdensome.
21. [VA pulls grant for homeless vet project. \*\*Hyperlink to Story\*\*](#) **The Gainesville Sun:** The Department of Veterans Affairs has chosen to terminate a multi-million-dollar grant awarded to the Alachua County Housing Authority in 2008 for the establishment of a transitional housing project for homeless veterans.

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22. [Northport VA, HUD joining forces to make LI more affordable for veterans](#). [Hyperlink to Story](#) **News 12 Long Island (Video)**: A local organization is joining forces with the federal government to make Long Island more affordable for veterans.
23. [Ex-chief of Cleveland VA Medical Center indicted](#). [Hyperlink to Story](#) **San Francisco Chronicle (AP)**: A former director of the Veterans Affairs medical center in Cleveland is accused of accepting bribes and has been indicted on federal charges in a long-running county corruption investigation.
24. [VA wants no part of fines proposal](#). [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**: The Department of Veterans Affairs would support a bill by Pittsburgh-area congressmen requiring its hospitals to disclose Legionnaires' and other infectious diseases to state and local health officials, but wants an exemption from proposed fines and would prefer voluntary reporting rules, VA officials said Wednesday.
25. **VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as June 21, 2013:**

- **June 26, 2013.** HVAC Economic Opportunity Subcommittee will hold a legislative hearing on the following bills. Time: TBD

The tentative bill list is as follows:

- HR 331 – School Consortium Bill, to permit the centralized reporting of Veteran enrollment by certain groups, districts, and consortiums of educational institutions.
- HR 1357 – VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, to improve the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program by providing assistance under such program for certain training programs that are considered less than fulltime.
- HR 1796 –Troop Talent Act, ensure that the education and training provided members of the Armed Forces and Veterans better assists members and Veterans in obtaining civilian certifications and licenses, and for other purposes.
- HR 2210 – Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship Improvements Act of 2013, amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the eligibility of children of certain deceased Veterans to educational assistance under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Education bill on 'irrevocable decision'.

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- Draft “Veterans Economic Opportunity Administration Act of 2009,” this is a reprise of a Buyer Bill from 2009 that would split off from VBA a new “Economic Opportunity Administration.”
- **June 27, 2013.** HVAC will hold a hearing to discuss VA’s capital investment options to provide Veterans with care. 10:00 A.M.; 334 Cannon
- **July 10, 2013.** The House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs will hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Armed Services entitled, “DOD and VA Collaboration to assist Service Members Returning to Civilian Life.” 10:00 A.M.; 2118 Rayburn

## 26. Today in History:

- [1734](#) – In [Montreal](#) in [New France](#), a slave known by the French name of [Marie-Joseph Angélique](#) is put to death, having been convicted of [setting the fire](#) that destroyed much of the city.
- [1749](#) – [Halifax, Nova Scotia](#), is founded.
- [1788](#) – [New Hampshire](#) ratifies the [Constitution of the United States](#) and is admitted as the 9th state in the [United States](#).
- [1791](#) – King [Louis XVI of France](#) and his immediate family begin the [Flight to Varennes](#) during the [French Revolution](#).
- [1798](#) – [Irish Rebellion of 1798](#): The British Army defeats Irish rebels at the [Battle of Vinegar Hill](#).
- [1813](#) – [Peninsular War](#): [Battle of Vitoria](#).
- [1824](#) – [Greek War of Independence](#): [Egyptian](#) forces capture [Psara](#) in the [Aegean Sea](#).
- [1826](#) – [Maniots](#) defeat Egyptians under [Ibrahim Pasha](#) in the [Battle of Vergas](#).
- [1848](#) – In the [Wallachian Revolution](#), [Ion Heliade Rădulescu](#) and [Christian Tell](#) issue the [Proclamation of Islaz](#) and create a new republican government.
- [1854](#) – The first [Victoria Cross](#) is awarded during the bombardment of [Bomarsund](#) in the [Åland Islands](#).
- [1864](#) – [American Civil War](#): The [Battle of Jerusalem Plank Road](#) begins.
- [1864](#) – [New Zealand Land Wars](#): The [Tauranga Campaign](#) ends.
- [1877](#) – The [Molly Maguires](#), ten Irish immigrants convicted of murder, are hanged at the [Schuylkill County](#) and [Carbon County, Pennsylvania](#) prisons.
- [1898](#) – The [United States captures Guam](#) from [Spain](#).
- [1900](#) – [Boxer Rebellion](#). China formally declared war on the United States, Britain, Germany, France and Japan, as an edict issued from the Dowager Empress [Cixi](#).
- [1915](#) – The [U.S. Supreme Court](#) hands down its decision in [Guinn v. United States](#) 238 US 347 1915, striking down an [Oklahoma](#) law denying the right to vote to some citizens.
- [1919](#) – The [Royal Canadian Mounted Police](#) fire a volley into a crowd of unemployed war veterans, killing two, during the [Winnipeg General Strike](#).
- [1919](#) – Admiral [Ludwig von Reuter](#) [scuttles the German fleet](#) in [Scapa Flow, Orkney](#). The nine sailors killed are the last casualties of [World War I](#).
- [1929](#) – An agreement brokered by U.S. Ambassador [Dwight Whitney Morrow](#) ends the [Cristero War](#) in [Mexico](#).

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- [1930](#) – One-year [conscription](#) comes into force in [France](#).
- [1942](#) – [World War II: Tobruk](#) falls to Italian and German forces.
- [1942](#) – World War II: A [Japanese submarine](#) surfaces near the [Columbia River](#) in [Oregon](#), firing 17 shells at nearby [Fort Stevens](#) in one of only a handful of [attacks by the Japanese against the United States mainland](#).
- [1945](#) – World War II: The [Battle of Okinawa](#) ends when the organized resistance of [Imperial Japanese Army](#) forces collapses in the Mabuni area on the southern tip of the main island.
- [1948](#) – [Columbia Records](#) introduces the [long-playing record album](#) in a public demonstration at the [Waldorf-Astoria Hotel](#) in [New York, New York](#).
- [1957](#) – [Ellen Fairclough](#) is sworn in as Canada's first woman [Cabinet Minister](#).
- [1964](#) – Three [civil rights](#) workers, [Andrew Goodman](#), [James Chaney](#) and [Mickey Schwerner](#), [are murdered](#) in [Neshoba County, Mississippi](#), United States, by members of the [Ku Klux Klan](#).
- [1970](#) – [Penn Central](#) declares Section 77 [bankruptcy](#), largest ever US corporate bankruptcy up to this date.
- [1973](#) – In handing down the decision in [Miller v. California](#) 413 US 15, the Supreme Court of the United States establishes the [Miller Test](#) for obscenity in U.S. law.
- [1982](#) – [John Hinckley](#) is found [not guilty by reason of insanity](#) for the attempted [assassination](#) of [U.S. President Ronald Reagan](#).
- [2001](#) – A federal grand jury in [Alexandria, Virginia](#), indicts 13 Saudis and a Lebanese in the 1996 bombing of the [Khobar Towers](#) in [Saudi Arabia](#) that killed 19 American servicemen.
- [2004](#) – [SpaceShipOne](#) becomes the first privately funded [spaceplane](#) to achieve [spaceflight](#).
- [2009](#) – [Greenland](#) assumes [self-rule](#).
- [2012](#) – A boat carrying more than 200 [refugees capsized](#) in the [Indian Ocean](#) between the Indonesian island of [Java](#) and [Christmas Island](#), killing 17 people and leaving 70 other missing,