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3. Wounded veterans find multiple benefits from paddling on dragon boat teams.
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5. Pentagon to Buy Records System Amid US Veterans' Claims Delays.
6. V.A. Warns Aging Veterans Against 'Pension Poachers'.
7. More hope to cut backlog of VA disability claims?
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1. [Bloomfield editorial: Memorial Day.](#) [NorthJersey.com](#) According to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the origins of Memorial Day can be contested. Since the Civil War, towns and organizations have coordinated observances for the war dead. Many of these events were called Decoration Day. Many were ...
2. [Congress vows close scrutiny of VA's backlog progress.](#) After years of quiet stagnation, the veterans benefits claim backlog has finally caught Congress' attention.
3. [Wounded veterans find multiple benefits from paddling on dragon boat teams.](#) From the shore along Vancouver Lake, you can see ospreys slice through the sky, then suddenly wheel around and plunge toward a target in the water. It's kind of like what Tony Davis did a few years ago, as a Navy helicopter crewman.
4. [Veterans Affairs Health Records System Update Sought By Pentagon.](#) [Huffington Post](#) A U.S. official says the Pentagon has decided to buy a new computerized health records system that will allow the department to better share and merge its data with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel is ...
5. [Pentagon to Buy Records System Amid US Veterans' Claims Delays.](#) [Businessweek](#) "This has been a longstanding concern that seemingly the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense cannot resolve," according to a letter signed by the lawmakers. The two agencies need to permanently merge electronic medical-care ...
6. [V.A. Warns Aging Veterans Against 'Pension Poachers'.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#)
The New York Times: If you've applied for the Aid and Attendance benefit from Department of Veterans Affairs — which can provide as much as \$2,019 monthly for a veteran and spouse for caregiving expenses — then you are all too familiar with some of the reasons for the typical 8-to-18-month delays in getting an answer from the V.A.

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7. [More hope to cut backlog of VA disability claims?](#) [Sacramento Bee \(blog\)](#)
There's a flurry of activity on VA disability claims -- and, just maybe, some hope that the disgracefully long waits endured by veterans will be reduced. Tuesday, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced a partnership with the American Legion ...
8. [VA and Vet Groups Announce Backlog Initiative.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#)
Military.com: The Department of Veterans Affairs and two of the country's leading veterans' service organizations say they have developed a plan to speed up action on disability claims and help bring down the claims backlog that is frustrating veterans, their families, and congressional lawmakers.
9. [JON STEWART ON THE DELAYED DEFENSE-VA HEALTH RECORD DECISION.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **NextGov (Video):** Comedian Jon Stewart, like me, can count to 30. Last night on his "Daily Show," he skewered Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel for not making a decision on the integrated electronic health record system last week as promised.
10. [Hagel Opts for Commercial Electronic Health Record Software.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **NextGov:** Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel opted to run procurements for commercial electronic health record software, which will "likely" include software based on the system used by the Veterans Affairs Department.
11. [Our View: Veterans Affairs adds evidence of sexual abuse in military.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Fayetteville Observer:** With each new report, the extent of sexual abuse in the nation's military services grows more astonishing. And the need to control it grows more urgent.
12. [Veterans seek help for sexual abuse.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Pensacola News Journal:** New government figures underscore the staggering long-term consequences of military sexual assaults: More than 85,000 veterans were treated last year for injuries or illness linked to the abuse, and 4,000 sought disability benefits.
13. [VA closing in on mental health hiring goal.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Army Times:** The Veterans Affairs Department is 240 people shy of meeting a goal to hire 1,600 new mental health professionals by June 30, VA officials said Tuesday.
14. [Food Stamp Cuts Feared By Veterans.](#) [Hyperlink to Story](#) **The Huffington Post (Video):** Veterans have a reminder for the Senate as it takes up plans to cut food stamps by \$4.1 billion this week: The aid has been -- and still is -- vital to people who served their country.

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15. [Improving cataract surgery outcomes for VA patients](#). [Hyperlink to Story](#) **The Washington Post:** There are more than 50,000 cataract surgeries performed at Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health facilities every year and more than 3 million throughout the country, but there has never been a system in place to collect detailed patient outcomes on a national level, in either the private or public sectors.

16. [HUNNEMAN: Vets seek out those 'Missing in America'](#). [Hyperlink to Story](#) **Press-Enterprise:** On Monday, May 20, the cremains of 35 military veterans were taken by hearse from the Northern California city of Santa Rosa and driven about 75 miles to the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery in Dixon.

17. **VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as May 23, 2013:**
 - **May 23, 2013.** The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Subcommittee on the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Federal Programs and the Federal Workforce will conduct a hearing entitled "Improving Federal Health Care in Rural America: Developing the Workforce and Building Partnerships." 10:00 A.M.; 340 Dirksen SOB
 - **June 5, 2013. (Postponed from May 15, 2013)** The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs will hold a legislative hearing on VA's benefit programs and other purposes. 10:00 A.M.; Russell 418

The tentative bill list is as follows:

- S. 6 Putting Our Veterans Back to Work Act of 2013 (Reid)
- S. 200 A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the interment in national cemeteries under the control of the National Cemetery Administration of individuals who served in combat support of the Armed forces in the Kingdom of Laos between February 28, 1961, and May 15, 1975, and for other purposes (Murkowski)
- S.257 GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013 (Boozman)
- S.262 Veterans Education Equity Act of 2013 (Durbin)
- S. 294 Ruth Moore Act of 2013 (Tester)
- S. 373 Charlie Morgan Military Spouses Equal Treatment Act of 2013 (Shaheen)
- S. 430 Veterans Small Business Opportunity and Protection Act of 2013 (Heller)
- S. 492 A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require States to recognize the Military experience of Veterans when issuing licenses and credentials to Veterans, and for other purposes (Burr)
- S. 495 Careers for Veterans Act of 2013 (Burr)

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- S. 514 A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide additional Educational Assistance under Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to Veterans pursuing a degree in science, technology, engineering, math, or an area that leads to employment in a high-demand occupation, and for other purposes (Brown)
- S. 515 A bill to amend Title 38, United States Code, to extend the Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program to cover recipients of Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry scholarship, and for other purposes. (Brown)
- S 572 Veterans Second Amendment Act (Burr)
- S. 629 Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act of 2013 (Pryor)
- S. 674 Accountability for Veterans Act of 2013 (Heller)
- S. 690 Filipino Veterans Fairness Act of 2013 (Schatz)
- S. 695 Veterans Paralympic Act of 2013--A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the Authorization of appropriations for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay a monthly assistance allowance to Disabled Veterans training or competing for the Paralympic Team and the authorization of appropriations for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide assistance to United States Paralympics, Inc., and for other purposes (Boozman)
- S. 705 A bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to ensure Memorials commemorating the service of the United States Armed Forces may contain religious symbols, and for other purposes (Burr)
- S. 735 Survivor Benefits Improvement Act of 2013 (Sanders)
- S. 748 Veterans Pension Protection Act (Wyden)
- S. 778 A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to issue cards to Veterans that identify them as Veterans, and for other purposes. (Burr)
- S. 819 Veterans Mental Health Treatment First Act of 2013 (Burr)
- S. 863 Veterans Back to School Act of 2013 (Blumenthal)
- S. 868 Filipino Veterans Promise Act (Heller)
- S. 889 Servicemembers' Choice in Transition Act of 2013 (Boozman)
- S. 893 Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2013 (Sanders)
- S. 894 A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend expiring authority for work-study allowances for individuals who are pursuing programs of rehabilitation, education, or training under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, to expand such authority to certain outreach services provided through congressional offices, and for other purposes. (Sanders)
- S. 922 Veterans Outreach Act of 2013 (Sanders)
- S. 927 Veterans Equipped for success During Transition Act of 2013 (Sanders)
- S. 928 Claims Processing Improvement Act of 2013 (Sanders)

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DRAFT BILLS

- S. XXX Franchise Education for Veterans for Veterans Act of 2013 (Moran)
- S. XXX A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to treat certain misfiled documents as motions for reconsideration of decisions by the Board of Veterans' Appeals, and for other purposes. (Blumenthal)
- S. XXX Putting Veterans Funding First Act of 2013 (Begich)
- S. XXX Giving Rise to Emerging Environmental Technologies for Vets Act of 2013 (Sanders)
- S. XXX Quicker Veterans Benefits Delivery Act (Franken)
- S. XXX A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to charge Veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, and for other purposes.
- S. XXX A bill to provide in-state tuition to transitioning Veterans (Sanders)

18. Today in History:

- [1701](#) – After being convicted of [piracy](#) and of murdering William Moore, Captain [William Kidd](#) is hanged in [London](#).
- [1706](#) – [Battle of Ramillies](#): [John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough](#), defeats a [French](#) army under [Marshal Villeroi](#).
- [1788](#) – [South Carolina](#) ratifies the Constitution as the 8th American state.
- [1793](#) – [Battle of Flanders](#) during the [Flanders Campaign](#) of the [War of the First Coalition](#).
- [1813](#) – [South American independence](#) leader [Simón Bolívar](#) enters [Mérida](#), leading the invasion of [Venezuela](#), and is proclaimed *El Libertador* ("The Liberator").
- [1846](#) – [Mexican-American War](#): President [Mariano Paredes](#) of [Mexico](#) unofficially declares war on the [United States](#).
- [1873](#) – The [Canadian](#) Parliament establishes the [North-West Mounted Police](#), the forerunner of the [Royal Canadian Mounted Police](#).
- [1900](#) – [American Civil War](#): Sergeant [William Harvey Carney](#) is awarded the [Medal of Honor](#), for his heroism in the [Assault on the Battery Wagner](#) in 1863.
- [1915](#) – [World War I](#): Italy joins the [Allies](#) after they declare war on [Austria-Hungary](#).
- [1932](#) – In Brazil, four students are shot and killed during a manifestation against the Brazilian dictator Getúlio Vargas, which occurred in the city of [São Paulo](#). Their names/surnames were used to form the M.M.D.C., a revolutionary group that would act against the dictatorial government, especially in the [Constitutionalist Revolution](#) ("Revolução Constitucionalista", in Portuguese), the major uprising in Brazil during the 20th century.
- [1934](#) – American [bank robbers](#) [Bonnie and Clyde](#) are ambushed by police and killed in [Black Lake, Louisiana](#).

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- 1934 – The [Auto-Lite Strike](#) culminates in the "Battle of Toledo", a five-day mêlée between 1,300 troops of the [Ohio National Guard](#) and 6,000 picketers.
- [1939](#) – The U.S. Navy [submarine USS Squalus](#) sinks off the coast of [New Hampshire](#) during a test dive, causing the death of 24 sailors and two civilian technicians. The remaining 32 sailors and one civilian naval architect are rescued the following day.
- [1945](#) – [World War II](#): [Heinrich Himmler](#), the head of the [SS](#), commits [suicide](#) while in [Allied](#) custody.
- 1945 – World War II: The [Flensburg government](#) under [Reichspräsident Karl Dönitz](#) is dissolved when its members are captured and arrested by [British](#) forces at [Flensburg](#) in Northern [Germany](#).
- [1948](#) – [Thomas C. Wasson](#), US Consul-General assassinated in Jerusalem.
- [1949](#) – The [Federal Republic of Germany](#) is established and the [Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany](#) is proclaimed.
- [1951](#) – [Tibetans](#) sign the [Seventeen Point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet](#) with the [People's Republic of China](#).
- [1967](#) – [Egypt](#) closes the [Straits of Tiran](#) and blockades the port of [Eilat](#) at the northern end of the [Gulf of Aqaba](#) to [Israeli](#) shipping.
- [1992](#) – Italy's most prominent anti-mafia judge [Giovanni Falcone](#), his wife and three body guards are killed by the [Corleonesi](#) clan with a half-ton bomb near [Capaci](#), [Sicily](#). His friend and colleague [Paolo Borsellino](#) will be assassinated less than 2 months later, making 1992 a turning point in the history of [Italian Mafia](#) prosecutions.
- [1995](#) – The first version of the [Java programming language](#) is released.
- [1998](#) – The [Good Friday Agreement](#) is accepted in a [referendum](#) in [Northern Ireland](#) with 75% voting yes.
- [2004](#) – Part of [Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport](#)'s Terminal 2E collapses, killing four people and injuring three others.
- [2006](#) – [Alaskan stratovolcano Mount Cleveland](#) erupts.
- [2008](#) – The [International Court of Justice](#) (ICJ) awards [Middle Rocks](#) to [Malaysia](#) and [Pedra Branca \(Pulau Batu Puteh\)](#) to [Singapore](#), ending a 29-year [territorial dispute](#) between the two countries.
- [2010](#) – [Jamaican](#) police begin a manhunt for drug lord [Christopher "Dudus" Coke](#), after the United States requested his extradition, leading to [three days of violence](#) during which at least 73 bystanders are killed.