Happy Wednesday all. Hoping you and yours are well.

**For Today:** “Character is higher than intellect. A great soul will be strong to live as well as think.”

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

**American Legion, Post 1, Fall 2012, Networking Event, Washington, DC, September 11, 2012.** Free chow, cash bar, Veterans and friends of Vets...all welcome. *Please see attached flyer* for details and should you have questions, please contact my good buddy Bill Ferguson at billferguson3rd@hotmail.com

Secretary Shinseki addressed the American Legion. On Tuesday, Secretary Shinseki addressed the American Legion at their annual convention in Indianapolis. Learn more

**Reserve Officers Association (ROA) SmartBrief for August 28, 2012.**
http://www.smartbrief.com/servlet/wireless?issueid=F55EAA7F-6D52-466B-8870-2BE48B023128&sid=22cbe9eb%2d3ef0%2d4eca%2d8105%2def9f466de32d

Prayers and blessings for you and your loved ones and for our dear Troops and their loved ones everywhere.

Best.....Wayne

------------------------------------

**Comments Regarding SDV and BIRLS and CVE – Sent in by our good friend and passionate Vets advocate, Master Chief Bob Hesser, USN (Ret), 1st Vice Chairman of VetForce.**

"Wayne, I will appreciate you publishing partial public testimony excerpts from the **5th public meeting minutes of the Intergency Task Force on Veteran’s Small Business Development held on April 27th, 2012 (attached).** Ms. Marie Johns is the Chairman of the Task Force and Mr. Tom Leney is the OSDBU for VA. Mr. Leney was asked about BIRLS several times at VET-Force meetings, by congressmen during congressional testimony, and other times since July last year. Each time the response was that ultimately the Veteran must be in the BIRLS database if they are to be verified by CVE as being a VOSB or SDVOSB. And, Mr. Leney has told us, as does the letter CVE sends denying verification because the individual is not in BIRLS; that it is the individual’s responsibility to get their name in BIRLS.

To this date you can speak to any VA employee or contractor you choose and they cannot tell you how an individual can get their name and data into the BIRLS database. VA’s own 38 CFR 74.1 definition is: “Service-disabled veteran is a veteran who possesses either a disability rating letter issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs, establishing a service-connected rating between 0 and 100 percent, or a disability determination from the
Department of Defense.” THERE IS NOTHING STATING BIRLS IS REQUIRED. As of today, August 29, 2012, there are individuals awaiting reconsideration because they were denied for NOT being in BIRLS. Mr. Leney was told personally by me at a VET-Force meeting. He has been sent emails detailing the problems with others. This is malfeasance. This is cruelty. This is disgraceful. Enough!!

I am including testimony concerning BIRLS. I also included testimony concerning a question I asked about franchising that reflects the attitude of VA versus common sense practiced by SBA.

Signed - Bob Hesser 1st Vice-Chairman, VET-Force.”

**Note:** Definition of BIRLS - Beneficiary Identification Records Locator Subsystem: Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) system called The Beneficiary Identification Records Locator System (BIRLS) is a benefits-related VA database containing records of beneficiaries, including Veterans whose survivors applied for death benefits.

If the VA wants to know if a veteran is a veteran or has received any benefits from the VA they go to BIRLS. CVE decided some time ago that they would go to BIRLS to determine if a person claiming Veterans status was actually a Veteran or SDV. If you received any benefit from the VA (GI Bill, education, Loan, voc-rehab, compensations after 1963 you were input into the database by DOD or VAS benefits departments. However, if you received the benefit ten or more years past, your name disappeared from BIRLS (Bob Hesser says his name did disappear from BIRLS). If you did not ask for a benefit between 1963 and 1974 your name disappeared from BIRLS. Bob says he has been communicating his concerns to VA and CVE regarding this matter as far back as 2003, but still, as of today, no action has been taken to correct this dilemma.

VA Veterans News for Wednesday, August 29, 2012. Thanks to Kevin Secor, VA VSO Liaison

1. **Remains of three Vietnam-era soldiers returned to families for burial.**
2. **Injured military members find physical, mental benefits in adaptive athletics.**
3. **Officials want vets to know benefit help is free.**
4. **VA’s IT Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses Strategy.**
5. **Veterans Affairs Agency Fined For Alleged Environmental Violations During Cemetery Construction.**
6. **VA Held Nearly 1,000 Conferences During The Past Two And A Half Years.**
7. **Vets Have Chance To Get Disability Ratings Upgraded.**
8. **Editorial Also Takes Note Of VA Notification Effort.**
9. **Veterans Job Training Slots Fill Up Quickly.**
10. **VA Working With Nonprofit To Help Vets Find Meaningful Jobs.**
11. **VA Praised For Providing Suits To Job-Hunting Vets.**
12. **Center Is "Sanctuary" For Troubled Vets.**
13. **Military Veterans Say Mental Health Services Need To Improve.**
14. OCW Delivers Gifts To Wounded Warriors.
15. New Service Gives VA Patients Access To Health Records Online.
17. Baker: VistA Refactoring Will Be Done In The Open.
20. Henry Black, 7th SMMC, Dies At 83.
21. GW Veterans Looks To Expand Presence.
23. VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as August 29, 2012:
24. Today in History:

1. **Remains of three Vietnam-era soldiers returned to families for burial.** The remains of three soldiers who died when their Special Forces reconnaissance patrol was ambushed during the Vietnam War have been identified and returned to their families for burial, the Defense Department said Monday.

2. **Injured military members find physical, mental benefits in adaptive athletics.** [AZ Central.com](https://www.azcentral.com) He heard about a winter sports clinic sponsored by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and decided to try it out. Clemens was hooked after a week's worth of skiing, and his athletic life snowballed from there. In just over a year, he lost 100 ...

3. **Officials want vets to know benefit help is free.** [San Francisco Chronicle](https://www.sanfranciscochronicle.com) In May, U.S. Sen. Bob Corker of Tennessee asked Smith and others to submit testimony for a hearing by a special Senate Committee on Aging. Recommendations that came out of the hearing included making it illegal to advise veterans to move assets and ...

4. **VA's IT Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses Strategy.** [govWin](http://www.govwin.com) Of their total FY2013 IT budget of $3.2 billion, the Department of Veterans Affairs plans to spend over $2.5 billion with federal contractors and a large percentage of that will go to Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, according to VA CIO ...

5. **Veterans Affairs Agency Fined For Alleged Environmental Violations During Cemetery Construction.** [Charleston (WV) Daily Mail](https://www.charlestonwv.com) "The state Department of Environmental Protection has proposed that the West Virginia Division of Veterans Affairs pay a $14,990 fine for allegedly failing to comply with environmental laws during construction of the Donel Kinnard Memorial State Veterans Cemetery at Institute." In a "consent order signed Aug. 9 by Larissa Wines, the Division of Veterans Affairs agreed to bring its operations into compliance, submit a corrective action plan, and pay a $14,990 fine. The Department of Environmental Protection calculated a base fine of $18,700, then increased the amount by $30 for public notice costs and reduced the amount by $3,740 for the Division of Veterans Affairs' good faith and for cooperating with the secretary of the DEP."

6. **VA Held Nearly 1,000 Conferences During The Past Two And A Half
Years. NextGov "The Veterans Affairs Department held 948 conferences - about one per day - attended by 50 or more employees between January 2009 and June 2012, according to a contract notice posted Friday on the Federal Business Opportunities website seeking outside help analyzing the department's conference planning and spending practices after VA Secretary Eric Shinseki ordered a comprehensive review." In a recent letter, US Rep. Jeff Miller (R-FL), chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, "asked Shinseki for a detailed list of the number of conferences that VA held in each fiscal year from 2009 through 2011 and their budgets, as well as data on fiscal 2012 conferences. Both the committee and the VA inspector general are conducting probes of department conferences."

7. Vets Have Chance To Get Disability Ratings Upgraded. Army Times "An effort to notify nearly 77,000 veterans of their chance to upgrade their military disability ratings has netted 919 new applications to the Pentagon's Physical Disability Board of Review. In May, the Veterans benefit Administration sent its first batch of letters to 17,000 such vets. The "Veterans Affairs Department intends to send the next wave of 17,000 letters by the end of the year to veterans discharged between 2004 and 2006."

8. Editorial Also Takes Note Of VA Notification Effort. Army Times "More than 70,000 veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars may be eligible for a lifetime of military retirement pay, health care and other benefits – and many veterans know nothing about it." The "Veterans Affairs Department is trying to pitch in, sending notices to some veterans believed to be eligible, but an untold number of others who are not enrolled in VA health care remain out of touch." The Times adds, "If you know of a medically retired vet who might be eligible for the review, tell them."

9. Veterans Job Training Slots Fill Up Quickly. Military Times "The Veterans Affairs Department announced Monday it has filled 36,000 of the 45,000 job training openings available in 2012 for unemployed veterans ages 35 to 60, and it expects to have every slot filled by Sept. 30. An additional 55,000 openings will be available beginning Oct. 1, the start of fiscal 2013," for the Veterans' Retaining Assistance Program (VRAP), "which provides up to 12 months of Montgomery GI Bill benefits while participants take vocational training classes aimed at helping them find work in high-demand occupations." In a statement, VA Secretary Eric Shinseki "said the large number of applicants" for VRAP "illustrates how important this program is in providing veterans the opportunity to find employment in a high-demand field." The same quote appears in a story for the NBC News (8/28, Ruiz) website.

10. VA Working With Nonprofit To Help Vets Find Meaningful Jobs. NPR A "number of companies and organizations" are trying to help Iraq and Afghanistan veterans find meaningful jobs. NPR spoke to Eric Greitens, the founder of the nonprofit The Mission Continues, who said, "What we found with this generation of veterans...is that 92 percent of them - 92 percent - say that serving their communities is very important to them." Greitens said his organization worked with one Iraq veteran "who did a fellowship through our program at the VA." Now, according to Greitens, the vet runs Patriot Commercial Cleaning, which "actually hires other veterans."
11. VA Praised For Providing Suits To Job-Hunting Vets. Florida Times-Union

Much “ado is being made over Mrs. Obama’s” recent “trip to Mayport touting jobs for veterans.” But the organizations that should “be lauded are those who partnered with the Wounded Warriors Project, the Marines transition team and the Veterans Administration to provide a new Brooks Brothers suit to young military veterans when they go job hunting.”


Earlier this month, there was an official opening ceremony for the Jefferson County Vet Center in Beaumont. The facility “offers counseling for combat veterans readjusting to civilian life. According to some vets at the ceremony, what makes the place special is that the counselors are veterans themselves and relate to those who come for help from a personal connection, as people who hadn't 'been there' could not.” The News adds, "The attitude among those who go to the center seems to be relief that they've found a welcoming place to try to make adjustments."

13. Military Veterans Say Mental Health Services Need To Improve. Orangeburg (SC) Times And Democrat

"Processing claims is not the only difficulty" with Veterans Affairs that vets with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) have. The Times And Democrat adds, "Some veterans are unhappy with the telemental health services being offered by the Orangeburg County Outpatient VA Medical Clinic to provide veterans living in rural and underserved communities with improved access to specialty care. Those veterans feel they are losing the person-to-person therapy they're used to." But Evetta Gregg, the public affairs officer at the Dorn VA Medical Center in Columbia, says, "We continue to see patients, and there has been no interruption in services." Gregg adds, "The bottom line is that the VA is committed to ensuring the care of our veterans."

14. OCW Delivers Gifts To Wounded Warriors. American Legion

"A delegation of Legionnaires treated patients at the Roudebush VA Medical Center in Indianapolis to gift cards, clothes and other comfort items on Aug. 27, during The American Legion’s 94th Annual National Convention. The visit was part of the Legion's ongoing Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) efforts to provide recovering warriors with items that make their hospital stays more comfortable.” Jacob Gadd, the Legion's deputy director of health, "explained that OCW's efforts fall in line with patient-centered care being promoted at Roudebush and other VA facilities."

15. New Service Gives VA Patients Access To Health Records Online. Chillicothe (OH) Gazette

"Patients served by the Chillicothe Veterans Affairs Medical Center now can have their lab results, prescription refills and appointment calendars at their fingertips.” The hospital uses "My HealtheVet, a personal health website and online gateway to select VA medical records." The Gazette adds, "About 6,000 people within the Chillicothe VA system have registered for a MyHealtheVet account, while 5,000 of them have completed the in-person authentication, giving them access to some of their medical records, said Jennifer Litteral, the program coordinator."
16. **Complicated Claims Slow Down VA Payments.** Army Times "More complex disability claims filed by new veterans and supplemental claims for increased benefits appear to be the major factors in the large and still growing backlog of unprocessed claims." Joe Violante of Disabled American Veterans "said he doesn't put much faith in VA's pledge to begin reducing the backlog by 2015." Violante added, "We've seen a change in mindset in the top leadership of VA to get something done, but I don't believe the culture that allowed the backlog to grow has changed."

17. **Baker: VistA Refactoring Will Be Done In The Open.** FierceGovernmentIT "The Veterans Affairs Department requires Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture, or VistA, code to be refactored in an open and collaborative way, said VA Chief Information Officer Roger Baker during an Aug. 24 press call. Some open source advocates questioned VA's Aug. 15 contract award to Tampa, Fla.-based Ray Group International." Baker, however, "said Ray Group is required to start by working with the open source code being used in Open Source Electronic Health Record Agent, the VA's open source code repository." Baker added, "The Ray Group contracts are working with the open source community [to] design the refactoring and I think to some extent implement some of the refactoring of the code base of VistA so it operates exactly the same way, but it's built in a more modular fashion."

18. **How Cops Can Best Deal With Vets.** Time

19. **How Mobile Apps Are Helping Homeless Veterans.** StateTech

20. **Henry Black, 7th SMMC, Dies At 83.** Marine Corps Times

21. **GW Veterans Looks To Expand Presence.** GW Hatchet

22. **Virtual Reality Therapy May Help PTSD Patients.** Military.com

23. **VA / VSO-MSO Hearings as August 29, 2012:**
   September 14, 2012. HVAC, Subcommittee on Health will hold a hearing on the Patient-Centered Community Care (PCCC) and Non-VA Care Coordination (NVCC) programs.

   September 20, 2012. HVAC, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity will hold a hearing entitled, “Examining the Re-Design of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP).”

24. **Today in History:**
   - 1756 – Frederick the Great attacks Saxony, beginning the Seven Years' War.
   - 1758 – The first American Indian Reservation is established, at Indian Mills, New Jersey.
   - 1778 – American Revolutionary War: British and American forces battle indecisively at the Battle of Rhode Island.
   - 1786 – Shays' Rebellion, an armed uprising of Massachusetts farmers, begins in
response to high debt and tax burdens.

- **1833** – The United Kingdom legislates the abolition of slavery in its empire.
- **1842** – Treaty of Nanking signing ends the First Opium War.
- **1861** – American Civil War: US Navy squadron captures forts at Hatteras Inlet, North Carolina.
- **1885** – Gottlieb Daimler patents the world's first internal combustion motorcycle, the Reitwagen.
- **1898** – The Goodyear tire company is founded.
- **1903** – The Russian battleship Slava, the last of the five Borodino-class battleships, is launched.
- **1910** – The Japan–Korea Treaty of 1910, also known as the Japan–Korea Annexation Treaty, becomes effective, officially starting the period of Japanese rule in Korea.
- **1911** – Ishi, considered the last Native American to make contact with European Americans, emerges from the wilderness of northeastern California.
- **1915** – US Navy salvage divers raise F-4, the first U.S. submarine sunk in accident.
- **1916** – The United States passes the Philippine Autonomy Act.
- **1918** – Bapaume taken by the New Zealand Division in the Hundred Days Offensive.
- **1930** – The last 36 remaining inhabitants of St Kilda are voluntarily evacuated to other parts of Scotland.
- **1941** – Tallinn, the Capital of Estonia is occupied by Nazi Germany following an occupation by the Soviet Union.
- **1943** – German-occupied Denmark scuttles most of its navy; Germany dissolves the Danish government.
- **1944** – Slovak National Uprising takes place as 60,000 Slovak troops turn against the Nazis.
- **1949** – Soviet atomic bomb project: The Soviet Union tests its first atomic bomb, known as First Lightning or Joe 1, at Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan.
- **1950** – Korean War: British troops arrive in Korea to bolster the US presence there.
- **1965** – The Gemini V spacecraft returns to Earth, landing in the Atlantic ocean.
- **1966** – The Beatles perform their last concert before paying fans at Candlestick Park in San Francisco.
- **1970** – Chicano Moratorium against the Vietnam War, East Los Angeles, California. Police riot kills three people, including journalist Ruben Salazar.
- **1991** – Libero Grassi, an Italian businessman from Palermo is killed by the Mafia after taking a solitary stand against their extortion demands.
- **1997** – At least 98 villagers are killed by the Armed Islamic Group of Algeria GIA in the Rais massacre, Algeria.
- **2003** – Ayatollah Sayed Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim, the Shia Muslim leader in Iraq, is assassinated in a terrorist bombing, along with nearly 100 worshippers as they leave a mosque in Najaf.
- **2005** – Hurricane Katrina devastates much of the U.S. Gulf Coast from Louisiana to the Florida Panhandle, killing more than 1,836 and causing over $80 billion in damage.
- **2007** – 2007 United States Air Force nuclear weapons incident: six US cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads are flown without proper authorization from Minot Air Force Base to Barksdale Air Force Base.

------------------------
From: JS Pentagon OCJCS Mailbox Warrior and Family Support
Sent:   Wednesday, August 29, 2012 4:47 PM


COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

**Team to Examine Military Health Challenges**

weku
FRANKFORT – Gov. Steve Beshear Wednesday announced that a team of Kentuckians will work to find better ways to help **military** service members, veterans and their families with substance abuse and mental **health** challenges. “When those who have ... 

**Online community gives dying WWII veteran a sincere gift**

phillyBurbs.com
Millions of people go to the website Reddit every day to look at adorable pets, laugh at memes, or read candid interviews with celebrities, but one particular section – or subreddit – titled r/pics gave a WWII veteran a heartfelt gift...

**Veterans rely on patchwork safety net during hard financial times**

NBCNews.com (blog)
VA is aiming to complete claims within 125 days with 98 percent accuracy by 2015 as it transitions to a digital processing system. The technology will be implemented in 16 regional offices this year and reach an additional 56 regional offices by the ...

WELLNESS

**Women warriors unwind at Pettit Lake**

Idaho Mountain Express and Guide
Mitchell said the goals can include engaging more with family members, getting outside more to exercise or mentoring someone in their home **community** to do the same. Lt. Col. Donna Van Deveer, 57, served as a **military** police officer in Germany before ...

**2012 Warrior-Family Symposium**

Military.com
The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and the National Defense Industrial Association will host the 2012 Warrior-Family Symposium to honor wounded heroes and their families. The event will be held on Thursday, September 13, 2012 from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. This year's WFS...

**Stress a major issue for defence: Houston**

The Australian
"Post traumatic stress disorder is not a psychological condition - it's more about chemicals in the brain and it is one of the most important issues we need to address in our modern defence force. "It's been around since World War I - it's always been ...

EDUCATION
**Student Veterans Struggle to Fit In**
The Atlantic
Tens of thousands of troops rotate out of the service every year, and many head straight to school, thanks to federal education benefits for veterans. More than 700,000 veterans and family members have used the Post-9/11 GI Bill since its inception in ...

**Fargo workshop to help military families' educational needs**
DVIDS
It's sponsored by the North Dakota National Guard's Service Member and Family Support program and provided by the Military Child Education Coalition, a nonprofit organization that addresses the educational needs of military-connected families.

**UT Health Science Center hopes to lure minority, military students**
San Antonio Express
The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio will launch a two-year program, starting next month, to draw more minority, military and veteran students into health professions arenas like respiratory care, clinical laboratory science and ...

**EMPLOYMENT**

**August 29: Job of the day**
9NEWS.com
Candidates should have experience working with the homeless and/or individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues, military or veteran experience preferred. This is a ... Your work will help them become self sufficient and ready to...

**'Broadarrows' host ESGR boss lift**
Florida Times-Union
The Boss Lift program educates employers about the military reserves by giving them a behind the scenes glimpse of the efforts their employees undertake each time they put on a uniform to serve. Photos. Back Photo: 1 of 3 Next. Lt. Cmdr. Jace ...

**My voice: Employing veterans is a win for Sioux Falls**
Sioux Falls Argus Leader
Here in the Sioux Falls, almost 11 percent of area residents are veterans — that's one in nine of your neighbors and friends. Putting veterans to work is more than something on my “to do list.” It's been my passion. The Veterans' Employment and ...

Our best regards...Randall E. "Smitty" Smith, Lt Col, USAF
Deputy Director, Warrior & Family Support
Office of the Chairman

----------------------------------
From: Janet Giles [Janet.Giles@jobzoneonline.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 28, 2012 11:23 PM

**Subj: 2012/13 JobZone Job Fair Schedule**

Attached and below, are JobZone's 2012/13 Job Fair schedules for your review. Please contact our office if you should have specific questions. There is NO COST for Veterans to attend these Job Fairs.
2012 JOB FAIRS
FRI, SEP 28 KING GEORGE VA (15 min from Dahlgren Navy Base), 10am-2pm, Citizens Center Bldg, 8076 Kings Hwy
TUE, OCT 9 DC NATIONAL GUARD @ ARMORY, 10am-2pm. 2001 E. Capitol St., SE, Washington, DC 20003
THU, OCT 18 FORT LEE VA, 10am-2pm, Regimental Club
THU, NOV 1 RICHMOND VA, 2-6 pm. Hosted by Stratford University-Richmond Campus. WED, NOV 7 FREDERICAJSBURG VA, 2-4 Vets/Military Only & 4-7 Open, Expo & Conference Center
FRI, NOV 9 FT. BELVOIR-SPRINGFIELD VA focused, 10am-12Noon Vets/Military & 12 Noon - 2pm Open, American Legion
TUE, DEC 4 PATUXENT RIVER NAS MD MINI-JOB FAIR, 3-6 pm, Bay District Vol Fire Dept Social Hall, Lexington Park, MD

2013 JOB FAIRS
TUE, JAN 15 PATUXENT RIVER NAS, 3-7 pm, Bay District Vol Fire Dept Social Hall (tbd), Lexington Park, MD
FRI, FEB 22 FORT BELVOIR-SPRINGFIELD VA, 10am-2pm, American Legion-Springfield, VA
WED, MAR 20 LINTHICUM MD, 3-7pm, SECURITY CLEARANCE focused. Hosted by JobZone and DoDInteJobs.com. FRI, MAR 29 KING GEORGE/DAHLGREN VA, 10am-2pm, 8076 Kings Hwy, Citizens Center Building.
TUE, APR 16 PATUXENT RIVER NAS MD, 3-7pm, Bay District Vol Fire Dept Social Hall, Lexington Park, MD
WED, APR 24 ANDREWS AFB MD TOP III ASSOCIATION JOB FAIR, 10am-2pm, The Club At The Base.
WED, MAY 15 RESTON VA, 3-7 pm, SECURITY CLEARANCE focused. Hosted by JobZone and DoDInteJobs.com.
THUR, MAY 16 DC NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY, 10am-2pm, 2001 E. Capitol St., SE, DC.
FRI, MAY 17 FORT BELVOIR-SPRINGFIELD VA, 10am-2pm, American Legion-Springfield, VA.
THUR, JUNE 20 FORT LEE VA, 10am-2pm, The Regimental Club.
FRI, JUNE 28 KING GEORGE/DAHLGREN VA, 10am-2pm, 8076 Kings Hwy, Citizens Center Bldg,
WED, JULY 17 FREDERICAJSBURG VA, 3-7pm, EXPO & CONFERENCE CENTER.
WED, AUG 14 ANDREWS AFB MD TOP III ASSOCIATION JOB FAIR, 10am-2pm, The Club At The Base.
FRI, AUG 16 SPRINGFIELD VA, 10am-2pm, SECURITY CLEARANCE focused. Hosted by JobZone and DoDInteJobs.com.
American Legion-Springfield.
TUE, AUG 20 PATUXENT RIVER NAS MD, 3-7pm, Bay District Vol Fire Dept Social Hall, Lexington Park, MD.
WED, SEP 26 DC NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY, 10am-2pm, 2001 E. Capitol St., SE,
D.C.  
FRI, SEP 27 **KING GEORGE/DAHLGREN VA**, 10am-2pm, 8076 Kings Hwy, Citizens Center Bldg.  
THUR, OCT 23 **FORT LEE VA**, 10am-2pm, The Regimental Club.  
FRI, NOV 8 **FORT BELVOIR-SPRINGFIELD VA** 10am-2pm, American Legion-Springfield.  
TUE, DEC 3 **PATUXENT RIVER NAS MD** MINI-JOB FAIR, 3-6pm, Bay District Vol Fire Dept Social Hall  
THU, DEC 5 or Nov 6 **FREDERICKSBURG VA**, 3-7pm, National Guard Armory on Route 1 or Expo Center & Conference Center.

**COMPANIES/EXHIBITORS**: CONTACT JOBZONE TO REGISTER FOR EVENTS. SPACE IS CONFIRMED UPON RECEIPT OF REGISTRATION FORMS.

**JOB SEEKERS**: VISIT [WWW.JOBZONEONLINE.COM](http://WWW.JOBZONEONLINE.COM) TO REGISTER, POST RESUME, AND FOR NEW UPDATES.

*Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.*  
- Theodore Roosevelt  

-----------------------------  
**GOP Platform Takes Aim At Federal Workforce**  
**Tuesday - 8/28/2012, 5:20pm EDT**  
**By Jack Moore**

The Republican Party unveiled its national platform Tuesday, revealing its plan to downsize the federal workforce, trim federal benefits and privatize airport screeners.

The platform calls for a wholesale reinvention of the federal government, which has become "bloated, antiquated and unresponsive to taxpayers," according to the plan.

"It is our intention not only to improve management and provide better services, but also to rethink and restructure government to bring it into the twenty-first century," the drafters of the Republican plan wrote.

**Federal workforce**

The plan calls for a reduction in the federal workforce by at least 10 percent through attrition. The authors of the plan say the federal workforce has grown by 140,000 workers under President Barack Obama — figures which are borne out by May 2012 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, according to a New York Times fact-check. The platform also calls for changing federal pay and benefits packages "to reflect those of the private sector."

The platform also calls out federal employees who fail to pay their taxes, saying it has "become too common in some segments of the civil service." Under a Republican administration, cracking down on tax-delinquent feds would be given higher priority, the plan said.

The Republican-controlled House passed a bill last month, allowing the government to boot federal employees who are seriously delinquent in paying their taxes.

**Platform singles out TSA, USPS**
The platform calls for the privatization of airport security screening, a role now undertaken by the Transportation Security Administration.

The platform characterizes the TSA as a "massive bureaucracy" made up of employees "who seem to be accountable to no one for the way they treat travelers."

The agency, created in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, has long drawn the ire of lawmakers, both for mismanagement of agency programs as well as the often inconvenient screening process.

The plan also calls for a "dramatic restructuring" of the U.S. Postal Service.

"In light of the Postal Service's seriously underfunded pension system" — the agency defaulted on a $5.5 billion payment to pre-fund pension costs last month — "Congress should explore a greater role for private enterprise in appropriate aspects of the mail-processing system."

The platform specifically calls on Congress to make reforms to the cash-strapped agency. The Senate approved comprehensive postal reform legislation in April, but House Republicans said the measure amounted to little more than a bailout and would actually make it more difficult for the agency to cut costs by closing facilities.

Not necessarily Romney's ideas

It's important to note the party platform doesn't necessarily represent the personal views of its putative standard-bearer, former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney. "This is the platform of the Republican Party; it's not the platform of Mitt Romney," the chairman of the Republican National Committee, Reince Priebus, told NBC News last week, when the plan was still in draft form.

Still, Romney has proposed similar issues himself. On his official website, the Republican presidential candidate includes a proposal to reduce the federal workforce by 10 percent through attrition as part of his plan to "improve the efficiency and effectiveness" of the federal government.

Romney has also called for federal pay and benefits to be aligned with the private sector. "Federal compensation exceeds private sector levels by as much as 30 to 40 percent when benefits are taken into account," according to a statement on Romney's website. "This must be corrected."

Similarly, Romney's choice for vice president, Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), has also proposed scaling back federal benefits.

In the "Path to Prosperity" budget proposal he introduced as chairman of the House Budget Committee, Ryan advocated for a 10-percent workforce reduction and for federal employees to contribute more toward their retirement.

"Federal employees deserve to be compensated equitably for their important work, but their pay levels, pay increases and fringe benefits should be reformed to better align with those of their private-sector counterparts," according to Ryan's budget plan.
Union response

The American Federation of Government Employees, the largest union representing federal employees, quickly registered its opposition to the Republican plan.

"GOP leaders continue to promote the belief that government is to blame for all of the nation's ills and that the solution lies in taking a hacksaw to federal programs that everyone in this country relies on," said AFGE President J. David Cox in a statement released Monday, before the party platform had officially been adopted.

Cox pointed to the work of government food-safety inspectors, border patrol guards and doctors at veteran medical centers.

"Without proper staffing and funding, these government services would simply cease to exist, leaving millions of Americans high and dry," Cox said.

From: Kevin Secor, VA VSO Liaison
Sent: Wednesday, August 29, 2012 11:53 AM

VA Researchers Receive Nation’s Top Award for Early Career Scientists
Recognized for Research from Spinal Cord Injury to Traumatic Brain Injury

WASHINGTON — Four Department of Veterans Affairs researchers were among the 96 recipients of the 2011 Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE) honored at a ceremony held last month. The PECASE is the highest honor conferred by the U.S. government on federal researchers in the early stages of their careers.

“Research is the lifeblood of our program to provide cutting-edge, world-class medical care to Veterans,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki. “The achievements of these four individuals show that VA research is a leader in the health care industry.”

Joining fellow award recipients from 11 other federal agencies were VA investigators Jeffrey R. Capadona, Ph.D., Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center; Charlenika T. Evans, Ph.D., Hines VA Hospital; Amy M. Kilbourne, Ph.D., VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System; and K. Luan Phan, M.D., Jesse Brown VA Medical Center in Chicago. The ceremony took place at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Capadona was recognized for key discoveries in the area of biomaterials, including research aimed at enabling the use of long-term implantable electrodes in the brain or possibly elsewhere in the nervous system. Electrodes developed by Capadona’s team may eventually be integrated into devices that can restore sight, hearing, movement, and speech to injured Veterans.

Evans pioneered work to reduce infectious disease among patients with spinal cord injury (SCI) and disorders. She was project manager and co-investigator for research that more than doubled the vaccination rate of those with SCI and is leading the first large-scale study on treatment and outcomes for SCI patients infected by Clostridium difficile, a germ that can lead to severe gastrointestinal conditions.
Kilbourne was honored for putting her advanced knowledge of complex datasets to work improving mental health care for Veterans. Her research was instrumental in implementing an outreach program to identify and re-engage Veterans with serious mental illness who were lost to follow-up. She also developed and led one of VA’s largest educational and research initiatives to help Veterans with bipolar disorder.

Phan was nominated for his cutting-edge research on post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury in Veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. By focusing on how medication and psychotherapy treatments work in the brain and also looking at predictive biomarkers, Phan’s work is aimed at helping guide clinicians and patients toward those treatments with the highest chance for success.

“The outstanding work of these investigators is a microcosm of how VA research itself helps improve the lives of Veterans,” said Dr. Robert Petzel, VA Under Secretary for Health. “We look forward to working with these young scientists as their careers progress.”

Established in 1996, the awards are given each year for “innovative research at the frontiers of science and technology” and a commitment to community service.

VA, which has the largest integrated health care system in the country, also has one of the largest medical research programs. This year, approximately 3,400 researchers will work on more than 2,300 projects with nearly $1.9 billion in funding.

For more information on VA Research, please visit www.research.va.gov

----------------------------------
A Ton of Scoop from Al Bunting, Col., USAF (Ret) in NJ. Thanks Al!

108,000 DoD civilians would lose jobs under sequestration: Report
(Federal Times) The Defense Department would be forced to cut 108,000 civilian employees from its work force next year if automatic budget cuts take effect Jan. 1, according to a new report.

President Obama stresses Veterans’ concerns in taped address to American Legion
(Indianapolis Star) The contenders for president are pressing appeals this week to thousands of veterans and other attendees who are in Indianapolis for the American Legion national convention

Army North deploys first responder teams to four Gulf Coast states
(NextGov.com) The Army has deployed about 85 personnel from its defense coordinating elements -- the Defense Departments first responders to a disaster -- to four states, along with emergency response vehicles packed with communications gear, as Hurricane Isaac heads toward the Gulf Coast.

Army plans suicide prevention stand down

- Suicide concern: There’s an app for that

GOP platform slams military's focus on climate change
(DEFCON Hill (thehill.com)) The official Republican platform takes aim at Obama administration military planning documents that emphasize the security risks of climate change, alleging they reveal a White House that has strayed from core defense priorities.

Snake in the Machine: It's easier to deliver a cyber attack than it is to build and deploy a kinetic weapon system, says Andrew Krepinevich, president of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. This has helped crime syndicates leverage power and will likely open the cyber domain to threatening non-state organizations, he writes in a new CSBA study on cyberwarfare. For instance, the Russian government "turns a blind eye" to the Russian business network, which is known to be the
world's foremost cyber-crime organization, states the study, released on Aug. 24. The RBN was accused of facilitating the cyber attacks on Estonia in 2007 and Georgia in 2008 at the Russian government's request, according to the study. Terrorist organizations such as al Qaeda potentially pose a major cyber threat as well, asserts Krepinevich. Computers and manuals seized in al Qaeda camps held information pertinent to dams and other critical infrastructure, he states. "One could imagine other non-state entities whose capabilities—both in terms of intellectual and financial resources—are likely to be far greater than those of al Qaeda," says Krepinevich. (See also Cybergeddon? Not Quite.) (CSBA release) (CSBA cyber study; caution, large-sized file.)

—Seth J. Miller

**Army to Issue Bug-Proof ACUs in 2013**
Soldiers who have spent any time in the field know that chiggers, ticks and other biting critters can burrow into unspeakable places on the body, spread disease, and generally destroy any chance for personal comfort. Read More

**Army Plans Suicide Prevention Stand Down**

- Suicide Concern: There's an App for That

**Sequestration would reduce National Guard access to federal funds**
Sequestration cuts would eliminate the ability of the Defense Department to provide funds to the National Guard under Title 32, which enables Guard units to act under the command of state governors while receiving federal support, writes Steven P. Bucci of The Heritage Foundation. In the event of a catastrophe, state governors would have to rely solely on state assets when mobilizing guard units, Bucci writes. The Heritage Foundation (8/27)

**Shinseki Notes Strides in Serving Nation's Veterans**

*08/28/2012 06:50 PM CDT*

Veterans' health care funding may be exempt from automatic, across-the-board budget cuts that are due to begin in January, but military health care is not — and a new think-tank report says Congress would have to reprogram $3 billion from other Defense Department budget accounts to fully pay for military health care should the cuts occur.

DoD personnel programs are exempt from the 10 percent cuts under sequestration, including basic pay, allowances for housing and subsistence, retirement pay, and bonuses. [Read More]

**CYBERCOM Moving Toward Command Elevation**
Following a plan laid out before its establishment, U.S. Cyber Command is on its way toward becoming a unified combatant command, Army Gen. Keith Alexander told an audience of military and civilian cyber experts this month. ...more

**Smaller Maritime Patrol Aircraft Built for Tight Budgets**
ARNBOROUGH, England — Spurred on by moves to replace the world's aging fleet of P-3 Orions, shrinking budgets and a growing need to patrol coastal regions, defense companies are queuing up to offer smaller maritime patrol and top-end maritime surveillance.

**U.S. Takes Another Shot at Networking the Border**
After well-publicized fits and starts — and almost $1 billion sunk into a canceled program — U.S. Customs and Border Protection is about to kick off another program in an attempt to blanket the U.S. southern border with a family of networked surveillance

**U.S. Arms Sales Nearly Triple in 2011, Researchers Say**
WASHINGTON — U.S. arms transfers to other countries nearly tripled last year to $66.3 billion, giving America a market share of nearly 80 percent, government researchers said Aug. 27. ...more
Dempsey, Japanese Counterpart Bolster Partnership Across Domains

Commandant: Shift Toward Asia Pacific Won't Overlook Other Regions

Keeping Up With the Fashion: If you didn't recognize the uniform worn by former Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz and his successor Gen. Mark Welsh at their Aug. 10 leadership transition ceremony, you are not alone. (See photos of the ceremony.) The outfit—called "the Ceremonial Uniform"—hasn't been seen much since Schwartz premiered it at a Medal of Honor ceremony in 2010. The special uniform—with satiny sheen, a high collar, belt, and no jacket pockets—is for wear only by the Chief of Staff or the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, said service spokesman Lt. Col. John Sheets. It was designed to "bridge" between occasions calling for something fancier than the standard Class A uniform, but where the tuxedo-like Mess Dress would be inappropriate, Sheets told the Daily Report on Aug. 28. The high collar and belt are supposed to hearken back to Billy Mitchell and the early days of the Army Air Corps, when those features were part of the unique aviator's uniform. The retro look dispenses, however, with the jodhpurs and knee-high boots that also went with the Mitchell-era uniform. There are no plans to expand use of the Ceremonial Uniform to the service's rank and file.

—John A. Tirpak

Romney's Defense-Budget Growth Tops Cold War Pace
(Bloomberg Government (bgov.com)) Governor Mitt Romneys national security policies reflect the Oliver-Twistian mindset of the Republican establishment on defense issues. They want some more. How Romney obliges that impulse illustrates the dilemma of trying to satisfy a military-industrial complex whose business models and profit margins are based on fixed diets.

When Soldiers Go Bad
(Raleigh News & Observer) The U.S. armed forces are not immune from the pathologies that afflict our larger society. But when those ills erupt among our young people in uniform as they have in Georgia, where four Army soldiers are accused of major crimes the shock can be almost too painful

Pumping Complex Captain: 'We're Ready'
(USA Today) A large part of keeping this city dry from Hurricane Isaac's punishing rains and floods rests on the eyes and ears of Ray Newman, canal captain for the 17th Street outfall canal complex. As the storm barrels ashore, Newman, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worker, will be hunkered down in a nearby station, closely watching water levels as they climb outside the mammoth, recently built structure on the northern edge of the city and making sure rainfall in the city is pumped out to Lake Pontchartrain.

MCLB Housing Isaac Evacuees
(Albany (GA) Herald) When storms come in, even the country's servicemembers can be displaced.

AF Moving Planes Away From Isaac Across South
(AirForceTimes.com) The wrath of growing storm Hurricane Isaac is forcing major changes in Air Force operations in the South, particularly at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss.

NATO Transition In Afghanistan 'Irreversible'
(Yahoo.com) The transfer of security control from a US-led international mission to Afghan troops has reached an irreversible phase, a top NATO commander said Tuesday, as he outlined moves to stem insider attacks on NATO forces.

Assad Draws Shock Troops From Elite Sect In Syria
(Wall Street Journal) Flag-draped coffins depart from the drab military hospital here each morning these days, carrying the dead soldiers of the Syrian regime along winding rural roads to ancestral villages in the surrounding hill country.

Turkish Military Is Key Factor In Syria Planning
(Yahoo.com) In 2003, Turkey barred U.S. forces from opening a northern front in the war against Iraq in a stunning rebuff to Washington that raised questions about whether the politically powerful Turkish military had undercut a civilian-led initiative to help the Americans. As Turkey and its allies mull possible intervention in Syria, the Turkish military, broken as a political force, is likely to move in step with the civilian commanders it once viewed with disdain.

Conference Update: Star-studded Agenda
Storm Warning: Guardsmen Wait for Isaac
Fighter Jets on Watch above GOP Gathering

Clinton To Discuss Nations' S. China Sea Dispute
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton will discuss tensions in the South China Sea during a sprawling trip through the Asia-Pacific that will include stops in China and Russia.

**In The Loop**

**Author: CIA Passed Up Shot At Bin Laden**
(Miami Herald) In late 1999, two years before the 9/11 terrorist attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people, a group of Afghan agents loyal to an anti-Taliban guerrilla leader proposed assassinating Osama bin Laden. All they wanted was the $5 million reward the Clinton administration had offered for bin Ladens capture, says a former Polish spy who was the Afghans go-between on the plot.

**Small Is Big In The Battle For Pacific Influence**
(Los Angeles Times) The tiny South Pacific islands and atolls known as the Cook Islands have rarely been more than an afterthought to the world's great powers. Yet in their intensifying contest for influence in the Asia Pacific region, the United States and China are seeing new value in far-flung outposts that until now were coveted more for pearls and sunsets than geostrategic importance. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton underscored that point Tuesday by announcing that she will attend an obscure meeting of Pacific Island nations Friday on a palm-fringed Polynesian island that her predecessors never considered worthy of a stop.

**China's Aircraft Carrier: In Name Only**
(Reuters.com) When Japanese activists scrambled ashore on a disputed island chain in the East China Sea this month, one of China's most hawkish military commentators proposed an uncharacteristically mild response.

**N. Korea, Japan To Hold First Direct Talks Since 2008**
(Yahoo.com) Japan and North Korea met on Wednesday in Beijing for their first face-to-face talks in four years in an attempt to lay the groundwork to overcome decades of mutual distrust.

**Marines Testing Women In Combat Jobs**
(Yahoo.com) There may be some anxiety from male Marines as female officers work their way into infantry and other combat jobs that historically have been open only to men, Gen. James F. Amos, the Marine Corps commandant, said Tuesday.

**Experts: Fort Hood Suspect's Beard Might Bias Jury**
(Yahoo.com) The Army psychiatrist charged in the Fort Hood shooting rampage should be forced to shave his beard to avoid any potential jury bias in his pending murder trial, say some military experts and the judge overseeing his pending court-martial.

**Stennis Departs Bremerton For Middle East**
(NavyTimes.com) The aircraft carrier John Stennis has left Bremerton, Wash., for another tour of duty in the Middle East.

**Americans Shot In Mexico Were C.I.A. Operatives Aiding In Drug War**
(New York Times) The two Americans who were wounded when gunmen fired on an American Embassy vehicle last week were Central Intelligence Agency employees sent as part of a multiagency effort to bolster Mexican efforts to fight drug traffickers, officials said on Tuesday.

**U.S. Urges African Air Forces To Form NATO-Style Ties**
(Reuters.com) The United States urged African nations on Tuesday to pool their air force assets in a NATO-style effort to take on terrorists and international criminals rather than struggle to fund costly independent operations.

**U.S. Reports That Piracy Off Africa Has Plunged**
(New York Times) Acts of piracy in the treacherous waters around the Horn of Africa have fallen sharply in 2012, according to statistics released by the United States Navy. The Navy credits aggressive patrolling by international forces and increased vigilance by the commercial shipping industry for the decrease.

**Hurricane Isaac brings thousands of National Guard troops to the region**
NOLA.com

Hours before Hurricane Isaac's full effects were to be felt in New Orleans Tuesday, Army National Guard Capt. Mark Castillon and his soldiers rolled up on a burglary scene in the Bywater neighborhood. Several New Orleans police officers converged on ... See all stories on this topic »

**WA National Guard opening intelligence center**
Sacramento Bee

The Washington National Guard is opening an intelligence analysis center at Camp Murray that it will operate with the Defense Intelligence Agency and other branches of the military. A guard spokesman, Capt. Keith Kosik (KAH'-sik), says the new $1.5 ... See all stories on this topic »
WV National Guard Practices Chemical Emergency Response
WBOY-TV
The West Virginia National Guard wants to be ready for any potential disaster. That includes a chemical attack on a large building filled with people, like the Coliseum in Morgantown. That was the simulated scenario for the West Virginia National Guard...
See all stories on this topic »

WA National Guard opening intelligence center
The Seattle Times
WA National Guard opening intelligence center. The Washington National Guard is opening an intelligence analysis center at Camp Murray that it will operate with the Defense Intelligence Agency and other branches of the military. The Associated Press...
See all stories on this topic »

National Guard mobilizes in the Gulf ... Veterans to RNC, DNC: Don't forget us ...
Politico
TODAY -- President Obama is addressing the American Legion's 2012 National Convention by video, Shinseki's there in the flesh, the National Guard is mobilizing in the Gulf and Republicans are determined to have a convention despite the natural disaster...
See all stories on this topic »

Documents Show White House Interest In Bin Laden Film
(Reuters.com) Documents released by the Pentagon and CIA shed light on White House officials' interest in a Hollywood film project dramatizing the U.S. commando

SEAL Book Raises Questions About Bin Laden's Death
(Yahoo.com) A firsthand account of the Navy SEAL raid that killed Osama bin Laden contradicts previous accounts by administration officials, raising questions as to whether the terror mastermind presented a clear threat when SEALs first fired upon him.

ARCHITECT OF THE ARMY GUARD’S BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION REFLECTS ON COMPETITION’S EVOLUTION
ARLINGTON, Va. (8/23/12) - In June 2005, the selection process for the Soldier and noncommissioned officer of the year for the Army National Guard was a very different process.

BEST OF THE NATIONAL GUARD HONORED AT BANQUET, AWARDS CEREMONY
ARLINGTON, Va. (8/23/12) -- The top Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard were honored at the 2012 Outstanding Soldier and Airmen of the Year banquet here.

VIRGINIA AIR GUARD JOINS WITH CIVIL AIR PATROL IN SEVERE WEATHER TRAINING EXERCISE
NEWPORT NEWS, Va. (8/22/12) – Airmen with the Virginia Air National Guard’s 192nd Intelligence Squadron based in Langley Air Force Base worked with the Civil Air Patrol at Newport News—Williamsburg International Airport during Commonwealth Guardian, a training exercise that used geospatial information technology to provide incident awareness and assessment during a simulated severe weather event.

Lawyers In WikiLeaks Case Argue Over Email Access
(Yahoo.com) Lawyers for a young Army private accused of leaking a trove of classified information to the website WikiLeaks said Tuesday that military prosecutors have withheld hundreds of emails related to his pretrial detention at a Marine Corps brig.

Morsi's Wrong Turn
(New York Times) I find it very disturbing that one of the first trips by Egypt's newly elected president, Mohamed Morsi, will be to attend the Nonaligned Movements summit meeting in
Tehran this week.

**U.S. Servicewomen Left Out Of Rape Exception**

(HuffingtonPost.com) The issue of abortion coverage for victims of rape was pushed into the national spotlight when my colleague on the House Armed Services Committee uttered his now infamous "legitimate rape" phrase.

**China's Buildup: Don't Believe The Hype**

(Philadelphia Inquirer) If you were focused on Hurricane Isaac or the violence in Syria, you might have missed the latest round of threat inflation surrounding China. Last week, the New York Times reported that China was "increasing its existing ability to deliver nuclear warheads to the United States and to overwhelm missile defense"

Kadena Weathers Typhoon Bolaven: Kadena AB, Japan, escaped Typhoon Bolaven's wrath with just a few minor damages, including some power outages and minor flooding, base spokesman Maj. Chris Anderson told the Daily Report. "Kadena weathered the storm fairly well," said Anderson in an e-mail correspondence. He added, "However, our civil engineer recovery teams were out in full force cleaning up debris, and working to restore power to those affected." The typhoon slammed Okinawa on Aug. 26. In preparation for the storm's arrival, the 18th Wing had relocated some of Kadena's aircraft to other Pacific bases, while airmen secured others in typhoon-proof hangars on base. Anderson declined to detail the specific numbers or locations of aircraft movements. Thus, it's not clear if the recently deployed F-22 Raptors were among the aircraft to relocate. Kadena's schools reopened already on Aug. 28. Forecasters had predicted that Bolaven would be the strongest storm to hit the area in half a century, but the slow-moving typhoon didn't live up to expectations, reported the BBC. After passing Okinawa, the typhoon worked its way up the Yellow Sea, striking the Korean peninsula from the west on Aug. 28.

**Breedlove Looks to Bolster African Partnerships:** US Air Forces in Europe Commander Gen. Philip Breedlove on Aug. 28 called for the nations of northwest Africa to work together to counter the terrorism threat in that region. "Our common enemy is well-equipped and willing to do what is necessary to accomplish their objectives. These groups are a viral threat that crosses national [African] borders," he said in his keynote address at the regional air chiefs conference in Dakar, Senegal. He added, "They cannot be overcome by a single nation. It requires partnerships and significant cooperation." The participants, including military leaders from 10 nations across the region, are discussing cross-regional issues; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; a regional approach to airlift; and air-ground integration, states a USAFE release. A chief concern among the nations of this region is the presence of al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb—an Islamic militia focused on overthrowing governments and instituting an Islamic state, according to the release. The conference runs through Aug. 30. (Dakar report by SSgt. Travis Edwards) (See also Donley Visits Africa.)

**Carter Establishes Group to Oversee Rapid Acquisitions:** Deputy Defense Secretary Ash Carter issued a directive that creates the "Warfighter Senior Integration Group" to oversee the Pentagon's efforts to respond rapidly to combatant commanders' urgent requests for new capability. The group will also have responsibility for mitigating "the risk of operational surprise associated with ongoing or anticipated near-term contingency operations," reads the directive, dated Aug. 24th. "DOD's highest priority is to provide warfighters involved in conflict or preparing for imminent contingency operations with the capabilities urgently needed to overcome unforeseen threats, achieve mission success, and reduce risk of casualties," states the directive. The deputy defense secretary will chair the group; the Joint Chiefs' vice chairman is the group's co-chair. Membership will also include senior-level officials from across the Office of Secretary of Defense as well as representatives from the services and combatant commands, states the directive. (Carter directive; caution, large-sized file.)

**State Department Seeks Public's Input on Arms Control Transparency:** The State Department on Aug. 28 launched the "Innovation in Arms Control Challenge" to elicit the public's help on how to apply commonly available technologies in support of arms control policies. "The astonishing advancements in information technologies include new tools and capabilities that could help support arms control transparency and compliance," reads the department's release. Officials seek to harness "the ingenuity of the American people" to determine whether, for example, there are innovative new ways to prevent "loose nukes" from falling into the hands of terrorists, or if smartphone and tablet applications could aid onsite inspectors in verifying and monitoring armaments and sensitive materials, states the release. The contest runs until Oct. 26 and is open to all US citizens or permanent residents. Cash awards range up to $10,000. (Click here for official rules and guidelines.)
DoD, VA gather to study airborne health hazards
At least 1,000 veterans have fallen ill with mysterious symptoms they say were caused by poisonous pollutants from open-air burn pits, fires and clean-up operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Now, the Defense and Veterans Affairs departments are hoping to widen their understanding of war-zone toxins and ultimately help suffering troops. [Read More]

Lies About Military Medals Still Punishable
Fort Lee Ends Use of Military Decals for Vehicles
Russia Considers Hypersonic Bomber
Shinseki Defends Claims Backlog: 'Let it Grow'
Study: Half of Military Crashes in Humvees
Guard Recruiter Gets 10 Years for Rape of Teen
JS Soldier's WikiLeaks Case Back in Military Court
Def Tech: Pentagon Builds Chameleon Robots
DoD Buzz: Defense Industry's Life Preserver
Gary Sinise Named Honorary Chief

Godspeed all......Wayne

Wayne M. Gatewood, Jr. USMC (Ret)
President/CEO
Quality Support, Inc.
A Service Disabled Veteran and Minority Owned-Small Business
8201 Corporate Drive, Suite 220
Landover, MD 20785
301-459-3777 EXT 101 - Fax 301-459-6961
www.qualitysupport.com

"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional as to how they perceive the Veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their Nation." - George Washington