



2nd Battalion 1st Infantry Chapter,

Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA)

WEBSITE: www.2-1-196th.com

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Volume 8

“A Soldier Once And Always”

August 2018

Commanders Corner: I hope all of you had a great month of July, especially for any activities and family events over the 4th of July, the Independence Day of our great Nation. Summer should be filled with family and friends' activities, especially with grandchildren. If you have any impact on anyone, let it be to the young people and youths in your families and neighborhoods; stress upon them to be good citizens of this nation and to always do what is right. On a personally note, I was recently honored by the Legionnaires of American Legion Post 284 in Colonial Heights, Virginia to be their Post Commander for 2018-2019 as of June 14th. So, the double duty will be a little hectic during the next year. We just finished our Department of Virginia Legion Convention 12-15 July, and I will be attending the 2018 National American Legion Convention in Minneapolis Mn, 23-30 August. I do so because I feel it is necessary to have a voice in our Nation's care and support of veterans' programs, especially health care which as you are aware of, is still a problem for the Veterans Administration. Continue to remember those 2-1 Infantry buddies who gave the full measure of their service, or who have passed on since we've been home. Keep their memories alive to honor their service. A lot of good men have served in 2-1 INF since its flagging over two hundred years ago. All of them, over the many wars and conflicts that the Nation has faced, have made their mark on the history of our regiment.



God bless you and your families for the rest of this summer season.

Remember our collective extended family, those Americans serving in our Armed Forces all over the world.

Got a comment, idea or complaint, contact me at Comander.2.1.jgw@gmail.com.

Rich has informed me that the July 2018 was not produced due largely because of a death in the family followed by 2 weeks at the NC shore with his family where he got sick and spent the vacation indoors under medical care. He has recovered and is back to work.

Chuck Holdaway has loaded the 2nd Q Financial report for this year and has updated the web site. Please refer to the WEBSITE for additional information and to check the status of your dues.

John

Keep safe and may the bond of battle never be broken!



ADVA 2018 National Reunion: The 2018 National Reunion dates have been set and Registration forms are available in the latest issue of the Americal Journal. The location is Oklahoma City, OK and the dates are September 26-30, 2018. Headquarters hotel is the Oklahoma City Wyndham Gardens Airport Hotel. Reunion guests can stay at a price of \$79.00 per night plus a 14% tax. Reservations can be made by calling 405-685-4000. Remember to tell the reservation clerk that you are attending the 2018 ADVA Reunion. Tours have been scheduled for Thursday and Friday including a visit to Fort Sill, OK where the latest ADVA monument is located, lunch is being provided at a Ft Sill mess hall and a visit to the Artillery Museum. Look for more details in the 2nd Quarter ADVA Journal.

National World War I Memorial a Step Closer to Reality: A century after the first world war, a project to build a national World War I memorial has taken a significant step forward. The latest design concept for the memorial has been approved by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, according to a recent announcement from the World War I Centennial Commission. Plans call for the memorial to be built at Pershing Park along Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington by 2020. Illustrations of the planned memorial feature a long stone wall with figures of troops leaving their families, fighting and falling in combat, suffering wounds and ultimately returning. The plan shows the structure in a wooded park setting with a reflecting pool. Designs for the memorial got a unanimous vote during a presentation by the commission's project team. The project was presented to CFA, the National Park Service and the National Capital Planning Commission. "We will continue to push forward in this effort. Our veterans deserve our best effort, and we owe it to them," said WWI Centennial Commission chair Terry Hamby. Architect David Rubin and members of the commission said variations on the design may be developed further with the oversight organizations. Congress in 2014 designated the site of the new memorial, which is intended to honor the Americans who served in the war, numbering more than four million men and women. The memorial project is funded through private donations. A memorial to the war already exists on the National Mall, a small structure with columns supporting a dome, placed by the citizens of the District of Columbia in the 1930s. But a national World War I memorial was never built, while the nation's World War II memorial opened in 2004, and the site for the Desert Storm memorial was approved last month.

Judges who said we don't need to stand up for the National Anthem expect us to stand up when they enter the court room. What do you suppose would happen if they came into the court room and everyone 'took a knee'?

Concern Over Using US Military to Help Border Enforcement: The Trump administration’s request for the Pentagon to house migrants detained at the U.S. southern border and even help prosecute them is prompting concern about strains to the military. Some call it an inappropriate mission. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, who has made it his top priority to improve the military’s fitness for combat, argues that the Pentagon is nonetheless obliged to provide help with border enforcement. In recent days Mattis has accepted requests by the departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services to provide temporary housing on Air Force and Army bases for potentially tens of thousands of detained migrant families and unaccompanied children. This is in line with historical precedents for military assistance, Mattis argued. “We have housed refugees, we have housed people thrown out of their homes by earthquakes and hurricanes; we do whatever is in the best interest of the country,” he recently told reporters. But he also has insisted that decisions about immigration policy and its security implications are not his to make. “I’m not going to chime in from the outside,” he said. The Pentagon says it received a Department of Homeland Security request to house up to 12,000 detained migrant family members, starting with shelters for 2,000 people to be available within 45 days. The initial shelters are likely to be at Fort Bliss in Texas, but subsequent tent cities could be at two other bases in border states.

West Point Graduate Recognized: 2LT Simone Askew has been named one of Glamour magazine’s Top 10 College Women of the Year. Askew graduated from the U.S. Military Academy on May 26, 2018. She is the first African-American woman to serve as First Captain of the U.S. Military Academy’s Corps of Cadets, the highest-ranking student post at the academy.



Voice of ‘Good Morning, Vietnam’ Dies at 79: Adrian Cronauer, a legend of the Vietnam War, and the inspiration for the 1987 movie “Good Morning, Vietnam,” died. An Air Force sergeant during his service in Vietnam as a disc jockey with the Armed Forces Radio Service, Cronauer began his early morning show, “Dawnbuster,” with the iconic words “Gooooood morning, Vietnam!” The 1987 movie, starring Robin Williams, turned that line into a national catch-phrase years after the war ended. Although Cronauer co-wrote the film that was loosely based on his time as a DJ, it was rewritten several times, each time with more creative license, to take full advantage of Williams’ outsize comedic talents. “Williams’ madcap banter ... was an exaggeration of the real Cronauer,” wrote Rick Fredericksen, a Marine newsman at American Forces Vietnam Network. “In a 2014 interview after Williams’ death, Cronauer shared one of his favorite observations about the star’s portrayal of him: ‘If I did even half the things that Robin did in the movie, I’d still be in Leavenworth [federal penitentiary]. ... He was a comedic genius.’” Cronauer did, however, push back against the staid military conventions of the time that pushed out “entertainment” that was deadly dull. With humor, imagination and enthusiasm, he produced radio broadcasts that were truly aimed at the troops fighting the war and, for that reason, became a beloved figure.

Why the Future of the Military Order of the Purple Heart is at Risk: For more than 85 years, the Military Order of the Purple Heart has united veterans wounded in combat, a fraternity literally forged with blood. The charity’s focus and crown jewel is the National Service Program, which helps veterans of all stripes navigate the bureaucracy involved in filing a benefits claim with the Department of Veterans Affairs. The program bankrolls dozens of caseworkers nationwide and submitted more than 12,000 VA claims in fiscal year 2017, obtaining nearly \$214 million in benefits along the way, according to the non-profit. “They don’t know how to deal with the VA,” said Ron Siebels, an Order member who was wounded in Vietnam. “We go to bat for them.” But that vital mission, and the pending VA claims of an untold number of veterans, were thrown into disarray in April, when the Order announced the program would end as of June 30. A press release blamed the Military Order of the Purple Heart Service Foundation, also known as the Purple Heart Foundation, a sister entity that is tasked with raising funds for the Order. The Foundation funds the Order via annual grants, and the National Service Program offers a service that veterans advocates say is already in short supply. “They failed us,” Neil Van Ess, the Order’s national commander, said at the time. But a few weeks later, the program’s cancellation was reversed, and the Order issued statements that said the vital program would continue at a reduced funding level. Whatever the reason for the reversal, the about-face and diminished level of funding offer the latest glimpse into the charity’s troubled financial state. The Foundation has been hemorrhaging money in recent years, according to its annual tax filings, imperiling the Order’s ability to continue its vital work.

Here’s How State and Federal Authorities are Targeting Sham Veteran Charities: Federal and state authorities have put sham veteran charities on notice. “I’m here to warn scam artists: Watch out. We’re investigating complaints. We will track you down, and in partnerships with our [state] attorneys general, we will shut you down,” said John Wobensmith, Maryland Secretary of State, during a news conference announcing the initiative that included other states’ attorneys general, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Better Business Bureau’s Wise Giving Alliance. The FTC — with law enforcement officials and charity regulators in 70 offices from every state, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam and Puerto Rico — announced “Operation Donate with Honor,” which includes the crackdown on sham charities, as well as an education campaign for potential donors. Officials announced more than 100 actions across the country. FTC Chairman Joe Simons announced action against a charity, Help the Vets, Inc., which was run by Neil G. “Paul” Paulson, Sr., who is reportedly an Army veteran, according to his Guidestar charity profile, and according to an Internet Archive of Help The Vets’ website. His military service couldn’t be immediately confirmed. The Guidestar profile says the charity is closed. The FTC has also charged another charity operator, Travis Deloy Peterson, with using fake veterans charities and making millions of illegal robocalls to solicit donations of cars, boats and other property, claiming that the donations would go to veterans charities and that they were tax deductible. Instead, officials allege, he sold the items for his own benefit. A federal court in Utah has issued a temporary restraining order prohibiting Peterson from making unlawful robocalls or engaging in misrepresentations about charitable donations, as the FTC moves ahead with its enforcement action. Peterson is accused of violating the FTC Act and the FTC’s telemarketing sales rule. Attempts to reach Peterson were unsuccessful. According to the FTC complaint, Peterson allegedly used the charity names Veterans of America, Vehicles for Veterans, Saving Our Soldiers, Donate your Car, Donate That Car, Act of Valor, and Medal of Honor.

Blended Retirement System Breakdown: This service leads, by far, in troops switching to the new retirement system: Halfway through the year, about 13.5 percent of service members facing a choice between the new and legacy military retirement systems have opted in to the new Blended Retirement System, according to Defense Department officials. As of June 30 — with six months left to make a decision — 221,872 service members had opted into BRS. That's out of the 1.6 million service members who are eligible to choose between the new system or staying with the legacy system, DoD spokeswoman Air Force Maj. Carla Gleason said. The Marine Corps has the highest percentage of BRS opt-ins by far: 27.2 percent, nearly 10 percentage points ahead of runner-up Navy at (17.1 percent). The Army has the smallest percentage of opt-ins at 8.8 percent. The BRS choice is available to active-duty service members who had fewer than 12 years of total service as of Dec. 31, 2017, and reserve-component members in a paid status with fewer than 4,320 retirement points as of Dec. 31, 2017. No one is automatically enrolled; they must make the move to opt in to BRS before the Dec. 31 deadline. Those with more time in service as of that date had no choice — they stay with the legacy retirement system. Those entering the military in 2018 and later also have no choice — they are automatically enrolled in the BRS.

Army Guard and Reserve Troops to Get Their Uniforms Easier, at Least for Now: All Army National Guard and Reserve members are now just a few clicks away from buying the Operational Camouflage uniforms and its accessories — at least temporarily, according to the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES). AAFES had set up a temporary arrangement to allow all Guard and Reserve members to buy the OCPs online at ShopMyExchange.com. Until now, Army Guard and Reserve personnel could only buy uniforms at brick-and-mortar military clothing stores. The Army is in transition to the OCP uniform, with all soldiers required to have them by October 2019. Under Army regulation and the direction of the Army Clothing Services Office, only Guard and Reserve officers, or enlisted on active duty under Title 10 or Title 32 orders can buy uniforms in stores. And since the exchange online store's system currently can't identify a shopper's rank or active-duty status, the online store didn't sell uniforms to Guard and Reserve members, in order to comply with the regulation, said AAFES spokesman Conner Hammett. That restriction is still in place for AAFES brick-and-mortar clothing stores. Enlisted Guard and Reserve members should show their orders verifying their status to purchase uniforms in stores. But with this temporary exception, all Army Guard and Reserve members can buy uniforms at ShopMyExchange.com, regardless of rank or active-duty status. The exception allows AAFES "to bring the convenience of online uniform shopping to these service members as it works with the [Army Clothing Services Office] to identify a more permanent solution that complies with all Army uniform regulations," Hammett said. The online exchange site automatically determines what military clothing items a service member is authorized to buy, based on branch of service, but beyond that, it can't identify rank or active-duty status, Hammett said.

A lieutenant, a major and a colonel were in the bar at the officer's club, having a debate about sex: how much was pleasure and how much was work. The lieutenant, just back from his honeymoon, said it was 75 percent pleasure and 25 percent work. The major, who was getting up in age, said it was 50-50. The colonel, who was ready for retirement, said it was 75 percent work and 25 percent pleasure. They couldn't come to an agreement, so they decided to go and ask the staff NCO. The staff duty NCO told them it was 100 percent pleasure. When the three officers asked him why, the staff NCO said: "Because if there was any work involved, the three of you would have me doing it for you!"

Here's Who Could Soon Lead the US Army's Futures Command: Lt. Gen. John Murray has been officially nominated by U.S. President Donald Trump to become the first four-star commander for the new Army Futures Command, according to the July 17 congressional record. The three-star general, who will become a four-star if confirmed, is currently serving as the deputy chief of staff Army G-8, the services programming arm. InsideDefense.com first reported that Murray was headed to the newly formed command in June, but the Army would not confirm his selection, even during an AFC briefing at the Pentagon on July 13. Murray's nomination has been referred to the Senate Armed Services Committee. His confirmation hearing date has not been set. The new Army Futures Command (AFC) will be in Austin, Texas, congressional sources, who are now being notified of the choice, have confirmed. The new four-star command was stood up in October at the Association of the U.S. Army's annual conference in Washington. The plan is to realign the Army's modernization priorities under a new organization that will implement cross-functional teams that correspond with the service's top six modernization efforts: Long-Range Precision Fires, Next-Generation Combat Vehicle, Future Vertical Lift, the network, air-and-missile defense and soldier lethality. The service plans to make an official announcement on the location of the command July 13 at the Pentagon. The Army has wanted the new command's headquarters in a city or urban hub close to industry and academia and not on a base or military installation. Earlier this year it shortlisted several major cities in the U.S. as possible locations and put each through a rigorous vetting process. Congressional leaders from the locales pressed hard for a chance to host the new command.

Special Operations Pilot Awarded DFC with Valor for Airdrop Under Fire: An Air Force special operations pilot was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross at a July 6 ceremony on Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, for his efforts to resupply Army Special Forces soldiers under heavy fire in Afghanistan two years ago. Maj. Michael Tolzien, from Kirtland's 58th Special Operations Wing, received the DFC "with valor," which means his actions were conducted at grave personal risk while engaged with the enemy. 2016, while serving in Afghanistan, then-Capt. Tolzien received an alert for a high priority mission: A team of Green Berets was under heavy enemy fire, isolated from conventional support and would soon be overrun by enemy forces. Sgt. 1st Class Matthew McClintock from 19th Special Forces Group out of Buckley, Washington, had already been killed in the fight near the city of Marjah, in Afghanistan's Helmand province. Tolzien's crew prepared their MC-130J Commando II aircraft with 1,600 pounds of combat-critical supplies, to include ammunition, water and medical gear, that could be dropped to the ground team and assist them in pushing back the enemy. After loading up and taking off, Tolzien's aircraft began cruising toward the drop zone, which was changed multiple times due to the shifting nature of the ground combat situation. The fluidity of the battle forced Tolzien's crew to recalculate the perfect release point several times to ensure the supplies landed where U.S. forces, and not the enemy, could retrieve them. Conditions were quickly deteriorating as the crew neared their objective and looked for the best spot to drop their haul. Tolzien's aircraft was struck multiple times by enemy fire as it flew slow and low, at about 800 feet above the ground, looking for the drop point. Despite the incoming rounds, Tolzien was able to remain calm and fly the plane steady enough that his crew dropped the supplies within 50 meters of the ground forces, "halting any further loss of life," according to the Air Force. The drop "directly contributed to a successful counterattack."

Lawyers are the only people who can write a 10,000 word document and call it a 'brief'.

Senate Confirms Robert Wilkie as VA Secretary:

Senators overwhelmingly approved Robert Wilkie as the Veterans Affairs secretary, but the move came with political dissent for the first time in the department's 30-year history. The final vote of 86-9 wasn't enough to seriously jeopardize Wilkie's chances of taking over as the 10th VA secretary. But it did mark the first time since the agency became a Cabinet-level department that any senator has voted against a nominee for the top VA job. One of Wilkie's biggest responsibilities in the next year will be crafting new community care rules allowing veterans more access to private-sector doctors, a process that is expected to spur even more heated debate. Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee ranking member Jon Tester, D-Mont., has also expressed concerns about Trump's intentions with VA, but took to the Senate floor before the vote to back Wilkie as a responsible nominee to guide the department into the future. "Right now the VA does not have a confirmed secretary who is focused on the larger mission of serving veterans, implementing the reforms, and improving VA care and benefits," he said. "Instead, we've had temporary political appointees in charge. They're more interested in picking political fights with people who are not their enemy. "I believe we've lost sight of the VA mission. It will be up to Mr. Wilkie to right that ship." Republicans in the Senate were even freer with their praise. Committee chairman Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., called the nominee "the real deal" and an exemplary pick by the president. Now that the Senate has confirmed Robert Wilkie as the next secretary of Veterans Affairs, he takes over a department that has produced some of the most noteworthy accomplishments for the Trump administration but also some of the biggest headaches. Here's a look at the top issues Wilkie will have to address in coming weeks as the 10th permanent VA secretary:

The budget fight

Administration officials and lawmakers are currently sparring over a \$1.6 billion funding gap in VA's proposed fiscal 2019 budget, a fight that has largely stalled the entire federal appropriations process on Capitol Hill.

The community care overhaul

The funding fight is related to legislation passed earlier this summer called the VA Mission Act, which calls for a restructuring of the department's outside medical care programs over the next year.

The staff question

After he was pushed out of the secretary job, Shulkin accused political operatives within the White House and VA of sabotaging his tenure and working to privatize aspects of department health care.

The medical records modernization

In May, while working as acting secretary, Wilkie finalized a contract with the Missouri-based Cerner Corp. to bring veterans' electronic medical records in line with Defense Department systems over the next decade.

NYC soldier was Army Division's 1st Combat Loss in WWI 100 Years Ago:

A century ago this week, the New York National Guard's 27th Division lost its first soldier in combat in World War I. According to historians at the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs, Robert Friedman of New York City was killed during a German artillery barrage in Belgium on July 13, 1918. The 22-year-old private was serving in an engineer regiment in the division, which was mobilized a year earlier for wartime service. Friedman was the first of the division's 1,791 soldiers who would be killed in action. More than 9,000 others would be wounded before the war ended in November 1918. The 27th Division fought in some of the war's bloodiest battles, including the offensive that breached German defenses known as the Hindenburg Line in September 1918.

The Expert Infantryman Badge as you know it is on the way out:

The Expert Infantryman Badge turns 75 years old next year, and just in time for this milestone birthday, the Army is preparing to rewrite the manual. The infantry branch is in the midst of a pilot program, with soldiers testing out ideas to update the evaluation's 30 tasks and the way they're graded, led by a senior NCO at Fort Benning, Georgia. "Their feedback was really essential to rolling out this new standard, making sure it was validated before it hit the house," Master Sgt. Charles Evans, from the office of the Chief of the Infantry, said in a Monday release. "Just working out all the kinks and making sure that all the tasks were applicable, realistic and up to date with the latest doctrine." EIB testing consists of 30 tasks carried out in three lanes: weapons, patrol and medic. The basics will be the same, the release said, but there will be some reworking to the way soldiers complete indirect fire, move under fire, grenades, CPR and care under fire. Mostly, changes will affect the options units have for conducting testing in general, in order to standardize and streamline the process, the release said. No timeline was provided, but Benning is hosting an EIB event in September, so "the burden rests upon this pilot program to finalize these changes quickly and push out the new manual," according to the release.

Squad Leader Shortage:

Why the Corps is handing out big bucks for infantry NCOs: A disappointingly low completion rate for the infantry squad leader course is prompting the Marine Corps to throw big cash bonuses at today's grunts in the hopes of retaining them as experienced corporals and sergeants. It's been about three years since the Corps established a new job field for squad leaders — the 0365 military occupational specialty — which only 359 Marines have obtained, according to data provided by Marine Corps Training and Education Command. The figure is barely half the number needed to fill out the 648 active-duty rifle squads across the Corps. Roughly 706 corporals and sergeants have graduated the ISULC course since 2015, according to TECOM. While that reflects some progress for the Corps and its effort to further professionalize the infantry's leadership, the total attendance at the schools remains less than half the available qualified corporals and sergeants who could potentially attend. The Corps hopes those ISULC graduates will beef up the lethality of its new 12-man rifle squad model and help build a more mature and tech-adept force. But the dismaying figures portend a difficult path ahead for the Corps as it seeks to retool its forces for a modern battlefield. The six-week course hones Marines' skills in decision-making and leadership at the tactical level. It provides the Corps' junior leaders with education and advanced training that should propel them to become successful squad leaders. The course is a key part of the pipeline for those Marines wishing to don the 0365 MOS, which starts with Marines being approved for the Corps' Squad Leader Development Program and also the completion of the sergeants course.

Air Force Awards First-ever 'R' Devices for Remote Combat Ops:

The Air Force awarded its first-ever remote "R" devices to five airmen from the 432nd Air Expeditionary Wing at Creech Air Force Base, Nevada. The airmen received either Meritorious Service medals or Air Force Commendation medals with the device. The device recognizes airmen who have participated in "hands-on employment of a weapons system that had direct and immediate impact on a combat operation. The award recognized remotely piloted aircraft crewmembers. The five airmen received the device for actions over the course of three separate combat operations in which they were protecting U.S. and allied ground forces.

"Though defensive violence will always be 'a sad necessity' in the eyes of men of principle, it would be still more unfortunate if wrongdoers should dominate just men."
— Saint Augustine

National Guard Making it Easier for Soldiers to Access Tuition Benefits: The Army is making it easier for National Guard troops to get an education as it strives to recruit and retain more soldiers. Starting Aug. 5, guardsmen will have access to tuition assistance immediately after basic training and job-specific schooling, Ken Hardy, the chief of the Army Guard's Education Services Branch, said. Active-duty soldiers, guardsmen and reservists are currently unable to access the tuition benefit until they've completed a year of service at their first unit. Guardsmen head home after training and have time to go to school immediately. The change should help with recruiting and retention since studies show education is the primary reason why six out of 10 guardsmen join up and those who use education benefits are more likely to stay in uniform. Another change starting in August will affect officers and enlisted troops seeking a master's degree. A 10-year time limit for soldiers to use tuition assistance after tapping it to study for an undergraduate degree will be lifted. The funding instead will be tied to completion of the Advanced Leadership Course for enlisted troops, the Warrant Officer Advanced Course for warrant officers, and the Captain's Career Course for commissioned officers.

U.S. North Korean Military Officials Mark Progress on Efforts to Bring Home Fallen American Troops:

U.S. officials held high-level military talks with North Korean representatives for the first time in nine years, a move that veterans advocates hope will be a breakthrough in efforts to recover the remains of thousands of fallen American troops. As a result, additional meetings were scheduled to take place with the goal of coordinating the next steps in transferring the remains of the fallen U.S. troops. Pompeo said both sides also agreed to restart field operations to search for additional U.S. troop remains, a move which could eventually bring American military forensics teams into the country. The resumption of recovery and return efforts was a key talking point of last month's summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. More than 35,000 Americans died on the Korean Peninsula during the war, which lasted from 1950 to 1953. Of those, 7,700 are still listed as missing in action, with 5,300 believed to be on North Korean soil.

VA Implementing Executive Order Governing Union Activities:

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced it has begun implementing a recent presidential executive order (EO), offering new guidelines for how union officials use work hours when representing federal employees. Executive Order 13837 is intended to ensure that taxpayer-funded union time is used efficiently and authorized in amounts that are reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest. The order ensures the proper stewardship of taxpayer dollars. The order offers reasonable standards for union representatives and makes clear that they should spend the majority of their duty hours on federal government work. The executive order affects about 1,700 VA employees using taxpayer-funded union time. Approximately 300,000 VA employees are represented by one of five national unions. The order's restrictions regarding time spent on government work includes member solicitation, lobbying activities, elections of union officials and collection of dues. The executive order also outlines rules about the following:

Negotiations about appropriate implementation of the executive order; Standards for use of union time; Employee conduct regarding agency time and resources, to include use of office or meeting spaces, phones and computer systems. Preventing unlawful or unauthorized expenditures and Agency reporting requirements, and Public disclosure and transparency.

This article was sent in by Juju. The DASH

At the funeral of a friend.
He referred to the dates on his tombstone
From the beginning...to the end.

He noted that first came the date of his birth
And spoke of the following date with tears,
But said what mattered most of all
Was the dash between those years.

For the dash represents all the time
That he spent alive on this earth
And now only those who loved him
Know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not how much we own,
The cars... the house...the cash...
What matters is how we live and love
And how we spend our dash.

So, think about this long and hard;
Are there things you'd like to change?
For you never know how much time is left
That can still be rearranged.

If we could just slow down enough
to consider what's "true and real"
and always try to understand
the way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger
And show appreciation more
And love the people in our lives
Like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect
And more often wear a smile,
Remembering that this special dash
Might only last a little while.

So when your eulogy is being read
With your life's actions to rehash.
Would you be proud of the things they said
About how you spend that Dash.

They Feed My Soul': Creighton-trained ICU Nurse Provides Care, and Dignity, for Veterans:

Katherine Zech Kioshi loves being an intensive care unit (ICU) nurse. "So much of who I am is what I do," says Kioshi, a 1992 Creighton University College of Nursing graduate and former Navy nurse who has worked at the VA Medical Center in Portland since 2006. Kioshi was recently recognized with a national DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. The family of a Vietnam veteran for whom she cared nominated Kioshi for the award. In the nomination letter, the family wrote: "Katherine is an extraordinary nurse who does everything possible for her patients. Our family can never give back to Katherine what she gave to us. She will always be in our hearts and memories." The patient had suffered a heart attack last June and was transported to a local hospital. The family felt he wasn't getting appropriate care, particularly with his history of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and asked that he be transferred to the VA hospital. "The morning after he was admitted to the VA, we met Katherine," his wife wrote. "The amount of compassion she had was amazing. Within a couple of days, he was no longer restrained and off all of the sedation. His confusion was clearing and we were beginning to see my husband again. He was placed under hospice care and died 4 days later.