



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”

January 2018

Commanders Corner: Christmas is behind us as well as New Years and I hope that all of you and your families are doing well. Remember our collective extended family, those Americans serving in our Armed Forces all over the world. Some time ago, old friends and I discussed who would serve and defend this great Nation! Well, to our surprise there are still plenty of young men and women who will pick up the gauntlet of service and do the hard duty that others will not do. It's our sons and daughters and grand children who need to see the need for service and do what needs to be done. I have attached the excerpt from the latest Vietnam War Commemorative Status report for Dec 2017.

Thank you for your incredible dedication to honor America's Vietnam veterans! Across the nation, communities large and small have been inspired by your steadfast commitment and leadership. Your hosting of more than 11,000 commemorative events has enabled Americans to publicly and individually recognize 1.8 million Vietnam veterans and their families ... remarkable! At the genesis of this Commemoration, our early leadership resolved to honor all U.S. veterans who served on active duty from November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of location. This resolve has not changed ... it will continue to guide our efforts as we move forward. "There is no doubt that everyone who served during these difficult years knows the difference between service "in country," "in theatre" and as a "Vietnam-era" veteran. More importantly, each of these patriots knows that after they raised their hand, swearing "... to support and defend the Constitution ..." not one of them could self-determine where they were stationed. Regardless of where they served, these warriors were all "painted with the same brush" by American citizens who could not separate their distaste for the war from the warriors they sent to fight it. Thankfully, that mindset no longer exists in America. The bottom line ... anyone who served during this period of time is worthy of the nation's gratitude and thanks! Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs estimates we are losing 506 Vietnam veterans daily and that by the end of 2017 only 6.6 million will be living of the original 9 million who served during this period. Clearly, our time is limited to reach those that have not been thanked and honored, so I encourage each of you to continue this noble pursuit!

To order Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pins and other free materials for your commemorative events, contact us and remember to share the number of veterans and families you reach during your events. We're here to help so call (877) 387-9951 or email whs.vnwar50th@mail.mil."

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

Again, I hope all of you have a Happy New Year for 2018.

Respectfully,

John

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

DFAS Newsletter Director's Message: 2017 is coming to a close and we are about to enter another tax season. Before we get into the thick of the season, there are a few things that every retiree and annuitant needs to know. First, **myPay** continues to be the quickest and easiest way to access your account information. You can see how the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) will affect your pay, get your IRS Form 1099R and much more. This newsletter has a great article on getting into your **myPay** account, and other options for getting your 1099R. Second, as you may have heard, we have a new mailing address. Please be sure to read the article about our change in address. All mail that is sent to the old address will be forwarded until April 30, 2018, but this will cause a delay in processing time. We are still getting some mail at our old address, so to avoid delays, be sure that you are sending any correspondence to the new address in Indianapolis, Indiana. Third, you may have heard about the new Blended Retirement System. This change only affects people who have not retired yet. You will not see any changes in your retirement benefits due to the new Blended Retirement System. Finally, there have been some changes that will affect smaller groups of retirees or annuitants. If you receive Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) and have the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), your SBP premiums will be deducted from your CRSC starting in April of 2018. Please read the article regarding this change and check back on our website for more updates closer to the April 1, 2018 implementation date.

Veterans Administration Identification Cards:

Some more information to share with each of you...below is an email from the VA regarding the approval of VA ID cards being issued to all honorably discharged veterans starting this month...all that is needed is a DD 214 that lists a discharge as honorable or as general under honorable conditions to request a VA issued identification card... I'm not certain what the value in having one of these cards is, but perhaps cardholders would be able to get discounts from places that offer discounts to military personnel...Information about this program is below, and please help disseminate it out to the masses as much as you can...I am still trying to coordinate with the VA center here in Greenville for another meeting in the next week or two...will relay information as it develops...Additionally, here is a link to a site that the VA has put together that outlines what the newly created Veteran Engagement Boards throughout the country are trying to accomplish: <https://www.va.gov/ve/communityEngagement.asp>. The site is very good with a lot of valuable references, however, they are missing our group in the listings of the North Carolina regions...I contacted the site coordinator and informed him of the oversight, so hopefully sometime soon, we will be listed under the NC region references...Please find the attached documents related to the implementation of the Veterans Identification Card (VIC) program that was signed into law in July 2015 and is being implemented beginning November 2017.

Trump Makes a 355-Ship Navy National Policy:

Achieving a 355-ship Navy is now national policy, but the goal is still a long way off. When U.S. President Donald Trump signed the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act on Tuesday, it included a provision sponsored by Senate Seapower Subcommittee Chairman Roger Wicker and his House counterpart, Rep. Rob Wittman, that calls for the country to build up to 355 ships "as soon as practicable." The provision is contingent on the requisite appropriations, which means it's anything but a sure bet. "With his signature, President Trump has confirmed the United States' resolve to meet the growing needs of our U.S. Navy," Wicker said in a statement. "Building up our nation's fleet is essential to protecting our national security and projecting American power around the globe. "We are asking too few ships to do too many things, and today the President took a major step toward rectifying that problem." The so-called SHIPS Act doesn't lock in any money or set any specific timeline, but is more a signaling of Congress' intent to work toward that goal. The provision will give proponents of a naval buildup something to hang their hats on as they push for the larger Navy Trump promised during the campaign. "This is a helpful move, if largely symbolic," said Bryan McGrath, a retired destroyer captain and consultant with The Ferrybridge Group.

You're Not Seeing Things: Soldiers are Wearing Prototype 'Pinks and Greens':

The Army is working on a revival of a World War II-era service uniform, and prototypes of the proposed "pinks and greens" made their debut on the conference floor of the annual AUSA meeting in Washington, D.C. A handful of soldiers are roaming around the conference in variations of the iconic olive uniform, testing out skirts vs. pants and folding caps vs. service caps. "We want you to go check them out, ask them questions, and let us know what you think," Sergeant Major of the Army Dan Dailey told soldiers.



Monthly Moment of Silence Honoring Fallen Heroes:

Congressman Walter B. Jones (NC-3) continued his commitment to the United States military, and introduced H. Res. 643, a resolution that would amend rules of the U.S. House of Representatives to observe a moment of silence on the first legislative day of each month for American service members killed overseas. America's military members are fighting and dying for this country, and we must show our gratitude," said Congressman Jones. "It is only through remembrance and prayer that the U.S. House of Representatives can truly show the brave families of those we lost that we also share in their sadness." Since 2001, over 6,900 American service members have given their life while serving abroad. While Congress has rightfully observed moments of silence for numerous tragic events, the body does not regularly observe such a moment for those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

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Pearl Harbor Veteran in His 90s Breaks Out in Song in Front of President Trump:

A Pearl Harbor veteran burst into song in front of President Donald Trump at the White House Thursday — the 76th anniversary of the historic attack. Before the president signed a presidential proclamation recognizing December 7 as National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, he said to the six veterans standing beside him, "Remember Pearl Harbor.' Have you heard that before a couple of times, 'Remember Pearl Harbor?'" One of the men, Michael "Mickey" Ganitch, didn't miss a beat, bursting into a rendition of Sammy Kaye's "Remember Pearl Harbor," as Trump looked on and smiled. "Let's remember Pearl Harbor as we go to meet the foe. Let's remember Pearl Harbor, as we did the Alamo," Ganitch sang. "We will always remember how they died for liberty. Let's remember Pearl Harbor, and go on to victory." The room burst into applause as he concluded the song. "He's a very shy person," Trump joked. He then thanked the six veterans for their service. "Today our entire nation pauses to remember Pearl Harbor and the brave warriors who on that day stood tall and fought for America," he said. Thursday marked 76 years since the Japanese surprise aerial attack on the U.S. naval base in Hawaii, which killed more than 2,300 servicemen. The following day, the U.S. and the U.K. declared war on Japan.

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) 2018: Based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index, there will be a 2.0 percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for most retired pay and Survivor Benefit Plan annuities effective Dec. 1, 2017. Retirees will see the change in their Dec. 29, 2017 payment and annuitants in their Jan. 2, 2018 payment.

The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of the blessings. The inherent blessing of socialism is the equal sharing of misery.
-- Winston Churchill

Military Ordered to Begin Accepting Transgender Recruits Jan. 1 Despite Trump's Ban:

The military must begin accepting transgender recruits Jan. 1 despite a ban ordered by President Trump this year, according to a D.C. district court judge. Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly had already granted a preliminary injunction in the *Doe v. Trump* lawsuit filed by a group of transgender troops. She clarified this week that her order also blocks Defense Secretary Jim Mattis from delaying the recruiting. Mattis had planned to begin accepting transgender recruits on the first of the year before Trump tweeted in July that they would not be allowed to serve in the military in any capacity. The president later followed up with an order telling the Pentagon to abandon the plan, which got underway during the previous administration. The Trump administration is appealing the order but did not say whether it may seek a stay blocking the recruiting portion of the order. "We disagree with the Court's ruling and are currently evaluating the next steps," Lauren Ehrsam, a Justice Department spokeswoman, wrote in an email to the *Washington Examiner*.

Protecting Soldiers During World War II: During WW II the U.S. Army found several ways to protect its Soldiers. Steel helmets guarded their heads against shrapnel and flying debris, socks and boots kept feet warm and covered, while coats and wool caps kept the cold away. There were bibles issued that chaplains provided to keep souls safe and secure and there was, occasionally, warm food to fortify the stomach. Despite all of these efforts, the only thing that could protect a Soldier's heart were loved ones back home and even there the Army tried to help—with the aid of the US Postal Service. The National Museum of the United States Army has in its collection a small letter written on authorized stationery called V-Mail. The V-Mail process was based on efficiency and a need to save valuable cargo space for an army deployed across the globe.

Medal of Honor Recipient Receives Standing Ovation at College Graduation: A U.S. Marine who earned the Medal of Honor for throwing himself on a grenade says he was deeply honored by fellow students' standing ovation at his University of South Carolina graduation ceremony. Kyle Carpenter received his bachelor's degree in international studies on Monday, according to The State newspaper. He was recognized during the ceremony, leading to applause from the entire crowd. Carpenter said fellow students frequently thanked him individually for his service, but the standing ovation at his graduation was perhaps his best moment at the school. "That was one of the most incredible moments since I woke up at the hospital and realized I had a second chance at life," Carpenter told the newspaper shortly after graduating. Carpenter was credited with saving the life of a fellow Marine by shielding him from an exploding grenade in Afghanistan in 2010. He received the nation's highest military honor from President Barack Obama in 2014. Carpenter lost his right eye and suffered a collapse lungs and broken bones, leading to dozens of surgeries. Now, Carpenter is weighing options for life after college. He said he plans to continue working with veterans groups and serving as a motivational speaker. "My college experience was like everyone else's. I learned a lot. I gained a new perspective on the world and on people that I'm so thankful and appreciative for," Carpenter said. "I was first and foremost a fellow Gamecock and friend before a Medal of Honor recipient. I just had a four years that is too special to put into words."

Old age is having a choice of two temptations and choosing the one that will get you home earlier.

Marine Vet Wins Case to Return to US from Mexico:

A Marine veteran deported to Mexico 15 years ago after he was convicted of a minor offense has won his fight to return to the United States and regain his permanent U.S. residency. Marco Chavez told The Associated Press he was looking forward to reuniting with his three sons in Iowa after missing their childhoods. He is now 45 and they range in age from 17 to 21. "One of the things I wanted to let my kids know is they did have a father and I did not plan to leave them," said Chavez, who has been living in the border city of Tijuana. "That wasn't part of the plan with me and my ex-wife. I just want to be there to support them. They still might have resentment but that's understandable." An immigration judge's ruling last month is allowing Chavez' return. He was convicted in 1998 of animal cruelty for a dog beating but said another person was responsible. He was sentenced to two years in state prison, was released after 15 months because of good behavior and later deported. Brown said Chavez "served our country, earned a pardon and deserves to come back home." His wife initially moved to Tijuana with their sons so they could all be together, but life was too hard for the family in the violence-plagued border city, where the schools were not as good and jobs were scarce, Chavez said. The couple divorced and she moved to Iowa with their children. He plans to meet his parents at the U.S.-Mexico border crossing in San Diego before Christmas and will live in Los Angeles with them for several months while he deals with his residency paperwork. He then will move to Iowa and try to rebuild a relationship with his children. Chavez last saw his sons when they visited him in Tijuana in 2013. Chavez was a baby when his parents took him to the United States. He served four years in the Marine Corps and was honorably discharged. After getting deported in 2002, he had to learn Spanish and find work in land that was foreign to him.



Device Would Help Combat Medics Document Treatment in the Field:

When bullets are flying and a service member needs treatment, a combat medic can't be worried about taking notes. But knowing what happened and how a patient was treated helps their future treatment, and it can assist wounded warriors when claiming disability. Researchers at Clemson University are working on a hands-free system for medics to document battlefield care and ensure troops receive the benefits they deserve. Although in its early stages, the system includes a hands-free device that records audio and video. The plan is to have the audio automatically transcribed, separating words from battlefield noises, which would let doctors know how to properly care for the patient once they're off the battlefield. This information would become part of the service member's permanent record, helping them prove they were injured in battle. Through a two-year, \$1.6 million Defense Department-funded pilot program, the researchers are developing the components that would enable this to happen. Medics currently use a handheld mobile device to enter data, according to Loretta Schlachta-Fairchild with Army Medical Research and Materiel Command. Existing technology doesn't solve this problem for the military because even though recorders can separate noise and words in noisy settings like coffee shops, train stations and hospitals, it can't drown out the kinds of sounds found on a battlefield, according to Kuang-Ching "K.C." Wang, a professor of electrical and computer and engineering at Clemson.

Last year I joined a support group for procrastinators. We haven't met yet!

VA Study Clarence Beavers, Last of a Black Paratroop Unit, Dies at 96: Clarence Beavers, the last surviving member of a groundbreaking group of black paratroopers deployed during World War II against what were described as the world's first intercontinental-range airborne weapons — giant bomb-laden balloons launched from Japan and aimed at North America — died on Dec. 4, 2017 at his home in Huntington, N.Y. He was 96. Mr. Beavers was one of 17 soldiers who formed what became the Army's first all-black paratroop unit, the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion. The unit, which began training in 1944, was never as famous as the Tuskegee Airmen, the all-black Army Air Forces group from Alabama, but it was pioneering nonetheless. The paratroopers were nicknamed the Triple Nickels (the 555th conjured up the five-cent coin), but they also became known as the Smoke Jumpers after being dispatched to the American Northwest to be on hand to extinguish forest fires should the balloon bombs ignite fires.



Tump Pays Holiday Visit to Wounded Troops at Walter Reed: President Donald Trump paid a holiday visit Thursday to wounded service members at Walter Reed National Medical Center, hailing them as "some of the bravest people anywhere in the world." During his visit, the president awarded the Purple Heart to 1st Lt. Victor Prato of the 127th Airborne Engineer Battalion, who was injured last month while deployed in Afghanistan. Prato, 25, of Somers, New York, suffered multiple soft tissue injuries following a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device blast, according to the White House. "One of the most powerful moments of my life watching @POTUS give the Purple Heart to this American Hero," wrote press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders on Twitter, where she posted a photo of Prato. "Amazed by the strength and resilience of the men and women in our Armed Forces." Trump also met with other sick and injured service members from all branches of the armed forces, Sanders said. Trump told reporters as he was leaving the White House en route to the medical center that he was going to "say hello to some of the bravest people anywhere in the world." "We're just going to wish them a merry Christmas, a happy New Year," he said. "We love those people." The president last visited the military hospital complex in Bethesda, Maryland, just outside of Washington, in April.

Man Going to Prison After False Claim of Military Service: A western Illinois man who falsely claimed that he fought in Vietnam to receive disability benefits has been sentenced to eight years in federal prison. In a news release, the U.S. Attorney's office in Rock Island says a federal judge on Wednesday also ordered 68-year-old William R. Jones of Geneseo to pay a fine of \$40,000 and \$71,000 in restitution. The release says Jones joined the Air National Guard in 1971 but when he retired from service as a lieutenant colonel in 2002 he had never seen combat or served in Vietnam. The release says in 2013 he received \$71,000 for combat-related disability from the Department of Veterans Affairs after he falsely claimed that being shot down and wounded in Vietnam had left him suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment History

In the December newsletter, Commander Woyansky made reference to the history of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment. Anyone interested in reading up on the history of the regiment can find detailed information on our web site at http://www.2-1-196th.com/httpdocs/Sub_Htms/History-2nd_1st.htm or at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1st_Infantry_Regiment_\(United_States\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1st_Infantry_Regiment_(United_States)). Below is a rendering of the initial "Legion" (which was eventually divided into the 1st and 3rd Infantry Regiments) in action in 1794. Our web site also contains information regarding some of the units assigned to the Americal Division, the ARVN's and the NVA. If you have any questions, suggestions and/or corrections, please contact me.

Chuck Holdaway

Banks of the Maumee, Ohio, August 1794. Anthony Wayne commanded the Army, enlarged in 1792 and formed into the Legion (now 1st and 3d Infantry Regiments). He trained it into a tough combat team to beat the Indians of the Northwest who had twice whipped us. The Legion advanced into Indian country, feeling its way cautiously. On 20 August 1794 it tracked down the foe, routed him from behind a vast windfall, and destroyed his warriors. Thus the way cleared for the new nation to expand into the Ohio Valley.



VA and Humane Society of United States Announce Partnership; Goal is to Pair Veterans with Rescued Animals:

The Department of Veterans Affairs has announced a partnership with the Humane Society of the United States to encourage veterans to consider pet ownership and volunteer opportunities with community organizations, including local animal shelters and humane societies in an effort to pair Veterans with rescued animals. This announcement represents the latest example of VA's commitment to working closely with nonprofit organizations and other community partners to identify new and innovative ways to support veterans' health and well being through this initiative. "There are many benefits to pet ownership both for veterans in need of companionship and for animals in need of good homes," said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. "The greatest benefit for both can be a more fulfilled quality of life. We are pleased to work with the Humane Society on this important initiative and excited about its potential to create more opportunities to serve." Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of the Humane Society of the United States, also hailed the new alliance. "The partnership between animal welfare groups and VA is an important program for our veterans and for homeless animals," Pacelle said. "We know the power of the human-animal bond, and I can't think of a better way to see it expressed than in helping our nation's heroes."