



# 2nd Battalion 1st Infantry Chapter, Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA)



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“A Soldier Once And Always”

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**Commanders Corner:** My fellow 2/1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brothers I am deeply honored and humbled to have been selected to be the next commander of our Chapter. I hope that those that could not attend the reunion will support my selection and that I can serve you all to the best of my ability. It is my vision that we can grow our chapter and to that I challenge each member to find and add one new member to our roster by the time we meet in Indianapolis in August 2020! I want to congratulate everyone that were involved in adding 15 new members in their recent recruiting drive. This result is evidence I believe that adding one member per each current member is an achievable goal. I would be remiss if I did not extend appreciation to Jesse and Eileen for once again providing a great Hospitality room for all our attendees at the reunion. They have been doing this each year that they have been in charge and as we know it's a lot of work and this year they had to travel a long way from Texas to Rhode Island. As you all know Jesse has also served as our Secretary Treasure during this time. He has chosen to pass this baton this year but he and Eileen will continue to manage the Hospitality Room and 2/1 PX for future reunions so we all owe them a big thank you for their continued service. I would like to make a recommendation that when we have members located in the area of future reunions that they pitch in to assist with the refreshment and beverage set ups to reduce some of the load. Some of us had the honor to attend our fellow brother Julius (Juju) Deriscavage's Burial at Arlington National Cemetery on September 16. We were also able to attend a celebration for Juju with his family the night before his burial and wonderful experience for those of us in attendance and his family. I want to offer a big Thank You to our brother Rich Heroux for his excellent work in publishing our Chapter Newsletter. I think we will all agree that his performance has been first rate and this is not an easy task. I want to issue you another challenge; each of us provide at least one topic to Rich during this next year for the newsletter and more if possible. If you have a subject matter in mind for the letter but don't know how to express it please reach out to Rich or me and we will be happy to assist! We would also like to hear from anyone who has any ideas on improving the letter to include what subject matter you would like to see in the Newsletter. I encourage the 15 new members to send any articles and/or ideas you may have for our Newsletter. New ideas are always welcome! Again I commit to do my best to serve you as Commander but the success of our Chapter in the future will happen only by the efforts of everyone just like we did in Vietnam. I will always try to make myself available to any member so don't hesitate to contact me by phone or e-mail which are 410.718.4499 (cell) and [dwightsybolt@gmail.com](mailto:dwrightsybolt@gmail.com). I solicit your ideas, criticism, or if you just want to talk. The latter is what I deem the most important since for most of us it is only by talking to a brother sometimes are we able to share things that only we will



understand. I hope that we can Have a large turnover next year in Indianapolis which will be hosted by our brother Chuck Holdaway. None of us are getting younger so we need to assemble when we can.

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

**Dwight Sybolt.**

Commande



**SGT Julius Driscavage is laid to Rest:** We said “Goodbye” to a trusted friend and comrade on September 16, 2019 as Julius Driscavage was laid to rest at his beloved Arlington National Cemetery. A small group of mourners gathered at his grave site listening to the words uttered by a military Chaplain sending his soul to the Father. Many of us knew Juju as a wonderful soldier, a patriot and a tribute to our Nation. His family and friends offered kind words of his service to his country and community. He was laid to rest in the same section as LtC Gary Carder and in the next section to SGM John Garlic, two fellow soldiers who were part of our beloved military unit.



LTC Gary Carder



SGM John Garlic

**Report of the 2019 ADVA Reunion:** The accommodations for the 2019 ADVA Reunion were spectacular the recently renovated Crown Plaza hotel offered a tremendous opportunity for people to assemble and conduct social affairs. Eileen Boney and Jesse Mendoza prepared the Hospitality room in great fashion. We often forget just how much effort they put forth for our comfort and entertainment. The room offered a much larger space to accommodate our group. Although we had anticipated more than finally showed attended the reunion, the room was large enough for us to share. The hotel location was conducive to allow for near-by shopping with plenty of choices for dining. The transportation offered by the hotel provided everyone the choice of near-by restaurants. We conducted the election of officers following the General Membership meeting on Saturday. Elected to serve for the next two years are; Commander, Dwight Sypolt; Vice Commander, Rich Heroux; Secy/Treas, John Woyansky; ADVA Executive Committee Representative, Carl Fryman; At-Large Officer – Jesse Mandoza; At-Large Officer, Chuck Holdaway. Our next reunion will take place in Indianapolis, Indiana in August 2020. Jesse Mandoza was awarded the “Bravo Knife” for safe-keeping for the remainder of this year.



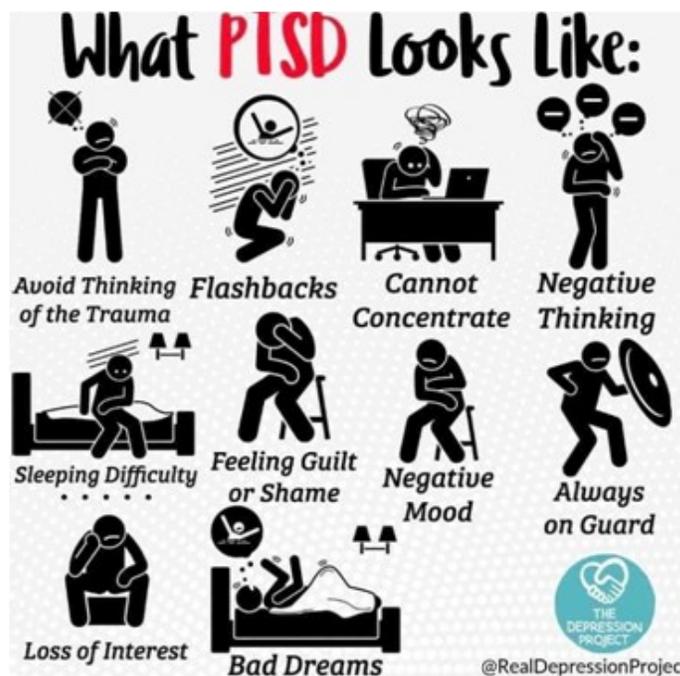
**The U.S. Army Museum opening June 2020:** June 2020 is the period established by the Committee responsible for the construction of the Army Museum. To see the progress being made by the construction crews please enter the information <https://youtu.be/2twaZ4bD5Vk> into your computer.

### THE RIDE HOME

In 1991, at the end of Desert Storm, a 19 yr. old US Army Cavalry Scout Private who had just spent 8 months at war sat out on a street at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia. He sat there on his duffel bag with his Battalion around him for 4 days waiting for the buses to come and take him to the King Fahad Airport so he could go home. Unfortunately, the politicians of the day never planned for how to bring so many soldiers home after the war ended so there was a shortage of planes. Politicians are great at talking, but terrible at doing. Finally, the buses came, and took the young man to the airport. The planes waiting were from Tower Air. The owner of Tower Air had volunteered his planes and staff to bring soldiers home for the cost of fuel only. Happily, the young veteran got home just in time for Easter weekend in 1991, and spent that time emotionally healing with friends and family surrounding him. That Private was me, Ron Knouse. The owner of Tower Air was - Donald J Trump. Written by Pvt. Ron Knouse

### What constitutes being "old school" in the military?

If you ever wore yellow, nylon PT shorts. rode in a REAL deuce and a half know what a gamma goat used to be were transported in a cattle car wore and washed in a steel pot realized your M16 was built by the lowest bidding contractor lived in WWII era barracks thought the only definition of "offensive" was "taking it to the commies" actually put 2 shelter halves together to make and sleep in a tent pressed your duty uniform spit shined your boots ate MREs... If you know what wall to wall counseling is... Shine your boots with spit and kiwi with a brown tshirt curse drink at a NCO club on post have weekly inspections of room in barracks by 1SG all pictures on barracks wall framed wear a banana suit for PT starched your BDUs and Class B sing cadence without repercussion drive a 1/4 ton drive a deuce and a half smoke indoors... These constitute being Old School.



## **Student Loan Crisis, not Mideast Wars, helped Army Leaders Exceed Recruiting Goals this Year:**

Army leadership gathered recently to announce that they surpassed their recruiting goal for 2019, signing up more than 68,000 active duty soldiers before the end of the fiscal year, but the long wars in the Middle East weren't exactly part of the sales pitch. Based on his experience visiting 30 to 40 recruiting stations this year, the eventual outcomes of wars abroad are "not really part of the discussion" between potential soldiers and their recruiters, Maj. Gen. Frank Muth, head of Army Recruiting Command, told reporters at the Pentagon. "One of the national crises right now is student loans, so \$31,000 is [about] the average," Muth said. "You can get out [of the Army] after four years, 100 percent paid for state college anywhere in the United States." A significant part of the recruiting push has been showing that the Army serves as a pathway to America's middle class, with several service leaders noting that their children used GI Bill benefits and ROTC scholarships. "I have three kids serving. A lot of us have kids serving," Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said. "And the reason is because we see it as a pathway to success."

## **White House Responsible for Delayed Decision on new Agent Orange Diseases, Documents Show:**

Two years ago, then Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin decided to add three health conditions to the list of diseases eligible for Agent Orange benefits, but White House officials challenged his authority and impeded enactment, according to internal documents obtained by a veteran through the Freedom of Information Act. Now tens of thousands of veterans are still waiting. Shulkin decided to add three health conditions — bladder cancer, Parkinson's-like symptoms and hypothyroidism — to the list of diseases eligible for Agent Orange benefits. Heavily redacted emails and briefings released recently to former Army Spc. Jeff O'Malley, of Pearland, Texas, show Shulkin made the decision sometime before Oct. 3, 2017 — a move that would have given ailing veterans faster access to disability compensation and health benefits. But the Office of Management and Budget, including Director Mick Mulvaney, and other White House officials objected, according to the documents. While the specifics of OMB's opposition were redacted, legible portions show that the office believed the scientific evidence supporting the proposed additions was limited and it had concerns about the budgetary impact of the expansion, as well as any adverse effects on the existing disability benefits program. According to the documents, roughly 83,000 veterans are afflicted with one of the three proposed presumptive conditions. The estimated cost for providing disability compensation to these former service members was redacted.

**Famous Frigate Sails Boston's Harbor!** The USS Constitution sailed in Boston Harbor to celebrate its 222nd birthday and the U.S. Navy's birthday. The ship left Charlestown Navy Yard Friday morning and headed to Fort Independence on Castle Island to fire a 21-gun salute. The event celebrates the birthday of "Old Ironsides" — the world's oldest commissioned warship still afloat — and the Navy's 244th birthday. Cmdr. Nathaniel Shick, the Constitution's commanding officer, says the ship has served the country with distinction and he's honored to celebrate its legacy. On its return back to the yard, the ship was scheduled to fire another salute as it passed Coast Guard Sector Boston, the former site of the shipyard where the Constitution was built and launched in October 1797.

**Camping is a tradition in my family. It was a tradition in everyone's family until we invented the House.**

## **Another Marine was Misidentified in Iconic Iwo Jima Flag-Raising Photo, Corps says:**

The image of Marines raising the American flag on top of Mount Suribachi in Japan during World War II is one permanently etched into the mind of every Marine. It's a symbol of the Corps' dedication to the country and perseverance against all enemies, in every clime and place. But on Thursday the Marine Corps announced another correction to the Marines identified in the iconic photo taken by The Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal on Feb. 23, 1945. Originally, Pfc. Rene A. Gagnon was the Marine identified on the far side of the pole, who had a bit of his helmet showing, the Corps said. Cpl. Harold P. Keller is now identified as that Marine, the Corps announced. The conclusion came after a two year investigation by the Marine Corps with assistance from the FBI looking closely at previously private photos shared with them by historians Stephen Foley, Dustin Spence and Brent Westemeyer. Gagnon and Keller survived the war, both dying in 1979, when Gagnon was 54 and Keller was 57. This is not the first time the Marine Corps reidentified the Marines in the photo. In 2016, the Corps said that Pfc. Harold Schultz was one of the Marines in the photo, not Navy Corpsman John Bradley. Identifying who was in the photo was important, the Marine Corps said, but every Marine who participated in the battle was a hero. "Regardless of who was in the photograph, each and every Marine who set foot on Iwo Jima, or supported the effort from the sea and air around the island is, and always will be, a part of our Corps' cherished history," the Corps said.

## **SMA Grinston Talks about his push to Build Cohesive Units, 'This is My Squad':**

The new sergeant major of the Army, Michael A. Grinston, is looking at ways to strengthen squad-level cohesion among soldiers during his tenure. The new SMA wants to find and replicate the model of strong, cohesive units across the Army by focusing on the positive aspects of being a soldier. Doing so will hopefully address ongoing problems, including sexual harassment and assault, suicide prevention and domestic issues, while also building on Army readiness priorities like preparing soldiers for the new fitness test. Grinston hopes that at least some of those problems can be addressed by instilling a certain mindset into soldiers, and squad leaders in particular: "This is my squad, and I don't let anything happen to them." He has started to float a "This is My Squad" initiative that will compliment the "Not in My Squad" campaign, or NIMS, brought about by his predecessor. NIMS aimed to help junior leaders fight sexual misconduct and other issues through an optional online assessment that offered training material to either reinforce strengths of a squad or give areas to improve based on user responses.

## **Here's How the Army is Planning to Roll Out the ACFT:**

The Army Combat Fitness Test has reached initial operating capacity, with the entire service gearing up to take diagnostic tests this year before the ACFT officially becomes the fitness test of record in October 2020. However, all new officers and enlisted soldiers coming into the Army after Oct. 1 of this year will be training for and required to pass the ACFT before they graduate and report to the operational force, according to Maj. Gen. Lonnie G. Hibbard, commander of the Center for Initial Military Training. "I don't think it will impact graduation rates; It's really going to impact how we train," Hibbard said. "We're taking a high school student and transitioning him into a soldier, we just have to make sure he is competent in the ten components of physical fitness to be successful on the ACFT." For those soldiers already in the force, the active-duty Army will take two ACFT diagnostic tests over the next year, while soldiers in the Guard and Reserve components will take one diagnostic test.

**New Army Chief Wants to Let Soldiers Stay Longer at Favorite Duty Stations:** Soldiers could get an opportunity to remain longer at duty stations of their choice under a policy pushed by new Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville. The traditional "industrial-age" system that can require moves every three years is out of place in an information-age Army, McConville said. "I don't see why people can't stay four, five, six, seven, eight, nine years," McConville said to a packed audience of military families Tuesday at the Association of the U.S. Army's annual exposition and convention. "You all helped us by bringing to the attention of the chain of command where there are issues," McConville told the families, and the burden and hassle of frequent permanent changes of station, or PCS, was one of them. McConville said he also wanted to limit PCS moves that can occur outside the peak summer moving season. "People will say, hey, during the summer -- that's when the peak season is -- so some people say we'll move soldiers off-peak. I don't sign up for that," McConville said. McConville noted that he and his wife, Marie, had made 22 moves during their Army career, and the moves were made more difficult when school was in session. "I sign up for making less moves [and] stabilizing people longer, but we're not going to have the soldier moving in March and the kids getting pulled out of school," he said. At a later session with a small group of reporters, McConville expanded on his initiative to allow longer tour options.

**Army launches New ads with Less Combat Focus: 'What's Your Warrior?':** The Army is preparing to launch an advertising campaign this November called "What's Your Warrior?" courtesy of the service's new Chicago-based marketing team. The campaign differentiates from past efforts in its focus on the Army's many military occupational specialties that don't involve direct combat, according to Brig. Gen. Alex Fink, chief of Army Enterprise Marketing. While the campaign hasn't launched yet, Fink gave Army Times an early look of one copy of a print ad. It depicts actual U.S. soldiers from five different career paths: a lab tech, a signals troop, an aviator, a cyber operator and a sniper-qualified soldier. Those types of roles can be difficult to fill. "These particular MOSs featured here are indeed in those top ones we need," Fink said. "But that's not necessarily why we chose them." The soldiers were chosen for the ads because the marketing team wants to expose Generation Z to a variety of options.



**Coast Guard Offloads \$92M of Cocaine Seized from Vessels in the Pacific:** Cocaine valued at an estimated \$92 million was seized by the U.S. Coast Guard from boats in the Pacific Ocean has been brought to San Diego. About 6,800 pounds (3,084 kilograms) of cocaine were offloaded from the Coast Guard cutter Alert recently. The Coast Guard says the cocaine was seized by crews of the Alert and cutters Robert Ward and Seneca from vessels off the coasts of Mexico and Central and South America.

**Ninety percent of the things I worry about never happen.**

**After Almost 5 Years, Army's 101st Airborne Will Return to Full Air Assault Power:** U.S. Army aviation officials have launched an effort to restore full air assault capability to the 101st Airborne Division -- a capability the Screaming Eagles have been without since 2015. As the Army's only air-assault division, the 101st has traditionally had two combat aviation brigades -- instead of one CAB like other divisions -- to allow the unit to lift a full brigade combat team into combat at one time. Recent Budget cuts under sequestration prompted the Army to take one of the 101st's CABs away. The effort to re-equip the 101st with dozens of helicopters is one of the top aviation priorities the Army has identified as it races to be ready to conduct major combat operations across all warfare domains by 2028, Maj. Gen. David Francis, commander of the Army's Aviation Center of Excellence at Fort Rucker, Alabama, said. Army aviation was required to reduce the number of combat aviation brigades in the active component, so we went from 13 combat aviation brigades down to 11," Francis said Wednesday at the 2019 Association of the United States Army's annual meeting. "One of the combat aviation brigades that was inactivated was the 159th CAB, one of two that resided [in the 101st] at Fort Campbell." The 159th CAB officially inactivated in December 2015, leaving the unit with the 101st CAB.

**Why Federal Spending on Veterans Education Benefits has Soared Nearly 250 percent:** Federal spending on veterans' education benefits grew nearly 250 percent over the span of 10 years, an increase largely attributed to one veterans program: the Post-9/11 GI Bill. The Post-9/11 GI Bill comprised roughly \$11 billion in federal support for veterans' education benefits in 2017, according to a new study from the Pew Charitable Trusts. That's more than four times the amount spent in 2017 on all seven other federal programs dedicated to veterans education, which amassed a total of \$2.5 billion in federal spending. In comparison, numbers adjusted for inflation show that total spending on veterans' higher education programs reached nearly \$4 billion in 2007 -- before the Post-9/11 GI Bill took effect. "The federal government has long provided resources to help veterans and their dependents pursue higher education," the study said. "The 2009 implementation of the Post-9/11 GI Bill significantly increased the amount of support available by providing funding for tuition, housing, and other educational expenses."

**Army is Flexing Muscle it Hasn't Used much in 18 Years, Top Leader Says:** The Army intends to train at the division level in its next major exercises in Europe and the Indo-Pacific, testing the movement of a large force from fort to port, across the ocean and then making its way to multi-national sites where partner forces will train with the Americans. Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy said that the Defender 2020 exercise held in Europe from April to May will be similar in size and scope to Exercise Reforger, a Cold War-era strategic deployment of a division or more to West Germany in annual iterations. It is set to be one of the largest military exercises on that continent since the Cold War. But the service is also staring down the barrel of some of its modernization initiatives, sometimes making hard choices to ensure continued funding through its "night court" process, as well as pushing the programs to completion. McCarthy talked with Army Times ahead of the Association of the United States Army annual gathering this year to discuss the challenges ahead. The Q&A has been edited for length.

**Being right isn't as important as knowing when to shut up!**

**The VA Is Processing More Appeals, Decisions Thanks to New System:** The results are in: The Board of Veterans' Appeals processed 11% more decisions and held 38% more hearings in fiscal 2019 than 2018 thanks, in part, to a new congressionally-mandated appeals structure, officials reported this month. That new process, combined with hiring more staff, helped the board process nearly 95,100 rating appeals, of which 35% were granted and 30% denied, BVA Chairman Cheryl Mason said. "The entire department is mostly focused on changing what we do," Mason said. "This is really about changing for the veterans and providing the services that the veterans and their families need and that's what the board is committed to." Two years ago, Congress passed a modernization act to have the board develop three options for reviewing decisions, better notifying veterans about outcomes, and improving claim resolution time. "That's what it's about: choices for veterans so they don't get stuck for three or seven years," Mason said. Mason said they don't yet know the average processing time since it hasn't been a full year since the new appeals options were introduced. Meanwhile, Mason said she's increased the office size by about 400 people since she took office in December 2017, giving her 96 judges and about 800 attorneys to review appeals and make decisions. Moving forward, she said the BVA will leverage its ability to hire more military spouses to increase staff size. "That's part of our commitment to changing the process, improving the process, hiring the right people, and just hiring veterans and their families," Mason said, "because all of those groups bring a perspective that we need to have."

**41 US Troops have been ID'd from Remains Returned by North Korea, DPAA:** At least 41 American troops have been identified among the remains returned from North Korea last year, officials said Friday, paving the way for them to be returned to their families nearly seven decades after the Korean War. Army Cpl. Lloyd B. Odom, 19, of Odessa, Mo., was the third missing soldier whose identity was announced this week. The Pentagon said Friday that Odom was accounted for on Sept. 12. North Korea turned over 55 cases of bones and artifacts to the United States in July 2018, weeks after its leader, Kim Jong Un, agreed to do so as a goodwill gesture during his first nuclear summit with President Donald Trump. However, hopes that joint searches for more remains in North Korea could resume have been put on hold as diplomacy has stalled. More than 7,600 Americans remain missing since the 1950-53 war ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty, leaving the two Koreas divided by one of the world's most heavily fortified frontiers.

**Killed at Pearl Harbor, World War II sailor comes home:** A funeral was slated for an Alabama sailor killed in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor nearly 80 years ago. News outlets reported recently the graveside service was planned for Johnnie Cornelius Laurie of Bessemer. He was a 25-year-old Navy mess attendant on board the battleship Oklahoma when it was hit by multiple torpedoes on Dec. 7, 1941. More than 400 crew members died, and many of their bodies were interred in cemeteries in Hawaii. Laurie's remains were among those that couldn't initially be identified. The military recovered remains in 2015 and began using DNA testing and other methods for identification. The Navy says Laurie's remains were identified earlier this year. Laurie's only living brother, Elmer White, says he's glad his brother is home. The funeral date would have been Laurie's 103rd birthday.

**The fact that there is a highway to hell and only a stairway to heaven, says alot about the anticipated traffic Numbers.**

**Remains of Massachusetts Airman killed in WWII Identified:** The remains of a Massachusetts airman killed during World War II have been identified. U.S. Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Joseph E. Finneran, who was killed during World War II, was accounted for Aug. 9, according to a Friday announcement from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. In the summer of 1943, the 22-year-old from the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston was a bombardier aboard a Consolidated B-24D Liberator assigned to the 345th Bombardment Squadron, 98th Bombardiers Group (Heavy), the "Pyramidiers." On Aug. 1 of that year, his aircraft crashed after being hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire during Operation Tidal Wave, the largest bombing mission against the oil fields and refineries at Ploiesti, north of Bucharest, Romania. Of the Americans killed, only 27 could be identified and Finneran wasn't among them, according to the DPAA. The remains that could not be identified were buried as unknowns in the Hero Section of the Civilian and Military Cemetery of Bolovan in Ploiesti. Following the war, those remains were reinterred in the American Military Cemetery at Neuville-en-Condroz, Belgium. The remains that were later identified as Finneran's were exhumed in 2017 and later identified through anthropological and DNA analysis, according to the agency.

**Remains Identified of Ohio Soldier who died in Korean War:** The government says the remains of a soldier who died during the Korean War have been identified as an 18-year-old Ohio man. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency says the remains of Army Cpl. Robert L. Bray of Chillicothe (chihl-ih-KAHTH'-ee) were accounted for on June 6, 2019. The agency says Bray was a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Regiment in the summer of 1950. He was reported missing on July 20, 1950, near Taejon, South Korea, and declared dead on Dec. 31, 1953. Bray was identified following 2018 testing of remains initially declared unidentifiable that were transferred to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii in the 1950s. Bray will be buried Nov. 6, 2019, in Bainbridge, Ohio —

**Remains Identified of World War II Marine who died at Tarawa Atoll:** The government says the remains of a Marine who died in a Pacific island battle during World War II have been identified as a 23-year-old Philadelphia man. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency says the remains of Marine Corps Reserve Pvt. Joseph F. Boschetti were accounted for on July 8. The agency says Boschetti was a member of Company A, 1st Battalion, 18th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force on Nov. 20, 1943. He died on the first day of fighting against the Japanese on the island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Boschetti was identified following testing of remains initially declared unidentifiable that were transferred to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii in 1949.

**Good Riddance, Blueberries! Navy bids Farewell to its worst Uniform ever:** Starting Oct. 1, sailors who are currently being forged by the sea will at long last no longer blend in with it. After 11 perilous years of parading around looking like victims of an airplane toilet explosion, the Navy finally is saying sayonara to the Type I Navy Working Uniform, a heinous half-nylon boondoggle that not only wasted hundreds of millions of dollars but endangered the lives of everyone who donned the accursed "blueberry." That's because until 2012, sailors didn't realize that a mere spark could turn them into blueberry flambé. Or — as the Navy Clothing and Textile Research Facility eloquently put it after testing a uniform that doubled as "a thermoplastic fiber" Yankee candle that "melts and drips" when lit — it "will burn robustly until completely consumed." Surveys suggest most sailors, if given the opportunity, will robustly choose to avoid welding clothing to their skin.

New Eligibility Rules for Arlington Cemetery would Exclude most Non-Combat Veterans:

Officials are moving to limit the number of individuals eligible for burial at [Arlington National Cemetery](#) in Virginia, restricting below-ground sites to combat heroes, battle casualties and a small pool of notable dignitaries.

Under the proposal, which still needs to be finalized through a public rulemaking process, some other veterans will still be eligible for storage of cremated remains [at the famed site](#) in above-ground structures, which will allow planners additional flexibility and space in coming decades. The move by the Army, which administers the cemetery, is part of an ongoing effort to extend how long the cemetery can be used as [a final resting place](#) for America’s service members. Army officials have for the last two years considered a series of site expansions and facility changes in an effort to deal with dwindling space at the site. “Arlington National Cemetery is a national shrine for all Americans, but especially those who have served our great nation,” acting Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy said in a statement. “We must ensure it can honor those we have lost for many years to come.”

The 154-year-old cemetery, originally established as an overflow site for mounting Civil War casualties, has become one of the most hallowed military sites in America. More than 3 million visitors travel to the site annually.

Only about 100,000 burial sites are left at the cemetery, tucked between the Potomac River and the ever growing northern Virginia suburbs. Expansion plans are expected to keep burials on pace into the 2040s, but not much beyond that. Under the latest proposal, 1,000 gravesites would be set aside for current and future Medal of Honor recipients, to ensure space is reserved for those recipients of the highest military honor. In addition to them, below-ground burials would be restricted to these other military groups:

- Troops killed in action, to include repatriated remains
- Purple Heart recipients
- Award recipients of the Silver Star or a higher honor
- Combat-related service deaths “while conducting uniquely military activities”
- Former prisoners of war
- Veterans with combat service who “made significant contributions to the nation’s security” in other government posts
- Former presidents and vice presidents of the United States

Spouses of eligible individuals would also be allowed burial at their loved-ones plots. Above-ground in-  
tuments of ashes will be open to any veterans from World War II, military retirees, veterans who served in combat and spent at least two years in the ranks, and veterans without any combat service who “made significant contributions to the nation’s security” in other government posts. Currently, any military retiree is eligible for below-ground burial at the site, and any veteran who left the service under honorable conditions is eligible for inurment of ashes. The former group would only be eligible for inurment now, while many of the later would not be eligible for any admission to Arlington. The new restrictions are likely to cause controversy within the military community, since veterans groups have long opposed restricting eligibility at Arlington. Army officials said the new changes will not affect any burials already scheduled, or any planned between now and the completion of the rulemaking process, expected to take at least nine months. “Additionally, the proposed revisions will not affect veterans’ burial benefits or veteran eligibility at Department of Veterans Affairs national cemeteries and state veterans cemeteries,” the Army’s official release on the rules stated.