



CONNECTIONS

JEWISH WAR VETERANS POST #373

ALBERT ARONOWITZ CHAPTER, Tampa, Florida

Commander Larry Jasper • lmjasper@reagan.com • (813) 404-5616

MAY 2021

NEXT POST MEETING

Sunday, May 16th

9:30 am Breakfast / 10:00 am Meeting
via In-Person/Zoom

In-Person Option:

(you must RSVP to Larry Jasper at lmjasper@reagan.com)

Publix Apex (Meeting Room)
16560 N. Nebraska Ave., Lutz, FL 33549

Zoom Option:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5348041177?pwd=SHRqMU5BRkZkRk9wMFh6ZHhCYkw0UT09>

Online Meeting and Passcode:
Meeting ID: 534 804 1177 / Passcode: 1JTpm2

If you plan on joining by phone (not recommended), you can find a phone number by clicking the link below (or check the list in your Post E-Mail):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kzoUnPmU5>

Telephonic Meeting and Passcode:
Meeting ID: 534 804 1177 / Passcode: 874451

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Commander's Corner.....	2
Don't Leave Us Behind.....	8
Toxic Exposure.....	16
Burn Pit Claims	17
Chinese Space Station	21
Circle of Heroes Memorial.....	30



Date	Time	Event
Sunday May 16	0930**	Post Meeting at Publix Apex and Virtually
	1100	Memorial Day Collections
	2013	Shavuot begins at sundown
	1000	IDF Presentation Part 2
	1000	Flag Placement at Cemeteries
	1000	Memorial Day Collections
	1000	Memorial Day
	1000	Memorial Day Collections
	0900*	77 th Anniversary of D-Day
	0900*	Dept of FL Convention - Delray Beach
	0930**	Flag Day
	0930**	Post Meeting and Father's Day
		Independence Day
		126 th National J WV Convention
		New Orleans, LA
		J WV 33 rd Mission to Israel

* Dates and Times are subject to change

** Meeting begins at 0930 with In-Person Breakfast and 1000 both in person and virtually via Zoom



For the latest updates:

Check out all of our websites:

Post 373 — www.jwvtampa.org
Dept of FL — www.jwv-fl.org
J WV National — www.jwv.org



COMMANDER'S CORNER

We are finally there! We are no longer isolating, although we will continue to use precautions.

We will hold our first in person meeting in over a year on Sunday May 16th at the Publix at the Apex of Nebraska and Florida Avenues. There is a meeting room in the store and they are allowing us to bring breakfast (no more virtual breakfast!) We will begin the meeting at 9:30 am. You will need to wear a mask to enter the store. We will also Zoom the meeting for those who cannot attend or who do not feel ready to do so at this time. The VA is not ready to allow meetings in the hospital at this time.

I need to know ASAP if you plan to attend in person so I can determine how much food to bring.

We will also begin Memorial Day Collections following the meeting on the 16th as well as on the 30 and 31st. I sent a separate email with the schedule – please sign-up ASAP.

We are also placing flags at the usual cemeteries on Monday May 24th. Your help is needed for this also.

The first part of the 1973 Yom Kippur war presentation in April was a huge success and is available on YouTube for those who missed it. The second part will be on May 23rd, one week after our Post meeting. I hope everyone will watch it – and invite friends! Part 2 will cover the war to the south, the Suez Campaign against Egypt. It will be as informative and exciting as the first part. A new link will be sent shortly.

If anyone has not as yet renewed their annual membership, or has difficulty paying their dues due to the pandemic or any other reason, assistance is available – please contact me. All contacts will be strictly confidential. If you are behind in your dues, pay for the 2021 and back dues will be erased. If you fail to pay dues for 3 years National will drop you from the rolls. Don't let that happen!

If anyone is interested in holding a Department of Florida position, please let me know. Nominations are open and will be accepted at the June 6th Department Convention prior to voting. If you are interested, contact me for details.

The Department of Florida Convention will be in-person at the Delray Beach Golf Club on June 6th.

JWV National Commander Jeff Sacks will join us. Information has been emailed to those who I have addresses for and approximately 500 copies were sent via snail mail. Please try and attend.

Onto JWV business:

JWV has a Post 9-11 committee that is looking for members. If you served post 9-11, contact Jeff Blonder at jwv.of.massachusetts@gmail.com.

The Gulf War Committee is also looking for members who served during that time period (1990 – 2001). If you served, contact Rochel Hayman at rochelhaymanjwv@gmail.com.

Plans to hold the 126th Annual National Convention in New Orleans August 15th – 20th is going forward. Details are available on the National Website and on our Post 373 Website.

The JWV 33rd Allied Mission to Israel is scheduled for November 28th to December 7th of this year. Details are available on the National Website and on our Post 373 Website.

Hope to see everyone in person or on Zoom this Sunday!

L'Shalom,

Larry

VIETNAM WALL

The Virtual Wall ® VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL www.VIRTUALWALL.org

Find A Name ▾ The Virtual Wall ® ▾

THE VIRTUAL WALL® VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington DC honors those who died in the Vietnam War. Their relatives and friends leave letters, poems, and photographs at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and on this web site. We bring the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to your home to help remember the sacrifices of the fallen and their families.

The Memorial Pages:

- [By Last Name](#)
- [By State & City](#)
- [Wall Panels by Date](#)
- [Faces of Freedom \(photos\)](#)
- [Send us a photo](#)
- [Height of Valor \(medals\)](#)
- [By Military Unit](#)
- [MIA Status](#)
- [About The Wall](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [Who We Are](#)
- [Links](#)
- [FAQs](#)

For Veterans Day, consider watching
[A boy's tribute to the veterans of Omaha Beach, D-Day, 1944](#)

Names: [A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

This is really sobering. First click on a state. When it opens, scroll down to the city where you went to high school and look at the names. Click on the name and it will give details of the person's death, a picture or at least their bio and medals.

This really is an amazing web site. Someone spent a lot of time and effort to create it.

I hope that everyone who receives this appreciates what those who served in Vietnam sacrificed for our country.

Pass the link on to others, as many knew wonderful people whose names are listed.



Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America

Chartered By an Act of Congress

Department of Florida

JWV-FL.Org

Larry Jasper

Department Commander

4469 Keyes Avenue, Spring Hill, FL 34606-1664, lmjasper@reagan.com 813-404-5616

April 7, 2021

Fellow members of the Department of Florida:

It is time for us to come out of the dark and once again gather to see one another! (With precautions of course)

The Covid-19 Vaccine is widely available and extremely effective. If you have not yet received your vaccination, you should schedule and get it ASAP.

A sufficient number of members have been vaccinated to allow us to have this year's Department Convention in person. It will be held on Sunday June 6, at the Delray Beach Golf Club in Delray Beach. A schedule of events will be coming soon with the quarterly newsletter

I am pleased to announce that our National Commander, Jeffrey Sacks, will be joining us for the convention.

At the convention we will hold our annual election of officers. If you are interested in being considered for a position, please contact me, or make it known as soon as possible.

Please make every effort to attend the convention and encourage others to do so. As a precaution, we will still wear masks except when having breakfast and lunch. See the attached form for the lunch options and return as soon as possible.

We will also have a raffle to help offset the cost of the convention. You can pre-purchase you tickets as per the attached flyer or you can purchase them at the convention.

I anticipate that following the convention we will resume in person quarterly meetings.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Hope to see everyone on June 6th!

L'Shalom,

Larry Jasper



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J.W.V./J.W.V.A. DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA 2021 STATE CONVENTION

Sunday June 6, 2021 0900

Delray Beach Golf Club, 2200 Highland Avenue, Delray Beach, FL 33445

From: Larry Jasper, Department of Florida Commander & Verna Rosenzweig, Florida Auxiliary President

To: All members of the JWV Department of Florida and JWV Florida Auxiliary

We are returning to normal! A sufficient number of members have been vaccinated to reduce the risk so we can have an in-person Convention this year. **However:** For additional safety, everyone will be required to wear a mask at all times except when seated for breakfast and lunch.

We will not have an ad journal for this convention.

Instead, to help offset costs we will conduct a 50-25-25 at the convention.

How this works: 50% will go to the Department; there will be 2 winners picked, each will split the remaining 50%.

You can purchase tickets in advance or at the Convention.

You do not have to be present to win.

There are 2 ways purchase tickets in advance:

1. By using the online payment method at floridajwv.square.site (not .com).
2. By mailing a check to our Quartermaster, Ike Heller, 9620 NW 28th Street, Hollywood, FL 33024-8501 made payable to JWV Dept of Florida.

The cost of the tickets are as follows:

\$5 each ticket

With 5 tickets, you will get an additional 3 free.

With 10 tickets, you will get an additional 5 free.

With 15 or more, you will receive an equal amount free.

The more tickets you buy, the better your chances to win!

You have to be in it to win it!

Please help support the Department by buying additional tickets.

"The Patriotic Voice of American Jewry – 125 years of Jewish Pride and American Patriotism"

J.W.V./J.W.V.A. DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA 2021 STATE CONVENTION



75th Annual JWV
State Convention



69th Annual JWVA
State Convention

**June 6, 2021
Delray Beach Golf Club
2200 Highland Avenue - Delray Beach, FL 33445**

Total Convention Cost is \$29.00 including 2 meals

THE PLANNED MEAL PROGRAM INCLUDES

- Breakfast** - Coffee, Tea, Bagels, Butter and or Margarine and Cream Cheese
- Buffet Lunch** -
1. **Delray Trio Salad** - Albacore tuna salad, egg salad and homemade chicken salad placed on a bed of mixed greens with alfalfa sprouts and choice of dressings. Fresh rolls and butter.
2. **Cobb Salad** - Iceberg lettuce with roast turkey, avocado, crumbled bleu cheese, shredded cheddar cheese, cherry tomatoes, hardboiled egg and ripe olives. Choice of dressing.
*All lunch choices are served with fresh rolls and butter. Coffee, Decaf and Iced Tea.
- Dessert** - Lemon Rasberry Mousse Cake or Fruit Cup
If not staying for Lunch, there is a charge of \$6.00 for Breakfast.
-

ORDER FORM

PLEASE SEND IN FULL PAYMENT OF \$29.00 NO LATER THAN MAY 22, 2021

YOUR NAME _____ **PHONE** _____

ADDRESS _____ **ZIP** _____

POST # _____ **AUXILIARY #** _____

NUMBER OF PEOPLE ATTENDING _____

IF MORE THAN ONE PERSON IS ATTENDING, PLEASE INDICATE WHICH PERSON GETS WHICH MEAL

DELRAY TRIO SALAD* _____ **COBB SALAD** _____

DO YOU REQUIRE SUGAR FREE DESSERTS? _____ If so, for how many people? _____

DO YOU REQUIRE GLUTEN-FREE MEAL? _____ If so, for how many people? _____

BREAKFAST ONLY _____ (\$6.00)

Preferred Payment: Online at floridajwv.square.site (not ".com")

If paying by check, make checks payable to **JWV Dept of Florida**, and mail to:

Ike Heller, 9620 NW 28th St., Hollywood, FL 33024-8501

PLEASE MAKE FULL PAYMENT OF \$29.00 NO LATER THAN MAY 22, 2021

SAVE THE DATE!

JWV 126th Annual National Convention

August 15-20, 2021

**Omni Royal Orleans Hotel
621 St. Louis St., New Orleans, LA**

(504) 529-5333

**[https://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/
new-orleans-royal-orleans](https://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/new-orleans-royal-orleans)**

**For more information and details about
the Convention, click the link below:**

**[https://www.jwv.org/programs/building-
membership/national-convention/?mc_
cid=64878b2f25&mc_eid=4e1ac33944](https://www.jwv.org/programs/building-membership/national-convention/?mc_cid=64878b2f25&mc_eid=4e1ac33944)**

Registration Form is on next page.

Hotel registration deadline is Wed., July 7

A one night (\$165/single or double) deposit is required for all hotel registrations.

A 3-night minimum stay is required.

Hotel reservations must be made through JWV.

There is a \$175 Convention surcharge for JWV members not staying at the hotel.

Local members living within a 50 mile radius are exempt.

JWVA events are open to everyone!

**Sign and mail this completed form, along with your payment to:
Jewish War Veterans
1811 R Street, NW
Washington, DC
20009
Attn: Convention Dept.**

JWV Member Name: _____ Post #: _____

JWVA Member Name: _____ Aux. #: _____

Address: _____ Dept.: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Room will be shared with: _____

Arriving on: _____ / _____ Departing on: _____ / _____ Total nights: _____

Registration for both JWV + JWVA	Cost	QTY.	Amount
Rooms Check one: <input type="checkbox"/> King <input type="checkbox"/> 2 beds <i>Please note that handicap rooms will be assigned by JWV on an as needed priority.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> I need a Handicap room.	\$165.00 per night		
JWV Member Convention Registration Fee	\$50.00		
Convention Surcharge for those not staying at the Hotel	\$175.00 per member		
National Commander's Banquet • Thurs, Aug. 19 ____ Beef/Chicken ____ Fish ____ Sugar-free Dessert	\$50.00 per person		
National Ladies Auxiliary Registration Fee	\$50.00 per member		
Partners' Club (\$50 new members/\$25 renewal) • Mon, Aug. 16	\$50.00 \$25.00		
National President's Reception and Banquet • Tues, Aug. 17 ____ Beef/Chicken ____ Fish ____ Sugar-free Dessert	\$50.00 per person		
Double Chai Club Breakfast • Wed, Aug 18 ____ This is my first Double Chai Breakfast ____ I already have 15 stones on my pin ____ I am happy with the Double Chai Pin I have now I have _____ on my pin and will need one more (15 stones max)	\$36.00 per person <i>You don't need to belong to the Ladies Auxiliary to attend our Double Chai Breakfast. Everyone is welcome! You will have a great time!</i>		
Raffle Tickets \$5.00 Each or 3 for \$10.00	JWVA		
Raffle Tickets \$5.00 Each or 3 for \$10.00	JWV		
Total			
All events must be pre-paid in full		Amount paying now:	
I am paying by: <input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> American Express <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> Discover			
Card No.		Exp.	/
Signature			



Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America



Middle East War History Spotlight Series

Yom Kippur War: History and Perspectives

Zoom Webinar Part 2 – 23 May 2021 [1000-1330 EDT]

Battle Run (in Israel) – 15-23 May 2022

Featured Panelists Include:



Uri Simhony (MG. Ret., IDF)
Former Col. J3 – Northern Command



Hayim Danon (Ltc. Ret., IDF)
Former Major – Co. Tank Btn.,
679 Bde., Golan Heights



Avraham Bar David (BG. Ret., IDF)
Former Ltc. – Chief of Artillery,
Northern Command



Gideon Avidor (BG. Ret., IDF)
Former Ltc. – G3 252 Div.,
Sinai



Amram Mizra (MG. Ret., IDF)
Former Ltc. – 196th Btn.,
14th Bde., Sinai



Emanuel Sakal (MG. Ret., IDF)
Former Ltc. – 52nd Btn.,
401st Bde., Sinai



Pesach Maluvani (Col.)
Former Major – Intelligence Analyst,
Syrian and Egyptian Armies

**For more details, use the QR code,
or log onto www.jwv-fl.org/yom-kippur**

Zoom Link:

Register for 23 May — https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_JX_rxgHGRvmSHi4_1CYVcw

Watch Part 1 again — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pompm-2GxSY>



SCAN THIS

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AFGHANISTAN WITHDRAWAL WON'T BE LIKE 'FALL OF SAIGON,' DEPUTY SECDEF SAYS

30 Apr 2021 | Military.com | By Stephen Losey

The Pentagon does not expect the U.S. military's withdrawal from Afghanistan to result in a chaotic "fall of Saigon"-type evacuation from Kabul, Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen Hicks said Friday.

While answering questions during a virtual forum hosted by The Aspen Institute, Hicks stressed that the military is focusing on a "safe, orderly, disciplined withdrawal process" over the next few months.

But, she said, the forces that are there until then will have the ability to defend themselves.

Hicks said that the United States now has a wide slate of counterterrorism tools, including more unmanned systems and better collaboration between intelligence agencies and allies, that didn't exist before 9/11.

"It's not 2001, it's 2021," she said. "As we do in almost every other part of the world, executing on our counterterrorism mission without having substantial forces on the ground is the general way in which we approach counterterrorism."

Hicks declined to provide operational details of how an "over-the-horizon" counterterror response, as President Joe Biden described it, would work. But, she said, "It's fair to say we're thinking through all the contingency operations," and that the military's effort to help Afghanistan will support a primarily diplomatic approach.

"We've removed al-Qaida and demonstrated that we will not tolerate it being a safe haven for use against United States citizens and territory," she said. "And we will continue to ... hold the Taliban and any other actors inside Afghanistan responsible for not living up to those expectations."

When asked how much of the Pentagon's planning assumes the collapse of Afghan security forces and the fall of the government in Kabul, Hicks did not answer directly. Instead, she reiterated that the U.S. government will ensure Afghanistan cannot again become a safe haven for terrorists.

Hicks added that the U.S. continues to support a negotiated settlement between the government in Kabul and the Taliban. But, she said, "that is not central to how the United States plans for itself, both in terms of the over-the-horizon capability and



Soldiers of the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team patrol near Camp Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army/Sgt. James Sims)

any enduring interest we have in Afghanistan as it relates to terrorism."

After Saturday, when the withdrawal process officially begins, the U.S. will continue providing support -- including air support -- to NATO and Afghan allies, Hicks said.

During a press conference Tuesday, Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby caused some confusion about whether air support to the Afghans would continue during the withdrawal, before later clarifying that no decision had been made to change or reduce air support.

'DON'T LEAVE US BEHIND,' AFGHAN INTERPRETERS URGE US



Alex Ungquist, left, interpreter, and U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Richard Holder, right, talk with the village elder Oct. 25, 2012, outside Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (USAF photo/Staff Sgt. Jonathan)

1 May 2021 | Agence France Presse

Dozens of Afghans who worked as interpreters in often deadly conditions with the U.S. military expressed fear Friday of being targeted by the Taliban after American troops head home, and they urged Washington not to leave them behind.

The interpreters gathered after noon prayers in a Kabul neighborhood on the eve of the beginning of Washington's formal troop withdrawal -- although forces have been drawn down for months.

"The main thing we want is that we should be taken to the United States. That's what we were promised," said Mohammad Shoaib Walizada, an Afghan interpreter who worked with U.S. forces in combat operations between 2009 and 2013.

Walizada, 31, said he was shot in the leg when he was with U.S. forces in Ghazni in 2011.

President Joe Biden announced earlier this month that all remaining U.S. troops will leave Afghanistan by the 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks, bringing an end to America's longest war.

Calling themselves "forgotten war heroes," some of the interpreters complained that many of their contracts with U.S. and NATO forces had been terminated abruptly.

Thousands of Afghan interpreters have left the country after

getting visas from the United States and other NATO countries. But permits have dried up in recent years, with some U.S. officials arguing that a jihadist posing as an interpreter could slip in that way.

A report released earlier this month by Brown University said in 2019 there was a backlog of about 19,000 applications from Afghanistan -- a number higher than those who had received visas in the two decades of conflict.

"The failure to implement the program as originally envisioned leaves applicants stranded in Afghanistan or elsewhere and vulnerable to attacks by the Taliban and criminal gangs," the report said.

The US military and embassy when contacted did not offer any immediate comment.

The interpreters who gathered Friday said around 3,000 of them across the country were living in fear of the Taliban and other jihadists for having worked with foreign forces.

"When the Taliban came to know that I worked with US forces, they killed my brother," said one interpreter, who refused to reveal his name for fear of being targeted. "Even the CIA acknowledged it was the Taliban who had killed my brother. Now, I live in fear and isolation."

Behind him some interpreters displayed a banner reading "President Biden, do not turn your back on us". Another poster showed a man pointing a gun at an interpreter who is calling for help as a group of U.S. soldiers board a helicopter.

"Please do not leave us behind, your forgotten heroes," said a demonstrator who gave his name as Jaffry.

"The success of your fighting is because of the presence of these interpreters on the battleground."

ISLAMIC STATE DEGRADED IN AFGHANISTAN BUT STILL POSES THREAT

27 Apr 2021 | The Associated Press | By Kathy Gannon

KABUL, Afghanistan — Tribal elder Dawlat Khan still has nightmares about fighters from the local affiliate of the global Islamic State terror network who swept across his and other villages in eastern Afghanistan five years ago.

The extremists, including Afghans, Pakistanis, Arabs and men from Central Asia, quickly imposed a reign of terror. They kidnapped some locals who worked for the Afghan government, later dropping off their decapitated corpses in public places. In one instance, villagers were summoned to a beheading where some fainted while others froze as they watched in horror.

Militants of the Islamic State group have since been driven back into the mountains by blistering U.S. and Afghan bombing raids and a fierce ground campaign by the Taliban, Afghanistan's homegrown insurgents. The Taliban, eager to expand their domestic political power, pledged to the Trump administration last year they would prevent any attacks on the West from Afghan soil after foreign troops leave.

Recent success in containing ISIS is central to the calculus of President Joe Biden, who decided earlier this month to pull all remaining U.S. troops out of Afghanistan by the summer. Biden argues that threats to the West, whether by ISIS or remnants of the al-Qaida network, can be defused from a distance.

Yet there are concerns that in the potential chaos of a post-withdrawal Afghanistan, ISIS "will be able to find additional space to operate," said Seth Jones, senior vice-president at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

Some note that it took more than three years to dislodge and degrade ISIS fighters, many of them ethnic Pashtuns from Pakistan's tribal regions and Afghans from the northeastern Nangarhar and Kunar provinces. The retreating militants left behind mined roads and fields.

Khan, the tribal leader, fled his village of Pananzai with his six brothers and their families at the height of the battles against ISIS. They're not rushing home, even though the family of 63 people is crammed into nine small rooms in Nangarhar's provincial capital of Jalalabad.

"We are afraid they will return," Khan, a father of 12, said of ISIS fighters.

Biden has said he will hold the Taliban accountable for their commitment not to allow terror threats against the U.S. or its allies from Afghan soil. The U.S. invaded Afghanistan 20 years ago after al-Qaida militants, hosted by the Taliban, staged the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

In recent years, Washington has come to see the Taliban as a national force, with no ambitions beyond their borders, according to a U.S. defense official who spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.

The Taliban, familiar with mountain caves and dirt paths in remote terrain, are a useful ally against ISIS, which is viewed by the U.S. as



Internally displaced tribal leader Dawlat Khan plays with his children and nephews in a house on the outskirts of Jalalabad, Afghanistan, Wednesday, April 21, 2021. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

the greatest threat emanating from Afghanistan, the official said. In justifying his withdrawal decision, Biden noted that terror threats are "metastasizing around the globe" and that "keeping thousands of troops grounded and concentrated in just one country, at the cost of billions each year, makes little sense to me and our leaders."

The withdrawal is under way, with the final phase starting Saturday. By Sept. 11, America will have withdrawn its last 2,500 to 3,500 troops, and about 7,000 allied forces from NATO are following the same timetable.

But there are concerns about ISIS re-emerging, particularly if the Taliban and the Afghan government can't reach a power-sharing deal. Intra-Afghan peace talks remain stalled, despite U.S. efforts to jump start them.

Ongoing fighting between the Taliban and the government could further erode the morale of Afghanistan's 300,000-plus security forces who sustain heavy casualties daily and are plagued by widespread corruption. It's unclear how the troops can be a bulwark against new terrorist threats.

At the same time, ISIS continues to recruit among radicalized university students and disgruntled Taliban, said a former Afghan security official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to reporters.

ISIS has also resumed a campaign of targeted killings of minority Shiite Muslims, many of them ethnic Hazaras, as well as women's rights activists and media workers. They claimed attacks last year on two educational facilities, including Kabul University, that killed more than 50 students. Washington blamed ISIS for a brutal assault last year on a maternity hospital in a largely Hazara neighborhood of Kabul. Infants and pregnant women were killed.

See DEGRADED— *continued on page 13*

PENTAGON PREPARING FOR TALIBAN ATTACKS DURING US WITHDRAWAL



Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley Wednesday, April 28, 2021, in the House Chamber at the U.S. Capitol in Washington. (Melina Mara/The Washington Post via AP)

30 Apr 2021 | The Associated Press | By Robert Burns

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is preparing for possible Taliban attacks on U.S. and coalition forces as they withdraw from Afghanistan, a prospect that complicates the outlook for winding down America's longest war.

May 1 was the date all U.S. and other foreign forces were to have departed Afghanistan under a February 2020 deal between the Taliban and the Trump administration. As part of that agreement, the Taliban halted attacks on U.S. troops, and none has been killed since then. But the Taliban said it will consider the United States to be in violation of the agreement for missing the deadline for full withdrawal. Their representatives have been vague about whether they intend to attack starting May 1.

President Joe Biden's decision to proceed with a final but delayed withdrawal adds a new element of security risk as the remaining 2,500 to 3,500 American troops, along with about 7,000 coalition troops and thousands of contractors, begin departing. Biden has said all will be gone by Sept. 11, the date of the 2001 terrorist attacks that prompted the U.S. to invade Afghanistan in the first place.

"We have to assume that this drawdown will be opposed," Pentagon press secretary John Kirby said Tuesday in explaining why Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin decided to keep an aircraft carrier in the Middle East and to move at least four B-52 bombers and portions of an Army Ranger task force to the region as a precaution.

"It would be irresponsible for us not to assume that this drawdown and forces drawing down — both American and from our NATO allies — could be attacked by the Taliban," Kirby added.

Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters traveling with him Thursday that the pullout is "complex and not without risk."

The military typically plans for worst-case scenarios to try to avoid being caught by surprise. The withdrawal from Afghanistan involves ground and air movements of troops, supplies and equipment that could be vulnerable to attack. For security reasons, withdrawal details are not being made public, but the White House and several defense officials confirmed Thursday that the drawdown has begun. Defense officials, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive movements, said that in recent days some troops — described as "dozens" — and military equipment have left the country.

The State Department also is taking precautions. On Tuesday, it instructed all embassy personnel in Kabul to depart unless their jobs require them to be in Afghanistan. The order went well beyond the usual curtailment of staffers for security and safety reasons.

The possibility of resuming conflict with the Taliban is one of several uncertain aspects of the U.S. withdrawal — beyond the key question of whether the pullout will lead to the collapse of the Afghan government. The U.S. intends to continue counterterrorism operations, as needed, against al-Qaida and potentially other extremist groups in Afghanistan, but it's not yet clear where those forces will be positioned. Also unclear is the extent to which American and coalition forces will continue to provide air and other military support for Afghan security forces during and after the withdrawal.

The U.S. military ended its ground combat operations against the Taliban in 2014 and transitioned to training, advising and supporting Afghan forces, including providing air cover for them against the Taliban. The hope was that Afghan government forces could hold their own against the Taliban and that a political settlement could be reached. The departure of U.S. and coalition forces will test the Afghan government's resolve in unpredictable ways, Milley said.

BOMBERS DEPLOY, CARRIER EXTENDS TO COVER US TROOPS' WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN



A B-52H Stratofortress assigned to the 5th Bomb Wing, Minot Air Force Base, ND., parks on the flightline April 23, 2021, at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. The B-52 aircraft are deployed to Al Udeid AB to protect U.S. and coalition forces as they conduct drawdown operations from Afghanistan. (*Staff Sgt. Greg Erwin/U.S. Air Force*)

23 Apr 2021 | Military.com | By Stephen Losey

As the U.S. military begins its final withdrawal from Afghanistan, it's bringing in some heavy firepower to cover the troops' exit.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Friday approved an extension of the aircraft carrier Dwight D. Eisenhower's stay in the Middle East, Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby told reporters. Kirby did not specify how much longer the Ike will remain.

Austin also approved the deployment of more long-range bombers to the region, Kirby said.

The first two aircraft, a pair of B-52H Stratofortress bombers from the 5th Bomb Wing at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, arrived at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar on Friday, the Air Force said in a release. Airmen from the 5th Bomb Wing also arrived at Al Udeid to support the bombers' deployment.

The military is deploying these forces in case the Taliban decides to attack U.S. troops as the last few thousand forces pull out of Afghanistan no later than Sept. 11, Kirby said.

"It would be foolhardy and imprudent not to assume that there could be resistance and opposition to the drawdown by the Taliban, given their staunch rhetoric," he said. "In light of that ... we're going to make this a safe, orderly and deliberate, responsible withdrawal, where force protection is at a premium."

Kirby declined to comment about what other forces could deploy in the near future, but said more temporary steps to protect forces could be taken to ensure the drawdown goes smoothly.

He said that plans drawn up under the Trump administration, which negotiated a May 1 withdrawal with the Taliban, to pull out equipment are being revised to account for the new timeline. Some equipment and systems will be inspected, cleaned and shipped back to the United States, Kirby said. Other equipment will be shipped elsewhere in the world.

Other pieces will be donated to Afghan partners, he added, and the rest will be destroyed.

Most of the American equipment, particularly vehicles, that will be taken out of Afghanistan will be shipped using Air Force cargo aircraft, Kirby said.

"Given the unique [geography] of Afghanistan ... airlift is the most effective way to remove the personnel and to remove the equipment that we do intend to leave with," he explained.

DEGRADED — *continued from page 11*

In March, seven Hazaras who worked in a stucco factory in the eastern city of Jalalabad were killed in an attack claimed by ISIS. The assailants tied their victims' hands behind their backs and shot each with a single bullet to the back of the head.

Some residents there are afraid to point the finger at ISIS, fearing they might be targeted next.

IS operatives are said to occupy an entire neighborhood near the central Talashi roundabout. They have infiltrated the motorized rickshaw business and use the vehicles for targeted killings, said taxi driver Saida Jan.

Evan Kohlmann, a terrorism consultant, said for a while it appeared the ISIS presence in Afghanistan and surrounding regions "was all but dead," but the group's operations "have since resumed in earnest."

"They represent a significant terrorist threat, but their tactics remain in the realm of assassination and sabotage," said Kohlmann, who has worked with the FBI and the Nine Eleven Finding Answers Foundation that emerged following the assaults on America.

"They don't seem to be in a strong position of conquering and holding territory," or of threatening the U.S., he said.

The Taliban say they have made good on promises to the U.S. by ordering fighters to keep non-Afghans from their ranks, and telling al-Qaida to leave the region. Some analysts say they're not convinced the Taliban have distanced themselves from groups like al-Qaida.

U.S. officials, meanwhile, acknowledge the withdrawal will reduce Washington's intelligence gathering capacities, even if ISIS and al-Qaida aren't in a position to attack U.S. targets from Afghanistan.

Asfandyar Mir at Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation said the U.S. will be able to continue technical eaves-dropping from a distance, while on-the-ground intelligence gathering will weaken further.

"The U.S. campaign in Afghanistan has been notoriously poor at getting good information and being played by rent-seeking actors, the cost of which is borne by innocent civilians in raids and strikes gone wrong," said Mir.

"With U.S. forces out, and unable to provide security to potential informers, existing sources will dwindle and opportunities for bad actors to dupe the U.S. will grow," he said.



This year in Jerusalem!

JWV's 33rd Mission to Israel

November 28 - December 7, 2021



Join us on our 33rd Mission to Israel! Witness the wonderful achievements of this small Jewish country, America's friend and ally. We visit places other groups do not visit. Get updated briefings. Meet Israelis and their leaders. Enjoy fun and comradeship with fellow veterans. Feel at home! You do not have to be Jewish or a veteran to travel with us, so bring your family and friends!

ITINERARY

Sunday, November 28: Depart for an overnight, non-stop flight on ELAL from JFK or Newark. Dinner,



inflight entertainment, and breakfast on board.

Monday, November 29: We arrive in Israel, at Ben Gurion airport, near Tel Aviv. Transfer to your beach-front Tel Aviv hotel. If time permits – on the way to the hotel – a panoramic city tour. Check-in and rest.

- We meet for dinner at the hotel.

Tuesday, November 30: After enjoying a hearty Israeli breakfast, we visit the hidden underground bullet factory from the British mandate time. Afterwards we are hosted by TZEVET (The JWV of Israel) for an Israeli Defense Force (IDF) briefing and lunch. Afternoon visit to Palmach Museum. Palmach was the pre-1948 military force Israel built during the British mandate time.

- Dinner and overnight in our Tel Aviv hotel.

Wednesday, December 1: After breakfast we depart Tel Aviv towards Latroun – the armored corps memorial center. See Israeli-made Merkava tanks. We shall lay a wreath to honor those who fell on the defense of Israel. We reach Jerusalem and visit Ammunition Hill, site of the fiercest battle in Jerusalem during the Six Day War.

- Check-in and dinner at our Jerusalem hotel.

Thursday, December 2: Today we enjoy a city tour of Jerusalem. We will visit Mount of Olives (the



famous stunning view of Jerusalem), Shrine of the Book at Israel Museum – home to the Dead Sea Scrolls, Mt. Herzl National Memorial Center, and Bethlehem, a special place for Christian guests.

- Dinner and overnight in our Jerusalem hotel.

Friday, December 3: Today we visit Yad Vashem holocaust museum. Enjoy Machne Yehuda market and get the special feeling of last-minute food shopping for Shabbat. Afternoon visit to the Jewish Quarter, ending at the Kotel (Western Wall) where we conduct a unique Kabbalat Shabbat service.

- Shabbat dinner and overnight in our Jerusalem hotel.

This year in Jerusalem!

JWV's 33rd Mission to Israel

November 28 - December 7, 2021



Saturday, December 4: Today we leave Jerusalem and head towards the Dead



Sea and Masada.

Enjoy floating on the Dead Sea – full of natural healing properties. The mud here is nature's gift to your skin. Visit Masada – the palace fortress King Herod built and where hundreds of Jews preferred a group suicide rather than falling into Roman hands. We head north through the Jordan Valley towards our Tiberias hotel. (Shomer Shabbat will have a day of rest at the Jerusalem hotel and will be transferred after Shabbat).

- Dinner and overnight in our Tiberias hotel.

Sunday, December 5: We start at Misgav Am overlooking Lebanon. Listen to a special briefing about this fragile northern border of Israel. Proceed to the Golan Heights. Visit the battle fields of the Yom Kippur War and the new city of Katzrin. Afternoon visit to Kfar Naum – the synagogue where Jesus preached. If time permits, we end the day at the Donna Gracia Museum – a unique story of a 16th century woman returning home from the Spanish – Portuguese inquisition.

- Dinner and overnight in our Tiberias hotel.



Monday, December 6: Visit Nazareth – hometown of Jesus. Proceed to a tree planting site where each of us can plant a tree and get a certificate. Drive to Haifa to see the Bahai Gardens and arrive to your Herzliya marina hotel for relaxation, rest, and dinner.

Tuesday, December 7: – Enjoy a delicious Israeli breakfast. Transfer to the airport for your flight back home.

Evening arrival in JFK or Newark.

Welcome home! You have just returned from a lifetime experience!

**For registration information,
click on the link below:**

<https://www.jwv.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/33rd-Mission-to-Israel-2021.pdf>

This year in Jerusalem!

Name (exactly as it appears on your passport)

Address

City State Zipcode

Cell Home

E-mail:

I prefer to share a room with: _____

Military rank if you were in the military: _____

Are you a member of JWV? _____ If so, what Post? _____

Are you an Allied veteran guest? _____

If yes, what organization do you represent and what is your position?

Is this your first trip to Israel? _____ First trip with JWV? _____

So that we are able to accommodate your needs, please let us know of physical conditions or disabilities which may require special assistance.

Passport No. _____
Passports must be valid at least until June 8, 2022

Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____
 mm dd yyyy

Date Issued: ____ / ____ / ____ Expiration Date: ____ / ____ / ____
 mm dd yyyy mm dd yyyy

Please send your completed registration form along with payment, signed release, and color copy of your passport to:

Jewish War Veterans of the USA
 1811 R Street, NW
 Washington, DC 20009
 Attn: Christy Turner

JWV's 33 rd Annual Mission To Israel November 28 - December 7, 2021	Cost	Qty	Total
Basic Tour departing on EL AL from JFK-NY or Newark-NJ. * Airline seat upgrades will be subject to market rate.	\$3889.00		
Land Charge only (trip excluding air fare)	\$2995.00		
Single Supplement	\$890.00		
Travel Insurance - Insurance purchased when paying first deposit avoids limitations due to pre-existing medical conditions. Travel insurance is non-refundable.	\$174.00		
	Total Amount:		

If you pay by check: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may deduct \$155.00 from the Basic Tour • You may deduct \$120.00 from the Land only 		
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Final payment must be made by August 28, 2021, to take advantage of deduction. Discount will be applied to final payment.

- A \$350.00 deposit is required at time of registration.
- 2nd payment of \$500.00 is due May 28, 2021.
- Full payment is due no later than August 28, 2021, to avoid a \$75.00 late fee charge.
- You can still sign up to travel with us after the final payment due date, but be advised that price is guaranteed until tickets are issued.

I have read the tour brochure and agree to its conditions.

I am paying this amount today: _____

I have enclosed a check Please make check out to Jewish War Veterans

Please charge my credit card for the amount of: _____

Visa Mastercard American Express Discover

Card #: _____ Exp: _____ / _____

Cardholder Signature: _____

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Christy Turner at: cturner@jwv.org • (202) 265-6280

If you would like to upgrade your airplane seat, contact Mary Craddock at Aviatours: mary@aviatours.net • (800) 950-0747 • (516) 867-2200

Jewish American Heritage Month begins May 1st. Every member should contact Jewish Organizations in their area to see what is planned and how they can involve JWV.



Membership Committee

Jewish War Veterans of the USA National Executive Committee (NEC) January 28-29, 2021

JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH (JAHM)

Why JAHM? Understanding that recruiting for all JWV Posts is a local activity. Every JWV Post should plan to be an active partner participate in their local JAHM events. This is an ideal opportunity for name recognition and recruiting potential new members.



Jewish American Heritage Month is a month to celebrate the contributions Jewish Americans have made to America since they first arrived in New Amsterdam in 1654. Jewish American Heritage Month had its origins in 1980 when Congress passed Pub. L. 96-237 which authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating a week in April or May as Jewish Heritage Week. The House Concurrent Resolution urging the president to designate a month in the year as Jewish American Heritage.⁽¹⁾ There is no one better than the local JWV Members to show that "Jews Served."

(1) <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/commemorative-observations/jewish-heritage.php/>

LAWMAKER SETS AMBITIOUS PLAN FOR OMNIBUS TOXIC EXPOSURE BILL TO HELP MILLIONS OF SICK VETERANS

28 Apr 2021 | Military.com | By Steve Beynon

Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., set his sights Wednesday to deliver a sweeping legislative package to tackle a wide swath of health care issues impacting a half century worth of veterans sickened by toxic exposure -- an ambitious target that could significantly bolster services at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"There are a number of bills out there. We need to put those bills together and we will, in a comprehensive package that I hope to mark up in this committee before Memorial Day," Tester, the chair of the Senate VA committee, said at a hearing Wednesday. "If we're able to do that, I believe that gets us time to get something done this year."

The Senate and House VA committees are holding coordinated hearings on two dozen bills related to toxic exposure. The Senate had its hearing Wednesday; the House is set for May 5.

The bills offer a range of incremental improvements; a few would offer mammoth health care expansions granting benefits to veterans sickened from Agent Orange, radiation and burn pits.

A key issue among the bills that could end up in a legislative package relates to granting presumptive care to veterans sickened by burn pit exposure.

Those measures are likely to come with a hefty price tag and give lawmakers sticker shock. It's unclear what an omnibus bill would end up looking like, but lawmakers and advocates are increasingly irritated at veterans being denied benefits at the VA. However, given recent unprecedented federal spending and other big ticket items the Biden administration is pursuing, it's unclear if that could impact the VA committees' efforts.

The VA has estimated that 3.5 million veterans were exposed to burn pits since 1990, and a massive bill granting all of them some level of care or disability would certainly be one of the most ambitious health care moves on Capitol Hill in years.

It's unclear how many veterans are sick from burn pits or have died from related illnesses. VA data shows 72% of the 15,640 burn pit-related claims since 2007 were denied. However, the data is murky at best. The agency largely got that data from a word search for phrases like "burn pits" in its patient database. That means if a veteran's medical record never specifically referenced burn pits, it's unlikely to be represented in the data.

Meanwhile, out of the 2.5 million Global War on Terrorism veterans, 781,384 have filed claims related to respiratory issues. According to VA data obtained by Military.com, 63% were granted. Of all the GWOT veterans, 42,686 filed for claims related to cancer; 37% of those claims were granted.

The VA's research shows GWOT veterans are three times more likely than non-deployed veterans to file claims related to respiratory issues and twice as likely to file claims for cancer.



Reporters reach out to Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., at the Capitol in Washington, Feb. 23, 2021. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

Chutzpah:



Chutzpah is a Yiddish word meaning gall, brazen nerve, effrontery, sheer guts, plus arrogance; it's Yiddish and, as Leo Rosten (Leo Calvin Rosten was an American humorist in the fields of scriptwriting, story writing, journalism, and Yiddish lexicography) writes, "no other word and no other language can do it justice."

This example is better than 1,000 words:

The Essence of Chutzpah:

A little old lady sold pretzels on a street corner for 25 cents each. Every day a young man would leave his office building at lunch time and as he passed the pretzel stand, he would leave a quarter but never take a pretzel.

And this went on for more than 3 years.

The two of them never spoke.

One day, as the young man passed the old lady's stand and left his quarter as usual, the pretzel lady spoke to him.

Without blinking an eye she said: "They're 35 cents now."

Now that's Chutzpah!!!

VA SECRETARY WANTS MORE VETS SICKENED BY BURN PITS TO FILE CLAIMS, BUT MANY ARE STILL BEING TURNED AWAY

28 Apr 2021 | Military.com | By Steve Beynon

Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Denis McDonough wants more veterans who believe they were sickened by exposure to burn pits overseas to seek help from the department, despite many being turned away.

"We're urging vets to come forward with their claims," McDonough said at a press briefing Monday. "Our commitment is to treat each claim with the care it deserves. As we get more claims, we can aggregate those claims to draw bigger conclusions."

As of March 31, the VA had denied 72% of burn pit claims, according to agency data obtained by Military.com. Between June 2007 and March 31, the VA processed 15,640 disability compensation claims related to burn pit exposure. Of those, 3,510 veterans had at least one burn pit issue granted.

The top three diagnoses related to burn pits are bronchial asthma, chronic bronchitis and allergic rhinitis, according to department data. The most common reasons for a veteran to be denied is not having a diagnosed medical condition or being unable to connect the condition to their service -- 43.1% and 42.8% of denials, respectively.

But the data doesn't reflect the scope of the issue. The number of patients filing claims might be disproportionately small given VA estimates that 3.5 million veterans have been exposed to burn pits since 1990. It is unclear how many are sick due to their exposure or have died as a result.

McDonough suggests that more data is needed, and he wants more veterans to seek help from the VA so officials can get a better grasp on the issue.

The burn pit data also could be inherently flawed. To get the data, the VA had to use text mining, searching for keywords such as "burn pit" and "burn pits" in its patient databases, according to department records. This means patients coming forward with issues related to burn pits might not automatically be listed as burn pit patients if that phrase wasn't used in their records.

Out of the 2.5 million Global War on Terrorism veterans, 781,384 have filed claims related to respiratory issues. According to VA data obtained by Military.com, 63% were granted. Of all the GWOT veterans, 42,686 filed for claims related to cancer; 37% of those claims were granted.

The VA's research shows GWOT veterans are three times more likely than non-deployed veterans to file claims related to respiratory issues and twice as likely to file claims for cancer.

"Although the GWOT-deployed and GWOT non-deployed population sizes are relatively the same, the GWOT-deployed

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough speaks during his confirmation hearing before the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs on Capitol Hill, Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2021, in Washington. (*Sarah Silbiger/Pool via AP*)



cohort has more than two times the number of service-connected cancers," according to the agency's findings.

Burn pits are often referred to as the post-9/11 generation's Agent Orange, referencing the bureaucratic maze and uneven claims process veterans have to navigate, and what could be a decades-long legislative fight to issue easy-to-access health care and disability compensation.

The House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees and advocacy groups have made toxic exposure the top issue this year. Congress is looking at some two dozen bills, ranging from incremental improvements to sweeping health care bills for all 3.5 million veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic environments.

But it's unclear what can actually make it to President Joe Biden's desk. Some lawmakers and advocates are concerned over what is very likely to be a huge tab to cover the cost of opening the VA up to a huge swath of new patients.

It is unclear whether there's a greater burden of proof by showing documentation for medals or proving service in a specific country. However, medals veterans are entitled to aren't always awarded or reflected in official records such as a DD-214. But there could also be barriers to veterans trying to prove they served in a specific country, such as no longer having access to their orders.

For decades, the military used open-air burn pits to dispose of garbage, paint, plastics, jet fuel and human waste. Now, some veterans are getting sick and dying from what they believe are cancers and other illnesses caused by breathing in the toxic fumes.

It is unclear how many veterans are sick or have died from toxic exposure. From June 2007 to February this year, more than 13,900 veterans filed for disability claims for issues they believed were related to burn pit exposure. Less than 4,000 claims were granted, according to Luria's office. The VA has not responded to a request for additional data by Military.com

See BURN PITS—*continued on page 19*

CONNECTICUT SUBMARINER HAUNTED BY FATEFUL NAVY ORDERS ISSUED 58 YEARS AGO

29 Mar 2021 | The Day, New London, Conn. | By Brian Hallenbeck

MYSTIC — A spry 82-year-old, David Cornell has compiled abundant evidence of a life fully lived: his life.

It's all in a binder thick with certificates, patches, official correspondence and photographs, each page sheathed in protective plastic.

He's written his obituary, too, along with a list of who should be notified when he dies; some passages that should be spoken at his wake (and who should speak them); and instructions about how his ashes should be spread over a certain expanse of the Atlantic Ocean.

Apparently, 58 years of survivor's guilt can make a person do such things.

Above all else, Cornell was — no, forever “is,” he’s quick to point out — a submariner. A machinist’s mate, he served on four submarines between 1956 and 1966, a “cold warrior” with many a tale to tell.

It’s the story about the boat he almost served on and the buddy who drew the assignment instead that haunts him.

“I’ve been thinking a lot about Bob Gaynor these days,” Cornell said last week during an interview in his Cow Hill Road home. “When Bob came on board the Seadragon, we clicked. He was a bit on the wild side, but what sailor isn’t?”

Both men, Boston-area natives, served on the USS Seadragon (SSN-584) from 1959 to 1961. Before the submarine left the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, on a historic 1960 mission to the Pacific via the Northwest Passage, they got fresh orders.

“One of us was going to the Thresher,” Cornell said, tearing up. “Well ... I’m here.”

Robert William Gaynor was among the 129 people — 112 Navy personnel and 17 civilians — who perished April 10, 1963, when the USS Thresher (SSN-593) sank during deep-diving exercises some 220 miles east of Boston. Bits of debris were recovered from the ocean floor, and photographs showed that the Thresher had broken up in 5,500 feet of water. Only last year, the Navy, prompted by a lawsuit, began releasing records of a Court of Inquiry into the sinking, which concluded a welding failure had led to the flooding of the Thresher’s engine room and the eventual shutdown of the submarine’s nuclear reactor.

Cornell speculates that his being “nuclear qualified” kept him assigned to the Seadragon when Gaynor, part of the “auxiliary gang,” was transferred to the Thresher.

At the time of the tragedy, Cornell was serving on the USS Barb (SSN-596). He thought instantly of Gaynor when he heard the news.

He recalled that Gaynor’s nickname was “Mitzi,” the name of

The Thresher (SSN 593) is under way in the Atlantic on July 24, 1961, shortly before its commissioning ceremony 10 days later. (US Navy photo courtesy of Naval History and Heritage Command)



the actress with the same surname as Gaynor who starred in the movie version of “South Pacific,” which was popular at the time.

“He was like a brother to me,” Cornell said.

Eschewing computers and cellphones, Cornell has never tried to research Gaynor’s legacy. A website dedicated to the Thresher and its crew says Gaynor was survived by his widow and three children.

Cornell had four sons with his first wife, Sandra, who died in 1994. They bought a house in North Stonington in 1964 and lived there for decades. After leaving the Navy, Cornell went to work for Pratt & Whitney and retired in 1992. In 1996, he married his wife JoAnn.

His binder contains copies of newspaper articles about Thresher memorials, including one Cornell attended in 2013 at Mitchell College in New London on the 50th anniversary of the Thresher’s sinking. Other clippings give accounts of Navy burials at sea of those with connections to the Thresher crew.

In April 2015, the cremated remains of Irene Harvey, wife of the ill-fated submarine’s commanding officer, Lt. Cmdr. John “Wes” Harvey, were laid to rest in the area where the Thresher was lost, as she had requested. In 2016, a similar honor was accorded Capt. Paul “Bud” Rogers, a native Pennsylvanian who up until the last minute was supposed to be on board the Thresher’s last cruise and whose will requested he be buried at sea.

Rogers felt survivor’s remorse much of his life, his wife said at the time.

Cornell has written a speech he hopes to deliver at services marking the 60th anniversary of the Thresher sinking in 2023. He figures such events are likely to take place in Kittery, Maine, and elsewhere.

“I am David T. Cornell and I am a submariner,” the speech begins.

It expresses Cornell’s wish that he “be cremated and ashes transported by a naval submarine, to be spread over the water where the Thresher was lost to join Robert Gaynor and all my fellow submariners ...”

FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS:

JEWISH WAR VETERANS HIGHWAY INTERSTATE 95

If you happened to travel in Massachusetts on Interstate 95 this week, you may have noticed the newly replaced highway markers honoring the Jewish War Veterans.



In 1989 JWV MA Commander George Levine along with the assistance of Past Commander Ira Novoselsky, both petitioned the Massachusetts Legislators to consider the five (5) mile stretch on Interstate 95 as Jewish War Veterans Highway.

With Legislative approval JWV markers were placed between Danvers and Peabody, on the North and South bound sides of Interstate 95.

The Legislators dedicated the markers in recognition of the contribution to the Nation and the Commonwealth rendered by Jewish veterans.

Over the years the markers were destroyed and then removed. Thanks to the effort of JWV National Commander (2008-2009) Ira Novoselsky, who asked the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to replace the missing markers, the missing JWV Interstate 95 markers were replaced just in time for the celebration of our JWV 125th Anniversary year.

Similar JWV markers honoring Jewish Veterans were also dedicated in Canton, MA and Worcester County, MA.

BURN PITS – *continued from page 17*

More than 230,000 veterans have registered for the VA's burn pit data collection registry. The department estimates about 3.5 million veterans have been exposed to burn pits, according to a 2015 report.

Efforts to provide medical care to military victims of burn pits have long been plagued by delays in Congress and the VA. The VA maintains the science is not clear on diseases potentially caused by burn pit exposure. Advocates, however, have argued the department is stalling and repeating mistakes made with Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange and World War II veterans exposed to radiation.

JWV CELEBRATES 125 YEARS



2021 marks JWV's 125th anniversary. We are celebrating JWV every day this year with the #JWV125. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for fun facts about JWV history.

To celebrate this milestone, order the 125th Anniversary commemorative pin! The pins are \$5 each and a minimum of 5 pins per order is required. Post Commanders please consolidate your requests and e-mail or call Ben Kane at National: bkane@jwv.org; 202-448-5410.

VA Health Care: When You're In, You're In

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) operates the largest health care system in the country, with over 1,400 sites of care nationwide. When you become enrolled in the VA health care system, it's for a lifetime. You are instantly and automatically entitled to receive care at any VA location without ever having to register for VA health care benefits again. Learn more at: http://www2.va.gov/directory/guide/division_fish.asp?dnum=1

After you enroll, you can immediately start receiving your health care at a VA facility, or at a later date - the choice is yours. Enrolling in the VA health care system is quick and easy - just complete an online Application for Health Benefits online at: <https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez/>. Need help enrolling? Contact the VA toll free at 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

PROPOSED LAW WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR VETS TO GET PRIVATE-SECTOR CARE ON VA'S DIME

3 May 2021 | Military.com | By Steve Beynon

New legislation before Congress aims to make it easier for veterans to access private-sector care and have the Department of Veterans Affairs pick up the tab.

The Veterans Health Care Freedom Act would largely take the VA out of the community care process by allowing veterans themselves to find and schedule necessary appointments at private-sector clinics in the department's network.

Right now, veterans must be approved by the agency to receive community care; the department then refers the patient to a facility. If this measure becomes law, veterans would need approval only from their primary-care doctor.

"This legislation is a step in the right direction that ensures our veterans will be able to obtain timely and quality care," said Rep. Andy Biggs, R-Ariz., the bill's sponsor. "By allowing our veterans to access community care facilities, we can ensure that no veteran goes without care."

The legislation is largely based on 2016 recommendations by a congressionally appointed commission, which included a proposal to allow veterans themselves to choose their private-sector care to alleviate wait times.

It is unclear how long the average veteran waits for private-sector appointments; the department has not set a standard for such waits. The VA did not respond to a request for data on wait times.

A Government Accountability Office report last year strongly urged the VA to take its recommendations to "ensure veterans' appointments are scheduled in a timely manner."

"Given VA's lack of action over the prior seven years implementing wait-time goals for various community care programs, congressional action is warranted to help achieve timely health care for veterans," the GAO said in its report.

The legislation would direct the VA to test the program for three years in four regions that cover a diversity of locations, including rural and urban areas. The program would become permanent across the country after four years.

"It's common sense, very practical that we try it out instead of just doing it to make sure it works and makes adjustments," Darin Selnick, senior adviser to the right-leaning Concerned Veterans for America, said in an interview with Military.com

Community care became a much larger element of VA care with the 2018 passing of the Mission Act, which dramatically expanded veterans' access to VA-funded private-sector care as a reaction to scandals involving egregious wait times.

But expanding community care has had serious impacts on the VA's already mammoth budget. The VA is the second-largest federal agency, and its budget has ballooned over the years.

The proposed budget for VA health care next year is \$97.5 billion, an increase of \$7.6 billion. VA Secretary Denis McDonough told lawmakers at a budget hearing that the boost was needed partly because of the larger role of private-sector care.

"Much of the growth we're requesting is as a result of care in the community," he said. "Going back to the moment when the Mission Act was signed into law, you see a significant increase of care going into the community."

Biden told Stars and Stripes last year that he does "not under any circumstances support moving to total privatization" of the VA. He argued that the department is uniquely positioned to handle the "consequences of war and pressure."



Rep. Andy Biggs, R-Ariz., on Capitol Hill, in Washington, July 24, 2019. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik)

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USAA Visa Credit Card.**



Go to JWV.org or USAA.com to apply.

CHINA LAUNCHES MAIN PART OF ITS 1ST PERMANENT SPACE STATION

29 Apr 2021 The Associated Press | By Sam McNeil

BEIJING — China on Thursday launched the main module of its first permanent space station that will host astronauts long term, the latest success for a program that has realized a number of its growing ambitions in recent years.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, the core module of China's space station, Tianhe, on the Long March-5B Y2 rocket is moved to the launching area of the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in southern China's Hainan Province on April 23, 2021. (*Guo Wenbin/Xinhua via AP*)

Tianhe, or "Heavenly Harmony," module blasted into space atop a Long March 5B rocket from the Wenchang Launch Center on the southern island province of Hainan, marking another major advance for the country's space exploration.

The launch begins the first of 11 missions necessary to complete, supply and crew the station by the end of next year.

China's space program has also recently brought back the first new lunar samples in more than 40 years and expects to land a probe and rover on the surface of Mars later next month.

Minutes after the launch, the fairing opened to expose the Tianhe atop the core stage of the rocket, with the characters for "China Manned Space" emblazoned on its exterior. Soon after, it separated from the rocket, which will orbit for about a week before falling to Earth, and minutes after that, opened its solar arrays to provide a steady energy source.

The space program is a source of huge national pride, and Premier Li Keqiang and other top civilian and military leaders watched the launch live from the control center in Beijing. A message of congratulations from state leader and head of the ruling Communist Party Xi Jinping was also read to staff at the Wenchang Launch Center.

The launch furthers the "three-step" strategy of building up

The

China's manned space program and marks "an important leading project for constructing a powerful country in science and technology and aerospace," Xi's message said.

The core module is the section of the station where astronauts will live for up to six months at a time. Another 10 launches will send up two more modules where crews will conduct experiments, four cargo supply shipments and four missions with crews.

At least 12 astronauts are training to fly to and live in the station, including veterans of previous flights, newcomers, and women, with the first crewed mission, Shenzhou-12, expected to be launched by June.

When completed by late 2022, the T-shaped Chinese Space Station is expected to weigh about 66 tons, considerably smaller than the International Space Station, which launched its first module in 1998 and will weigh about 450 tons when completed.

Tianhe will have a docking port and will also be able to connect with a powerful Chinese space satellite. Theoretically, it could be expanded to as many as six modules. The station is designed to operate for at least 10 years.

Tianhe is about the size of the American Skylab space station of the 1970s and the former Soviet/Russian Mir, which operated for more than 14 years after launching in 1986.

The core module will provide living space for as many as six astronauts during crew changeovers, while its other two modules, Wentian, or "Quest for the Heavens," and Mengtian, or "Dreaming of the Heavens," will provide room for conducting scientific experiments including in medicine and the properties of the outer space environment.

China began working on a space station project in 1992, just as its space ambitions were taking shape. The need to go it alone became more urgent after it was excluded from the International Space Station largely due to U.S. objections over the Chinese program's secretive nature and close military ties.

After years of successful rocket and commercial satellite launches, China put its first astronaut into space in October 2003, becoming only the third country to independently do so after the former Soviet Union and the United States.

Along with more crewed missions, China launched a pair of experimental, single-module space stations — Tiangong-1, which means "Heavenly Palace-1," and its successor, Tiangong-2. The first burned up after contact was lost and its orbit decayed, while the second was successfully taken out of orbit in 2018.

The Tiangong-2 crew stayed aboard for 33 days.

While NASA must get permission from a reluctant Congress

See CHINA SPACE STATION — *continued on page 22*

CHINA SPACE STATION – *continued from page 21*

to engage in contact with the Chinese space program, other countries have been far less reluctant. European nations and the United Nations are expected to cooperate on experiments to be done on the completed Chinese station.

The launch comes as China is also forging ahead with crewless missions, particularly in lunar exploration, and it has landed a rover on the little-explored far side of the moon. In December, its Chang'e 5 probe returned lunar rocks to Earth for the first time since the U.S. missions of the 1970s.

Meanwhile, a Chinese probe carrying a rover is due to set down on Mars sometime around the middle of next month, making China only the second country to successfully accomplish that after the U.S.

The Tianwen-1 space probe has been orbiting the red planet since February while collecting data. Its Zhurong rover will be looking for evidence of life.

Another Chinese program aims to collect soil from an asteroid, a key focus of Japan's space program.

China plans another mission in 2024 to bring back lunar samples and has said it wants to land people on the moon and possibly build a scientific base there. No timeline has been proposed for such projects. A highly secretive space plane is also reportedly under development.

China has proceeded in a more measured, cautious manner than the U.S. and Soviet Union during the height of the space race.

One recent setback came when a Long March 5 rocket failed in 2017 during development of the Long March 5B variant used to put Tianhe into orbit, but that caused only a brief delay.

THE VETERANS HEALTH ID CARD FOR MILITARY BASE ACCESS

The Defense Department announced expanded Commissary, Military Service Exchange and MWR access as of January 1, 2020. Veterans who are eligible and want to take advantage of in-person benefits must have a Veterans Health Identification Card (VHIC). Veterans must be enrolled in the VA health care system to receive a VHIC. To enroll, you can complete an application for enrollment in VA health care by telephone without the need for a signed paper application. Just call 1-877-222-8387 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. Eastern. You can also apply for VA healthcare benefits online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll, or in person at your local VA medical facility. Once your enrollment is verified, you can have your picture taken at your local VA medical center, and VA will mail you a VHIC.

<https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/68479/veterans-need-vhicfor-in-person-commissary-military-exchange-and-mwr-access/-for-in-person-commissary-military-exchange-andmwr-access/>



**The Veterans Administration (VA) offers
Veterans Community Care Program**

Under the Veterans Community Care Program (replaces the Veterans Choice Program), Veterans can work with their VA health care provider or other VA staff to see if they are eligible to receive community care based on new criteria. Please go to the following website for further information:

<https://missionact.va.gov>

find us on
facebook

JWV National:
<https://www.facebook.com/JewishWarVeterans>

State of Florida:
<https://www.facebook.com/floridajwv>

Post 373:
<https://www.facebook.com/jwvtampa>

PHILIPPINES PROTESTS ‘BLOCKING’ OF ITS PATROL SHIPS BY CHINA



In this Feb. 6, 2020, file photo, Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Teodoro Locsin Jr. gestures during a senate hearing in Manila, Philippines. (AP Photo/Aaron Favila)

3 May 2021 | The Associated Press | By Jim Gomez

MANILA, Philippines — The Philippine government has protested the Chinese coast guard’s harassment of Philippine coast guard ships patrolling a disputed shoal in the South China Sea, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Monday.

It was the latest of dozens of recent protests by Manila’s foreign affairs department, along with increasingly acerbic remarks by the country’s top diplomat and defense chief about Chinese actions in the disputed waters. The high-profile feud has escalated despite President Rodrigo Duterte’s friendly stance toward China.

Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. used an obscene phrase in a tweet demanding China get out of Philippine-claimed areas. “What are you doing to our friendship?” Locsin asked. “You’re like an ugly oaf forcing your attentions on a handsome guy who wants to be a friend.”

Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana rejected China’s demand that the Philippines end its patrols in the disputed region. “While we acknowledge that China’s military capability is more advanced than ours, this does not prevent us from defending our national interests and our dignity as a people with all that we have,” Lorenzana said in a video message late Sunday,

In the latest incident, the Department of Foreign Affairs said it “has protested the shadowing, blocking, dangerous maneuver and radio challenges by the Chinese coast guard of Philippine coast guard vessels conducting legitimate maritime patrols and

training exercises” from April 24 to 25 near Scarborough Shoal off the northwestern Philippines.

Both countries claim the rich fishing area, which China effectively seized in 2012 by surrounding it with its coast guard and surveillance ships after a tense standoff with Philippine vessels.

The department said it also protested “the incessant, illegal, prolonged and increasing presence of Chinese fishing vessels and maritime militia vessels in Philippine maritime zones” in the disputed waters. It said hundreds of Chinese vessels have been spotted by Philippine law enforcement agencies from January to March this year in areas around Scarborough Shoal and Philippine-occupied Thitu Island, which Filipinos call Pagasa.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry has asked the Philippines to respect what it calls Chinese sovereignty in the disputed waters and “stop actions complicating the situation and escalating disputes.” China claims virtually all of the South China Sea. On Sunday, its People’s Liberation Army said a Chinese aircraft carrier group recently conducted annual exercises in the busy sea lanes.

The escalating feud between Manila and Beijing started after more than 200 Chinese vessels suspected by Philippine authorities to be operated by militias were spotted in early March at Whitsun Reef. The Philippine government demanded the vessels leave, then deployed coast guard vessels to the area. China said it owns the reef and the Chinese vessels were sheltering from rough seas.

Many of the Chinese vessels have left Whitsun, about 175 nautical miles (325 kilometers) west of the Philippine province of Palawan, but several have remained moored in the area, part of a shallow atoll partly occupied by China and Vietnam. The Philippine government says the reef is within an internationally recognized offshore zone where Manila has exclusive rights to exploit fisheries, oil, gas and other resources.

The United States has said it will stand by the Philippines amid the territorial disputes.

SAFE TRAVELS —WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT MEDICARE WHEN TRAVELING ABROAD:



In general, Medicare will not pay for health care services or supplies if you travel outside the United States. Please go to the following website to see Medicare Traveling Rules:

<https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/travel?>

GULF WAR REGISTRY HEALTH EXAM FOR VETERANS

VA's Gulf War Registry Health Exam alerts Veterans to possible long-term health problems that may be related to environmental exposures during their military service. The registry data helps VA understand and respond to these health problems more effectively.

Contact your local VA Environmental Health coordinator about getting a Gulf War registry health exam:

<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/coordinators.asp>

ABOUT THE GULF WAR REGISTRY HEALTH EXAM

This comprehensive health exam includes an exposure and medical history, laboratory tests, and a physical exam. A VA health professional will discuss the results face-to-face with the Veteran and in a follow-up letter.



IMPORTANT POINTS ABOUT REGISTRY HEALTH EXAMS

- Free to eligible Veterans and no co-payment
- Not a disability compensation exam or required for other VA benefits
- Enrollment in VA's health care system not necessary
- Based on Veterans' recollection of service, not on their military records
- Veterans can receive additional registry exams if new problems develop
- Veterans' family members are not eligible for registry exams

ELIGIBILITY FOR GULF WAR REGISTRY HEALTH EXAM

Veterans who served in the Gulf during Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or Operation New Dawn are eligible for the Gulf War Registry exam.

You do not need to be enrolled in VA health care to take part.

BURN PIT REGISTRY

Veterans who are eligible for the Gulf War Registry may also join the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry, which includes additional data related to airborne hazards.

Check your eligibility and sign up through an online questionnaire:

<https://veteran.mobilehealth.va.gov/AHBurnPitRegistry/#page/home>

INTERESTED IN DISABILITY COMPENSATION?

The registry evaluation is separate from VA's disability compensation process.

Veterans who want to be considered for disability compensation for health problems related to Gulf War service must file a claim for disability compensation: <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage>

During the claims process, VA will set up a separate exam for compensation if necessary.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES TO SUPPORT OUR NATION'S HEROES

(Click on any of the links below or head to www.jwv-fl.org and click on the link at the top of the page.)

Courtesy of: Ryan MacKenzie from Thankyouveteran.com

Matching Career Options with Personality Types

Veterans Employment Assistance

Career Advice for Veterans: Interviewing Tips

What is a VA Home Loan?

Mortgage Assistance Programs for Veterans

Moving Companies with Military Discounts

At-Home Services That Can Help Senior Veterans

Veterans' Health Care: Costs & Co-Payments

Military & Veterans Mental Health Issues

Counseling, Crisis Help, & Suicide Prevention for Our Military Community

VETERANS' DAY WATCH PARTIES

On November 11, 2021, the JWV will have the honor of being the lead organization for the Veterans' Day Ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery. A small number of JWV members will have the ability to attend in person, but most members will not be able to.

Therefore, the JWV would like Posts to form "watch parties" so members can gather together or via Zoom to watch the Veterans' Day Program in Washington.

Department Commanders are asked to work with their respective Post Commanders to organize these watch parties and have the Post Commanders report back their progress in planning and executing these watch parties.

Guidance will be made available to Department Commanders at their next committee meeting.

STICKY BOMBS LATEST WEAPON IN AFGHANISTAN'S ARSENAL OF WAR

26 Mar 2021 | The Associated Press | By Kathy Gannon

KABUL, Afghanistan — Sticky bombs slapped onto cars trapped in Kabul's chaotic traffic are the newest weapons terrorizing Afghans in the increasingly lawless nation, as Washington searches for a responsible exit after decades of war.

The primitive devices, sometimes made in mechanics' workshops for little money, are used by militants, criminals or those trying to settle personal scores. Over the past year, one or more cars have been exploding in Kabul almost every day and residents are terrified.

The administration of President Joe Biden has alternated between coaxing and sharp words — even offering a ready-made peace proposal — to hurry the Taliban and the Afghan government toward an end to the conflict. In the Afghan capital last weekend, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said America wanted a “responsible end” to Afghanistan’s relentless war. But in the meantime violence is escalating and taking the occasional new twist, such as the sticky bombs.

Kabul, a city traumatized by war, has been the scene of many suicide bombings and shooting attacks. But the heavy use of sticky bombs is relatively new, said former interior minister Masoud Andarabi. “What is new is that they (attackers) have created a simple model,” he said, noting that sticky bombs are easy to make for about \$25 and easy to carry.

Some victims are targeted, while others appear to have been chosen at random, with the aim of terrorizing an entire population, Andarabi said. One motive appears to be to undermine faith in peace efforts among ordinary Afghans, with the Taliban and the government blaming each other for the chaos.

The campaign has had an impact, leaving motorists navigating Kabul's chaotic traffic wondering if the nearby car might explode, or whether a beggar weaving through the traffic might be carrying a sticky bomb.

Typically, sticky bombs consist of explosives packed in a small box, a magnet attached to the box and a mobile phone. The bomb-maker programs a number into the phone number and dials it, with the last digit setting off the blast once he is clear of the targeted car.

Tactics vary, say security forces. Occasionally, a small child begging for money will be used to distract the driver, while the bomber sticks the small box under the wheel well. A new ruse is to drop the sticky bomb from inside a hole cut near the gearshift of the attacker's vehicle as the target vehicle approaches from behind. When the target is over the small bomb it is detonated.

There is no shortage of recruits from the city's poor, who make up roughly two-thirds of Afghanistan's 35 million people. According to the World Bank, 72% of Afghanistan's 35 million people live on roughly \$1.90 a day and unemployment is around 30%.

In January, a mechanic was arrested in Kabul's destitute Shah Shaheed area, where ramshackle shops line up tightly against each other. Abdul Sami, 30, was accused of putting sticky bombs inside newly repaired



Security personnel inspect the site of a sticky bomb attack in Kabul, Afghanistan, March 15, 2021. Sticky bombs slapped onto cars trapped in Kabul's chaotic traffic are the newest weapons terrorizing Afghans in the increasingly lawless nation. (*AP Photo/Rahmat Gul*)

vehicles.

Sami's shop was one of more than a dozen workshops and spare parts shops on a rutted road in Shah Shaheed. It's now shuttered and the tattered sign that once welcomed customers has been removed.

In 2015 the neighborhood was blown apart by a powerful truck bomb that killed 15 people and injured nearly 150. Ruins from that day still litter the local landscape.

ARMY RANGER LEGEND TO RECEIVE MEDAL OF HONOR AT 94

3 May 2021 | Military.com | By Matthew Cox

Seven decades ago, Army 1st Lt. Ralph Puckett knew his outnumbered Ranger Company had to defend a hill in northern Korea against hundreds of determined Chinese infantry.

In below-freezing temperatures, Puckett led the men of the 8th Ranger Company to repel five enemy assaults against their perimeter on Hill 205. He was wounded three times but still managed to call in artillery on the enemy shortly after the position was overrun.

For his bravery on Nov. 25-26, 1950, President Joe Biden will upgrade the 94-year-old retired colonel's Distinguished Service Cross to the Medal of Honor. The news was first reported by The Washington Post.

Biden called Puckett at home in Columbus, Georgia, on Friday to tell him of his decision to approve the award, John Lock, a retired Army officer who began petitioning the service in 2003 for reconsideration of Puckett's actions, told the Post. Lock confirmed this to Military.com Monday.

Puckett led his 51 Rangers and 9 South Korean soldiers across 800 yards of frozen rice paddies to seize the enemy-held "Hill 205". "We came under mortar and machine gun fire as soon as we jumped off the tanks which had carried us from behind [another] hill out onto the rice paddy," Puckett recalled.

During this operation, he "deliberately exposed himself to enemy machine-gun fire" so his men could spot the weapons' locations, according to Puckett's Distinguished Service Cross citation.

Once the company seized the hill, the unit immediately prepared to defend against enemy counterattack from any direction. "We always defended 360 degrees because we were always alone," Puckett said in the oral history. "Tonight was to be no different; the closest U.S. Army unit was over a mile away, so we've got to look after ourselves."

"We were hit by a mortar barrage and automatic weapons fire and, shortly thereafter, a shower of hand grenades," he said. "I called in artillery, got artillery ... and that stopped the assault."

The Rangers took casualties, including Puckett, who was

wounded in his right shoulder. Refusing evacuation, he continued to direct his company through "four more counterattacks by a numerically superior force who advanced to within grenade range before being driven back," according to his citation.

Puckett's Rangers put up a stiff fight, but he also credited the artillery support they received. "It saved our necks. ... We were getting more and more pressure; we had more and more people wounded," Puckett said.

At roughly 2:30 a.m. Nov. 26, the Chinese bugles again blasted through the darkness.

"I ran back to my foxhole and called for artillery, but the artillery officer said, 'I can't give it to you,'" Puckett said. "They were firing another mission. I said, 'We have got to have it. ... We are under great pressure. We are crumbling. We are being overrun.'"

Puckett was hit a third time and could no longer move. Realizing that his company was about to be overrun and forced to withdraw, he ordered his men to leave him behind, according to the citation.

"Despite his protests, he was dragged from the hill to a position of safety," it adds.

At the bottom of the hill, three tanks had come up but could not attack the enemy on the steep incline, Puckett recalled.

"I called for an artillery concentration with ... white phosphorus and high explosive on top of the hill," said Puckett, who was then loaded on the tanks and taken for medical care.

Following the Korean War, Puckett served for two years in the U.S. Army Infantry School Ranger Department. He would go on to earn a second Distinguished Service Cross while serving in the Vietnam War. His other decorations and awards include two Silver Stars, three Legions of Merit, two Bronze Stars, the Commendation Medal, 10 Air Medals, and five Purple Hearts, according to his Association of the United States Army bio.

Over the years, Puckett, who retired in 1971, also became a respected mentor and "honorary colonel" for the 75th Ranger Regiment, according to the Post. Puckett's wife, Jean, told the paper that she hopes Puckett, who has health problems, will be able to receive the Medal of Honor.



Retired Col. Ralph Puckett Jr. visits U.S. Army Rangers who are competing in the 2021 Best Ranger Competition on Fort Benning, Georgia, April 16, 2021. (*U.S. Army/Sgt. Kelson Brooks*)

CONGRESS, NOT COURTS, SHOULD DECIDE THE FUTURE OF THE MILITARY DRAFT, JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SAYS

20 Apr 2021 | Military.com | By Patricia Kime

The Biden administration has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to reject a petition calling for the men-only draft registration to be declared unconstitutional and let Congress decide the future of the Selective Service System.

In a brief filed to the court April 14, Acting Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar said consideration of the case -- the National Coalition for Men v. Selective Service System -- would be "premature at this time," since Congress is "actively considering" the scope of the registration.

Prelogar, the Justice Department official who argues cases before the Supreme Court, pointed out that previous court decisions "made it clear that the Court should defer to Congress where possible in this sensitive military context," and said legislation has been introduced to address the issue.

She also argued that Congress has not had time to consider more than 160 recommendations made last year by a blue-ribbon commission on the future of the draft and national service.

"This Court should afford Congress a reasonable opportunity to consider the Commission's recommendations, particularly given their breadth and timing," Prelogar wrote in her brief.

The case challenges the constitutionality of a requirement that all American men aged 18 to 26 register with the Selective Service System in the event that a national emergency warrants a military draft.

The plaintiff, the National Coalition for Men, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, argues that registration should be expanded to include men and women.

In February, 10 retired military general and flag officers, including retired Air Force Gen. Mike Hayden, former director of the National Security Administration; Army Gen. Stanley McChrystal; and Army Lt. Gen. Claudia Kennedy, penned a brief supporting that argument.

"Including women in the selective service would double the pool of candidates available to draft, raising the overall quality of the conscripted force and enabling the nation to better meet its military needs," the officers wrote.

But Prelogar made no mention of expanding the registration to include women. Instead, she focused on a previous case, *Rostker v. Goldberg*, in which the justices ruled the registration constitutional because its function was to furnish combat troops during a period of national emergency. At the time of the ruling in 1981, women were barred from serving in combat roles and thus would not be

able to contribute.

But the Defense Department lifted the ban on women in combat in 2013, and all military specialties became open to women in 2015.

"Rostker itself made clear that the Court should defer to Congress where possible in this sensitive military context," Prelogar argued.

She also noted the work of the National Commission on Military, National and Public Service, which produced a 245-page report last March making 164 recommendations to Congress on Selective Service, the draft, civic education, and non-military national or public service.

The commission said Selective Service registration should be extended to women, and commission members included the provision in proposed legislation that accompanied their report. That proposal, the Inspire 2 Serve Act, was introduced in the House in March 2020 but never made it past committee, overshadowed by the coronavirus pandemic.

"The timing of the Commission's finalization of the report -- which coincided with the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic -- may have interfered with Congress's ability to take immediate action in response to

the report," Prelogar wrote. "Congress has not had even one full legislative cycle to consider whether to adopt the recommendations in the Commission's March 2020 report."

The Senate Armed Services Committee held a hearing on the panel's recommendations in March 2021.

Last week, a bipartisan group of lawmakers introduced legislation to abolish the Selective Service System, calling its \$25 million annual cost a waste of taxpayer dollars.

Introduced by Sens. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and Rand Paul, R-Ky., as well as Reps. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., and Rodney Davis, R-Ill., the legislation would dismantle the system. Military conscription ended in 1973 when the U.S. military moved to an all-volunteer force.

"Congress hasn't come close to reinstating a military draft in 50 years, and I can't imagine a scenario where it would," Wyden said in a release on the proposed legislation.

"It has been nearly 50 years since the draft was last used. I've long stated that if a war is worth fighting, Congress will vote to declare it and people will volunteer. This outdated government program no longer serves a purpose and should be eliminated permanently," Paul said.

The Supreme Court now must decide whether to hear oral arguments in the case or request more information from the parties.



After completing a building clearing and rescue mission in an urban environment, a group of soldiers from the 76th Operational Response Command gather to discuss the details of the event as the sun sets at Camp Williams, Utah, April 16, 2021. (*Brent C. Powell/U.S. Army Reserve*)

FROM THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER:

76 YEARS AGO DACHAU CONCENTRATION CAMP LIBERATED

On April 29, 1945, Dachau Concentration Camp was liberated by American soldiers.

Native Americans Bennett Freeny and his identical twin brother Benjamin were born on January 21, 1922 in Caddo, Oklahoma. The Freeny family is of Chickasaw and Choctaw descent.

Bennett was a medic with the 45th (Thunderbird) Infantry Division of the U.S. Army, one of the first units to enter Dachau Concentration Camp, where they helped liberate tens of thousands of prisoners.

Bennett Freeny stripped a German officer of this Iron Cross shortly after the liberation of Dachau Concentration Camp. Fellow

soldier Ace Caldwell, who witnessed the incident, sent this account to Bennett's daughter:

"... Bennett and I were both medics with the 45th and we encountered a great many prisoners who had contracted Typhoid and other ailments, and even more who had been starved ... We were very disheartened by the condition of these poor souls and still enraged by the evil and carnage we had encountered liberating the camp.

A German SS officer walked through as though still in command and eyed us arrogantly and with a sort of sneer. Your dad stood, walked up to him and pulled out his knife. A couple of our boys stood by and prevented the officer from moving. Your father, one at a time, cut his medals and insignias off his uniform – Death Head, Edelweiss insignia, various patches and came to the

Iron Cross hanging around his neck. Bennett grabbed it, cut the ribbon, and said 'this is the sign of a hero – there are no heroes here' and stuffed all the medals and patches in his pocket. A few of the prisoners who were able, clapped.

We were young men who had a lifetime of horror and violence visited upon us by age 23. None of us would ever be the same, but that day your father was bigger than life..."

The Navy revealed last year that it has established its own NGAD program office in an effort to speed up the fielding of a new fighter prior to the 2030s, according to USNI News.

The service is conducting separate studies for the F/A-XX follow-on and EA-

18G Growler replacement aircraft, Harris said Tuesday.

In September, the Air Force revealed it had quietly built and flown a brand-new prototype that could become a future advanced fighter jet -- or something more, as part of its own "family of systems" initiative.

The NGAD program is being developed alongside the service's future fighter road map.

In the ongoing "TacAir study," Air Force officials are trying to determine the right mix of aircraft for the future inventory and assessing how future fighter concepts will fit into the current mix of fourth- and fifth-generation fighters.



MARINES FIRE ANTI-SHIP MISSILE FROM BACK OF UNMANNED TRUCK TO HIT TARGET AT SEA

29 Apr 2021 | Military.com | By Gina Harkins

Marines scored a direct hit in a first-ever live-fire test in which they launched a Navy missile from the back of an unmanned tactical vehicle to strike a surface target at sea.

The Marine Corps has combined two existing technologies to produce a deadly new way to hit targets offshore. Coined NMESIS, the Navy Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System can launch naval strike missiles from the back of a modified Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, or JLTV, to destroy targets on land or at sea.

Raytheon Missiles and Defense, which makes the naval strike missile, announced Wednesday that the Marine Corps used NMESIS to hit a target in the water from Point Mugu Sea Range in California. The missile can take out targets from more than 100 nautical miles away.

Commandant Gen. David Berger showed a photo of the test launch to lawmakers Thursday when discussing the need for funding for ground-based anti-ship missiles. He called the test the result of the “brilliance of a couple of young officers” and Oshkosh Defense, a Wisconsin-based company that makes the JLTV.

“The people at Oshkosh and these couple of majors thought, ‘We can do this,’ so they took the cab off the back and they put a missile in the back with a fire-control system,” Berger said. “Now, we can move this around on vessels or put it ashore and hold an adversary’s navy at risk ... to ensure that the lines on the sea are kept open.”

“This is the speed at which we have to move,” he added.

Getting funding for ground-based long-range precision fires out of the next budget will be crucial for the Marine Corps’ mission, Berger told lawmakers. He wrote in his 2019 planning guidance that the service had fallen “woefully behind” in the development of ground-based long-range precision fires.

“We must possess the ability to turn maritime spaces into barriers so we can attack an adversary’s sea lines of communication ... while defending our own in support of the Fleet or Joint Force,” Berger wrote.

In 2021, the Marine Corps requested \$125 million to buy nearly 50 Tomahawk missiles it could launch from land. Congress ultimately did not fund the move. Adm. Phil Davidson, the head of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, told lawmakers in March that the decision to slash those funds hurt the military’s ability to deter China.

The JLTV used in the test at Point Mugu is an unmanned version known as a ROGUE -- or remotely operated ground unit for



The Navy Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System can launch naval strike missiles from the back of a modified Joint Light Tactical Vehicle to destroy targets on land or at sea. (U.S. Navy)

expeditionary -- fires vehicle. The naval strike missile fired from the back carries a 500-pound class warhead, according to Raytheon. The Navy uses the missile on littoral combat ships.

Combined, the missile and ROGUE fires vehicle form NMESIS, which is operated by artillery Marines, Lt. Gen. Eric Smith, the deputy commandant of Combat Development and Integration, told reporters this month.

Berger said using a modified JLTV and a proven strike missile gives commanders flexibility since they can fire the munition from a ship or ashore.

“It’s the same missile, so as needed, the commander can move the ordnance where it’s needed most,” he said. “... [It also] speeds up our ability to field it. It’s a proven missile. ... This is not a new missile system -- we know how it performs. So, we’re riding on the backs of something that is already developed and putting it on a platform that we’re very confident in.”



"The difference between genius and stupidity is that genius has its limits" - Albert Einstein

A wife sent her husband a romantic text message...

She wrote: “If you are sleeping, send me your dreams. If you are laughing, send me your smile. If you are eating, send me a bite. If you are drinking, send me a sip. If you are crying, send me your tears. I love you.”

Her husband texted back: “I’m on the toilet, please advise.”

THE CIRCLE OF HEROES UNDERWATER MEMORIAL

7 May 2021 | By Larry Jasper

The **Circle of Heroes** is an underwater military veterans memorial 10 miles off the coast of Honeymoon Island State Park in the Gulf of Mexico. It is the first underwater veterans' memorial. It was dedicated on August 5, 2019 and began with twelve 6-foot tall statues at a depth of 40 feet underwater with plans to add an additional twelve statues. The memorial is considered a recreational dive site.

The dive site was expected to feature a total of 24 detailed structures by the end of 2020, but funding and Covid-19 had delayed the plans.

The 6-foot-tall concrete statues were placed in a circle featuring a center monument with 5 bronze emblems representing each of the U.S. Armed Forces.

The idea for the memorial was first imagined by local marine expert and scuba instructor Heyward Mathews almost 10 years ago. In February 2018, several of the statues were unveiled on land during a live broadcast ceremony. The statues were sunk in place during the week of July 22, 2019, and the site officially opened to the public on August 5. This dive site will be open to recreational scuba divers, and there are plans to use the site for adaptive sports therapy programs for disabled veteran divers. The vision is that this shallow dive site can provide physical and mental health therapy for veterans who participate in scuba diving rehabilitation.

Each statue weighs 1,200 pounds.

The initial 12 statues depict:

- Navy Sailor
- Southeast Asia War Soldier
- Korean War Soldier
- Marine in Dress Blues
- Vietnam Soldier
- Air Force Pilot
- No Man Left Behind
- Gulf War Soldier
- Iraq War Soldier
- Iraq Freedom Fighter
- Army Nurse
- Soldier Kneeling & Battle Cross

For more information, photos, and video please visit <https://brighterfutureflorida.org/> or see the videos on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpI6yHpuzVI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vi9KneZVRiQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQu7OPJUHNc>



The Circle of Heroes Memorial statues before sinking.



"No Man Left Behind" Statue



UW Statue

JWV EXPLORATION OF CIRCLE OF HEROES UNDERWATER MEMORIAL — IN PICTURES



The shell wreath that Commander Jasper is holding was placed at the Circle of Heroes Memorial. See below where it, along with a commemorative JWB coin was placed at the site.

The flags of both JWV Post 373 and the Jewish Welfare Board were aboard “Captain Jasper’s Vessel.” Below, see the same flags at the Circle of Heroes Underwater Memorial site.

(From L-R): Rabbi Ammos Chorny (Naples, FL), Commander Larry Jasper (JWV-FL), and Rabbi Irv Elson (JWB).



Rabbi Irv Elson of the Jewish Welfare Board explores the Circle of Heroes site. He described the exploration as a “deeply meaningful experience.”



Again, Rabbi Irv Elson examines the inscription at the site.

**NEXT POST MEETING (HYBRID — IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL):
SUNDAY, MAY 16, 2021
BREAKFAST 0930 / MEETING 1000**