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Photo by Austin Buntin

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.2 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 14,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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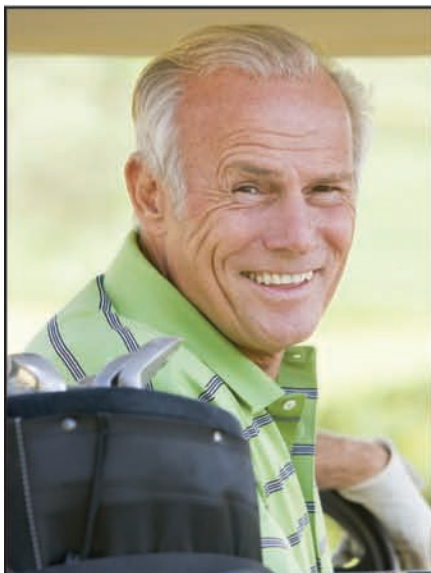
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‘Our Incredible Shrinking Military’

Mackenzie Eaglen’s article (August) should serve as a clarion call to our leaders in the Pentagon, Congress and the administration. Sadly, I suspect it will fall on deaf ears as political infighting, foolish policies and a dangerous focus on social engineering rather than combat readiness hasten us on the path to Third World status. The generals and admirals have offered only token resistance before falling right in line.

The new term “defeat and deny” is appropriate to describe the Pentagon’s replacement for the two-war construct. We are well on our way to military defeat while denying that a problem exists. It will indeed take new leadership – at all levels – before it’s too late. It may already be too late.

– Alan C. Saunders, Fredericksburg, Va.

Mackenzie Eaglen’s article was very thought-provoking. According to *The Economist’s* Pocket World in Figures 2016, the United States spent more on defense in 2014 than the next nine highest spending countries combined. We are spending more and getting less out of our defense budget, and it appears that the focus is very much on fighting conventional wars.

What is it about our foreign policy that gets us so entangled in the world’s conflicts? I take from Eaglen’s article that our military equipment and personnel are just about worn out and that there is no plan to fix this. How is it that while spending so much more than Russia we see Vladimir Putin as such a threat? Such large differences leave me wondering if we are properly assessing and matching real

threats to the United States, and if we are doing enough to get our allies to fight their own wars. It is time for a complete rethinking of our threats and our military’s role in protecting the citizens of the United States, which also means rethinking our role in the world.

– George Walrond, Panama City, Fla.

Nostalgia for the “good old days” when the United States was a two-war superpower is understandable, especially among those of us who grew up in the aftermath of World War II, but those days are long gone. The glory of our victory in 1945 was followed by 70 years of inglorious and failed military adventures in Korea, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Iraq and other unlikely places. Dwight Eisenhower’s wise

counsel – beware the military/industrial complex, and never fight a land war in Asia – was ignored and trillions of dollars were wasted, to say nothing of the destruction of American and foreign lives and the loss of U.S. prestige worldwide.

We're in the 21st century now. The greatest threats to U.S. security are not North Korea's missiles or China's army, but acts of foreign and domestic terrorism, and the hacking of computer systems that will threaten our infrastructure and bring the United States to its knees virtually overnight. We need to keep downsizing our anachronistic conventional military and address a very different threat that can be carried out by anonymous individuals operating from anywhere in the world.

– John S. Whitman, Peaks Island, Maine

Republican budget plan

Rep. Tim Ryan's opening paragraph (Big Issues, August) told me all I needed to read to know he was not serious and would lie to us freely.

There are fewer people in the workforce now than in decades. The 14 million jobs cited are so bogus and come from double-counting and very short part-time work, some of it only days long. We are barely creating enough new jobs to cover the new workers entering the workforce each month.

Ryan claims the country's health uninsured rate is below 5 percent for the first time in history. Another lie; the actual rate is 12 percent and the costs

of insurance have skyrocketed. He also says we've "slashed budget deficits by nearly three quarters." They were raised to astronomical levels for the administration's first few years, so any reduction looks great. It has added nearly \$10 trillion to the national debt.

Of course, Ryan's answer to all problems is to spend more money. That has never fixed schools, VA, infrastructure, poverty nor anything else the government runs. Reduce regulations, and let the free market work and get us out of this mess before we lose the country altogether.

– Mike Teutsch, Port St. Lucie, Fla.

I find it incredible that Rep. David Brat did not mention military or VA budget items once. Could it be that the Republican budget plan includes reductions in military benefits in several areas?

– Carmen J. DiGiacomo, Pittsburgh

Changes to commissary benefit

The commissary is one of the few benefits left on which Congress has not reneged (Veterans Update, August). Unfortunately, the changes will decrease commissary usage, allowing Congress to then get rid of commissaries because they are not used. Pretty good plan.

– Thomas Cook, Mendon, Mass.

This is an all-out attack on the benefits of servicemembers. Providing benefits as part of the compensation package to servicemembers is not supposed to be a drill in efficiency but a

commitment from our leaders on the same level as what we are currently doing, or have done, in the service of our country.

– William L. Rose, Olympia, Wash.

Here in San Antonio, at least, the commissary has a long way to go to lure back customers at the current pricing schedule. Increasing prices will only further degrade the customer base. They all suffer the same problem: customer service. Shelves are habitually empty, and produce prices are higher than local supermarkets with lower quality. It's not cost-saving or efficient to save a few bucks only to have to shop a second store for what the commissary can't or won't get. I wouldn't miss them if they closed.

– Ed Kassof, San Antonio

'Happy I Could Do My Part'

I just wanted to comment on the wonderful article about Bill Krissoff (August). At 60, he did not get bitter about losing his son; he decided to help others. I applaud him and his family for his service. I lost my son, a Marine, in Grenada in 1983. I joined Gold Star Mothers and devote time to helping veterans through the organization. It pales in light of Dr. Krissoff's actions, but I do it to honor my son's service to the Marine Corps just as he honors his son.

– Vivian Scharver, Wilmington, N.C.

Editor's note: In "The Olympian" (August), the site of the 2012 Olympics was wrongly identified as Beijing. The games were held in London.

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"The Legion, Rotary and other organizations let you use your talent to help make lives better."

JOHN GERM

John Germ, the current president of Rotary International, has been a member of The American Legion for 25 years. What he appreciates about both organizations is their deep commitment to serving local communities.

"The Legion gives you the opportunity to pay back the community," Germ says. "It gives you the opportunity to build a stronger community and the satisfaction of knowing you helped somebody else. You're not out there saying, 'I did this.' You're out there saying, 'I want my community to be a stronger, better community, and I can do it working with the Legion in various programs to make it happen.'"

Rotary's major initiative is to eradicate polio, of which there were only 74 cases worldwide last year. Like the Legion, Rotary relies on its network of chapters in local communities. Germ credits his time in the Air Force with developing in him the leadership skills necessary to lead a major nonprofit civic organization.

Germ wants to motivate patriotic Americans who are interested in serving and help them figure out how to do that. "How do we channel that energy into how we make our communities stronger?" he asks. "You've got to do it one day at a time and one life at a time. If you change just one person, you've made progress."

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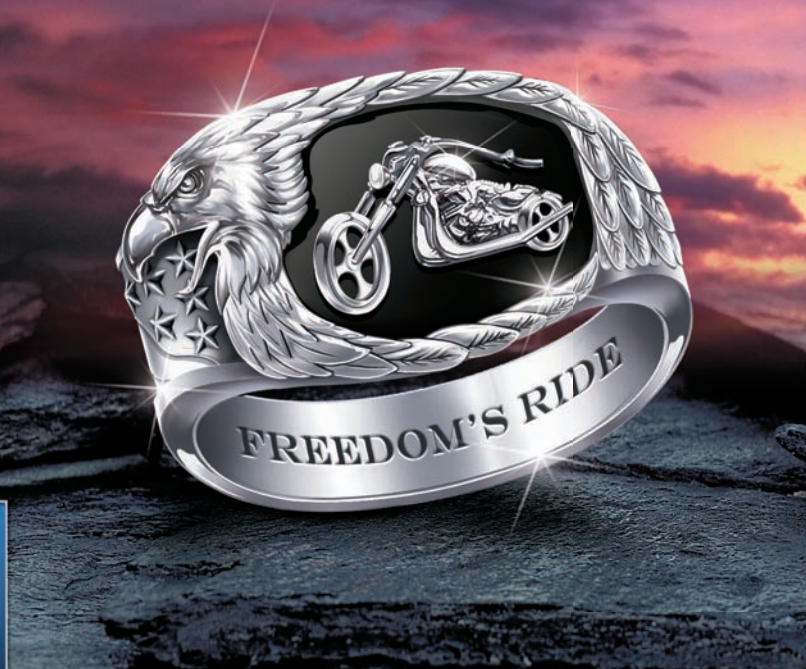
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White House immigration plan



SUPPORT

Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev.

■ Titus is a member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

In a 4-4 vote, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a lower court's ruling that fails our communities and harms our economy.

For years, millions of hard-working families have had to remain in the shadows because of this politically driven lawsuit and Republicans' refusal to pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill. So for now, their lives remain in limbo.

The vast majority of the 4.5 million people who would have been eligible for the president's programs – expansions to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA) – came to the United States to seek a better life for their families.

These are people who want to work, go to school and prosper in our great country. Many want to serve our nation in the military. But the Supreme Court's decision will prevent them from graduating from college, starting their own businesses or enlisting in the armed forces – all to our country's disadvantage.

The president's actions would have generated nearly \$3 billion worth of tax revenue over the next 10 years, according to a new study by the Center for American Progress. Furthermore, of the 700,000 children who have qualified under the original DACA since 2012, 75 percent have acquired better-paying jobs and 30 percent have returned to school.

Clearly, our nation's immigration system is broken, and we must work together to fix it. We should focus on keeping families together and giving people the opportunity to fulfill their potential, not on demonizing immigrants and building walls.



OPPOSE

Rep. Jeff Duncan, R-S.C.

■ Duncan is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

On June 23, the Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling that dealt a major blow to President Obama's executive immigration plan.

In the United States we have a president, not a king. If the executive branch could make law on

its own, the consequences for our country would be disastrous. And if the rule of law becomes meaningless, the very foundation of our country begins to break down.

President Obama has routinely defended his

position by saying that he acted only because Congress had not passed an immigration reform bill. That's not a legitimate excuse. The U.S. Constitution clearly outlines the powers and responsibilities of the three branches of government. The legislative branch writes the law, the judicial branch interprets the law and the executive branch enforces the law. Nowhere does it say that if Congress does not act in accordance with the president's wishes, then he or she has the ability to act on his or her own.

If a president believes Congress should take action on a particular topic, he or she can use the bully pulpit to pressure Congress. He or she can threaten to veto legislation that Congress passes. But we as a nation must remember the wisdom of our founding fathers and avoid putting too much power in the hands of one person.

President Obama called the Supreme Court's decision "heartbreaking," but the real tragedy is how much he has divided the country over his attempts to violate the Constitution. It is alarming that there are four Supreme Court justices who seem content to destroy our system of checks and balances.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

The Supreme Court blocked President Obama's executive action on immigration, which would have shielded millions of illegal immigrants from deportation and allowed them to work legally. Critics called the ruling a check on presidential power.

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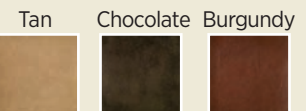
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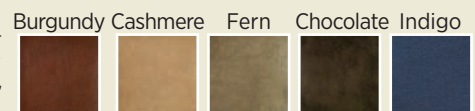


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EYE OPENER



Media Bakery

Don't ignore the damage to your vision caused by medicines and digital devices.

BY JUDITH HURLEY

It's common knowledge that sunlight can damage eyes, but the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays aren't the only risk to our vision. Medicine cabinets and smartphones may cause trouble, too.

According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, several prescription and over-the-counter medications make eyes more sensitive to UV light, and thus more vulnerable to cataracts (clouding of the eye's lens) and cancer (ocular melanoma).

Drugs that increase the eye's susceptibility to sun damage include antibiotics like doxycycline and ciprofloxacin, and psoralens used to treat psoriasis. Certain birth control pills, estrogen medications, acne drugs and diuretics used to treat high blood pressure also make the eye more sensitive to UV light. Several studies have shown that corticosteroids – used to treat rheumatoid arthritis, severe asthma and COPD – raise cataract risk too. Less commonly, anti-inflammatory pain relievers such as ibuprofen and naproxen sodium increase the eye's photosensitivity.

While cataracts grow slowly and can be

surgically treated, eye cancer is more serious. People taking drugs that increase sensitivity to sunlight should protect their eyes outside by wearing a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses.

A hat and shades won't help you avoid the risks indoors, however. A national survey by the Vision Council, an optical industry group, found that 60 percent of adults spend more than five hours a day using digital devices, and 30 percent spend nine hours a day – more than half their waking hours – using them. People tend to blink less often when staring at a screen, which means less moisture travels across the eye's surface. That's one reason why excessive use of digital devices can lead to eye strain, blurred vision and itchy, dry eyes. But those are short-term effects. The new worry is the long-term effect of the blue light emitted by our digital companions.

Blue light, also referred to as high-energy visible (HEV) light, emanates from the back of digital devices and from LED and fluorescent lights. It reaches deeper into the eye than UV light and may harm the retina, potentially increasing the

risk for cataracts and age-related macular degeneration, which occurs when the central portion of the retina is damaged by oxidation and inflammation. It is the leading cause of vision loss in the United States and occurs most often in older adults.

To protect your eyes from the damaging effects of UV and blue light, follow these tips:

- Stay out of the sun during the peak hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Wear UV-protective sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat when outdoors.
- Protect your eyes year-round, not just in the summer. Even on cloudy days, plenty of UV light passes through the haze.
- Adjust the brightness of digital screens from bright white to cool gray.
- If you use a computer or other digital device frequently, consider blue-light-blocking lenses.
- Get regular eye exams and let your eye doctor know about any medications you take.

Judith Hurley is a freelance journalist who specializes in science and medicine.

SHOPPING FOR SHADES

Shopping for sunglasses can be confusing. Here's a buyer's guide:

- Lenses labeled "100 percent UV protection" or "blocks UV absorption up to 400 nanometers" provide the best protection. Skip any labeled merely "UV absorbing" or "blocks most UV light."
- Polarized lenses don't necessarily protect against UV rays.
- Photochromic lenses only protect against UV radiation if they bear the UV protection label.
- Wraparound and large frames better protect your eyes from all angles.
- Mirror-coated lenses reduce light but don't necessarily provide the best UV protection.
- Darker lenses are more comfortable when it's extremely bright out, but they don't protect against UV rays any more than lighter lenses.
- Colored lenses can offer the same protection as brown or black lenses. Again, the key is the "100 percent UV protection" label.



Media Bakery

Advice on antibiotics

With the rise of so-called superbugs – infections resistant to antibiotics – WebMD urges patients to advocate for themselves and ask questions of their doctors before taking antibiotics. Here are four starters:

■ **When do I really need an antibiotic?** Antibiotics make good sense for certain bacterial infections, but they do not kill viruses. They won't work for colds or the flu, so don't be surprised if your doctor suggests a course of "watchful waiting" rather than a regimen of antibiotics.

■ **Why are you prescribing an antibiotic?** Taking too many antibiotics increases the chances they won't work when you really need them, WebMD warns. Ask your doctor what the medicine is supposed to do for you now and how likely it is to improve your symptoms.

■ **When did you last wash your hands?** If you don't see your doctor or nurse wash their hands or use sanitizer before touching you, ask if he or she did.

■ **Does your hospital track superbug infections?** Outpatient clinics are not as likely to track superbug infections since confirmation of one can take time.

GOING UP

15 Low end of pounds put on by the average American since the late 1980s and early 1990s, without a corresponding increase in height. The gain is consistent with a couple of points increase in body mass index, according to one obesity researcher.

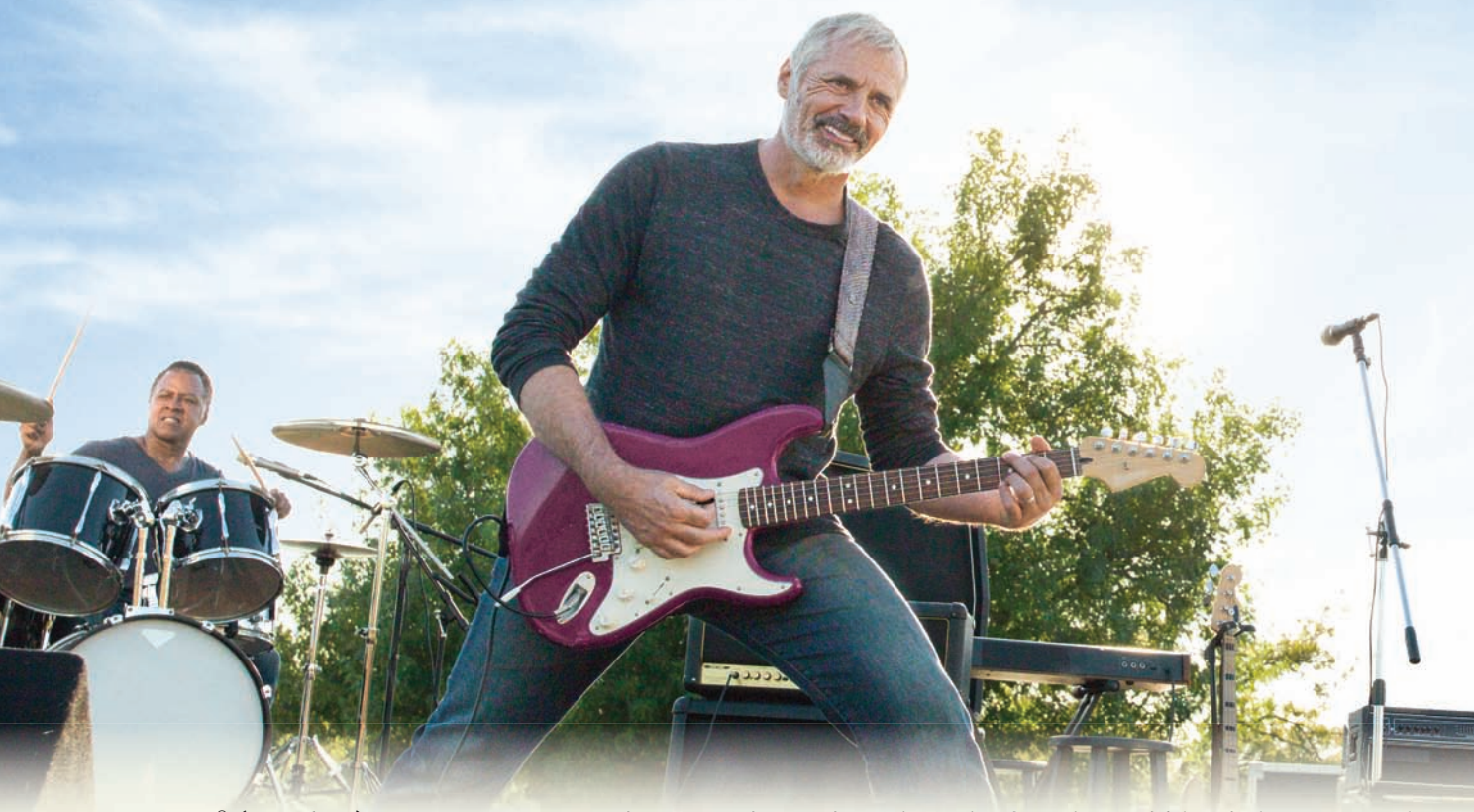


Media Bakery

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.

For people with a higher risk of stroke due to
Atrial Fibrillation (AFib) not caused by a heart valve problem

I won't accept going for less than my best.



ELIQUIS® (apixaban) is a prescription medicine used to reduce the risk of stroke and blood clots in people who have atrial fibrillation, a type of irregular heartbeat, not caused by a heart valve problem.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:

- **Do not stop taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation without talking to the doctor who prescribed it for you. Stopping ELIQUIS increases your risk of having a stroke.** ELIQUIS may need to be stopped, prior to surgery or a medical or dental procedure. Your doctor will tell you when you should stop taking ELIQUIS and when you may start taking it again. If you have to stop taking ELIQUIS, your doctor may prescribe another medicine to help prevent a blood clot from forming.
- **ELIQUIS can cause bleeding, which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death.**
- **You may have a higher risk of bleeding if you take ELIQUIS and take other medicines that increase your risk of bleeding, such as aspirin, NSAIDs, warfarin (COUMADIN®), heparin, SSRIs or SNRIs, and other blood thinners. Tell your doctor about all medicines, vitamins and supplements you take.**

While taking ELIQUIS, you may bruise more easily and it may take longer than usual for any bleeding to stop.

- **Get medical help right away if you have any of these signs or symptoms of bleeding:**
 - unexpected bleeding, or bleeding that lasts a long time, such as unusual bleeding from the gums; nosebleeds that happen often, or menstrual or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal
 - bleeding that is severe or you cannot control
 - red, pink, or brown urine; red or black stools (looks like tar)
 - coughing up or vomiting blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds
 - unexpected pain, swelling, or joint pain; headaches, feeling dizzy or weak
- **ELIQUIS is not for patients with artificial heart valves.**

Now I'm going for something better than warfarin. ELIQUIS.

Reduced the risk of stroke
better than warfarin.

ELIQUIS® (apixaban)

Had significantly less
major bleeding than warfarin.

No routine blood testing.

ELIQUIS and other blood thinners increase the risk of bleeding
which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death.

Ask your doctor if switching to ELIQUIS is right for you.



- **Spinal or epidural blood clots (hematoma).** People who take ELIQUIS, and have medicine injected into their spinal and epidural area, or have a spinal puncture have a risk of forming a blood clot that can cause long-term or permanent loss of the ability to move (paralysis). This risk is higher if, an epidural catheter is placed in your back to give you certain medicine, you take NSAIDs or blood thinners, you have a history of difficult or repeated epidural or spinal punctures. Tell your doctor right away if you have tingling, numbness, or muscle weakness, especially in your legs and feet.
- **Before you take ELIQUIS,** tell your doctor if you have: kidney or liver problems, any other medical condition, or ever had bleeding problems. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or plan to become pregnant or breastfeed.
- **Do not take ELIQUIS if you** currently have certain types of abnormal bleeding or have had a serious allergic reaction to ELIQUIS.

A reaction to ELIQUIS can cause hives, rash, itching, and possibly trouble breathing. Get medical help right away if you have sudden chest pain or chest tightness, have sudden swelling of your face or tongue, have trouble breathing, wheezing, or feeling dizzy or faint.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see additional Important Product Information on the adjacent page.

Individual results may vary.

Learn about savings and offers.
Visit ELIQUIS.COM or call 1-855-ELIQUIS

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Eliquis®
**(apixaban) tablets 5mg
2.5mg**

IMPORTANT FACTS about ELIQUIS® (apixaban) tablets

Rx ONLY

The information below does not take the place of talking with your healthcare professional. Only your healthcare professional knows the specifics of your condition and how ELIQUIS may fit into your overall therapy. Talk to your healthcare professional if you have any questions about ELIQUIS (pronounced ELL eh kwiss).

What is the most important information I should know about ELIQUIS (apixaban)?

For people taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation: Do not stop taking ELIQUIS without talking to the doctor who prescribed it for you. Stopping ELIQUIS increases your risk of having a stroke. ELIQUIS may need to be stopped, prior to surgery or a medical or dental procedure. Your doctor will tell you when you should stop taking ELIQUIS and when you may start taking it again. If you have to stop taking ELIQUIS, your doctor may prescribe another medicine to help prevent a blood clot from forming.

ELIQUIS can cause bleeding which can be serious, and rarely may lead to death. This is because ELIQUIS is a blood thinner medicine that reduces blood clotting.

You may have a higher risk of bleeding if you take ELIQUIS and take other medicines that increase your risk of bleeding, such as aspirin, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (called NSAIDs), warfarin (COUMADIN®), heparin, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) or serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs), and other medicines to help prevent or treat blood clots.

Tell your doctor if you take any of these medicines. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if your medicine is one listed above.

While taking ELIQUIS:

- you may bruise more easily
- it may take longer than usual for any bleeding to stop

Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of these signs or symptoms of bleeding when taking ELIQUIS:

- unexpected bleeding, or bleeding that lasts a long time, such as:
 - unusual bleeding from the gums
 - nosebleeds that happen often
 - menstrual bleeding or vaginal bleeding that is heavier than normal
- bleeding that is severe or you cannot control
- red, pink, or brown urine
- red or black stools (looks like tar)
- cough up blood or blood clots
- vomit blood or your vomit looks like coffee grounds
- unexpected pain, swelling, or joint pain
- headaches, feeling dizzy or weak

ELIQUIS is not for patients with artificial heart valves.

Spinal or epidural blood clots (hematoma). People who take a blood thinner medicine (anticoagulant) like ELIQUIS, and have medicine injected into their spinal and epidural area, or have a spinal puncture have a risk of

forming a blood clot that can cause long-term or permanent loss of the ability to move (paralysis). Your risk of developing a spinal or epidural blood clot is higher if:

- a thin tube called an epidural catheter is placed in your back to give you certain medicine
- you take NSAIDs or a medicine to prevent blood from clotting
- you have a history of difficult or repeated epidural or spinal punctures
- you have a history of problems with your spine or have had surgery on your spine

If you take ELIQUIS (apixaban) and receive spinal anesthesia or have a spinal puncture, your doctor should watch you closely for symptoms of spinal or epidural blood clots or bleeding. Tell your doctor right away if you have tingling, numbness, or muscle weakness, especially in your legs and feet.

What is ELIQUIS?

ELIQUIS is a prescription medicine used to:

- reduce the risk of stroke and blood clots in people who have atrial fibrillation.
- reduce the risk of forming a blood clot in the legs and lungs of people who have just had hip or knee replacement surgery.
- treat blood clots in the veins of your legs (deep vein thrombosis) or lungs (pulmonary embolism), and reduce the risk of them occurring again.

It is not known if ELIQUIS is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take ELIQUIS?

Do not take ELIQUIS if you:

- currently have certain types of abnormal bleeding
- have had a serious allergic reaction to ELIQUIS. Ask your doctor if you are not sure

What should I tell my doctor before taking ELIQUIS?

Before you take ELIQUIS, tell your doctor if you:

- have kidney or liver problems
- have any other medical condition
- have ever had bleeding problems
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if ELIQUIS will harm your unborn baby
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if ELIQUIS passes into your breast milk. You and your doctor should decide if you will take ELIQUIS or breastfeed. You should not do both

Tell all of your doctors and dentists that you are taking ELIQUIS. They should talk to the doctor who prescribed ELIQUIS for you, before you have **any** surgery, medical or dental procedure.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Some of your other medicines may affect the way ELIQUIS (apixaban) works. Certain medicines may increase your risk of bleeding or stroke when taken with ELIQUIS.

How should I take ELIQUIS?

Take ELIQUIS exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Take ELIQUIS twice every day with or without food, and do not change your dose or stop taking it unless your doctor tells you to. If you miss a dose of ELIQUIS, take it as soon as you remember, and do not take more than one dose at the same time. **Do not run out of ELIQUIS. Refill your prescription before you run out.** When leaving the hospital following hip or knee replacement, be sure that you will have ELIQUIS available to avoid missing any doses. **If you are taking ELIQUIS for atrial fibrillation, stopping ELIQUIS may increase your risk of having a stroke.**

What are the possible side effects of ELIQUIS?

- See **“What is the most important information I should know about ELIQUIS?”**
- ELIQUIS can cause a skin rash or severe allergic reaction. Call your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following symptoms:
 - chest pain or tightness
 - swelling of your face or tongue
 - trouble breathing or wheezing
 - feeling dizzy or faint

Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

These are not all of the possible side effects of ELIQUIS. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about ELIQUIS. For more information, talk with your doctor or pharmacist, call 1-855-ELIQUIS (1-855-354-7847), or go to www.ELIQUIS.com.

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June 2015
432US1501088-11-01

VA predicts flood of emergency care claims

BY TOM PHILPOTT

In September 2014, retired Marine Gunnery Sgt. Michael Beckstrom of Peru, Ind., sliced off part of a finger in a home accident. His bad day got worse when the 56-year-old had a heart attack in the ambulance.

Two weeks earlier, during Beckstrom's annual VA physical in Fort Wayne, a doctor had prescribed cholesterol-lowering pills and a stress test. This day, however, with no VA heart surgeon nearby, Beckstrom was flown by helicopter to a civilian medical center.

VA has long stated that it will reimburse veterans for out-of-pocket costs of private-sector emergency care only if they have no other health coverage. The practical effect is that VA-enrolled veterans who lack alternative health coverage will be reimbursed for all outside emergency care costs. Veterans with other health coverage – Medicare, TRICARE, employer-provided health insurance or commercial health plans – must pay all emergency care costs that alternative plans will not cover.

In this case, Beckstrom had TRICARE to cover the bulk of his emergency bills. But he also had to pay fees and co-pays until he quickly reached the \$3,000 catastrophic cap for TRICARE families.

A year later, he needed more outside emergency care for heart failure. So while still working to pay off his share of earlier emergency costs, Beckstrom faced \$1,200 more in charges that neither TRICARE nor VA would cover.

Then Beckstrom read about a ruling last April by the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims in the case of Air Force veteran *Richard W. Staab v. Robert A. McDonald*, VA secretary. A three-judge panel unanimously ruled that VA wrongly ignored the “plain language” that a 2010 law change intended to protect VA-enrolled vets from any costs related to outside emergency care.

VA challenged the *Staab* decision, filing separate motions that the panel reconsider its ruling and, if not, that the full appellate court of seven judges rehear the case. Both motions failed, however, and on July 22 the claims court announced its decision as final.

But VA hasn't reimbursed Staab or Beckstrom or any of the thousands of veterans denied claims for emergency care since 2010. It has until Sept. 20 to appeal the decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. An appeal seems certain given the stakes for VA – and for millions of vets.

Court documents explain that from Feb. 1, 2010 (the effective date of the law change that the court said should have benefitted veterans like Staab), through July 6 this year, VA-enrolled veterans received more than 2 million emergency health-care services in the private sector. Those could result in reimbursements of more than \$2 billion.

Over the next 10 years, an estimated 68.6 million more claims for emergency care could be reimbursable, driving up VA health costs by as much as \$10.6 billion. The numbers are large because ER visits mean acute care and multiple claims, VA officials explained. The average is four claims per outpatient emergency room visit and eight per emergency hospital admission.

VA says administrative costs alone for handling these claims, including hiring more employees and upgrading claim systems, would be \$182 million over 10 years, raising total costs to \$10.8 billion.

While VA considers an appeal, it is not paying claims made valid by *Staab*. First, VA counsel believes that the claims court misinterpreted the 2010 law and its decision will be reserved. Also, VA needs to put a new regulation and review process in place to support these claims.

Even if *Staab* is upheld, VA told the court, the statutory authority it said VA ignored “does not set forth a payment methodology or payment limitations necessary for VA to implement the decision. Therefore, VA must follow legal procedures to implement regulations that would allow it to process payments for claims impacted by *Staab*.”

So Staab, Beckstrom and thousands of other veterans have long waits for reimbursements and no legal guarantee yet that they will come at all.

Tom Philpott has been covering military personnel and veterans issues for nearly 40 years.



Media Bakery

THE MIND FIELD

ALTERNATIVE ROUTES OF RECOVERY

ALABAMA GETAWAY

SECOND IN A SERIES

Often, the best medicine for veterans struggling with service-connected mental injuries is simply each other, especially in an outdoor place without the distractions of everyday life. In many states nationwide, outdoor facilities and programs operated or supported by The American Legion are making differences for these veterans and their families.



Photo by Clay Lometh

'They know how you feel'

Department of Alabama retreat gives veterans a chance to deal with their PTSD together, as comrades.

BY STEVE B. BROOKS

Danny Barrett was reluctant to sign up for The American Legion Department of Alabama's second annual Veterans Retreat. Days before it started, he debated whether or not he'd even go. In the end, the Navy veteran did – and says he's so glad he didn't back out.

"Here I am sharing things with people who know what I am talking about," says Barrett, who receives care at the Birmingham VA Medical Center for post-traumatic stress. "In civilian life, they want to say, 'I know how you feel.' But they really don't. Here, they know how you feel. It's been fabulous."

In early August, about 50 men and women receiving care at Alabama VA facilities gathered at YMCA's Camp Chandler in Wetumpka for outdoor activities and fellowship. By resolution, the department will conduct the retreat annually.

"It's our way of showing them an alternate means of treatment," Department of Alabama Adjutant Greg Akers says. "The biggest thing is camaraderie: get out here, start talking to one another and know you've got a shoulder to lean on."

Activities included fishing, air rifle shooting, a rope ladder and ropes course, photography, and paddling a war canoe that seats more than a dozen and serves as a team-building exercise.

On the final night, the veterans gathered around a campfire to talk about their time in service, issues they've faced since coming home and anything else on their mind. Some stories were funny, others emotional.



WILWIN LODGE

Gift of property, Legion leadership and new location make Michigan retreat a success.

The location has changed, but the mission remains the same at Wilwin Lodge: taking care of veterans and their families. The American Legion Department of Michigan's nature retreat continues to provide a peaceful setting for veterans of all eras and life circumstances, especially those who have PTSD or TBI or are disabled.

The lodge's original location, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, was donated to the Legion in 2009. However, adjoining property was purchased for the purpose of mining limestone, with part of the lode on 400 of Wilwin's 600 original acres. The department decided to sell the property and create a bigger and better Wilwin Lodge south of Custer, Mich.

The new property is almost twice the size (1,183 acres) of the previous acreage and includes a private lake with a sand beach, a bathhouse and dock. A four-bedroom home that can accommodate eight to 12 veterans is already located on the property, along with caretaker's quarters and a large garage with living quarters above it sizeable enough to accommodate four more veterans.

Final transfer of the property occurred in December. Wilwin at Cygnet Cove opened in mid-May and offers veterans and their families plenty of opportunities to fish, canoe, boat, hike, bicycle or just enjoy the outdoors.

"We have more miles of trails on the property, and the veterans have been enjoying fishing," says Bill Hafeman, a member of Wilwin's board of directors. "And the potential for this property is better. We're closer to a higher-density veteran population."

In addition, Wilwin's board is in talks with the Capt. James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center in Chicago to possibly offer counseling services at the lodge.

– Steve B. Brooks



Take all your fears, all your loneliness, anger, all the bad inside you ... and give it to the river. The river will take it from you, wash you of all the evil, and leave you in a better place.

Hopi high priest Marvin Talayumtewa, speaking to young veterans, some with mental injuries and other service-connected disabilities, as they embarked on the Grand Canyon Warriors Rafting Trip in 2015. The trip received support from The American Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors program.

For Larry Coleman, who served as an Army helicopter pilot in Vietnam, the retreat is a one-of-a-kind outlet. "To be able to talk about it ... that's a long time coming," he says. "It's much better (talking to fellow veterans). If you haven't been there, you can't tell me how I feel."

The retreat provided toiletries and sleeping bags for participants. Local vendors donated food and outdoor equipment, while Post 133 and Post 135 each served a lunch. Sons of The American Legion hosted a fish fry on Saturday, and the entire Alabama Legion Family organized a cookout for the veterans on the final day of the retreat.

During the cookout, Department of Alabama Commander Jim Jeffries announced that the department would pay the first year's dues for any participant who wasn't already a Legion member.

"Veterans have to take care of veterans," Jeffries says. "We have a responsibility to one another."

Barrett became more aware of that responsibility when he met fellow veteran David Lottier at the retreat. The two spent time together throughout the weekend, and after a while, Barrett asked Lottier if he could give him a hug. Lottier responded with a strange look, but the pair hugged anyway.

"I saw him at breakfast (the next day), and he was so bright-eyed," Barrett says. "He was like a whole different person. He said, 'You sat and listened to me, and I shared with you all the problems I have, and they just kind of went away.'"

The pair traded phone numbers to stay in touch. "He helped me," Barrett says. "I helped him. That's what this has been about."

The opportunity to share with others in such a setting "just brings us closer together," Lottier says. "I've met some very good friends."

This was the second year at the retreat for Alicia Anthony, an Air Force veteran. "I have never had anybody treat me like we were treated last year," she says. "It was a blessing because it made me realize there are people who care ... It's amazing that you can meet people and, in a day or two, it's like you are family."

Akers, an Army veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan, says the retreat is always therapeutic. "I suffer from PTSD," he says. "This camp has done more for me than any counseling or medication." 🌿

Steve B. Brooks is the social media manager for The American Legion.

CAMP AMERICAN LEGION

Wisconsin veterans have had a place to turn since 1925.

Referred to as a "diamond in Wisconsin," Camp American Legion in Tomahawk has provided rest and readjustment for the state's veterans and their families since 1925. Located on Big Carr Lake on roughly 300 wooded acres, the camp is owned and operated by The American Legion Department of Wisconsin and is open to any Wisconsin veteran or active-duty servicemember from the state with a physician-documented physical or psychological illness, injury or disability.

Active-duty military personnel returning from deployment within the past nine months, as well as any surviving family of a servicemember killed in the past year, are also eligible to use the camp.

A main lodge and more than 20 fully furnished cabins – each able to hold anywhere from two to six people – provide accommodations for nearly 1,000 veterans and their families each year. Guests can fish, boat, swim, craft, hike, play games and engage in other activities. This year, the camp added a handicap-accessible walking trail named for Wisconsin Medal of Honor recipient Gary Wetzel, a member of Post 434 in Oak Creek, Wis.

The camp also has various theme weeks during the



season targeting specific groups, including blind or vision-impaired veterans, homeless veterans and women veterans. Another weekend is devoted to peer-to-peer PTSD support.

Camp director Kevin Moshea, a member of Post 318 in nearby Lake Tomahawk, says the camp's positive effect on the veterans who use it is why he does what he does.

"It means everything to me," he said. "It's why I get up in the morning. It is the thing that makes me say to the good Lord, 'I know why you put me here.' Changing people's lives is my daily goal in life. When I visibly see a change, that makes my day."

– Steve B. Brooks

To some, sunglasses are a fashion accessory...

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Drivers' Alert: Driving can expose you to more dangerous glare than any sunny day at the beach can... do you know how to protect yourself?

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light. This superior lens technology was first discovered when NASA scientists looked to nature for a means to superior eye protection—specifically, by studying the eyes of eagles, known for their extreme visual acuity. This discovery resulted in what is now known as Eagle Eyes®.

The Only Sunglass Technology Certified by the Space Foundation for UV and Blue-Light Eye Protection. Eagle Eyes® features the most advanced eye protection technology ever created. The TriLenium® Lens Technology offers triple-filter polarization to block 99.9% UVA and UVB—plus the added benefit of blue-light eye protection. Eagle Eyes® is the only optic technology that has earned official recognition from the Space Certification Program for this remarkable technology. Now, that's proven science-based protection.

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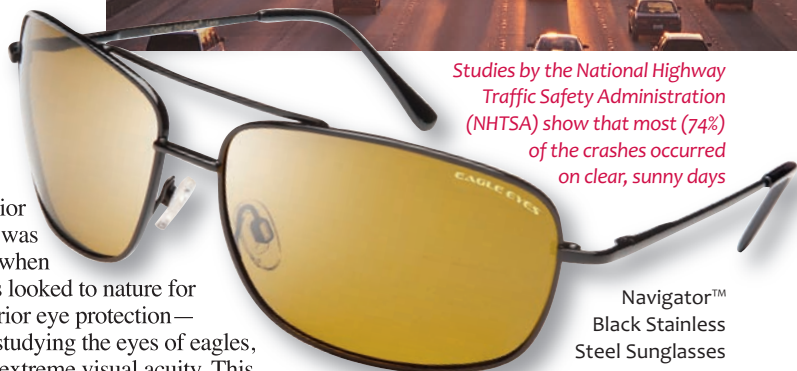
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The dog debate

VA study will examine whether service dogs help veterans with PTSD.

Can a service dog trained to sweep a building, turn on lights and fetch medications help veterans with PTSD?

After two false starts, VA hopes to have scientifically defensible answers to these and other questions by the end of 2018. VA is pairing 220 veterans with PTSD and specially trained dogs in Atlanta, Iowa City and Portland, Ore., as part of a \$12 million study. Researchers will gauge how the dogs affect PTSD symptoms, suicidal thoughts, mood disorders, substance abuse, the ability to work and other issues during the 21 months each veteran-dog pair is monitored.

Participating veterans must be engaged in some type of mental health treatment for PTSD. They have the option to keep their dogs at the end of the study no matter the outcome, according to VA.

Veterans are randomly chosen to receive either emotional support dogs or service dogs. Emotional support dogs provide comfort and companionship, says Lauren Lee, program manager at Canine Companions for Independence (CCI), one of three groups providing dogs for the study. Service dogs, on the other hand, are trained to do specific tasks, can accompany their handlers to any place open to the public, and can work independently of their handlers.

In this case, dogs are being trained to search a building or room and let the veteran know if someone is there. "If a veteran feels anxiety, they can cue on the canine," Lee says. "Then, based on the dog's body language – their ears are up and their tail is wagging – the veteran knows there's not something in their environment they should worry about."

In addition to the "sweep" or "search" command, the dogs are being trained to bring owners things like medications, turn on lights in a dark room, and sit in front of or behind their owners if someone is approaching. This gives the veteran

personal space, Lee says. However, the dogs won't be aggressive or make moves to protect their owners.

VA currently provides service dogs for veterans with physical disabilities but does not pay for PTSD or mental health dogs. In August, however, VA announced it will start a pilot program to provide service dogs to some veterans with mental health disorders.

Congress mandated the study of service dogs specifically for veterans with PTSD in 2010. VA launched a pilot study in 2011 but stopped it after two dogs bit veterans' children in their homes. Issues around dog health and training prompted VA to suspend the study for a second time in 2012. The study was redesigned and launched again in 2015, and all 220 veterans are expected to have their dogs in the coming months, Michael Fallon, VA's chief veterinary medical officer, told Congress last spring.

Meanwhile, a bill was introduced in the House of Representatives in January that would require VA to provide service dogs to veterans with PTSD. That bill is in the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

– Ken Olsen



Photo by Travis Heying

Effectiveness of oxygen therapy harder to deny

Veterans searching for TBI and PTSD solutions are finding their way to hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT), with or without help from VA or DoD. "More and more veterans are getting treatment in clinics and off-label places," says Paul Harch, director of the Louisiana State University School of Medicine's Hyperbaric Medicine Fellowship Program, which

fight for federal recognition of HBOT treatment for veterans and military personnel. "We can't understand why they won't at least try this when everyone is in agreement that it is safe ... and that there is increasing evidence of its effectiveness. The current

accepted therapy are drugs that have been implicated in the increased suicide epidemic among veterans."

Harch is in the midst of a 50-subject test to bolster the case for HBOT acceptance. VA and DoD argue that the cost of treatment is too high. But Harch says estimates of up to \$500,000 per patient are exaggerated; HBOT runs \$2,000 an hour on average, but therapy can usually be concluded after 40 sessions. Critics have called it a "placebo" even though veterans nationwide are raising funds to get into programs.

"While there is more awareness, access is still minimal, and getting it paid for is still a struggle," Harch says. "But it's getting more difficult to make statements that it doesn't work. There's too much information to the contrary."

The third edition of Harch's book "The Oxygen Revolution" was published in April.



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Recommended by
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- Prevnar 13[®] is not 100% effective and will only help protect against the 13 strains included in the vaccine

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- Prevnar 13[®] should not be given to anyone with a history of severe allergic reaction to any component of Prevnar 13[®] or any diphtheria toxoid-containing vaccine
- Adults with weakened immune systems (eg, HIV infection, leukemia) may have a reduced immune response

- In adults, immune responses to Prevnar 13[®] were reduced when given with injected seasonal flu vaccine
- In adults, the common side effects were pain, redness, or swelling at the injection site, limitation of arm movement, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, vomiting, joint pain, decreased appetite, chills, or rash
- Ask your healthcare provider about the risks and benefits of Prevnar 13[®]. Only a healthcare provider can decide if Prevnar 13[®] is right for you

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of vaccines to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Visit www.vaers.hhs.gov or call 1-800-822-7967.

Please see Important Facts for Prevnar 13[®] on the adjacent page.

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IMPORTANT FACTS



Pprevnar 13® (pronounced “Prev • nar 13”)

Generic Name: Pneumococcal 13-valent Conjugate Vaccine (Diphtheria CRM₁₉₇ Protein)

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- Pprevnar 13® is a vaccine also approved for children 6 weeks through 17 years of age for the prevention of invasive disease caused by the 13 strains of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* included in the vaccine, and for children 6 weeks through 5 years for the prevention of ear infections caused by 7 of the 13 strains
- Pprevnar 13® is not 100% effective and will only help protect against the 13 strains included in the vaccine

Adults 18 years and older:

- In adults 18 years of age and older, Pprevnar 13® is given as a one-time, single dose

Children 6 weeks through 5 years of age:

- In children 6 weeks through 5 years of age, Pprevnar 13® is given as a 4-dose series at 2, 4, 6, and 12 to 15 months of age
- **Catch-up schedule:** Children 15 months through 5 years of age who are considered fully immunized with Pprevnar® may receive 1 dose of Pprevnar 13® to elicit immune responses to the 6 additional strains
- The immune responses from the catch-up schedule might be lower for the 6 additional strains (types 1, 3, 5, 6A, 7F, and 19A) than if your child had received the full 4 doses of Pprevnar 13®

Children 6 years through 17 years of age:

- In children 6 years through 17 years of age, Pprevnar 13® is given as a single dose

WHO SHOULD NOT RECEIVE PREVNAR 13®?

Children or adults who have had a severe allergic reaction to any component of Pprevnar 13® or any diphtheria toxoid-containing vaccine should not receive Pprevnar 13®

BEFORE STARTING PREVNAR 13®

Tell your healthcare provider or your child's healthcare provider about all medical conditions, including:

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- Especially tell the healthcare provider if your child or you are taking medicines that can weaken the immune system, such as steroids (eg, prednisone) and cancer medicines, or are undergoing radiation therapy
- If you are pregnant or nursing, or if you plan to become pregnant

WARNING

- A temporary pause of breathing following vaccination has been observed in some infants born prematurely. Decisions about when to give Pprevnar 13® to infants born prematurely should be based on consideration of the individual infant's medical status, and the potential benefits and possible risks of vaccination
- The safety and efficacy of Pprevnar 13® when given to persons with a weakened immune system (such as HIV infection, damaged spleen, cancer, or kidney problems) is not known. Children or adults with a weakened immune system may have a reduced response to Pprevnar 13®

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS?

- In adults, the common side effects were pain, redness, or swelling at the injection site, limitation of arm movement, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, vomiting, joint pain, decreased appetite, chills, or rash
- The most commonly reported serious adverse events in children were bronchiolitis (an infection of the lungs) (0.9%), gastroenteritis (inflammation of the stomach and small intestine) (0.9%), and pneumonia (0.9%)
- In children 6 weeks through 17 years, the most common side effects were tenderness, redness, or swelling at the injection site, irritability, decreased appetite, decreased or increased sleep, and fever. Most commonly reported side effects in children 5 years through 17 years also included hives

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT RECEIVING PREVNAR 13® WITH OTHER VACCINES?

- In adults, immune responses to Pprevnar 13® were reduced when given with injected seasonal flu vaccine
- When given within 1 year following pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine, immune response to Pprevnar 13® may be lower

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- The safety and effectiveness of Pprevnar 13® when used in children less than 6 weeks of age is not known
- In a study in which children received acetaminophen prior to Pprevnar 13®, immune responses to some strains in the vaccine were lower compared with responses among children who received acetaminophen after vaccination only as needed
- Ask your healthcare provider about the risks and benefits of Pprevnar 13®. Only a healthcare provider can decide if Pprevnar 13® is right for you or your child

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- This is only a summary of important information. Ask your healthcare provider or your child's healthcare provider for complete product information
- Go to www.Pprevnar13.com or call 1-800-666-7248

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Rx only

Big data and the prescription mix

Trials show how biotechnology can prevent PTSD over-medication.

George Carpenter IV, chief executive officer of MYnd Analytics, Inc., can put into five words the basic principle behind the biotech company's program, PEER, to find better ways to medicate patients suffering from PTSD or depression: "Don't give the wrong meds."

The right meds, he argues, can be found in the cloud. Researchers who have studied MYnd Analytics' proprietary PEER process and reviewed its early findings concur. PEER houses in the cloud a database of more than 10,200 mental health patients' recorded EEGs (electroencephalograms) along with more than 38,000 measurable outcomes based on the medicines they have taken. That data and the technology behind it – described as "a cloud-based predictive analytics tool" – aim to prevent overmedicating or incorrectly medicating veterans and military personnel with mental injuries before their treatment programs begin, and reduce government cost by shortening trial-and-error periods and reducing treatment failure.

An initial EEG of the patient's brain waves is compared with others in the database using a machine-run algorithm. From there, a customized treatment mix that has proven effective for patients with similar EEGs can be identified and matched up.

"We get outcomes from people," says Carpenter, who plans to report PEER findings to The American Legion's PTSD-TBI Committee this month. "When you have a drug that doesn't work, we get that outcome, too, and we build it into the database. There's an immediate impact if you don't put people on the wrong drugs."

In 2013, MYnd began a clinical trial of 150 patients at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Since then, another 1,500 outcomes have been added to the database, and an additional 500 veterans from Southern California and Canadian Forces/NATO are onboard for the next set of trials.

So far, says Carpenter, the results are impressive and will soon be published in the *Journal of Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment*. Among the initial results of the Walter Reed trials, shared with the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health in November 2014, were that patients showed:



- 75 percent less suicidal thinking
- 144 percent improvement in depression scores
- 139 percent improvement in PTSD scores

Carpenter says published reports have shown standard trial-and-error pharmacological treatment of PTSD "only works about a third of the time. Most doctors you talk to will say, 'Yeah, these are safe and effective.' All the studies show they really are not as safe as we thought, and not nearly as effective. It's kind of a scandal that just after the research came out that said these drugs don't work very well, we increase use of them."

Often, treatment programs that rely only on trial-and-error drug prescriptions lead PTSD sufferers away from talk therapy or other activities that could help. "When your behavior is not your own, and you don't feel like yourself, a lot of these guys just stay at home. They do not go out."

– Jeff Stoffer

Go online to learn more about MYnd and PEER (Psychiatric Electroencephalography Evaluation Registry) technology as a tool for PTSD treatment. www.myndanalytics.com

The rising tide of mental health medicine

Fiscal year	PTSD	Generalized anxiety	Unspecified anxiety	Major depressive disorder	Other depressive disorder	Sleep disorders
2015	791,000	118,000	474,000	387,000	987,000	984,000
2010	552,000	82,000	284,000	282,000	833,000	570,000
2005	317,000	56,000	172,000	191,000	586,000	282,000
2000	181,000	51,000	123,000	160,000	345,000	93,000

Total number of outpatient prescriptions issued by VA, by year, for veterans with PTSD, anxiety, depression, sleep disorders and other mental health diagnosis Source: Veterans Health Administration

Note: Data include individual veterans who were diagnosed with PTSD during at least one VHA outpatient encounter, hospital or residential treatment encounter but may not have returned for treatment. A veteran may be counted in multiple years. They also may appear in more than one column because a veteran can have multiple diagnoses (i.e. comorbid conditions).

AMERICA'S NEXT



PRESIDENT

Clinton and Trump make their cases to The American Legion Magazine.

BY HENRY HOWARD

The 2016 election season has been characterized by its uniqueness, polarization, bravado and potential for history in the making, regardless of who moves into the White House in January. What's been lost in most media coverage is an examination of where the presidential nominees of the two major political parties stand on the issues, particularly those of greatest interest to the nation's largest wartime veterans organization.

The American Legion conducted exclusive one-on-one interviews with Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton and Republican nominee Donald Trump in August. (While some third-party candidates have received more support than in previous elections, The American Legion followed the lead of the presidential debate committee on inclusion of other candidates. At deadline, however, no third-party candidates had reached the threshold to be included in the debates and therefore are not in this question-and-answer coverage.)

The interviews with Clinton and Trump, which were conducted while both candidates visited Florida, focused on issues of importance to American Legion members, other veterans, U.S. servicemembers and their families. Both shared their views on VA health care, defense spending, border security and more.

Here are excerpts from the interviews:

Veterans have faced long wait times and other problems while trying to receive health care or benefits decisions at VA. What is your recommendation to solve this?

Clinton: I am outraged at the long waits and other scandals that emerged over the last several years that have really disadvantaged veterans and broken the bond that we should be treasuring between ourselves and our vets. I am going to do everything I can to accelerate efforts under way to fix problems in the system. I'm going to create a President's Council for Veterans because we need that emphasis. I want to be sure we are fixing the problems, but not creating an opening for those who have advocated for the privatization of the VA health system. That would be a terrible mistake and would make access to treatment, particularly specialized treatment, even more difficult for a significant number of our vets.

I want to do a better job linking up DoD,

TRICARE and VA. This remains a big stumbling block because people who leave the service often don't even get their records, and if they do, it's often disorganized. It's not as seamless as it should be.

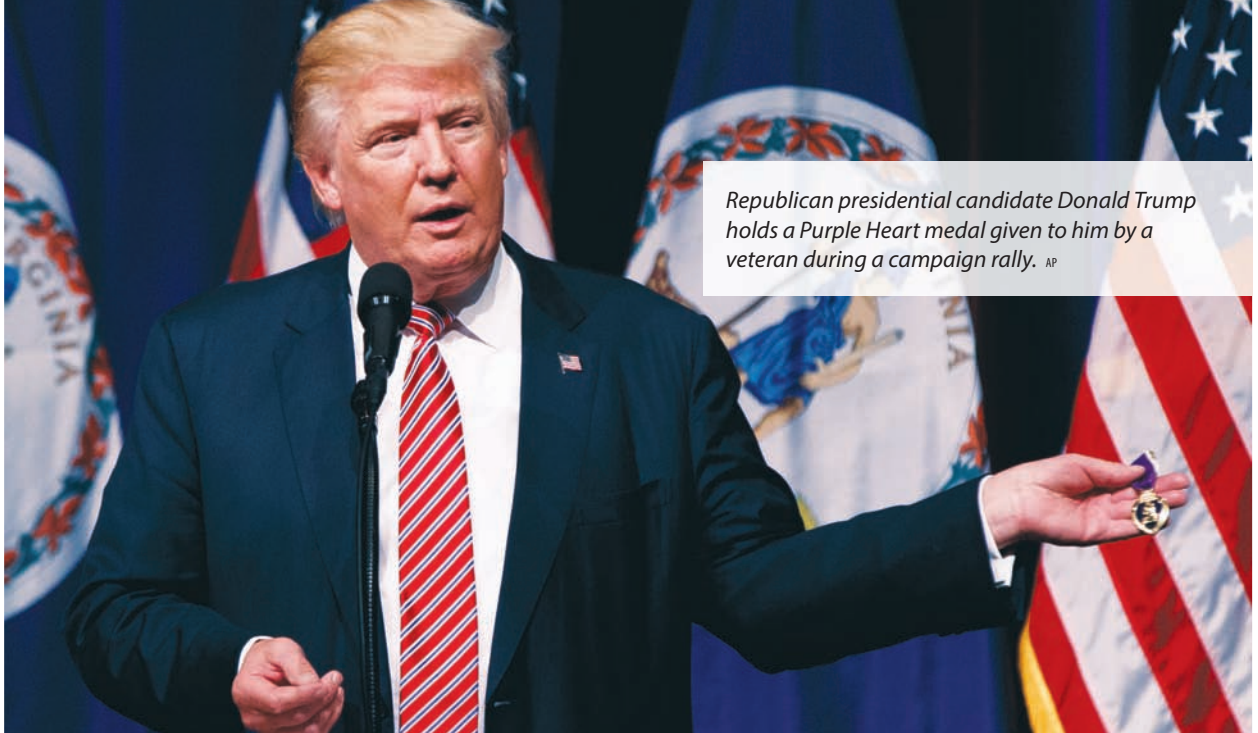
I take this as a high priority at the beginning of my presidency and will work on it every single day until we get it in as strong shape as possible.

Trump: Veterans have so many problems with VA. I've never seen anything like it. They are not being treated right. Their wait times – five, six, seven days, maybe even longer. Sometimes they don't even get to see a doctor. The guiding principle of the Trump Veterans Plan is ensuring veterans have convenient and timely access to top-quality care. The veterans health system will remain a public system because it's a public trust. But never again will we allow veterans to suffer or die waiting for care. One of the things we're going to do is that if they can't see a VA doctor, they are going to find a local doctor. It can be private – most likely it will be private – or they can go to a hospital outside that's different from where they can't get in or where they can't go through the lines. This could be a public or private hospital, and we will pay the bills and take care of them. These are great people and we will take care of them properly.

Many servicemembers are returning from the current wars with PTSD, military sexual trauma (MST) and/or traumatic brain injury (TBI). If elected, what would you recommend DoD and/or VA do to address and improve treatment in these areas?

Trump: A recent VA comprehensive study placed the number of veterans who die by suicide at 20 per day. We must do better for those who suffer the invisible wounds of war. First, we must make sure that the VA Office of Suicide Prevention is staffed, resourced and placed on equal footing with its DoD counterpart. In addition, I will increase the number of mental health care professionals, and allow veterans to be able to see mental health care outside the VA if they so choose. We will also increase investments in researching, treating and diagnosing traumatic brain injury. This is a top priority for me.

Clinton: As a senator, I was on the Armed Services Committee and we were already recognizing that



Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump holds a Purple Heart medal given to him by a veteran during a campaign rally. AP

PTSD and TBI were the new injuries of these wars in ways that were qualitatively different from what we had seen before. The PTSD that we were seeing not only included direct combat experience but sexual assault.

We've made progress but not near enough. Therefore I want to invest heavily in the best techniques, doing a comprehensive landscaping of what is working. Different things will work for different people. Can we create profiles that will give us more guidance as to how to deal with these very serious problems?

I'm going to approach this like we would approach some terrible epidemic that was killing people, maiming people, because that's the mentality I think we have to bring to this. We are losing 20 vets a day to suicide and a lot of them are just giving up. They feel such despair because they can't get any help that really works to get them through the emotional trauma that they have suffered.

It's physical, it's emotional, it's psychological, it's spiritual, it's cultural, and we need to treat it on all of those grounds and do a better job.

The armed forces are all suffering from cutbacks due to sequestration and budget reductions. How will your recommendations to Congress balance the need for a strong national defense with the need for a budget that reflects the realities of today's economy?

Clinton: I want to end sequestration, both on the defense and civilian side. I think it has been destructive to both. Clearly we know that on the defense side, there have been enough reports and

investigations about how we're falling behind in preparedness, and it's unacceptable.

On the civilian side, we have shut labs that were making promising breakthroughs and treating Alzheimer's, for example, and many other issues that have to be addressed, because of sequestration.

On the defense side, I am committed to a robust defense budget that will provide what we need to be prepared for the threats and adversaries we face today. Therefore, I want to get the best possible advice about what more we need to do to be prepared, and what it's going to cost. We're going to have a top-to-bottom review about what's working (and) what's not working, but I know we can't meet the demands that we face without getting rid of sequestration.

Trump: First of all, we have no choice. It's not like, "Oh, gee, we can just delay it." President Obama has delayed it. We have fewer ships than we have had in decades. We have arms that are old and airplanes that are very old. We can't even get parts anymore. They don't make them anymore. We get parts from the plane graveyards.

Cuts should instead be made to wasteful domestic spending and bloated bureaucratic budgets. But it's not a question of how we do it. We have no choice. These are very dangerous times, possibly as dangerous as we have ever had. We have a military that is depleted and we are going to take care of it.

The Islamic State is conducting terrorist attacks and inspiring others to commit violence worldwide. What's your strategy to defeat ISIS?

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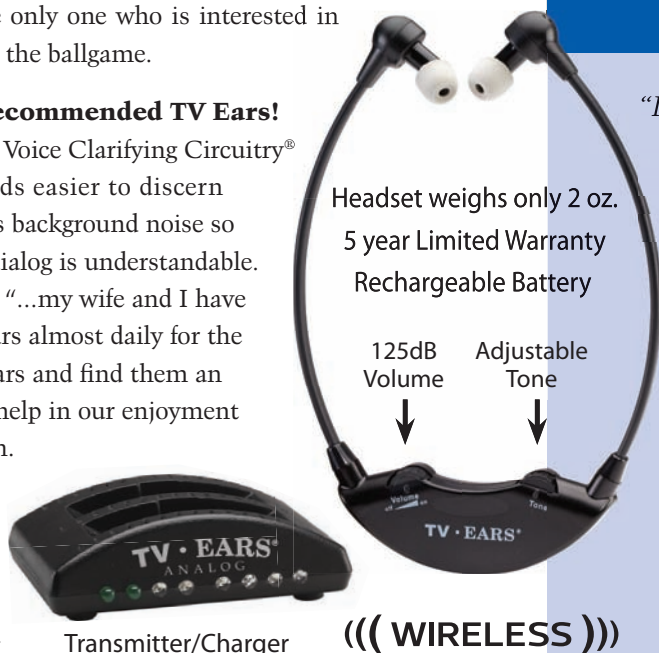
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— Robert Forbes, M.D., California

George Dennis, founder of TV Ears, Inc.

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Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton takes questions at a joint press conference sponsored by the National Association of Black Journalists and the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. AP

Trump: We must bring all of our allies into the fold who share our goal of defeating and destroying ISIS. Instead of nation-building like in Libya that creates operating and breeding grounds, we must work with all nations that want to eliminate this scourge to destroy them.

This means aggressive military strikes. It also means we must improve our intelligence-gathering operations and make huge investments in this crucial arena. It means we must change our immigration policy to keep ISIS from attacking here. Working with our military commanders, we must give our servicemembers the resources, strategies and policies they need to get the job done. Our military goal is not to spread democracy worldwide but to defeat ISIS and destroy terrorist organizations.

Clinton: I believe strongly that we have to defeat them and destroy them. We've got to have a multi-pronged strategy.

First, we have to continue and intensify our efforts to drive them from the territory that they occupy in Syria and Iraq, and we've made progress. American-led airstrikes have really helped. Our training of the Iraqi army has taken back territory. Our use of special forces to partner with Arab and Kurdish fighters has also been promising.

We have to keep working on that. We can't walk away from doing everything possible to destroy their headquarters in Raqqa, drive them out of Iraq and then destroy them in Syria.

That's not enough because they are a sophisticated enemy. They are fighting us online as well as

on the ground, and we're not doing yet enough to combat and defeat them online. I am absolutely adamant that we need to get the best support we can from our tech companies and experts from Silicon Valley ... (and) the Route 128 corridor in Massachusetts. Everybody needs to help us disrupt their sites, interfere with and end their recruitment and radicalization online.

We also have to have what I call an intelligence surge. There is not enough good sharing of the intelligence we have. We have seen that, unfortunately, in Europe, where ISIS has been successful in launching attacks. There is not the kind of seamless sharing of intelligence even across borders in Europe and between countries and the United States.

China is a threat with its terraforming program and involvement in cyber attacks. Given our debt situation with China, how should the United States strategically handle this relationship?

Clinton: It became apparent (to me) as secretary of state how aggressive the Chinese intended to be in making territorial claims in the South China Sea. I was the first to confront them and try to put together a strategy that will contain them and prevent them from not only intimidating their neighbors but also interfering with the free flow of commerce and international laws of navigation.

We strongly supported the Philippines in bringing their international legal challenge to China's claims, and I was quite surprised at how far the decision went in repudiating China. We've got a strong legal

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* In studies of patients with genotype 1 chronic hep C infection, the percentages of patients cured after taking ZEPATIER were: 94% (90 of 96 patients); 94% (115 of 122 patients); 95% (273 of 288 patients); 95% (179 of 189 patients); 96% (76 of 79 patients); and 97% (93 of 96 patients).

† In studies of patients with genotype 4 chronic hep C infection, the percentages of patients cured after taking ZEPATIER were: 97% (64 of 66 patients) and 100% (8 of 8 patients).

Important safety information

ZEPATIER is not for people with certain liver problems. Tell your health care provider if you have liver problems other than hep C. Also tell your health care provider if you have ever taken any medicine for hep C, have HIV or any other medical conditions, have had or are waiting for a liver transplant, or are nursing, pregnant, or trying to get pregnant. Tell your health care provider about all of the medicines you take. ZEPATIER may affect how other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how ZEPATIER works. Some medicines cannot be taken with ZEPATIER. Your health care provider can tell you if it is safe to take ZEPATIER with other medicines.

ZEPATIER may cause increases in your liver-related blood tests, which could be a sign of serious liver problems. Your health care provider will do blood tests to check your liver before and during treatment with ZEPATIER. Tell your health care provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms or if they get worse during treatment with ZEPATIER: loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting, feeling tired or weak, yellowing of your skin or eyes, or color changes in your stool.

If you take ZEPATIER with ribavirin, be sure you read the Medication Guide for ribavirin. Common side effects of ZEPATIER include feeling tired, headache, and nausea. When ZEPATIER is used with ribavirin, common side effects also include low red blood cell counts.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088. **Please read the adjacent Patient Information for ZEPATIER and discuss it with your doctor.**

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zepatier.com

 **MERCK**

Patient Information

ZEPATIER™ (ZEP-ah-teer) (elbasvir and grazoprevir) tablets



What you need to know about ZEPATIER

- Before you take this medicine, be sure you understand what it is for and how to take it safely.
- Keep this information.
- If you have questions about this medicine, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- Every time you get a refill, look at the Patient Information. There may be new information.
- Your healthcare provider may prescribe ZEPATIER with a medicine called ribavirin. Ribavirin is also known as Rebeto!®, Copegus®, Ribasphere®, and Moderiba®. **If you take both ZEPATIER and ribavirin, be sure you read the Medication Guide for ribavirin.**

What is ZEPATIER?

ZEPATIER is a prescription medicine used with or without ribavirin to treat chronic (long-lasting) hepatitis C virus (HCV) genotypes 1 or 4 infection in adults.

It is not known if ZEPATIER is safe or effective in children under 18 years old, people awaiting a liver transplant, or people who have had a liver transplant.

Who should not take ZEPATIER?

Do not take ZEPATIER if you have certain liver problems.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking ZEPATIER?

Tell your healthcare provider if you:

- have liver problems other than hepatitis C
- have ever taken any medicine for hepatitis C
- have HIV
- have had or are waiting for a liver transplant
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or trying to get pregnant. ZEPATIER has not been studied in pregnant women. We do not know if ZEPATIER will harm your baby while you are pregnant.
 - **Males and females who take ZEPATIER and ribavirin should also read the ribavirin Medication Guide for important pregnancy, contraception, and infertility information.**
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. We do not know if ZEPATIER gets in your breast milk and gets passed to your baby.
 - **Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby during treatment with ZEPATIER.**

Are you taking other medicines?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. ZEPATIER may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how ZEPATIER works. Some medicines cannot be taken with ZEPATIER. Your healthcare provider can tell you if it is safe to take ZEPATIER with other medicines.

- Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.
- You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that interact with this medicine.
- **Do not start taking a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider.**

How do I take ZEPATIER?

- **Take 1 ZEPATIER tablet at the same time every day.**
- ZEPATIER comes in a blister package of individually-packaged tablets. Keep the tablets in this package until you are ready to take your dose.
- Take ZEPATIER exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to take it.
- Take ZEPATIER with or without food.
- Do not stop taking ZEPATIER without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- If you take more than your prescribed dose, call your healthcare provider right away.

What if I forget to take ZEPATIER?

- Do not take two doses of ZEPATIER at the same time to make up for a missed dose.
- If you are not sure what to do, call your healthcare provider or pharmacist. It is important that you do not miss or skip doses of ZEPATIER during treatment.

What are the possible side effects of ZEPATIER?

Signs of liver problems. ZEPATIER may cause increases in your liver-related blood tests. This could be a sign of serious liver problems. Your healthcare provider will do blood tests to check your liver before and during treatment with ZEPATIER. Tell your

healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms or if they get worse during treatment with ZEPATIER:

- loss of appetite
- nausea and vomiting
- feeling tired or weak
- yellowing of your skin or eyes
- color changes in your stool

Common side effects of ZEPATIER when used without ribavirin include:

- feeling tired
- headache
- nausea
- trouble sleeping
- diarrhea

Common side effects of ZEPATIER when used with ribavirin include:

- low red blood cell counts (anemia)
- headache
- feeling tired
- shortness of breath
- rash or itching
- feeling irritable
- stomach pain
- depression
- joint pain

If you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away, tell your healthcare provider.

There may be other side effects to ZEPATIER that are not listed. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088. For more information or medical advice, call your doctor.

Where should I keep ZEPATIER?

- Keep ZEPATIER in its original packaging (blister package) until you are ready to take it. Do not take the tablets out of the original blister package to store in another container such as a pill box. This is important because the tablets are sensitive to moisture. The package is designed to protect them.
- Keep ZEPATIER at room temperature.
- Keep ZEPATIER and all medicines out of the reach of children.

General information about ZEPATIER

- Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in the Patient Information. Do not use ZEPATIER for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give ZEPATIER to other people, even if they have the same condition. It may harm them.
- If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider or pharmacist. You can ask them for information about ZEPATIER that was written for health professionals.
- For more information, call Merck, the company that makes ZEPATIER, at 1-877-888-4231 or go to www.ZEPATIER.com.

What are the ingredients in ZEPATIER?

The active ingredients are: elbasvir and grazoprevir. The inactive ingredients are: colloidal silicon dioxide, copovidone, croscarmellose sodium, hypromellose, lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, mannitol, microcrystalline cellulose, sodium chloride, sodium lauryl sulfate, and vitamin E polyethylene glycol succinate.

The tablets are film-coated with a coating material containing the following inactive ingredients: carnauba wax, ferrousferic oxide, hypromellose, iron oxide red, iron oxide yellow, lactose monohydrate, titanium dioxide, and triacetin.

This Patient Information has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

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Donald Trump accepts the GOP nomination for president at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland on July 22. Getty

basis, which we did not have before, to use diplomatically in confronting China.

We also have to ensure that our fleet is still present in the Pacific. It's important that we demonstrate our commitment to our mutual defense treaties, of which we have five in Asia. We have a preexisting obligation to protect our friends and allies. China needs to understand there's plenty of ocean to go around; there's enough space for everybody to benefit from commerce in the region. We should look for multinational resolution for some of China's claims that interfere with the rights of the Philippines, Vietnam and others, particularly when it comes to their desire to explore for oil, gas and other valuable commodities.

Trump: We have tremendous economic power over China. They have been ripping off our country for many, many years. They need us more than we need them. As strong as that sounds, it is 100 percent factual. We are going to have a trade deficit this year with China: 500 billion – with a 'b' – dollars. It's from the money, jobs and the products they have taken out of our country, meaning their access to our markets is the bulwark of their economy. We hold all the cards. We are going to deal with China very strongly.

I have very good relationships in China. I've made a lot of money in China. One of the biggest banks in the world is a tenant of mine in one of my buildings in Manhattan. I do a lot of business with China. China is tough to deal with but you can do very well if you know what you are doing. They have been ripping us left and right. We will be able to

handle China. But we don't use our cards; we don't play to our strengths. When they built that military complex in the South China Sea, they weren't allowed to do that. We'll have to deal with them. We'll deal with them on an economic basis.

What is the best – and most realistic – solution for protecting our borders?

Trump: (A wall along the U.S. southern border) is part of the solution, part of a complex puzzle. We have people pouring across the border. We have drugs pouring across the border. And I'm talking about a real wall, not a toy like they have now that is 7 feet tall. I'm talking about a real wall, like the Great Wall of China, which they built 2,000 years ago. It's 13,000 miles long. We need 1,000 miles.

It's a very easy thing to do. It will happen and, by the way, Mexico will pay for the wall. And the reason they will pay for it is because they could have stopped this horrible situation long ago between the drugs and the illegal immigrants pouring across the border. It's probably our country's fault; we never told them to stop it.

The National Border Patrol Council's 1,650 border patrol agents endorsed me. It's the first time they've done that in their history for a presidential election. Sheriff (Joe) Arpaio endorsed me. I know a lot about borders. We're going to have strong borders. We're going to let people come in but they are going to have to come in legally.

(The northern border) is a very long stretch. You're talking about a stretch that is much, much longer – much more complex. And, in all fairness, we have had much less of a problem with it.



Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton addresses delegates after accepting the party's nomination July 28, the final day of the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. Getty

Clinton: We are spending billions of dollars right now along our southern border with Mexico. We have dramatically increased the numbers of border guards and defensive equipment along our southern border.

In fact, there has been a slowdown and even reversal of migration from Mexico. What we're facing now are people coming from Central America primarily to escape horrific violence and drug gangs. We have to be vigilant and we need to be sure that we do whatever is necessary to protect our borders.

But our southern border is not our only border. Our northern border, which is the longest peaceful border in the world, is largely unprotected. Alert border guards captured the "millennial bomber" coming across the border around New Year's in 2000. We know that some of the 9/11 hijackers went back and forth from Canada.

When people talk about our borders, they are often only talking about our southern border. I'm talking about all of our borders, and I'm talking not only about car traffic, but also airplane traffic, ships, etc. We need more technology to protect our ports and our airports, and we have to be really clear about what it is we're looking for. There's a difference between children fleeing violence in Central America and drug traffickers, gun traffickers, human traffickers, and terrorists coming into our country, either legally or illegally. We have to upgrade our borders' security systems and use more technology.

I'm intent on comprehensive immigration reform and tightening our borders.

As president, how would you reinvigorate the U.S. economy, cultivate a culture of job growth, and help veterans and others launch small businesses?

Clinton: I have a very robust plan to get our economy going. I want to have the biggest increase in new jobs since World War II. We are going to do that with big infrastructure investments, advance manufacturing, clean energy, technology, all of which could create millions of new jobs.

I also want to be a small business president. I want to clear away the obstacles and give more people a chance to follow their dreams and start small businesses. That's going to require looking at taxes and regulations, and see what more help we can provide.

I'm particularly focused on veterans. I want to start at a much earlier stage than we do now and do a much better job of helping counsel people who are leaving the service. A lot of people have told me that, literally, they were called into a meeting, given a brochure, given a website, and somebody said, "Do you have any questions?" They didn't even know what questions to ask. And then they leave the service.

Trump: We're going to bring jobs back. The jobs are going to Mexico. The product is being made in many countries all over the world. We're losing our jobs. We're losing our manufacturing. We're going to stop. We're going to reset. We're going to bring jobs back to this country.

We're not going to let our companies go so easily. If they want to go, despite our efforts, and want to

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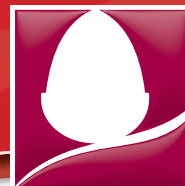


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sell their product in our country, without having a little bit of difficulty, to put it mildly, they are wrong. Once they know that, they won't be leaving. We're going to bring jobs back and we're not going to let companies leave very easily.

I have proposed changing our visa rules to ensure veterans get priorities for jobs. I also want financial reforms that make it easier for veterans, and aspiring entrepreneurs, to get credit.

There is no shortage of ideas – nuclear, coal, solar, wind, etc. – on how the United States should handle energy and rely less on imported resources. What is the federal government's role in guiding the United States to become more energy-independent?

Trump: I believe in unleashing the power of innovation through regulatory reform to make energy cheaper, cleaner, less expensive and more efficient. This will make our nation energy independent and add trillions in wealth to our economy. We have such massive regulations right now that the energy people aren't allowed to do what they have to do. Coal is being wiped out by this government; coal can be a powerful weapon, in terms of defense.

We want clean air, immaculate air. We want fantastically clean water. But we are going to get rid of some of these regulations that are putting companies out of business. The problem with wind and solar is that they need subsidies. Everything has its place, and I'm a fan of all forms of energy. We can't rely on the Middle East.

Clinton: I am adamant that we will be energy independent. We've made real progress thanks to natural gas, which has been a great boom in recent years.

The federal government has to lead the way, but we have to coordinate with states. I have something called the Clean Power Challenge to work with states. Some states are going full steam ahead. They are investing in clean energy. Iowa gets a third of its electricity from wind. Texas gets a big percentage of its electricity from wind. We've got other states investing in solar. We've got states looking at how to use more hydro. Then we have states which haven't done anything. We need to incentivize more states because we've got tremendous resources in the United States. I want us to deploy half a billion more solar panels by the end of my first term. I want enough clean energy to power every home in America within 10 years. These are all doable, and it will put people to work. The United States has to

lead the world in this area. Some country is going to be the 21st century clean energy superpower, and it'll probably either be China, Germany or us. I want it to be us.

As president, how would you ease the racial tensions that have gripped America?

Clinton: I'm deeply concerned about the divides in our country, and certainly some of what we've seen in terms of racial divides should concern every American. There are several approaches we have to take. We need to work with our police forces so they can do the best job on the ground as they are protecting communities. The police should be respected, and the police should respect the communities they serve. We need to do more to bring that about. Some places are doing a terrific job and we can learn from them.

We have to do some criminal justice reform, providing more support for training and the understanding of other ways to de-escalate tensions in difficult situations besides just reaching for one's gun. That is necessary in some instances, but those should be the exceptions – not the rule.

It's up to every American, not just our police. After the terrible murders of the five police officers in Dallas, the police chief there, Chief Brown, made a really important point. He said police are expected to deal with so much: mental health, failing schools, domestic disputes. That's a big burden to dump on our police forces. My view is everybody should be part of this: our faith communities, our business communities, our governments at all levels. Everybody should be asking themselves, "What more can I do to bridge these divides?"

Trump: It's two things: jobs and spirit. Our country doesn't have spirit. And we certainly don't have jobs. Look at the people who have looked for jobs. They have looked for months and months, and they have just given up. We need jobs, and we need spirit in our country. It is essential that we restore the bond of trust between citizens, and to have leaders who emphasize what we have in common – not apart.

Americanism brings us closer, as it is based on the trust that we are all equals, that we are all in this together, and that all Americans are united in common purpose and entitled to common protections. I want to emphasize our unity as one people under one flag. 🇺🇸

Henry Howard is deputy director of The American Legion's Media and Communications Division.

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TRAIL to the TOP

*Meet Charlie Schmidt,
The American Legion's
first national commander
from Oregon.*

BY MATT GRILLS

From about any place in town, Charlie Schmidt can see the hill that brought him to Burns, Oregon.

Fifty years ago, it was the site of an Air Force radar station – and the first assignment for 17-year-old Schmidt, fresh out of basic training.

He arrived after dark, driving a green 1963 Volkswagen Beetle, with only the faintest idea where he was headed. “I’m looking around like, ‘Where are all the bright lights?’” he recalls. “I thought, ‘I’m in the middle of nowhere.’”

Burns is even smaller now, and the Air Force left in 1974. But this area will always be special to Schmidt. Here is where his adult life really began – where he met Linda, the woman he’d marry, and embarked on a 28-year military career that took him around the world.

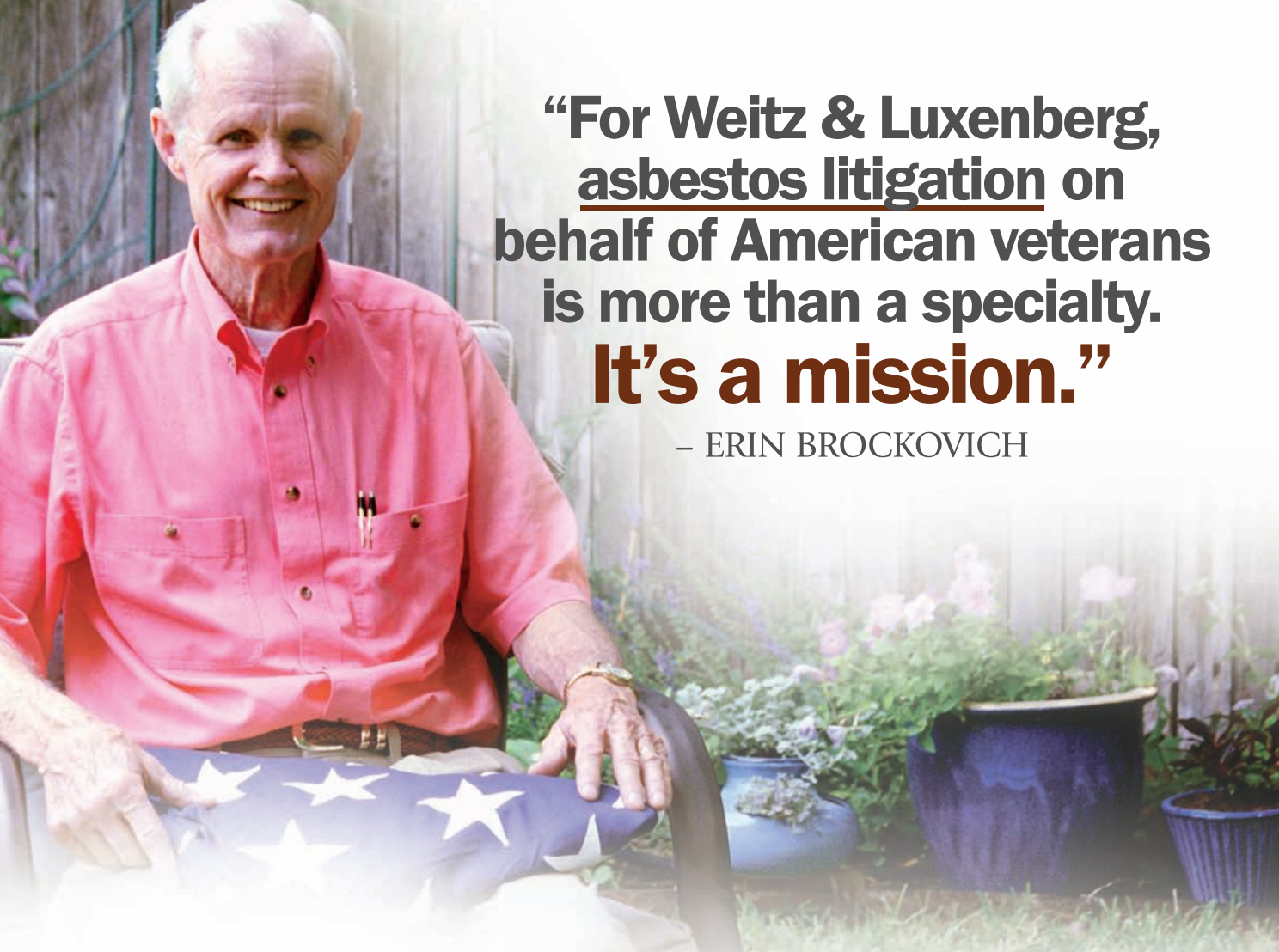
It’s also where Schmidt became an active and enthusiastic member of The American Legion, helping revitalize Harney County Post 63 and Oregon’s 10th District before taking on the role of department commander. More recently, he served on the National Executive Committee.

Last month, at the 98th National Convention in Cincinnati, Legionnaires elected Schmidt national commander – the first from the Beaver State. And those who know him best say he’s the man to lead the organization.

“Since I’ve been here, Charlie has been a mentor in every position we have,” says Ron Copeland, commander of Post 63 and a friend of Schmidt. “He’s taken everybody under his wing. He gives us direction and is always spot on. I’ve never seen a man work as hard as he has.”



Photo by Lucas Carter



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“The amazing litigators at Weitz & Luxenberg have won over \$17 billion in verdicts and settlements on behalf of asbestos victims and their families. If you’re a victim of asbestos exposure my advice to you is very simple: **Weitz & Luxenberg.**”

“And while I have your attention, I have a big issue with how our returning veterans are treated. I will stand with you in fighting for their rights... all day long.”

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Charlie Schmidt and his wife, Linda, live in Hines, Ore., not far from the armory where they met at a community dance in 1965. He is a past department, district and post commander, and Linda is in her sixth year as president of the Oregon American Legion Auxiliary's 10th District. Photo by Lucas Carter

'MY DAD WANTS TO MEET YOU' Schmidt grew up in Craig, Mo., the middle of three brothers. His father, Edward, was a farmhand who died young from emphysema. His mother, Martha, worked in a grocery store and later remarried. They didn't have much, but life in the country was sweet.

"We were always barefoot in the summertime, going down to the creek or playing in the barn," he says. "When we got bigger, we'd put fishing lines in the water or go hunting."

Schmidt's family went to church three times a week, and he was a Boy Scout. In high school, he played football and basketball, and graduated with a class of 25. Had he not enlisted, he might have become a farmer.

"Keep in mind this was 1965, and a place over in the western Pacific was heating up," Schmidt says. "I was going to go to college, and I had enough money to probably get through the first semester. But I said, 'What happens after that?' I knew my mother couldn't help me financially."

Deciding he'd rather go to Vietnam somewhat on his own terms than be drafted, Schmidt followed

in the footsteps of his older brother, Alfred, and joined the Air Force. And he did go to Vietnam, but not before his 18-month stint in Burns with the 634th Radar Squadron.

The unit worked up on a hill, and in their off hours airmen headed into town to find something to do. That's where Schmidt met Linda Presley during a dance at the armory. "I asked her out a couple of days later, and she said, 'My dad wants to meet you,'" Schmidt says, laughing. "Her mother said, 'You're going out with an Air Force guy?' They're here today and gone tomorrow."

Eldon Presley owned a gas station, and the pair drove by at his request. "Dad walked over and started staring at him through the window," Linda says. "Charlie took his sunglasses off, and you know, he has those light blue eyes. After I got home, Dad said, 'Well, I'm glad you brought him by, but he's got funny eyes.'"

"But after they got to know Charlie, they started telling everybody, 'How do you like the guy we picked out for our daughter?' They thought the world of him. He was like another son."

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TEN THINGS YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT CHARLIE SCHMIDT

10 He's particular about his dress shoes, shining them the way he was taught in the military. "If you look sharp, you'll feel sharp. And if you feel sharp, you'll want to look sharp. A little polish will do wonders."

9 On their first date, he and Linda saw "The Rounders," a 1965 movie starring Glenn Ford and Henry Fonda as wranglers who try to get rich by entering a bucking bronco in a rodeo.

8 Two of his favorite singers are Adele and Tina Turner.

7 His father called him Chuck. His mother insisted on Charles. His buddies call him Smitty. To everyone else, he's Charlie. "Just don't call me late for lunch," he quips.

6 He loves Dutch apple pie.

5 If he lived closer to Oregon's slopes, there's a pretty good chance he'd be a ski bum.

4 When the Schmidts lived in Omaha, Neb., they had a boat Charlie called the Blue Tuna – a name that lives on in his email address.

3 He puts hot sauce on everything. "And then he complains about heartburn," Linda says.

2 He sings in the shower.

1 When they want to unwind, he and Linda enjoy going four-wheeling.

In the spring of 1967, Schmidt was assigned to Hamilton Air Force Base in California, just outside San Rafael. Linda went to business school in Portland. He proposed, and they married in November – a month before he left for Vietnam.

With his flight delayed by fog, Schmidt couldn't help but feel anxious about the next 365 days. "I was probably the only one awake on that bus," he says. "You begin to think, 'What's this going to be like?' It kind of scared me."

He ended up at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, outside Saigon. As chief clerk of the 619th Tactical Control Squadron, Schmidt processed performance reports, award recommendations, R&R trips and the like, occasionally traveling to detachments throughout the country. But he never forgot he was at war.

During Tet, the enemy's rockets hit close to the base's motor pool and Schmidt's barracks, and a fellow he knew was killed in a firefight. Another time, he helped unload a truck full of body bags.

"These were dead Americans," he says. "That was hard to comprehend."

Following his tour, Schmidt spent a few months at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls, Mont., followed by 10 years at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, Neb. While there, he and Linda had two daughters. Andria, the oldest, is married to Peter, an Air Force veteran; they live in San Antonio with two sons and a daughter. Cori and her husband, Tony, are also Air Force veterans and live at Robins Air Force Base in Georgia. They have three sons.

Together they're a proud Air Force family, though Schmidt says he once flirted with the idea of leaving the service. Their first child was on the way, and he wanted to go back to school. But he liked the security of a military career and figured he'd stick it out a few more years.

In fact, Schmidt decided he'd try to become an officer. He enrolled at the University of Nebraska Omaha and took night classes in Offutt's bowling alley, in the basement of an old bomber plant. "We called it Bowling Alley U," he says.

He graduated in 1977, and while attending a noncommissioned officers academy in Louisiana, Schmidt learned he'd been selected for Officer Training School. Once commissioned, he received assignments that took him and his family overseas for a decade: three years in the Philippines, five years in Germany and three years in England. His final station was Lowry Air Force Base in Denver, where he retired as a major in 1993.

"I worked hard and earned everything I got," he says. "The Air Force was good to me, but I think I was equally good to it."

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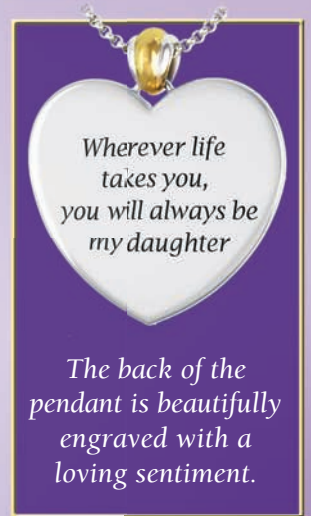
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Schmidt has been a mentor for several Legionnaires, including David Allen, commander of Oregon's District 10. Photo by Lucas Carter

'THE AMERICAN LEGION IS BACK' For a long time, Schmidt didn't think much about belonging to the Legion. Back in Craig, Alfred became the commander of Story-Hardin Post 164 and kept after his younger brother to join. But Schmidt said he didn't see a need. Then he retired.

He tried to get a physical on base and was told it took care of active-duty folks only. Was he enrolled at VA? He might check into that. Suddenly Schmidt realized what Alfred had been trying to tell him for years: transitioning military personnel and veterans have no better friend than the Legion.

In 1997, the Schmidts returned to eastern Oregon so Linda could be close to her parents. He took a job at the Harney County Federal Credit Union and wanted to get involved in the local Legion post. Trouble was, it barely had a heartbeat.

Talk of revitalization began, and a meeting was called. Several interested vets showed up, and the commander of a neighboring district – “a crusty old Army guy,” Schmidt says – took charge.

“So you guys want to get this post going,” he told them matter-of-factly. “You’re gonna need officers. How many Marines are here?” A man yelled, “Semper fi!” The district commander nodded and said, “OK, you’re the post commander.”

Schmidt watched as he appointed a Navy man vice commander and an Army veteran second vice commander. “I’m thinking, ‘What’s left?’ He said he knew there were some Air Force people there, and I said, ‘I was in the Air Force.’ ‘Good,’ the district commander replied. ‘You’re the adjutant.’”

At the time, Post 63 met in a room at the Burns armory. The new leaders conducted a yard sale to buy a U.S. flag, staff and base, and each pitched in to buy a service flag to represent his military branch. Knowing the Harney County Fair was coming, they borrowed a truck and decorated it with bunting for a parade. “We went down Main Street and Broadway, saying, ‘The American Legion is back,’” Schmidt says.

As adjutant and commander, Schmidt raised the Legion’s profile in the community, even securing the old city fire hall for a post home. He’s also challenged others – including David Allen, District 10 commander and vice commander of Post 63 – to keep up the momentum.

“When we were sworn in as officers, Charlie spoke about the privilege of being an American Legion member, and how we have a responsibility to keep this organization going,” Allen says. “That touched every one of us. He’s confident in our abilities and is a great judge of character. When you talk to Charlie one on one, you’re immediately comfortable with him. You know he’s your friend from the start.”

Thanks in part to Schmidt’s efforts, his district – the smallest in population – now leads the Department of Oregon in membership. As national commander, he’s eager to focus on recruitment and retention. With the Legion’s centennial looming, he believes now is the time to talk about the organization’s track record – what it has done and continues to do for veterans, in communities nationwide and on Capitol Hill.

“Whether you served in Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq or stateside, you served with somebody,” Schmidt says. “Your buddies looked out for you, and you looked out for your buddies. That’s what The American Legion does – we’re veterans serving veterans, and veterans serving America. That’s why I do this. Somebody took care of me, and I want to give back.”

Who misses out when a town or city has no American Legion presence? Everyone, including youth, Schmidt says. Since his own post came back from the brink, it’s sent several students to Oregon Boys State, two of whom went on to the Air Force Academy and military careers.

“That’s something to feel good about,” he says. “The Legion’s programs are building the next generation of good citizens.”

Schmidt says he’s encouraged by his visits to posts across the country, especially those with young veterans in leadership roles. “It’s refreshing to see. We should be hungry for members. I ask them, ‘Are you telling your buddies about the Legion?’ We’re as relevant as we were in 1919.”

He’s optimistic that the more members talk about the Legion’s legacy, the more veterans will realize its value. “Just like the light went on for me,” he says, “it’ll come on for them.”

Matt Grills is managing editor of The American Legion Magazine.

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GOT YOU COVERED?



From car rental to overseas travel, here's what you need to ask about your insurance.

Media Bakery

BY J.J. MONTANARO

Insurance can be a complex subject. It can be dizzying, even.

For that reason, many of us put off asking the tough questions that we know we should. But considering what may be at stake, it's worth getting the answers before you're confronted with an emergency.

Here are six questions you may want to ask your insurance provider before the need arises.

Do I need insurance when I rent a car?

If you've rented a car, you've probably been asked whether you want to pay extra for coverage offered by the agency. If your experience has been anything like mine, the process can be downright uncomfortable.

The fact that the agent is working hard to persuade you to buy the coverage tends to make you question whether you need it. If you have auto

insurance, your own policy typically extends to a rental car. So, subject to the terms, limitations and deductible of your policy, you may have coverage for the vehicle and any liability you incur from damaging property or harming others. But not so fast – that's only part of the story.

If you are in an accident, the rental car company may also suffer a loss from not being able to rent the vehicle while it's being repaired, a loss from its decreased value and the administrative expenses associated with the process. These would typically not be covered by your auto policy, so accepting the coverage, or at least the part associated with the rental company's losses, may make sense.

There's one final consideration before you sign on the dotted line: some credit cards also offer protection in coordination with your auto policy for rental company losses. Of course, you must use that card to rent the vehicle for those to apply.

If You Worked Around Gaskets, Packing, or Equipment Containing Asbestos

The Garlock and Coltec Bankruptcy Settlement May Affect Your Rights.

There is a bankruptcy involving claims about exposure to asbestos-containing gaskets, packing, and equipment. Garlock Sealing Technologies LLC, The Anchor Packing Company, and Garrison Litigation Management Group, Ltd., along with representatives of asbestos claimants, have filed a new plan of reorganization (the “Plan”). Coltec Industries Inc is also part of the Plan. If claimants approve the Plan, Coltec will merge with a company known as OldCo, LLC, and that company will file a bankruptcy case. Together, these companies are referred to as the “Debtors.”

The gaskets and packing were used in places where steam, hot liquid, or acids moved through pipes, including industrial and maritime settings. The equipment included compressors, engines, pumps, transformers, and other equipment that may have had asbestos-containing components, such as gaskets or packing. The Coltec-related divisions or businesses that may have sold asbestos-containing products or equipment were Fairbanks Morse, Quincy Compressor, Central Moloney, Delavan, France Compressor, and Farnam.

Who Is Affected by the Bankruptcy Case?

Your rights may be affected if you:

- Worked with or around Garlock asbestos-containing gaskets or packing, Coltec equipment with asbestos components, or any other asbestos-containing product for which Debtors are responsible, or
- Have a claim now or in the future against the Debtors for asbestos-related disease caused by any person’s exposure to asbestos-containing products.

Even if you have not yet been diagnosed with any disease or experienced any symptoms, your rights may be affected. The Court has appointed a Future Claimants’ Representative (“FCR”) to represent the rights of these future claimants.

What Does the Plan Provide?

The Plan is the result of a settlement agreement between the Debtors, the FCR, and committees representing asbestos claimants against Garlock and Coltec (the “Asbestos Claimants Committee”). The Plan will establish a Trust funded with \$480 million to pay asbestos claims against Garlock and Coltec. **If the Plan is approved, all claims**

must be filed against the Trust. You will not be able to file claims against the Debtor or protected parties. If you have claims only against Anchor, you are not expected to recover anything, as that company has no assets and will be dissolved.

The Plan replaces a different plan that was supported by the Debtors and FCR. The Plan provides more guaranteed funding for paying asbestos claims, and also pays claims against Coltec. The Asbestos Claimants Committee opposed the previous plan, but supports the Plan.

Who Can Vote on or Object to the Plan?

All identifiable asbestos claimants or their attorneys will receive the “Solicitation Package.” This includes the Plan, Voting Ballot, and other information. You can vote on the Plan by providing certified information about your claim, or making a motion to vote as described in the Solicitation Package available online or by calling the toll-free number.

You will need to vote on the Plan by December 9, 2016.

You may also object to the Plan and the adequacy of the FCR’s representation of future claimants, but must do so by December 9, 2016.

Do I Have to File a Claim?

Certain deadlines for filing asbestos claims against Garlock have already passed. **If you have an asbestos claim against Coltec based on a disease diagnosed on or before August 1, 2014, you must cast a ballot before December 9, 2016, or else file a claim by March 24, 2017.** If you do not file a claim, you may lose your right to bring your Coltec claim against the Trust in the future. Individuals diagnosed with disease after August 1, 2014 do not have to file a claim at this time, but may be able to vote or object to the Plan. In addition, if you have already filed an asbestos claim against Garlock, you do not have to file a separate Coltec asbestos claim.

When Will the Court Decide on the Plan?

A hearing to consider confirmation of the Plan will begin at 10:00 a.m. ET on May 15, 2017, at the US Bankruptcy Court, Western District of North Carolina, 401 West Trade Street, Charlotte, NC 28202.

For Information: www.GarlockNotice.com 1-844-Garlock

Before you rent a car, do your homework. Check with your auto insurer and credit card company to see where you stand.

Will my auto insurance policy cover items stolen out of my car?

It seems reasonable to assume that if your laptop, cellphone or even your vintage baseball card collection was stolen from your car, your auto insurer would reimburse you. That's not likely in most cases.

Instead, your homeowners or renters policy would protect your stuff. With a homeowners policy, this can be a bit of a challenge because deductibles and exclusions often limit the value of the protection. Check with your property insurance company to evaluate your coverage. If you regularly cart around high-dollar items in your car, consider a valuable personal property or personal articles floater to provide appropriate coverage. Luckily for me, it only took losing a laptop, not my baseball cards, to learn this lesson.

Does a spouse who doesn't work outside the home need life insurance?

Probably. This is one of the biggest life insurance blind spots I've encountered in decades of advising families on their finances. While replacing a breadwinner's income is a primary purpose of life insurance, it's not the only one.

Think about it. If something happens to a stay-at-home parent, especially one with young children, the remaining family members will need to adapt. The surviving parent may need to curtail work plans, aspirations and income potential to spend more time with the kids. He or she may also need to pay more for child care.

About 15 years ago, VA recognized this and began offering Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI) for spouses. Make sure your life insurance covers both of you. A life insurance calculator like the one at usaa.com/lifeinsurance can help you answer the most important question: do we have enough?

Does my mortgage insurance premium pay off my mortgage if I die?

If ever there was a misnomer in the world of insurance terms, it's private mortgage insurance (PMI). Those three words could leave you with the dangerous misconception that if you died, your mortgage would be paid off. That couldn't be further from the truth. Instead, this insurance, usually required for conventional mortgage loans

made with less than a 20 percent down payment, protects the lender if you default on your mortgage. While PMI may allow those without a hefty down payment to buy a home, it is not life insurance targeted to pay off your mortgage. It's also worth mentioning that one of the advantages of a VA loan is that it allows you to avoid PMI, even without making a down payment.

Does my health insurance coverage protect me overseas?

You'll want to know the answer to this question well before stepping on the plane or ship to your destination. Although we had to pay upfront, my work coverage through USAA reimbursed us when my wife spent the night in an emergency room in Germany a few years ago. Is that the case with your work coverage?

Medicare does not provide coverage while you're outside the United States. However, certain Medigap plans (C, D, F, G, M and N) provide overseas emergency health care. TRICARE and TRICARE for Life provide overseas coverage. The key is to understand your coverage before you are confronted with a health crisis away from home. If your coverage is likely to fall short, look into a short-term travel policy before you leave.

If I have Medicare or a Medicare Advantage plan, can I ignore the annual enrollment this year?

You can, at your own financial peril. Deciding between Medicare, a supplemental plan or Medicare Advantage used to be a one-and-done decision for many people. But in the rapidly changing medical environment, it's worth evaluating each year, from both a cost and coverage perspective. Take a look at your coverage during open enrollment this year, from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7.

Do your research, ask the questions you need to ask, and turn the complex into commonplace.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA Financial Planning Services, one of the USAA family of companies. USAA is The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services.

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WAR ON TERROR

Drones ISIS' latest weapon

Islamic State fighters are deploying small, off-the-shelf commercial drones armed with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and/or cameras to conduct operations against U.S. and Iraqi forces, Bloomberg News reports, citing sources at the Pentagon. Budget documents reveal that "small and tactical unmanned aerial systems ... pose a direct threat to U.S. and coalition forces."

ISIS is using drones "with full-motion video to look for attack opportunities ... monitor Iraqi Security Forces ... (and) provide target information for vehicles carrying suicide bombs," according to Bloomberg.

This new threat has led the Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Agency (JIDA) – the DoD office charged with countering IEDs – to request shifting \$20 million in a special fund to develop countermeasures against the new weapon.

DEFENSE

Undermanned Air Force



Recently retired Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh says his branch needs 40,000 to 60,000 more personnel to meet mission requirements, *Defense News* reports.

"If you look at just bedding down the F-35 over the next 15 to 20 years, it's going to take 30,000 airmen," Welsh explains. "If we're not allowed to divest the airmen who are doing other things today for our Air Force to put against the F-35 fleet, you start with 30,000 more who are required. If we want to expand (remotely piloted aircraft) wings, it's going to take 5,000 to 10,000 people to expand that mission area."

DEFENSE

Top U.S. defense contractors

1. Lockheed Martin Corp.

Amount obligated: \$29.4 billion
Contracts awarded: 66,353
Employees: 126,000

2. Boeing

Amount obligated: \$14.6 billion
Contracts awarded: 12,645
Employees: 148,750

3. Raytheon

Amount obligated: \$12.3 billion
Contracts awarded: 10,000
Employees: 61,000

4. General Dynamics

Amount obligated: \$11.8 billion
Contracts awarded: 20,822
Employees: 99,500

5. Northrop Grumman

Amount obligated: \$9.5 billion
Contracts awarded: 10,397
Employees: 65,000

Sources: General Services Administration, *Business Insider*



VERBATIM

... reminds me of the *Titanic*. Everything floating. Things that were in one room are now in another. I lost everything.

Sandi McGrew of Baton Rouge, La., whose ranch was devastated following days of rain in August. According to the Red Cross, the flooding in Louisiana is the country's worst natural disaster since Hurricane Sandy hit the East Coast in 2012.

Source: *The Washington Post*

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HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

Forgotten no more in San Francisco

More than six decades after the Korean War, a memorial honoring those who served was dedicated Aug. 1 in the Presidio National Cemetery in San Francisco.

Retired Marine Col. John Stevens conceived the idea for the memorial in 2009, when he was 88 years old.

"The Korean War is truly a forgotten war," said Stevens, a Pearl Harbor survivor who is a member of American Legion Post 384 in San Francisco. "We needed something to remind the people about the war and educate them about the war, which is our secondary mission. We'll do that in schools with materials that we provide, because these veterans won't be here."

Nearly 1,000 family members and supporters attended the dedication ceremony at the cemetery, where 2,273 veterans from the war are buried.

Retired Superior Court Judge Quentin Kopp, an Air Force veteran and a member of Post 238 in Pacifica, is president of the Korean War Memorial Foundation. Time has taken many Korean War veterans with whom he served. "I remember them with sorrow in my heart. They should be here today."

Kopp said the memorial's location is significant.

"This particular site is across the road from the national cemetery of San Francisco," he said. "It has a view not only of the bay and the ships that would traverse through the Golden Gate but a view of the Golden Gate Bridge itself ... this was a landmark cherished by those returning from war."

Gerard Parker, the foundation's executive director, welcomed more than 50 Korean War veterans in attendance and paid tribute to those who have passed on.



Veterans raise their hands to acknowledge their service during the Korean War memorial dedication ceremony at the San Francisco National Cemetery in the Presidio. Photo by David Andrews

"This day and this memorial are for you," said Parker, a Vietnam War veteran and member of Post 384.

U.S., Korean and U.N. flags stand at the memorial, which features pictures and plaques illustrating the war. The centerpiece panel depicts Marines climbing over a seawall in the invasion of the port of Inchon, an important victory. More than 1,000 donors helped fund the memorial, including Legion posts throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

Kim Jung-Boon, South Korea's vice minister of veterans affairs, said the war devastated his nation. "There were so many homeless and so many orphans," he said. "Now Korea is a shining star in the Orient. The sacrifice was not wasted."

Denny Weisgerber, a retired Marine gunnery sergeant, received the Navy Cross for his actions.

"It's a beautiful sight," said Weisgerber, a member of Post 546 in Santa Clara, Calif. "This monument faces the 38th parallel. This is the best Korean War memorial in the United States, and it's the only major one on the West Coast."

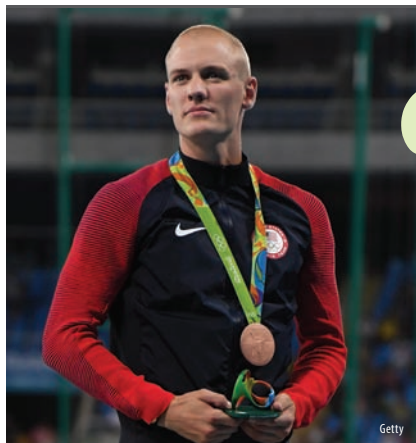
Still, amid the celebration, Weisberger mourned the lost.

"I'll be thinking of a lot of guys," he said. "I have a good friend buried out here, Medal of Honor recipient Staff Sgt. Robert Kennemore. And I think of those who didn't make it back. We were only between 18 and 25. A lot of people call it the 'forgotten war.' It will never be forgotten by us."

— Henry Howard

View a photo gallery and video online:

www.legion.org/honor



VERBATIM

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Twitter user Patriot18, on U.S. pole vaulter Sam Kendricks, who stopped mid-run and stood at attention when he heard the national anthem playing during his Olympic competition. Kendricks, 23, is a second lieutenant in the Army Reserve and one of 18 U.S. athletes in Rio de Janeiro who serve in the military. His father, Scott, served in the Marines and is Kendricks' coach.

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From Navy SEAL to Nashville

War veteran Pete Scobell trains his sights on a career in country music.

Photo by Brett Schreckengost

BY RICK MOORE

As a Navy SEAL, Pete Scobell made six deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan and other locations, participating in or leading various special missions and receiving two Bronze Stars. He served 17 years on active duty and two more in the reserves before pursuing his next career: country music.

Today Scobell is an up-and-coming country singer, with a well-received album and major tour experience under his belt, courtesy of his friends Wynonna Judd and her husband/drummer Cactus Moser. Scobell met the couple when he contributed a song, "For the Ones I Stand Beside," to the soundtrack of the 2014 Afghanistan war documentary "The Hornet's Nest."

"The producer sent my music to Cactus," Scobell recalls. "He called me up and asked if I'd be interested in coming to Nashville and recording an album. I said, 'Sure, I'd love to.'"

"It was one of those things where you don't really know how to get into the music business in Nashville, because it's like a room with no doors. But because of Cactus I was able to go there and record an album in RCA Studio A, where people like the Everly Brothers and Dolly Parton recorded, and have a great time doing it. That's how all this started."

Another part of "all this" was Scobell's recording of the single "Hearts I Leave Behind," at the request of Taya Kyle, widow of the late SEAL Chris Kyle. "I never served with Chris, but we each knew who the other was," Scobell says. "For the 2014 Patriot Tour, Taya was out on the road with us, and when I played her 'Hearts I Leave Behind' she asked me if I'd record it. Wynonna ended up singing on it with me."

The song hit No. 1 on the iTunes country chart without a major label or any promotion, and Scobell found himself on tour with Judd. The Nashville sessions with Moser then led to Scobell's debut album "Walkin' a Wire," which features music by some of Nashville's top songwriters and backing

by Judd's band The Big Noise. The album reached No. 46 on *Billboard's* top country albums charts.

Scobell says he's always had music in his blood. "It's something I've done my whole life," he says. "My mom was a music teacher. She died when I was 10 months old, and she left all her instruments. That's how I learned how to play. I was always trying to feel closer to her."

An American Legion member, Scobell comes from a family with a military heritage. "My dad and grandfather served in World War II," he says, "and my younger cousin is a SEAL as well. My uncle was Air Force in Vietnam. They never shoved it on us, but it was always talked about. My dad, every Fourth of July, would go to the cemetery and put flags on the graves of veterans. He didn't get choked up about too many things, but when he talked about service to his country it was something he was very passionate about. Same thing with my grandfather. My cousin and I looked up to them, and I think we both expected that of ourselves."

Scobell's service took a physical toll on him, and he spent a month at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence, where he was treated for traumatic brain injury (TBI).

"I do about 10 or 12 speeches a year talking about the 'blast effect,'" he says. "When you look at blast exposure, how it's passing energy through your brain, a lot of the symptoms will cross over between TBI and PTSD because there's a very deep emotional component to both."

Scobell lives with his young family in Aspen, Colo., where he is writing songs for a follow-up album. "It's nice to be home," he says. "As much as I love performing, I have to admit it's gonna be tough to go back on the road."

Rick Moore is a former professional musician and widely published freelance writer from Nashville, Tenn.



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Photo by Lucas Carter

LEGION BASEBALL

Mission accomplished for Arkansas at ALWS

Texarkana, Ark., Post 58 won its first American Legion Baseball World Series title Aug. 16 in front of 8,500 spectators at Keeter Stadium in Shelby, N.C.

Against Rowan County Post 342 – which, being 82 miles from Shelby, drew a pro-Rowan crowd – the Razorbacks (42-5) rallied from a 4-0 deficit and won the game with a four-run 12th inning, escaping a late comeback attempt to win 8-6 and bring home the state's first ALWS title.

Nick Myers provided a tie-breaking two-run single in the top of the 12th and teammate Parker Ribble followed with a two-run double to give Post 58 an 8-4 lead. Rowan County scored two runs in the bottom of the inning before Zac Harrington got the final out.

Team manager Dane Peavy said he saw something special in this squad that went beyond the ability to hit, pitch and field. "We knew what kind of talent we had," he said. "We knew we needed to put it together throughout the year.

"But we also knew what kind of family we were bringing in here. These guys were close. They have the camaraderie. When you have the mix of camaraderie and talent, it can be deadly. And I think we proved that tonight."

Harrington was the Razorbacks' ace in 2014 but missed the 2015 season with a partial tear in his flexor tendon. "It's what you dream of since you're a little kid, playing in front of a big crowd, teammates looking to you to make a big play," he said. "I'm just glad I got the chance."

Rowan County, which finished 41-14, also came back from an opening loss. That the team didn't go down without a fight in the 12th was no surprise to coach Jim Gantt.

"If we didn't have that tough mentality we wouldn't be here, and I'm proud of that," Gantt said. "They're coachable and they bought into what we were trying to do. We've probably had many teams that were more talented than this one, but we didn't have a better team than this one."

– Steve B. Brooks

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Adam Conway, Colonial Heights, Va., Post 284 (team captain)

Christopher Cioffi, Newburyport, Mass., Post 150

Luke Feliciano, Lyndhurst, N.J., Post 139

Samuel Craft, Greenville, N.C., Post 39

Robert Parkey, Brookfield, Mo., Post 182

Camden Dice, Gladwin, Mich., Post 171

Matthew Lamb, Doniphan, Neb., Post 53

Brett Williams, Yakima, Wash., Post 36

Greg Snyder, Tucson, Ariz., Post 59

POSTSEASON AWARD WINNERS

George W. Rulon American Legion Player of the Year
Will Smith, Texarkana, Ark.

Big Stick Award Zach Luckey, Omaha, Neb., and Angelo Bortolin, San Mateo, Calif. (27 total bases each)

Sluggo Award Tyler Villaroman, San Mateo, Calif.

Click Cowger RBI Award Angelo Bortolin, San Mateo, Calif. (16 RBIs)

Bob Feller Pitching Award Gerald Hein, Kennewick, Wash. (24 strikeouts in regional and ALWS competition)

Jack Williams Memorial Leadership Award
Texarkana, Ark., coaching staff

James Daniels Sportsmanship Award
Logan Vidrine, Texarkana, Ark.

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PSCC/Pocahontas Post 775,**Pocahontas, Va.** Chartered
June 21 (19 members)**Travis Fox Post 125,****Cowpens, S.C.** Chartered May 3
(26 members)**Post 101, Pelion, S.C.** Chartered

May 3 (21 members)



Photo courtesy CJ Entertainment

HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

Film tells story of Battle of Inchon

On Aug. 4, American Legion Hollywood Post 43 honored Korean War veterans by hosting the premiere of "Operation Chromite," a film that depicts the Battle of Inchon and stars Liam Neeson as Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

More than 200 guests attended, including Legionnaires and Korean War veterans, who walked a red carpet. "Operation Chromite" opened No. 1 at the box office in South Korea; its distributor, CJ Entertainment, has pledged a portion of U.S. box office sales to The American Legion.

"This film is about actual war heroes, both Korean and American, who helped turn the tide of the war and save so many lives," said Mark Shaw, CEO of CJ Entertainment, who served with the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea from 1989 to 1990. He told Korean War veterans that they might recognize the names of some places he served. "They are all still there, thanks to your service and sacrifice."

Angela Killoren, CJ Entertainment's chief operations officer, described the story of "Operation Chromite" as an example of how a few brave men can make a difference. "Oftentimes real life is more fantastic than art," she said. "We're so happy to be able to do the screening here at The American Legion."

Jean Paul White, a retired Marine Corps lieutenant colonel, enjoyed the movie. "I never forgot Korea," he said. "That was a long time ago, but it was a highlight of my life. I was a young sergeant, 23 years old, first time getting shot at. We did some good work there. They didn't like what I was doing, so they dropped a little artillery near me. I'm glad I went, but I'm glad I came back."

He added, "To me, and my friends, it's not forgotten. There are other people who remember too, (such as) the South Korean people. What we did enabled (them) to make it a great nation, and I'm proud to be a part of that."

For Korean War veteran Chuck Wiley, "Operation Chromite" was somewhat reminiscent of Clint Eastwood's "Letters From Iwo Jima," telling the other side of the story. "This gave me a lot more perspective on everything that was going on prior to the North Koreans invading South Korea," he said.

John Burk, a former Army drill sergeant, veteran of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and motivational speaker, said it's past time Korean War veterans have a movie made about them. "We're trying to change this belief of it being the forgotten war," he said. "Let's give them a voice; let's make more people understand what it was about for them. I think it's a beautiful thing they're doing."

"Operation Chromite" will screen at other American Legion posts across the nation, including Post 365 in Vista, Calif., and Post 973 in Chicago.

— Michael Hjelmstad

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AWARDS

Legion honors academy grads

Last spring, The American Legion's national vice commanders presented awards to exceptional students at the five military academies.


2nd Lt. Brian Bui

Alpharetta, Ga.

Bui received the Legion's award for the highest standing in chemistry at the U.S.

Military Academy in West Point, N.Y. National Vice Commander David Gough presented the award.


Ens. Ethan Dalton

Whittier, Calif.

Dalton received the Legion's award for the highest marks in English, history and

government at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. National Vice Commander Alan Davis Sr. presented the award.


Ens. Meghan Fornaro

Charlton, Mass.

Fornaro received the Legion's award for excellence in athletics

at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn. National Vice Commander George Cushing presented the award.


2nd Lt. Jeffrey Herrala

Andover, Minn.

Herrala received the Legion's award for the highest proficiency in

all academic subjects at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. National Vice Commander Jimmy Lane presented the award.


Ens. Laurel Anne Ryback

Wesley Chapel, Fla.

Ryback received the Legion's award in national security at the

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, N.Y. National Vice Commander John Hargreaves presented the award.



Photo by Clay Lonneth

YOUTH

Boys Nation turns 70

A staple of The American Legion's Americanism program since 1946, Boys Nation celebrated its 70th anniversary in late July as committed as ever to preparing high school boys for participation in the government process.

A day after they arrived at Marymount University in Arlington, Va., the 98 Boys Nation senators immediately went to work, electing Aaron Jaffe of Connecticut as president pro tempore and Pranoy Bahera of Oklahoma secretary.

Delegates also visited the National Mall, paying their respects at the World War II, Vietnam War and Korean War memorials. They enjoyed dinner at Post 136 in Greenbelt, Md., and met with local Legionnaires as well as National Commander Dale Barnett and Auxiliary National President Sharon Conatser.

"You have a special duty," Barnett told the gathering of young men. "Your country depends on you right now to do your duty, to lead ... and to lead this nation in the direction you want it to go."

As is tradition, two Boys Nation senators laid a wreath on behalf of their class at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

On July 27, delegates engaged in unusually intense debates that ended with the election of Anighya Crocker of Tennessee as president and Choteau Kammel of Nebraska as vice president. This year saw the introduction of new electronic voting devices that allow for much quicker vote tabulation; every bill had passed through committee by that night – a first according to longtime Boys Nation staffers. Ultimately, the Class of 2016 heard more bills (44) than any previous group.

Near the end of the week, Boys Nation and Girls Nation delegates visited Capitol Hill together to meet with staffs of their senators and observe how the political process works in Washington. (The Senate itself was in recess.)

During their final Senate session and graduation ceremony July 29, the young men watched a video presentation honoring American Legion Past National Commander Robert Turner, who serves as director of activities at Boys Nation and has been on staff for 34 years.

"I simply just try to do my job," Turner said. "I believe in the young people of this country. If I didn't, I wouldn't be here."

– Andy Proffett

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CAREERS

How to write networking letters



We all know that networking is the single most effective way to find a new job. When you network your way into a company, you've given yourself an instant competitive edge over other

candidates who simply upload their résumés in response to job postings. Someone already knows who you are.

A networking letter makes a connection between yourself and someone you know, most often colleagues, supervisors, friends, neighbors and college alumni. Your goal is an interview with your contact's company or with someone they know at another company. It might be for an advertised job or to explore opportunities in the future.

The writing tone and style of networking letters can vary widely. If you're writing to someone with whom you've worked for years, they know you, what you do and how well you do it. These letters can be concise, summarizing a few highlights of your career along with a statement about your current objectives. Even though you know the person well, make it easy for him or her to help you by providing basic information.

Conversely, if you're writing to a new contact who was referred to you by that same colleague, they will not be familiar with you, so write a more complete letter with highlights of your work experience, achievements, education and current objectives. This letter will be more formal in style and tone, and longer than the quick note mentioned in the paragraph above.

You can send both of these letters as e-notes – letters that are the email messages and not separate attachments. It's much better to instantly engage the reader with the email message itself; they can then click to read the attached résumé.

If you commit yourself to a proactive networking campaign, your job search will be faster, easier and more successful.

Wendy Enelow is co-author of "Modernize Your Résumé: Get Noticed ... Get Hired" and "Expert Résumés for Military-to-Civilian Transitions."

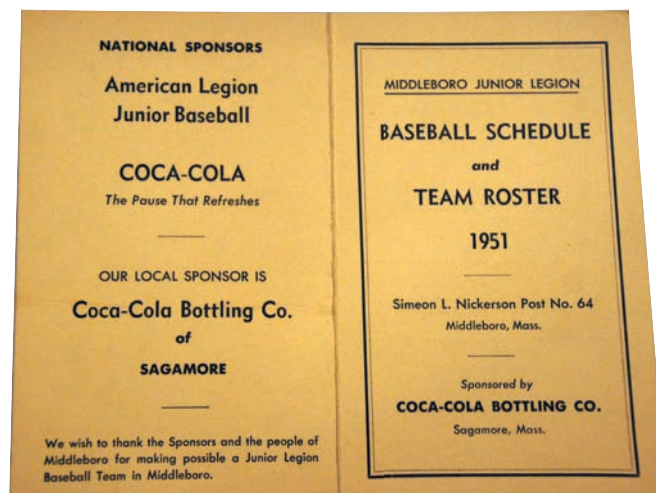


Photo courtesy Mike Palmer

CENTENNIAL

Post 64, Middleborough, Mass.

In 1951, John Rockwell, commander of American Legion Post 64 in Middleborough, Mass., solicited the nearby Coca-Cola Bottling Co. of Cape Cod in Sagamore to sponsor the post's Junior Legion Baseball team for an entire season, at \$150.

In his fundraising letter, Rockwell outlined the annual costs: "To run our team is a very expensive proposition these days. Baseballs alone, at the cheapest price, cost nearly \$30 a dozen and we'll use at least four dozen this season. Bats, caps, umpires, transportation and many other incidentals add up quickly."

In response, local Coca-Cola Bottling Co. President Musch Kayajan wrote, "I am certainly happy to take part in sponsoring this team and hope I have the opportunity to get up and see a game some time."

Share your post's legacy

Upload stories, photos and videos of your post's history on the Legion's Centennial Celebration website.

www.legion.org/centennial

EDUCATION

Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and on-the-job training



Q: *I was recently discharged from the Coast Guard and have been hired by the local police department. I hear I may be able to receive my Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits while employed at the police department. Can you explain how this works?*

A: Apprenticeship or on-the-job training (OJT) is where you learn a trade or skill. You will generally enter into a training contract for a specific time with a participating employer or union; at the end of the

training period you will receive a job certification or journeyman status. In most instances you will receive a salary from your employer while you are training. As you progress through the training, your skill level increases and so does your salary.

You will receive 100 percent of your applicable Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) during the first six months of training. Each six-month period following that will see a 20 percent decrease in the MHA you get. You can also receive up to \$83 per month for books and supplies.

Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Arizona. askvalerie@legion.org

AGING IS NATURAL, GIVING UP ON YOUR VIRILITY ISN'T!

**BRING BACK THE BEST YEARS OF YOUR LIFE
... HERE'S HOW ONE MAN DID IT!**

Although this would otherwise be an embarrassing subject – I feel strongly about sharing my recent experience with others my age. Simply put, **I'm 57 years old and even though I'm in good health overall, my body just doesn't respond like it used to.** Intimacy and virility have become an issue.

Recently, I found myself struggling to "perform." I began losing my confidence and with it, my sense of "male prowess". I was feeling a great deal of pressure and embarrassment, my wife was beginning to think it was something she did or didn't do – it wasn't.

I wasn't comfortable discussing my situation with anyone – not even my doctor – so in a desperate attempt to find some help, I privately did some research on the web.

First, I found that many **HEALTHY** men experience a decrease in virility with age. **I wasn't alone!** Good blood circulation is the key to maintaining virility, and there are a number of factors that can weaken it.

Armed with this new information, I began to search through the many "male enhancement" products on the net. I found a pill and patch for everything and anything, but **one product stood out among them - PROZEMAX** is completely different – not a pill or a patch, this surprisingly effective topical formula is delivered directly to the "source" – where I needed it most. Best of all, **PROZEMAX is recommended by a Leading Physician**, and you don't need a prescription. I don't need to swallow a pill, prescription or not, or wear some kind of patch on my shoulder!

After trying **PROZEMAX** just once, I could actually feel it working immediately, it felt incredible! I **LITERALLY STARTED FEELING IT IN UNDER 60 SECONDS!** What a difference! I couldn't believe it - virility like I haven't felt in years! My driver's license says I'm 57, but thanks to **PROZEMAX**, my wife says I'm 18 again! It feels great! I now know it's normal to experience some problems with virility at my age, but **PROZEMAX** let me deal with it naturally. No pills – no patches – and even better – no embarrassing appointment with the doctor.

Try **PROZEMAX**. You'll feel it working immediately, and get back to living your life!

Jim S.
Miami, FL

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Individual results may vary. These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information featured above has been compiled from actual letters we've received from a few of our many satisfied customers. P011AMLE0916

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PERSONAL FINANCE



Five reasons all kids should have savings accounts

FOCUS ON FINANCES



J.J. MONTANARO

I'm not sure why I took the road that led me to become a financial planner here at USAA, but I suspect it can be traced back to a passbook savings account I had as a child. I can still see the little blue book that was stamped with my new balance each time I made a deposit.

Everyone wants the best for their kids, and part of equipping them for life may be setting them up with the modern version of my old account. Here are five reasons to open a savings account for your child:

■ **It gets them in the money game.** Explaining money to children is not necessarily easy, especially in today's digital world. That's one reason a piggy bank is still a valuable training tool. When I was a kid, I began learning about finances with weekly trips to the store; I could buy candy with what I'd saved. A savings account allows you to kick that lesson up a notch.

■ **It introduces the savings habit early.** Saving is central to financial security, and as a country we're not doing too well on this front. Start early with your kids and create positive habits by urging them to save part of their allowance, baby-sitting earnings or lawn-mowing income.

■ **It helps you encourage them to save.** Not only can you teach your children what savings is all about, you can incentivize it. At our house, we matched any money the kids added to their savings accounts until they turned 18. That provided a larger payout on those fast-food jobs our kids worked – at least for the portion of their earnings that made its way to their savings accounts.

■ **It gives them spending options.** I'm a big fan of 529 college savings plans, but education is not the only reason your kids may need money when they become young adults. They can use their savings for other financial needs that arise. But don't forget that a student's money is taken into consideration when he or she applies for financial aid for college.

■ **It's a stepping stone.** First, opening a savings account gives your children access to your bank or credit union's communications, tools and apps designed to teach them about money. And as they get older, money in savings accounts can fund investment accounts that will help them understand stocks, bonds and the power of compound returns. Heck, for teenagers with jobs, it might even be an opportunity to get an early start on building for the future by funding a Roth IRA. From a more practical perspective, it could be the path to a car or deposit on an apartment.

If you haven't already, set your children up with savings accounts today. It may not turn them into financial planners, but it can help prepare them for the fiscal responsibility of adulthood.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. Submit questions for him online.

www.legion.org/usaa/focusonfinances

Get your child started today: www.usaa.com/inet/pages/youth_first_start_savings_main

MEMORIAM

Gierke was first Vietnam War national commander



Past National Commander Herman Fredrick "Sparky" Gierke, the first Vietnam War veteran to lead The American Legion, passed away Aug. 7. He was 73.

A longtime member of American Legion Post 29 in Watford, N.D., Gierke's slogan as national commander in 1988-1989 was "Proud to be an American."

Prior to his election as national commander at the Legion's 70th National Convention in Louisville, Ky., Gierke served as commander of Post 29 at age 36, as Department of North Dakota commander from 1983-1984, and as national vice commander from 1985-1986.

During his tenure as national commander, Gierke was called upon to lead the initial challenges to the Supreme Court's *Texas v. Johnson* decision, which extended free speech rights to desecration of the U.S. flag.

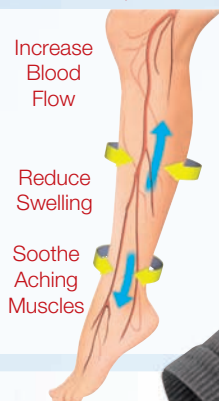
Gierke served in the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps, in which he acted as a trial judge in more than 500 courts-martial in Vietnam. He also served as justice of the North Dakota Supreme Court and chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, following a nomination by President George H.W. Bush two years after serving as the Legion's national commander.

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How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**, fax (317) 630-1280, e-mail reunions@legion.org or submit information via our website, www.legion.org/reunions.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are publicized free of charge.

Your notice will appear on our Web site within a week and will remain available online until the final day of your reunion. Upon submission, please allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, The American Legion Magazine will publish a group's listing only once a year.**

Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail reunions@legion.org.

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life

memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.** Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to **The American Legion Magazine, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.** Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

1st Mobile Comm Group AACs-AFCS, Portland, OR, 9/28-10/2, Stanley Phillips, (360) 978-6789, sfills@earthlink.net; **45th/813rd Msl Sec Sqdn**, Rapid City, SD, 6/13-16, Steve Sehi, (402) 310-4326, hsolo44@hotmail.com; **96th Sec Police Sqdn 7th Sec Forces Sqdn (Dyess AFB, TX)**, Abilene, TX, 5/17-21, John Havard, (325) 677-2938, johndhavard@yahoo.com; **601st, 615th AC&W (Germany)**, Myrtle Beach, SC, 4/24-28, Fay Dickey, (425) 422-5171, fadvickey@gvctel.com

ARMY

2nd Bn 75th FA/3rd Bn 20th FA Bn, San Antonio, 6/9-11, Kory James, (580) 284-9719, korya.james.ctr@mail.mil; **119th AHC & Support Orgs (Pleiku, Vietnam)**, Branson, MO, 9/19-21, Spencer Gardner, (817) 629-3155, sgardner619@hotmail.com; **446th Trans (Vietnam, 1967-1968)**, St. Simons Island, GA, 2/25-3/5, Dave Johnson, (912) 242-0271, davessi43@comcast.net; **A Co 2/12 1st Air Cav A Co 2nd Bn 12th Div (Jan 1966-June 1967)**, The Villages, FL, 3/12-18, Tony Oliveira, (610) 390-8088, upsvast42@aol.com; **C Co 76th Tank Bn 11th Abn Div (1955-1957)**, Gordonsville, TN, 11/12-13, Luther Clinch, (615) 897-4090; **HAWKers Air Def Arty**, Huntsville, AL, 4/27-30, Calvin Bridges, (828) 256-6008, woodhouse_1@charter.net

MARINES

F-2-7, Utter's Battalion (1965-1966), Asheville, NC, 9/19-22, Bob Gallaher, (615) 360-7927, gal2001@comcast.net; **HMR/HMM/HMH-361 (All Eras)**, Arlington, VA, 9/7-10, John Ruffini, (850) 291-6438, ruffinich53@gmail.com; **Hotel Co 2nd Bn 7th Mar (Vietnam, 1965-1970)**, Kenner, LA, 6/22-25, David McCann, (504) 909-9972, nopdret@gmail.com; **L&R MAG-12 (Chu Lai, Vietnam)**, Pigeon Forge, TN, 11/7-10, Paul Platt, (801) 782-2468, pfllatt@msn.com

NAVY

Conserver ARS 39, San Diego, 4/20-22, Dale Hower, (619) 449-7104, dcwoodworking1@yahoo.com; **Tattnall DDG 19**, New Orleans, 9/17-22, Richard Harmon, (386) 235-8723, dharmomlpgal@aol.com; **Tin Can Sailors-Destroyer Sailors Escort Assn (TCS-DESA) "Bull Session,"** Virginia Beach, VA, 10/28-29, I.C. Smith, (804) 445-1510, iseasmith@aol.com

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Post 355, CA: Agustin Cano, Carlos Gonzales, Donald Lowe, Alan Minner
Post 142, FL: Andrew Buglione
Post 222, FL: Arnold O. Brynmann, Paul K. Flanagan, Steven Newman
Post 240, FL: William R. Eastman, Ronald T. Woolsey

Post 274, FL: Mike Adcock, G. Van Dusseldorp
Post 330, FL: Theodore Schwartzhoff
Post 347, FL: Thomas E. Cranston, Thomas Cruce, Adrien Paquette, Robert L. Pethtel, Angelo Pierro
Post 42, IN: Larry W. French
Post 232, NC: George Shaw
Post 37, NE: John D. Nadolski
Post 144, VA: Russell T. Beggs, Percy S. Crouch, Robert E. Davis Jr., Stanley I. Douglas, Guy E. Haynes, Donald J. Hoy, Ronald M. Kelson, James W. Nunnally, William T. Proffitt Sr., James A. Wright, Linwood W. Zitta

IN SEARCH OF

1st Bn 5th Mar Div Bravo Co 1st Plt (Vietnam, 1970), Butch Jenifer, (301) 580-4273, cejen1549@gmail.com
2nd Bn Plt 2042 (Parris Island, SC, Sept-Nov 1969), Butch Jenifer, (301) 580-4273, cejen1549@gmail.com
3rd Plt A Co 4th Cbt Eng Bn 4th Inf Div (Pleiku, Vietnam, 1969-1970), Ken Longer, (585) 659-8670, dklonger@yahoo.com
3rd Plt D Co 1/503 Abn Inf Rgt 173rd Abn Bde (Apr 1969-Apr 1970), Gary Jugenheimer, (608) 255-4071, gary.jugenheimer@gmail.com
7th Inf Div 31st Rgt HQ Co (Korea, 1953-1954), Philip Kramer, (410) 668-4862, pm9015@msn.com
85th AAA 97th Grp AAA D Btry Baseball Team (Okinawa, 1952-1953), Brud Coombs, (845) 855-3376, bseecoach@comcast.net
178th Supply & Repair Parts Co (Camp Davies, Saigon & Cholon, Vietnam, 1967-1968), Steve Scruggs, (614) 565-1569, sscruggs@insight.rr.com
625th AC&W Sqdn (Fire Island, 1952), R.S. Spring, (518) 597-4577
775th Radar Sqdn (Cambric, CA, 1972-1974), Tom Hines, (804) 539-5539, timeup@live.com
1607th Communications & Electronics Sqdn, All Shops (Dover AFB, DE, 1961-1964), Joel Gray, (517) 449-7076, 1607thcomm.elect@gmail.com
Army Replacements Amphib Landing at Inchon (Nov 1950), Adrien Freeman, (770) 973-3763, afree3763@bellsouth.net
B Co 508th MP Bn (Berchtesgaden, Germany, 1956-1957), Alan Kober, (508) 528-1382, alankober@comcast.net
Bravo Co 3rd Bn 32nd Armor (1974-1975), Chuck Kennedy, (520) 433-0352
HHC 2nd Bn 11th Inf 4th Inf Div (Fort Carson, CO, Dec 1971-Mar 1972), David Laston, (317) 539-2769, marieisdtd@tds.net
Leary DD/DDR 879 (1944-1974), Al Redden, (308) 530-1284, alshr@allophone.com
LST 729 (Okinawa, 1944-1946), Reginald Guillot, (985) 518-5056
Midway Island Naval Stn 3080, Supply Dept (1955), Walter Hannowsky, (317) 294-0763, plumdun@comcast.net

OCS Class of 1966, James Amendolia, (480) 299-4657, jimamendolia@gmail.com

TAPS

Benny M. Bailey, Dept. of Florida. Nat'l Homeland Security & Civil Preparedness Cmte. Memb. 2007-2013 and Nat'l Guard & Reserve Forces Cmte. Memb. 2013-2016.
Randall W. Busch, Dept. of Nebraska. Nat'l Internal Affairs Cmsn. Memb. 2013-2016, Nat'l Trophies, Awards & Ceremonials Cmte. Memb. 1982-1999 and Nat'l Trophies, Awards & Ceremonials Cmte. Chmn. 1999-2013.
Edward J. Carney Jr., Dept. of Connecticut. Dept. Cmdr. 2005-2006, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1999-2000, Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1995-1996, Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cmsn. Memb. 2005-2009 and Nat'l VA&R Region 1 Memb. 2003-2005.
Hon. H.F. "Sparky" Gierke III, Dept. of North Dakota. Nat'l. Cmdr. 1988-1989, Nat'l Vice Cmdr. 1985-1986, Dept. Cmdr. 1983-1984, Nat'l Advisory Cmte. to the Nat'l Cmdr. Vice Chmn. 1990-1991, Nat'l Advisory Cmte. to the Nat'l Cmdr. Chmn. 1989-1990, Nat'l Constitution & By-Laws Cmte. Memb. 1983-1985 and 1986-1988, Nat'l Finance Cmsn. Ex-Officio Memb. 1988-1989, Nat'l Overseas Graves Decoration Trust Chmn. 1988-1989, Nat'l Overseas Graves Decoration Trust Memb. 1990-1991, Nat'l Overseas Graves Decoration Trust Vice Chmn. 1989-1990, Nat'l Policy Coordination & Action Group Chmn. 1988-1989, Nat'l Policy Coordination & Action Group Vice Chmn. 1989-1990 and Nat'l Veterans Planning & Coordination Cmte. Chmn. 1988-1989.
George T. Kessler, Dept. of New York. Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1983-1986.
Ernest R. Sohns, Dept. of District of Columbia. Dept. Cmdr. 2001-2002, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 2002-2004, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2011-2013, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 2004-2006, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1996-2004 and 2006-2011, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 2004-2006, Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1995-1996 and Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Memb. 2013-2015.
Tony Vaughn, Dept. of Nevada. Dept. Cmdr. 2006-2007 and Nat'l Constitution & By-Laws Cmte. Memb. 2003-2016.
Richard E. Walsh, Dept. of South Carolina. Dept. Cmdr. 2005-2006, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2003-2010, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 2001-2002, Nat'l Security Cmsn. Memb. 2010-2016 and Nat'l Security Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2002-2003.
George A. Wardwell, Dept. of Rhode Island. Nat'l Children & Youth Cmsn. Memb. 2009-2012.
Jim Young, Dept. of Texas. Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1997-1998 and Nat'l Internal Affairs Cmsn. Mbr. 1998-2005.

Grants available to restore WWI memorials

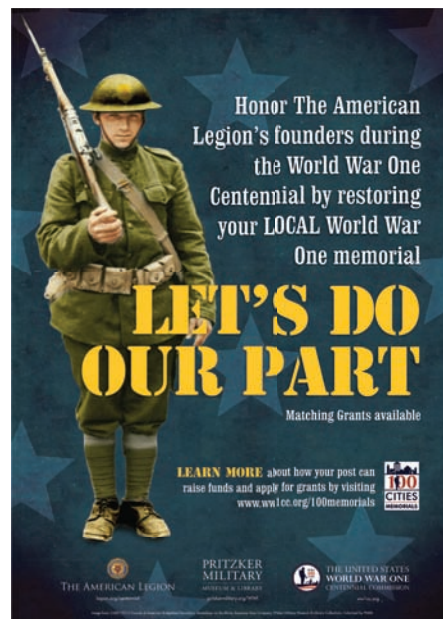
The American Legion's first generation was heavily involved with – if not fully responsible for – design, construction and dedication of hundreds of monuments and memorials to honor those who served, fought and died in World War I.

Over the decades, many of these sacred landmarks have become weathered and aged, if not forgotten altogether, and are in need of restoration. That is why The American Legion's National Executive Committee passed a resolution in May to promote and participate in a joint venture with the U.S. World War One Centennial Commission and the Pritzker Military Museum and Library: "100 Cities/100 Memorials."

Matching grants of up to \$2,000 per applicant are available for the restoration of sacred places to honor those who served in the Great War.

"The matching grant program is a great opportunity to take a close look at your community's monuments and memorials and pursue funding to restore them," American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee Chairman Robert W. Spanogle said. "This kind of initiative not only fulfills our sacred pledge to 'preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars,' as the preamble to our organization's constitution says, but it also can build public awareness about The American Legion's coming centennial in 2018 and 2019."

Details about the 100 Cities/100 Memorials project can be found online at www1cc.org/100Memorials. The application deadline is June 15, 2017. Memorials need to be located in the 50 states or U.S. territories, and the preservation work must be completed (or have been completed) between Jan. 1, 2014, and Nov. 11, 2018.



Posters promoting the matching-money grant program to restore World War I monuments are being distributed to local American Legion posts.

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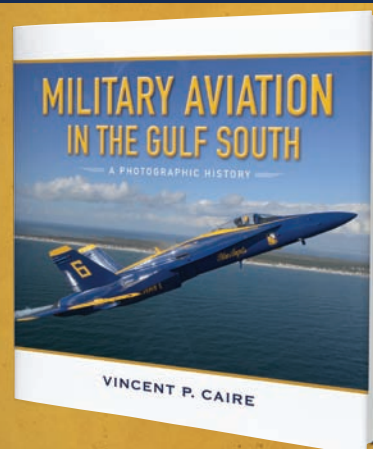
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Poor George Washington couldn't blame his troubles on the previous administration.

MY PSYCHIATRIST told me he knows what makes me tick, but he hasn't figured out yet what makes me chime on the hour.

AN EMPLOYEE marched into his boss' office and said, "I've been here 11 years doing three men's work for one man's pay. I want a raise."

"I can't do that," his boss replied. "But if you tell me who the other two men are, I'll fire them."

A TEACHER explained to her science class, "We can learn a lot from the ant. The ant works hard every day. The ant never stops working. And what happens to the ant in the end?"

One student replied, "Somebody steps on him."

A WIFE said to her husband, "Wake up! There's a mouse in the bedroom. I can hear it squeaking!"

"What do you want me to do?" her half-asleep husband asked. "Oil it?"

A SALES MANAGER asked one of his salesmen, "Did you get any orders today?"

"Two," the salesman said. "One to get out, and one to stay out."

A MOTORIST on his first visit to traffic court grumbled as the police clerk handed him a receipt for his fine. "What am I supposed to do with this?" he asked.

"Keep it," the clerk replied. "When you get four, you get a bicycle."



"My wife said I have a lot of growing up to do. But she's just jealous of my fort."



"No, I'm not too old. You call it trick-or-treating, I call it networking."



"I suggest placing it here. Over time, it will end up where you want it."

WHILE READING THE NEWSPAPER, a man saw an article about a beautiful actress/model who married a boxer known for his aggression.

"I will never understand how the biggest jerks get the most attractive wives," he said.

"Thank you, dear," his wife replied.

PEOPLE ASK US how we've been married so long. We take time to go to a restaurant twice a week. A little candlelight, soft music, dinner and a long walk home. She goes Tuesdays. I go Fridays.

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