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Members of the Department of Georgia American Legion Family march in the national convention parade in Cincinnati on Aug. 28. *Photo by Clay Lomneth*



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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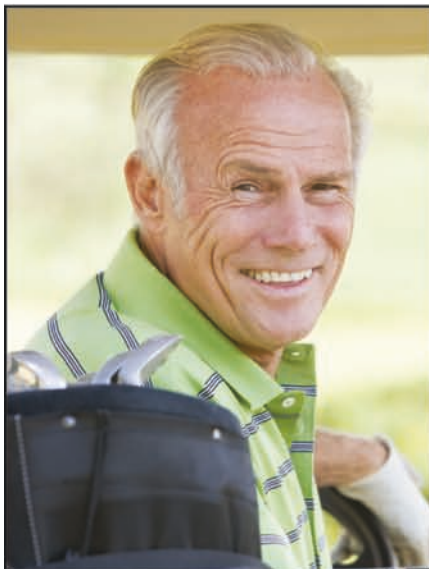
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'The Mind Field'

Regarding the PTSD package and Ken Olsen's article "Thoroughbred Therapy" (September), horse therapy is not new. My grandfather was a cattle rancher in Texas in the 1900s, and I remember him saying, "There is nothing better for the inside of a man than the outside of a horse." There may also have been an element of hard work implied; both are beneficial. Anyway, it worked for me, and I am almost 82.

— Dan Mason, Uvalde, Texas

'An Epic Friendship'

The article by Paul Glader (September) is the best I have ever read in *The American Legion Magazine*. It was well researched, well written, and brought to light a mutually supportive friendship of veterans of the Great War. The fruits of that mutual support continue to benefit us all.

— John W. Tilford, Bloomington, Ind.

As noted, both Lewis and Tolkien were prolific in their writings, their service in the Great War and their friendship, but I can't help but interject with another literary giant, friend to both, who influenced their literature, philosophy and especially Christianity.

G.K. Chesterton, as Lewis wrote, presented the most popular defense of the full Christian position in "The Everlasting Man." He noted that Chesterton's work was one

of the most influential books to shape his vocational attitude and philosophy of life.

Likewise, Tolkien and Chesterton unapologetically embraced Christian doctrine. All three understood that a belief in God in peace and in war was the foundational heart of a civilization of truth.

— Henry Sinopoli, Butler, Pa.

Thank you for an outstanding piece on C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. I applaud Paul Glader for detailing the events leading up to Lewis' conversion to Christianity. I am afraid that in some magazines this would have been omitted.

As a former TV news anchor and reporter, I understand all the elements of a story and appreciate how the background of the two men's faith was presented. Without it, the article would have been incomplete.

— John Culea, San Diego

Gun control after Orlando

The piece on gun control (Big Issues, September) prompted this letter. One of the major issues raised by firearms supporters is the lack of due process in gun control proposals. How about instituting due process hearings whenever one is denied the purchase of a rapid-fire military-style piece? Such hearings could be convened locally whenever one wants to buy such a gun, and would not apply to the purchase of single-shot rifles or to law enforcement agencies.

A licensed psychologist or social worker, say, might serve as chairman with a hunter and a lawyer, all from the locality of the buyer. The county would pay the cost. The expense would be worth it.

There are multiple examples of due process hearings to review rulings by government agencies. Decisions by bureaus of motor vehicles denying one a license to drive come to mind. You find due process review hearings in all walks of life without the fear of creating a big government monster to take away our liberty. Why not review of licenses to buy rapid-fire pieces?

– William Wood, Indianapolis

The “support” opinion from Sen. Bill Wilson repeats the myth perpetrated by politicians who know nothing about firearms, in that he erroneously refers (three times) to the Orlando shooter’s weapon as an “assault rifle.” An AR-15 semi-automatic rifle functions like your grandfather’s innocuous Remington Model 8, which came

out in 1906. But it looks like the selective fire/fully automatic M16A1, which I used daily as a combat infantryman in Vietnam. Yeah, AR-15s are ugly-looking, but even liberal Democrats don’t try to prohibit people from having ugly dogs or children.

Civilian ownership of fully automatic weapons, including the M16A1, has been severely restricted by federal law since 1934. Cosmetic features do not define an assault rifle, except in the minds of uninformed politicians who feel compelled to restrict our Second Amendment rights under the pretext of protecting citizens from thugs and terrorists. I’m sick of this doublespeak.

– Tom Dolan, East New Market, Md.

‘Predict and Prevent’

Mark Fuerst’s article on musculoskeletal injuries (Living Well, September) is long overdue, as is the research VA needs to make sound decisions. There are far more people injured in the line of duty (often with injuries far more severe) than those awarded Purple Hearts, yet nobody seems to care. They’re called lazy and malingerers because there are no bullet holes to point to, no scars from shrapnel, yet they cannot function at peak performance.

Chronic pain leads to more depression than PTSD ever does, as it saps people of the drive needed to press on. It saps the human soul. Maybe something will come from this research; apparently someone in the Army noticed.

– Vic “Doc” Moss, Las Vegas

‘Scenic Centennial’

I enjoyed Lyn Mettler’s article on the centennial of the National Park Service (August). We must remember Harry Yount, our first park ranger. Yount was a Union veteran who went to Wyoming Territory in 1866, where he became a hunter, trapper and guide. In 1880, Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz hired Yount as gamekeeper at Yellowstone due to his knowledge of the area.

Yount spent the winter of 1880-1881 in a cabin he built at the juncture of the Lamar and Soda Butte valleys, where he watched over the wintering herds of elk and bison. In his letters to Schurz and park superintendent Philetus Norris, Yount proposed appointing “a small, active, reliable police force” that could, in addition to protecting game, enforce park regulations to protect the countless and widely scattered wonders of the park.

Yount resigned in 1881, after 14 months. The ranger force he recommended was established 35 years later. In 1994, NPS created the annual Harry Yount Award for rangers demonstrating excellence in the performance of their duties.

– Harry Murray, Las Cruces, N.M.

Editor’s note: *The American Legion Magazine* wishes to clarify the position of The American Legion’s TBI/PTSD Committee on the differences between PTSD, TBI and military sexual trauma (MST). The latter is not a condition, but an event that can potentially cause one or both of the other two.

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE WELCOMES YOUR OPINIONS

Include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters published are subject to editing.

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 **MADE IN
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Legion programs help veterans, children

Baseball player and Navy veteran Yogi Berra once said, “When you come to a fork in a road, take it.” That’s the dilemma I faced when trying to select a fundraising project for my year as national commander of The American Legion. Our organization has so many outstanding programs. How do I choose just one?

In the end, I didn’t. I chose two, and I think you’ll agree with me that they’re quite worthy of our support: the Legion’s Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program, and training for service officers.

First, let’s talk about what TFA does. Since 1925, it has awarded more than \$15 million in cash grants to veterans with minor children at home. For families short on options, these grants help keep children in a stable environment by meeting the immediate costs of food, shelter, utilities, clothing and medical care. Applicants should be eligible for American Legion membership, though it isn’t required. As the program’s name indicates, TFA is temporary relief meant to keep the family unit intact. Last year, the program assisted 650 families and 1,500 children.

When Army veteran Brent Wightman lost his job following multiple back surgeries for a service-connected injury, he nearly lost his home, too. A Legionnaire offered support through TFA. “If it hadn’t been for the Legion, I would have been trying to figure out how to clothe, house and feed my kids,” Wightman says. “The American Legion gave me a mission and a purpose again. It saved my life.”

Another vital Legion program is our unrivaled corps of accredited veterans service officers. Whether a veteran incurred an illness during military service or suffered major wounds in combat, he or she should be able to access the health care and benefits earned. But navigating the VA bureaucracy is not easy and often requires the help of someone who is experienced and trained. The American Legion’s nationwide network of nearly 3,000 service officers stands ready, willing and able to assist any veteran in filing for benefits, regardless of membership status or eligibility. Best of all, this service is offered at no charge.

Today, the Legion represents nearly 800,000 veterans seeking benefits. It is essential that our service officers have the latest and best training so they can represent veterans as well as they represented us. That means staying current on VA policies and state and federal laws.

Nearly 20 percent of post-9/11 veterans live with PTSD. Some came home with traumatic brain injury; others have suffered military sexual assault. Meanwhile, an estimated 20 veterans commit suicide every day. The work of Legion service officers is not just important – it saves lives.

To support either of these great programs – TFA and our service officer corps – go to www.legion.org, click on the Donate tab and select “Commander’s Charity Fund.” Or send a check to American Legion Charities (put “Commander’s Fund” on the memo line) and mail it to The American Legion, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216. The fund has 501(c)(3) status and all money raised goes directly to the programs.

For those who wonder what we’re doing every day to help veterans and their families, I can’t think of two better examples than these programs. Join me in keeping their work going.

Charles E. Schmidt



National Commander
Charles E. Schmidt

MEMORANDA

GET OUT THE VOTE

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 8. The American Legion’s “Get Out the Vote” program encourages Legionnaires to get involved in the electoral process by working at the polls and helping others register to vote. Submit stories on your post’s Election Day activities to Legiontown.

www.legion.org/vote

www.legion.org/legiontown

VETERANS DAY

Tell us about your post’s Veterans Day observance and other activities with stories and photos. Submit them to the Legiontown website and share them with friends on social media.

www.legion.org/legiontown

To help with your post’s observance, the Legion has a suggested speech and spots that can be customized for local media.

www.legion.org/publications

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"The American Legion is built into the fabric of our lives. It's not something we do on the side."

— Mark Shreve

"The moment I joined, I hit the ground running."

— Patricia Liddell

In recruiting new members for The American Legion, Patricia Liddell and Mark Shreve are the Department of Georgia's secret weapons.

Except, according to them, there's no secret to what they do. They simply ask veterans if they belong to the Legion – and just as often, veterans approach them, asking how they can join.

Liddell says it's the power of the hat. She wears her Legion cap everywhere she goes, leading to all kinds of questions: "Are you a veteran? When did you serve?" She's signed people up at the grocery, the post office, church – even in parking lots, after someone spots her "American Legion National Recruiter of the Year" magnet on her car. Last year, Liddell brought in 818 new members.

"All of us know somebody who's a veteran or somebody who knows a veteran," she says. "If each of us recruits just one, we'll hit the 3 million mark."

For Shreve, membership success depends on the power of presence. He and Liddell go to events in and around Columbus, including graduations at Fort Benning. They thank people for their service, trade military stories, and soon they're walking away with completed membership applications. They also do a road show, walking posts through conversations with potential members, each taking a turn playing recruit and recruiter.

"Whether a person served for three years or 30 years, when you ask what they miss the most, it's the camaraderie," Shreve says. "I tell people that if they join the Legion, they'll experience it again. As veterans, we need each other."

As a two-time Race to the Top winner, Shreve guided Georgia's 3rd District past 100 percent to the highest percentage increase over the final previous year's membership. He recommends starting with your inner circle. "You don't have to cold call or knock on doors," he says. "Go to the people you know, your friends and family, and tell them a few of the things the Legion has done."

A positive attitude is key, Liddell adds. "I laugh everywhere I go. Everybody I meet I try to meet with a smile. A lot of times that's all it takes."

Watch an interview
with Patricia Liddell and
Mark Shreve online:

 www.legion.org/magazine

See an archive of past interviews:


 www.legion.org/iamlegion

Photo by Clay Lonneth

MARK SHREVE

BRANCH OF SERVICE Army (1979-2001)

MOS Military Police

RANK First sergeant

AMERICAN LEGION POST Post 189, Pine Mountain Valley, Ga.

YEARS IN THE LEGION 9

LEGION ACTIVITIES

- National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Council (2015-2016)
- Department vice commander (2016-2017)
- Department of Georgia Medical Research Committee chairman (2015-2016)
- District commander (2013-2016)
- District senior vice commander (2011-2013)
- Post commander (2009-2013)
- Post senior vice commander (2008-2009)

PATRICIA LIDDELL

BRANCH OF SERVICE Army (1977-2004)

MOS Patient Administration

RANK Master sergeant

AMERICAN LEGION POST Eddie L. Roberts Post 333, Columbus, Ga.

YEARS IN THE LEGION 15

LEGION ACTIVITIES

- National Recruiter of the Year (2015-2016)
- Department vice commander (2014-2016)
- Department VAVS officer (2016-present)
- District commander (2010-2012)
- District senior vice commander (2007-2009, 2013)
- District service officer (2007-present)
- District VAVS officer (2007-present)
- Post service officer (2005-present)
- Post VAVS officer (2005-present)



Repeal Dodd-Frank financial law



SUPPORT

Rep. Frank Lucas, R-Okla.

■ Lucas is a member of the House Committee on Financial Services.

In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, Democrats moved to vastly increase federal control of the financial industry. At more than 2,300 pages, the now six-year-old Dodd-Frank law is one of the most widespread restructurings of our nation's finance and banking sector in history.

And today, the United States remains in one of the weakest economic recoveries in its history. Small business lending is at decades-long lows, entrepreneurship is in decline, and banking service fees have risen for ordinary Americans.

In Oklahoma, I represent a number of smaller community banks – the lifeblood for families and businesses in rural America. In one out of every five U.S. counties, community banks are the only physical lending institutions, according to the FDIC. Unfortunately, Dodd-Frank is making it harder for these banks to serve their customers, and in some cases it's pushing them out altogether. Small banks are bearing the weight of more complex rules and regulations, and being buried under paperwork. As a result, the total market share of community banks has plummeted and several of these Main Street banks have been sold to larger banks. This means fewer and more expensive options for consumers.

Dodd-Frank also discourages banks from writing loans for small businesses or mortgages for prospective homebuyers. Impractical and arbitrary capital requirements force banks to sit on capital that could otherwise be put toward revitalizing our economy.

Dodd-Frank is not preventing another recession. It's actually holding back small businesses and discouraging consumers and is one of the biggest roadblocks to renewed economic growth today.



OPPOSE

Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif.

■ Waters is the ranking member of the House Committee on Financial Services.

Far too many Americans, including veterans and U.S. servicemembers, experienced the worst of the 2008 financial crisis firsthand. Millions lost their jobs or homes, and trillions of dollars of household wealth disappeared. Congress passed the Dodd-Frank Act to ensure that this never happens again. The mandate was simple: no more risky behavior on Wall Street or regulators looking the other way at the expense of taxpayers.

One of the cornerstones of the law is the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). For the first time, one regulator has a clear mission to protect consumers from tricks and traps in the financial marketplace.

In just five years, the CFPB has returned \$11.7 billion to more than 27 million Americans and is working to curb abuses in the mortgage, payday lending and debt collection industries, among others. It even started a dedicated Office of Servicemember Affairs, under the leadership of Holly Petraeus, to address financial issues specifically affecting servicemembers, veterans and their families.

In short, Dodd-Frank is working. Polls consistently show that a majority of Americans, Democrats and Republicans alike, want more financial regulation, not less. That is why efforts to repeal Dodd-Frank and weaken the CFPB are so misguided. Unfortunately, Republicans in Congress have proposed legislation that would gut both, undermining all the progress since 2008 and putting us at risk of another crisis.

Americans deserve better. We must never forget the lessons of the financial crisis and reject any attempts to undo the reforms that have made our financial system safer, fairer and stronger.

THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

The Dodd-Frank law was supposed to improve accountability and transparency in the U.S. financial system. Critics say it imposed massive new regulations and is harmful to community banks and consumers.

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Winter not the end for Zika?

The good news about the coming of winter is that the generation of adult mosquitoes carrying the Zika virus is expected to mostly die off.

The bad news? Researchers at the University of Texas Medical Branch Institute for Human Infection and Immunity say the virus can be passed down via larvae, which can survive winter and produce the next generation of mosquitoes when the weather gets warmer.

Not all larvae will be infected, and study co-author Robert Tesh told *Contagion* that “it doesn’t mean there are going to be a lot more new cases.” But it does mean that prevention and treatment efforts remain important.

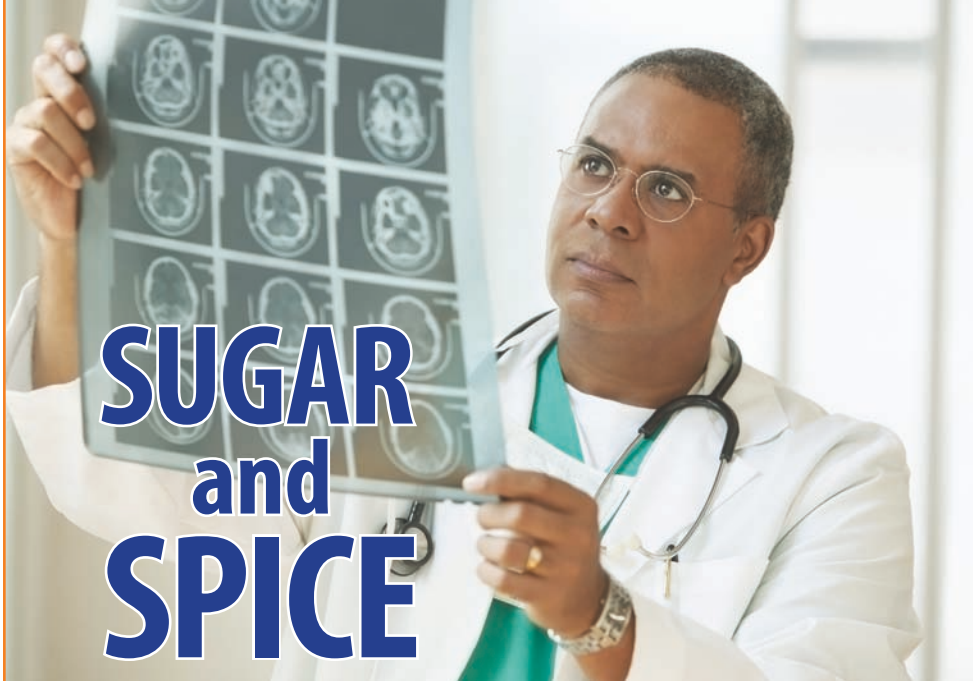
For now, Americans should continue following the CDC’s advice – mainly, practicing safe sex and avoiding mosquito bites.

 www.cdc.gov/zika



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.



Media Bakery

SUGAR and SPICE

To find treatments for devastating diseases, researchers are going old school.

BY LANCE FRAZER

Science is often described as forever marching onward. But in the search for treatments for chronic illnesses, we’re circling back to what we already know.

For hundreds of years, the thunder god vine has been used in traditional medicine in China, Japan and Korea. Easy to grow and widespread throughout Asia, the vine contains triptolide. Extracts have been used as anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer and immunosuppressant treatments, making it what Jun Liu calls the “explosive part of the guided missile.” What was needed was something to help the missile target cancer cells. As it turned out, that’s sugar.

Liu, who is professor of pharmacology and molecular sciences at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, says most cancer cells have an appetite for glucose to sustain their rapid growth. His research group found that adding sugar to the extract not only increased the

substance’s ability to target cancers, but by refining that focus reduced the harm to normal cells that is a side effect of many cancer treatments. “While we’ve thus far only studied the substance’s impact on prostate cancer, we feel it can be made applicable to most cancer types,” Liu says.

Meanwhile, at Vanderbilt University, Wellington Pham – an assistant professor of radiology and biomedical engineering – is studying spices as a possible Alzheimer’s treatment.

Curcumin is a natural product found in turmeric, a staple in Asian kitchens for centuries. Pham found that an easily formulated analog of curcumin can enter the brain, bind with and destroy the protein plaques linked to the destruction of neurons caused by Alzheimer’s. The problem is that our body has designed a “blood-brain” barrier to protect the brain from toxic molecules that can destroy the brain’s neurons.

“I decided to formulate it into an

See **SUGAR** on page 17

If you were
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what **story** would
write **next?**


ZEPATIER[™]
(elbasvir and grazoprevir)
50 mg/100 mg tablets



Models

Your life story has been a real page-turner. Now see if you could turn the page on hep C and start your next chapter.

ZEPATIER is a once-a-day pill with the power to cure chronic hepatitis C (hep C) infection. ZEPATIER is a prescription medicine used to treat chronic (long-lasting) hep C genotypes 1 or 4 infection in adults. ZEPATIER may sometimes be given with another medicine called ribavirin.

In clinical studies, 94% to 97%* of patients with genotype 1 and 97% to 100%† of patients with genotype 4 chronic hep C infection were cured with once-daily ZEPATIER. Cure means the hep C virus is not detected in the blood when measured 3 months after treatment is completed.

Start writing your next chapter today. Talk with your health care provider about ZEPATIER.

* 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.**

Merck Helps | Having trouble paying for your Merck medicine?
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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 Rebetol®, 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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For patent information: www.merck.com/product/patent/home.html
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USPPI-MK5172A-T-1601R000

Issued: 01/2016

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INFC-1170420-0000 05/16



Beyond better hearing

Are you ready to improve your quality of life? Can better hearing make you feel better about yourself and life in general? The answer may be a resounding yes, based on a recent study conducted by the National Council on Aging (NCOA).

For years, researchers have known there's a strong connection between untreated hearing loss and a number of negative feelings, including anxiety, paranoia, isolation, loneliness and depression. The NCOA study, which surveyed 2,300 adults 50 and older, revealed that:

- 30 percent of individuals with untreated hearing loss reported feelings of sadness or depression lasting two or more weeks, versus 22 percent of hearing aid wearers.

- Paranoia was more common among non-wearers (23 percent) compared with wearers (14 percent).

The NCOA study found significant quality-of-life enhancements in several key areas among respondents who received hearing help. Also, family members reported an even higher degree of improvement than the wearers themselves.

Are you ready to do something good for your hearing *and* your quality of life? An Amplifon Hearing Health Care provider in your area can help you make it happen.

Learn more at **www.amplifonusa.com/legion** or call **1-877-822-7087** for an appointment.



Creatas

SUGAR *continued from page 14*

aerosol,” he says. “Inhaling the substance delivers it to the lungs, then directly to the bloodstream and then to the brain, going directly to the part of the brain impacted by Alzheimer’s. The curcumin derivative binds to these clusters of protein/plaque material and destroys them.”

Another disease that affects people as they age is age-related macular degeneration (AMD), a condition in which cells at the back of the eye are no longer able to process images in the center of the eye. AMD has no known cure, afflicts some 10 million Americans and can eventually lead to blindness. Aparna Lakkaraju, an assistant professor of ophthalmology and visual sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, has found that drugs currently on the market to treat depression can neutralize the chemicals causing degeneration within the eye.

According to Lakkaraju, immune abnormalities beneath the retina result in macular degeneration. The damage begins with injury to a layer of cells beneath the rods and cones at the back of the eye. These cells contain immune proteins, charged with protecting the eye from disease-causing organisms.

“The light-detecting cells in the retina need these proteins for survival, but the cells are not replaced during the organism’s lifetime,” she says. “So we had to look at what keeps these protective cells healthy and what

causes them to go awry.” As we age, debris is deposited within, above and below this layer of cells. Trapped in the protective layer by this debris is cholesterol, which is important for cellular functioning. But too much can damage the surrounding cells.

Lakkaraju’s study found that the chemicals in a commonly prescribed antidepressant can reverse these cellular traffic jams. Her group found additional support in a study by two researchers in the school’s Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, which found a link between long-term use of these antidepressants and a reduced incidence of AMD.

Sadly, these are all considered new approaches because so many clinical trials of promising new drugs have failed, says Lakkaraju. “The number of new drugs approved by the FDA per billion dollars spent has been declining steeply, so it makes sense to first find out what causes the disease, identify promising drug targets, and then find drugs that have documented safety profiles for those targets. Chronic health issues, especially those that come with age, are multifunctional, (with) many causes, the number of causes increasing the further the disease progresses.”

Lance Frazer is a California-based writer specializing in health and medicine, science, nature and the environment.



Suicide rate lower for vets who use VA care

BY TOM PHILPOTT

The most comprehensive analysis of veterans suicide confirms a higher incidence than in the general population, a trend that goes back decades. But one hopeful fact also emerges: the incidence of suicide for at-risk vets falls by half for those who use VA mental health care.

A study released in August examined more than 55 million veterans' records from every state from 1979 to 2014. The results show suicide rates climbing across the U.S. population, but higher still among veterans than for Americans at large.

An average of 20 veterans take their lives every day, two-thirds by firearms. Adjusting for differences in age and gender, the risk for suicide is 21 percent higher among veterans compared with U.S. civilian adults.

In 2014, about 65 percent of veterans who died by suicide were 50 or older. Yet rates were highest among younger veterans (18 to 29) and lowest among older veterans (60 and older). Only veterans 70 and older had lower rates than civilians of the same age group.

Since 2001, U.S. adult civilian suicides increased 23 percent while veteran suicides increased 32 percent. After controlling for age and gender, this makes the risk of suicide 21 percent greater for veterans.

However, the rate of suicide among veterans who did not use VA services had increased by 38.6 over the period, compared to only an 8.8 percent increase for veterans who use VA mental health care.

According to VA, the new report will serve as a foundation for informing and evaluating suicide prevention efforts inside VA health care and for collaborations with community health providers.

The importance of VA mental health care seems particularly acute for female veterans. Since 2001, the rate of suicide among male veterans who use VA services increased 11 percent versus 35 percent for male vets who do not use VA services.

Among female veterans receiving VA care, the rate of suicide since 2001 increased 4.6 percent. The increase was 98 percent in the same period for female veterans who do not use VA health care.

After adjusting for age differences, the risk for

suicide in 2014 was 18 percent higher among male vets when compared with civilian adult males. But risk was 2.4 times higher among female veterans.

Suicide is an issue across the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that from 1999 through 2014, suicide rates climbed 24 percent in the general population for males and females alike.

In 2014, veterans accounted for 18 percent of all suicide deaths among U.S. adults, yet constituted only 8.5 percent of the adult population. Four years earlier, vets were 22 percent of all adult suicide deaths and represented 9.7 percent of adults.

VA officials said they have taken aggressive measures to prevent suicide, including

creating a toll-free crisis line, placing suicide prevention coordinators at all VA medical centers and large outpatient facilities, and improving case management and tracking of at-risk veterans.

VA has also hired more than 60 new crisis intervention responders for the Veterans Crisis Line, each trained on a wide variety of topics, including substance use disorders, caller screening and treatment referrals. A satellite crisis line site was to be established in Atlanta in October with 200 more responders available.

VA also said it would ensure same-day access for vets with urgent mental health needs at more than 1,000 VA points of care by the end of 2016. Mental health outlets now use predictive modeling to determine which veterans may be at highest risk of suicide so providers can intervene early. Veterans in the top 10th of 1 percent of risk have a 43-fold higher risk of suicide within a month. But they can be identified through modeling before clinical signs of suicide are evident, thus saving lives. VA says it's expanding access to telemental health care with four new regional hubs.

Veterans needing help should call VA's suicide prevention hotline at **1-800-273-8255** and press **1**, chat online at **www.veteranscrisisline.net** or send a text message to **838255**.

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



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Forward march

National Commander Dale Barnett reflects on Legion engagement, action.

Photo by Lucas Carter

In his report to the 98th National Convention, American Legion National Commander Dale Barnett emphasized the organization's position on combating PTSD and traumatic brain injuries.

"Pills are not the answer – pals are," he told 9,000 delegates in Cincinnati. "The Legion does not oppose medication, but we certainly are against overmedication simply because health-care providers are too busy to solve the problem. And that's perhaps the most valuable service we can offer a veteran – to be their friend."

During his year in office, Barnett created and led the Walk for Veterans initiative, raising awareness about the Legion from coast to coast. Barnett participated in 43 walks in 34 states, and praised departments that conducted walks without him.

"The walks are not about me," he said. "They are about you: the American Legion Family. They are about the great young people of this country. And they are about our military (servicemembers) – the bravery they show in defending us and the struggles some have when they return."

On VA, Barnett chided those who want to close and privatize VA. "It wasn't the private sector that sent our veterans to war," he said. "It was Uncle Sam." Even so, "we need to insist that VA hold its poor performers accountable and fire those who fail to serve veterans with respect. But you cannot simply fire your way out of a problem and call it 'reform' without addressing the root causes."

On this and so many other issues, the Legion Family continues to be out front.

"We organize troop homecomings, conduct blood donation drives, host job fairs and speak to schoolchildren every day," Barnett said. "We are the guardians of our nation's flag, the honor guards at veteran funerals, and the sympathetic ears for wounded warriors wanting to discuss the horrors of war with people who understand."

"We are the baseball coaches, the Boys and Girls State counselors, and the Scoutmasters. This is why we walk for veterans – not only to honor their service, but to remind people of the programs and camaraderie we offer."

“Let me and these other great Americans welcome you home. I appreciate you very much.”

Larry Gatlin, who served as the master of ceremonies for the 98th National Convention, asking Vietnam War veterans in the crowd to stand and be recognized. The music legend is the son of a Marine Corps veteran and has traveled with the USO to entertain military personnel overseas.





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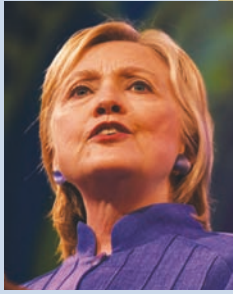
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I would expect The American Legion to be my partner in the White House ... You and all our veterans deserve nothing less.

Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, who spoke to the convention on issues related to national security, diversity and the U.S. military



We will be united by our common culture, values and principles, becoming one country, under one constitution, saluting one American flag – the flag all of you helped to protect and preserve.

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who spoke on national security, veterans health care and other issues



We've undermined their aura of invincibility and credibility. They are being exposed for the losers that they are. I can tell you that in the past year we have gained the momentum.

Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on U.S. successes in the war with the Islamic State



I suspect that proposal serves some parties somewhere pretty well. But it's not transformational. It's more along the lines of dereliction of duty.

VA Secretary Bob McDonald, who told Legionnaires that privatizing VA is not in veterans' best interests



Photo by Clay Lomneth

Legion honors Old Guard

On Aug. 30, the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, known as "The Old Guard," received the Legion's highest honor.

"The meticulous soldiers of The Old Guard always stand watch over the Tomb of the Unknowns – 24/7 in extreme heat, cold, rain, wind and snow," National Commander Dale Barnett said. "It is my pleasure to present the Distinguished Service Medal to the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment."

As the Army's oldest active-duty infantry unit, the Old Guard serves as its official ceremonial unit and escort to the president. The unit fought in the Indian Wars, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, World War II, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Members of The Old Guard are part of a legacy dating to 1784, but our current mission is to honor our fallen and represent the Army to the nation," Regiment Commander Col. Jason T. Garkey said. "Receiving this honor from this distinguished organization is truly humbling."



Photo by Lucas Carter

French survivor of Normandy occupation recognized

For "a lifetime of devotion to veterans of World War II," Bernard L. Marie received the Legion's Patriot Award.

A dual U.S.-France citizen and international business leader, Marie was a 5-year-old boy living with relatives on the Normandy coast when the Allies launched their historic invasion. In recent years, he has helped more than 150 U.S. World War II veterans obtain the French Legion of Honor recognizing the life-or-death commitments they made to free Europe from Nazi occupation.

In 1984, concerned that not enough was being done to commemorate the 40th anniversary of D-Day, he organized a luncheon for 645 veterans. Marie has continued hosting annual dinners and luncheons for World War II veterans around the country, arranging trips to France for them.

"I pledged in 1984 that I will do this until no one is left alive," he said.

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— J. Fitzgerald, VA



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A continuation of this trajectory of ignorance and advocacy of diminished religious freedom – inhibiting the free exercise of religion in favor of other, though often worthy, social goals – will fundamentally change the character of America, and not for the better.

Acting National Chaplain Tierian "Randy"

Cash, speaking at the Patriotic Memorial Service about the state of religious belief vs. "secular interests" in the United States today



I think we have too many veterans who are not willing to share their military experiences with our youth. We need to continue to encourage service to the nation as a noble endeavor.

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Robert

Winzenried, USAA's military affairs relationship director, on the importance of young people hearing from servicemembers and veterans



While we might have had unity of effort, we did not have unity of commander. With this merger, we do ... and (we're) able to move forward with everybody pulling their same weight.

Johnnie Webb, deputy to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) commander for external relations and legislative affairs, on the merger of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office, and the Air Force Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory



Get all of them involved. The posts are where The American Legion got started.

Past National Commander Dave

Rehbein, vice chairman of the national American Legion 100th Anniversary Observance Committee, on the importance of member and community support in celebrating the Legion's centennial



Photo by Lucas Carter

Reds' Johnny Bench named Legion's 'Good Guy'

Johnny Bench, recipient of the Legion's 2016 James V. Day "Good Guy" Award, has only one regret. "I didn't get to go to college," he says.

Instead, Bench – who was his high school's valedictorian – decided to play baseball. It worked out.

Considered by some baseball historians as the greatest catcher to ever play the game, Bench was a key member of Cincinnati's Big Red Machine, the Reds team that steamrolled its way through the regular season and league playoffs before winning world championships in 1975 and 1976.

Recognized by the American Legion Past Department Commanders Club during a luncheon at the 98th National Convention in Cincinnati, the Hall of Famer and two-time National League Most Valuable Player joked, "It only took The American Legion 98 years to find me."

Bench spoke with John Raughter, the Legion's deputy director of media relations, prior to the luncheon.

Because you spent your prime years playing baseball, many people don't know that you served in the military.

My dad actually served two hitches in World War II. He was in North Africa and Italy. I enlisted in the Army Reserve in '66 for six years. Did my basic training at Fort Knox and my combat support training at Fort Dix. I was a field wireman and made several summer camps: Watertown, N.Y., Camp A.P. Hill, Va., and Fort Sill, Okla.

You were playing during that time. Did you have trouble getting time off from your team?

The team didn't have a choice, really. I did my weekends – they made me a cook so that I could come over. I would get there at 4:30 in the morning and prepare the meals, and as soon as lunch was served at 11:30, they released me so I could play games that afternoon.

I was an E-4 when I got out. I graduated first in my class in combat support training. I got out right in the middle of spring training after they started. So I was in good shape, probably the best shape of my career. I was still in the minor leagues. I came up in '67.

Bernie Carbo (MLB player) and I were together. I think he was the No. 1 draft choice in '65. We did what you had to do. You fulfilled your obligation as a good American.

What influence did American Legion Baseball have on your career?

It was huge. We had organized baseball in Binger, Okla. My dad started that team, but when I got to be 14, in order to move up, I had to go to Anadarko, Okla. We didn't have the size of city to support an

American Legion team. That team in Anadarko actually had a couple of kids sign in the major leagues, so there was a lot of attention due to the quality of players on that particular team. It was sort of a hotbed for players in those days.

What made the Big Red Machine so successful?

First of all, we had a lot of talent. We had the best individuals at each position. There is no "I" in team, but there really is all "I"s. It's the best individuals. We had an organization, where Sparky (manager Sparky Anderson) was a great leader. The best. And he would actually ask us what we thought of a player if we traded for him. We would say no or yes. And he followed it ... Individually, if someone failed or didn't get a hit when it was the right time, the other guy picked him up. To this day people from all over this country will say, "I'm a Dodgers fan" or "I'm a Phillies fan, but, boy, we respected you guys." And they can still name the Big Red Machine lineup.

Your team swept the Yankees in the 1976 World Series. You probably had a lot to do with Yankees owner George Steinbrenner signing Reggie Jackson in the following offseason.

Sure. He saw how good we were. And unfortunately that was sort of the end of us. (Don) Gullett left for free agency and it sort of changed all the dynamics because the Reds were never going to be able to put out that kind of money. How would you like to pay Pete (Rose), Joe (Morgan), Tony (Pérez) and myself? Then you have to pay George (Foster). Then you have to pay Kenny (Griffey Sr.). What would you say to him if you had to negotiate with them now? Hello partner! The old Mantle deal.

Tell us about your recent visit to Camp Lejeune.

I co-hosted an event with Doug Flynn (former MLB player) called Hope for the Warriors. I also do USA Cares down in Louisville. Last year we raised a little over \$500,000. Almost all of that goes to mortgages, to groceries, to gas, to supplement the needs of families.

You visited Vietnam with Bob Hope. What was that like?

I went to Vietnam with trepidation with how I would be received. I was healthy and in the major leagues. But it was phenomenal. They welcomed me with open arms. I went to Desert Storm in 1990, too.

Why did you start the Johnny Bench Scholarship?


I didn't get to go to college. I had athletic scholarships in baseball and basketball. My dream was to play baseball, so when I was drafted I signed, and part of my bonus was \$1,000 a semester so I could have eight semesters of college. Then they wanted me to go to winter ball, in the instructional league. Over time, they finally gave me the money. But I didn't get to go to college. I think education was the most important thing. So when I retired what I wanted to start was a scholarship fund, and we have 84 kids on scholarship now.

Is it a surprise to receive the Good Guy Award?

Obviously, I played American Legion Baseball. I follow what they do. What your organization tries to achieve, in keeping the word out there and supporting our servicemembers – (the Legion has) 2 million people out there and 98 years of doing it. I just hope you get the respect you deserve.

Learn more about the Johnny Bench Scholarship Fund:

 www.johnnybench.com

Read the full version of this interview online:  www.legion.org



William "Joey" Poca teaches a Boots to Business: Reboot workshop. Photo by Clay Lometh

Workshops and more

The Legion's Veterans Employment & Education Commission continued its tradition of hosting valuable workshops and other events during the national convention. This year's offerings included:

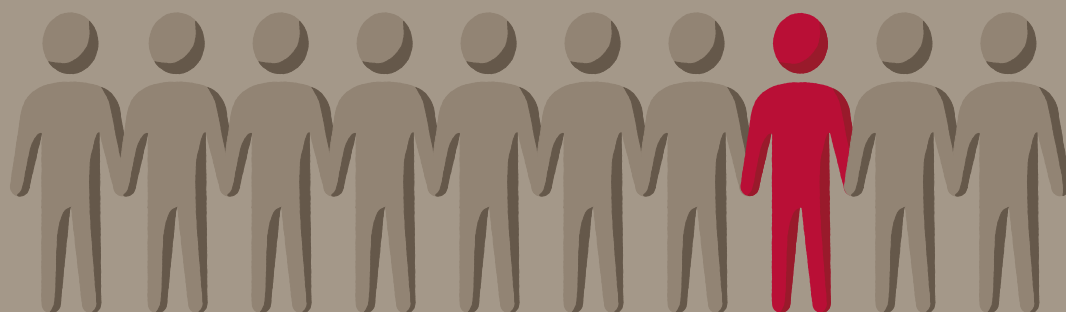
■ **BOOTS TO BUSINESS: REBOOT WORKSHOP**, during which skilled business advisers with the Small Business Administration provided an overview of business ownership as a career path and instructions on how to develop a business plan, as well as how to access public and private resources. Attendees also interacted with experts on the economics of small business start-ups, competing in various markets and financing business enterprises.

■ **WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT WORKSHOP**, which focused on financial literacy. According to Robert Smith of ClearPoint Financial Solutions, learning to control money is critical for retiring servicemembers and those transitioning out of the military, primarily because they might not understand the civilian pay structure and how their new benefits and entitlements may appear on their pay statements.

■ **JOB FAIR AND NETWORKING LUNCHEON**, held jointly with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Hiring Our Heroes program. The job fair hosted approximately 60 employers and 135 job-seeking veterans, spouses, active duty and reserve servicemembers. At the luncheon, Army veteran Ryen Macababba talked about how she went from being homeless to completing a Microsoft information technology training program. She said her success can be largely credited to her military service, and that companies benefit from hiring veterans. "I understand what mission accomplishment is, and I will do whatever work is necessary to get there," Macababba said.

VIETNAM VETERANS

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Vietnam Veterans, especially those born between 1945-1965, are at high risk for having Hep C. Many could have been exposed to Hep C due to unsterile vaccination procedures, or by coming into contact with contaminated blood during combat.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recommends all veterans (born between 1945-1965) get tested for Hep C.

The good news is: if you have Hep C, it can be cured. At your next appointment, ask your doctor to test you for Hep C.

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New high for Legacy Run

Led by National Commander Dale Barnett, the 11th annual American Legion Legacy Run roared into Yeager-Benson Memorial Post 199 in Harrison, Ohio, on Aug. 25, with 300 Legion Riders and passengers having participated.

The more "veteran-centric" Legacy Run, with wreath-layings along the route, made it to Cincinnati flush with camaraderie – and money. Riders helped raise more than \$555,000 before and during the ride, and collected another \$600,000 on the convention floor.

In all, that's \$1,155,363 for the American Legion Legacy Fund, which benefits children of fallen post-9/11 veterans or those with disability ratings of 50 percent or higher. This is the third year in a row the Legacy Run's total has topped \$1 million.

Photo by Lucas Carter

Legion Family goes to work

On Aug. 26, members of the American Legion Family went to three different homes in Cincinnati to repair a Korean War veteran's wheelchair ramp, stain decks and do yard work.

For Lisa Williamson, legislative chairman for the Alaska American Legion Auxiliary, this is a fun way to attract potential members – not by telling people what the Legion does, but showing them.

"It's like the 'Field of Dreams' movie: If you build it, they will come," she says. "I'm not a real great membership recruiter when it comes to handing out applications. But people come up to me and say, 'I love what you're doing. How can I be a part of it?' That's the key to me."



Photo by Clay Lommeth

The Legion collaborated on the project with the local nonprofit People Working Cooperatively (PWC), which provides thousands of low-income, elderly and disabled homeowners with critical home repairs, energy conservation and weatherization, mobility modifications and maintenance services.

"It's incredibly valuable," says Aaron Grant, PWC's volunteer

program manager, of the Legion's commitment to community service. "These are people connected to the armed services, and they wanted to make sure the impact they had here in Cincinnati was related to veterans. It's really important to connect these two groups of people."

'We wanted to do it for Dale'

For the second year in a row, the Department of Georgia's membership efforts earned it top spot among contiguous Legion departments in the National Convention Parade on Aug. 28.

"We want to win, but it's not about winning," said Randy Goodman, 2014-2015 department commander. "We've created an atmosphere in Georgia that is conducive to membership. We're promoting the Four Pillars of The American Legion in the best way possible."

Nabbing the honor for Georgia native Dale Barnett's national convention was also a treat. "One of the things we tried to do in the beginning of the year was create an atmosphere for supporting Dale as 'Team Georgia,'" Goodman said. "We wanted to do it for Dale."



Photo by Lucas Carter

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This knife boasts a full tang blade, meaning the blade doesn't stop at the handle, it runs the full length of the knife. According to *Gear Patrol*, a full tang blade is key, saying "A full tang lends structural strength to the knife, allowing for better leverage ...think one long steel beam versus two."

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Photo by Lucas Carter

Soldier's Wish granted to Vietnam War Legionnaire

In 2014, Army veteran Bill Welyczko of Middletown, N.Y., was diagnosed with lung cancer linked to Agent Orange exposure. Even with insurance, his surgeries and chemotherapy care cost thousands of dollars. But the cancer went into remission. Totally disabled, Welyczko needed help, and because his claim was not properly filed, he went months without income.

Help for veterans suffering from Agent Orange exposure was the focus of New York American Legion Auxiliary President Jan Mahoney, who joined Mark Ochsenbein of Soldier's Wish on stage to present Welyczko with a \$5,000 check.

"You don't know how much this means to me and my family," Welyczko said. "I am proud to be a member of The American Legion."

WWI centennial commission: 'We're all on the same team'

Daniel Dayton, executive director of the National World War One Centennial Commission, thanked the Legion for its support of the 100 Cities/100 Memorials initiative, which offers matching grants of up to \$2,000 per applicant to restore sacred places honoring those who fought in the Great War.

There may be between 8,000 and 10,000 World War I memorials in the United States, "depending on what you call a memorial," Dayton said.

He also updated the Legion on the construction of a national World War I memorial at Pershing Park in Washington, set to be dedicated on Veterans Day 2018.

"We're all on the same team here, and we are delighted to be," Dayton said.

Selected resolutions of the 98th National Convention

NATIONAL SECURITY

15 Support veteran status for National Guard and reserve servicemembers

21 Support for financial antiterrorism law enforcement

106 Establish strategic plan for internal security within the United States

306 Allow military retirees to apply for positions in federal law enforcement after age 37

VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION

57 Prevent exploitation of veterans and family members applying for benefits, to include Aid & Attendance

119 Exempt Purple Heart and Medal of Honor recipients from VA prescription co-payment

128 Protection of religious rights and ceremonies at National Cemetery Administration national and state ceremonies

180 Designate hypertension as a presumptive condition for veterans exposed to Agent Orange

378 Call for U.S. census to include veterans information


VETERANS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

58 Support legislation that prohibits discrimination against veterans in federal contracts

272 Extend dental care to veterans with service connection of 50 percent or more

274 Support employment services for spouses of servicemembers killed in the line of duty

The full text of all 319 resolutions passed at the convention is available in the Legion's Digital Archive.

 archive.legion.org, click on "Resolutions and Founding Documents of The American Legion"

Convention blood drive success

40 Units of blood collected during the convention's blood drive, hosted by the Hoxworth Blood Center, the University of Cincinnati and the American Red Cross, Greater Cincinnati-Dayton Region

120 Estimated number of lives that could be saved by the donations

"For those who lost a loved one protecting our country and protecting us ... for (them), the war is never over."

World War II veteran and Medal of Honor recipient Hershel W. "Woody" Williams, who addressed the convention and handed out the Legion's Spirit of Service Awards

Photo by Lucas Carter



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50-54	\$12.35	\$10.15	\$19.92	\$16.25	\$38.83	\$31.50	\$95.58	\$77.25
55-59	\$15.28	\$11.50	\$24.79	\$18.50	\$48.58	\$36.00	\$119.96	\$88.50
60-64	\$18.50	\$13.75	\$30.17	\$22.25	\$59.33	\$43.50	\$146.83	\$107.25
65-69	\$22.08	\$17.05	\$36.13	\$27.75	\$71.25	\$54.50	\$176.63	\$134.75
70-74	\$29.53	\$22.30	\$48.54	\$36.50	\$96.08	\$72.00	\$238.71	\$178.50
75-79	\$38.65	\$30.70	\$63.75	\$50.50	\$126.50	\$100.00	\$314.75	\$248.50
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New commander: 'We must leave our footprints'

Upon his election as the Legion's 2016-2017 national commander, Charles E. Schmidt of Oregon charged Legionnaires with making sure the organization is healthy and strong heading into its centennial.

"Our founding fathers had a vision for America and its veterans," he said. "That vision is still relevant today.

"Our responsibility is to ensure it is passed on to the next generation of veterans – to ensure those who have borne the battle, and their families, will be cared for by a grateful nation," Schmidt told Legion Family members. "You and I must leave our footprints on today's American Legion."

Schmidt intends to raise \$1 million for the Legion's service officer training program and \$1 million for the Temporary Financial Assistance program, which provides non-repayable cash grants to eligible veterans and their families to help meet their children's basic needs, such as shelter, utilities, clothing, food and medical care.

Calling member participation a key part of the Legion's membership program, Schmidt challenged Legionnaires to sign up one new member and renew one current member. "If you (do), you will hear from me," he said.

Reminding them that the Legion has a rich history of service, he encouraged members to "accentuate the positives" in the coming months. "We have so many programs and initiatives that have become the benchmark



Photo by Clay Lomneth

for patriotism, service and sacrifice," he said. "Good things are happening in our posts and in every department every day. Share them throughout your communities, through social media and other means.

"I am truly honored, humbled and proud to be serving with you in the coming year. Together we will make good things happen in our American Legion."

Auxiliary, Sons leadership for 2016-2017



Photo by Lucas Carter

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL COMMANDER JEFF FRAIN

Squadron: Squadron 27,
Apache Junction, Ariz.

Years in SAL: 33

Eligibility connections: Father (Army, Korean War), stepfather (Air Force, Vietnam War)

Membership theme: "Be a Superhero and Sign Up Three American Heroes"

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY NATIONAL PRESIDENT MARY DAVIS

Unit: Pat Tillman Memorial Unit 53,
DuPont, Wash.

Years in the Auxiliary: 40

Eligibility connections: father (Army Air Corps, World War II), mother (Women's Army Corps, World War II), husband (Army, Vietnam War), son (Air Force, Desert Storm)

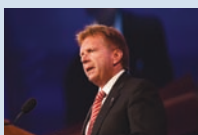
Theme: American Legion Auxiliary Member Pride

Watch convention highlights online

See some of the best moments of the Legion's 98th National Convention, including:

- The band and color guard competitions, and the Patriotic Memorial Service
- Speeches by Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump
- Video messages from congressional VIPs
- Chief Scout Executive Michael B. Surbaugh on the close relationship of Boy Scouts and the Legion

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National Recruiter of the Year

Patricia E. Liddell
Columbus, Ga.

Distinguished Service Medal

3rd Infantry Regiment
("The Old Guard")

Patriot Award

Bernard L. Marie

National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

David M. Mahon
Effingham County
Sheriff's Office,
Effingham, Ill.

National Firefighter of the Year

Matt Brown
Lakeland Fire
Department,
Lakeland, Fla.

Ralph T. O'Neil Education Trophy

For greatest activity in
use of The American
Legion School Medal
Awards
Department of
Colorado

Daniel J. O'Connor Americanism Trophy

For best all-around
Americanism activities
Department of
Virginia

Race to the Top Winners

Chris Bradley Sr.
Samson, Ala.
Aaron Cunningham II
Fairfield, Ohio
Dean Noechel
Colorado Springs, Colo.
Mark Shreve
Ellerslie, Ga.

Consolidated Post Report Winners

Departments of
Florida, Idaho,
Maryland, New York,



Ohio, Tennessee and
West Virginia

Frank N. Belgrano Jr. Trophy

For support of Boy
Scouts of America
Department of
New York

Garland D. Murphy Jr. Award

Based on actual
contributions received
during the 2015-2016
American Legion
Child Welfare
Foundation year
Department of Florida

William F. Lenker National Service Trophy

For best supporting
and implementing
programs to benefit
veterans and their
families
Department of
Wisconsin

U.S. "Udie" Grant Legacy Award

Based on combined
total donations of
American Legion
Family to the Child
Welfare Foundation
Department of Florida

Fourth Estate Award

PRINT
Marine Corps Times
Springfield, Va.

BROADCAST
WXIA-TV
Atlanta

NEW MEDIA
Milwaukee Journal
Sentinel

National Commander's Media & Communications Award

ESPN

Employer of the Year

For companies and
businesses dedicated
to hiring veterans

SMALL BUSINESS

Operation: Job Ready
Veterans
Indianapolis

MID-SIZED BUSINESS

Stresscon Corp.
Colorado Springs, Colo.

LARGE BUSINESS

New York Shipping
Association
Edison, N.J.

Enhance the Lives of the Disabled Award

Outdoor Freedom
Network
Broadus, Texas

Employer of Older Workers Award

First Transit
Houston

Homeless Veterans Outreach Award

George Walker
Department of Georgia

Employment Service Local Office Award

Fargo Customer
Service Office
Fargo, N.D.

Local Veterans Employment Representative of the Year

Nancy Brown
Wausau, Wis.

O.L. Bodenhamer Trophy

No. 1 in membership
at June report
Department of
Georgia

Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist of the Year

Dwight A. Butler
Fayetteville, N.C.

Color Guard Contest

MILITARY CLASS

George Whiteman
Memorial Post 642
Sedalia, Mo.

MILITARY OPEN CLASS

Harrisburg Post 472
Color Guard
Houston

OPEN CLASS

Shooting Stars Color
Guard, American
Legion Post 14
Flora, Ill.

ADVANCING/RETRIEVING COLORS

Newport Harbor
Post 291
Newport Beach, Calif.

Band Contest

The American Legion
Band of Greater
Kansas City (Mo.)

Spirit of Service

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Cornelius

MARINE CORPS

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Jenks

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Class Levetina S. King

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Cpl. Bryce T. Wolford

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Burlington, Wash.

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Anighya Crocker
Springfield, Tenn.

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Jacob Kelley
Cottage Grove, Wis.

JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS

SPORTER CHAMPION
Emma Thompson
Freeport, Ill.

JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS

PRECISION CHAMPION
Taylor Gibson
Salem, Ore.

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Justin Hawkins
Prosperity, S.C.

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Joshua Wasilewski
Belmont, Vt.



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Roster for a new Legion year

DOUGLAS L. BOLDT

National Vice Commander, Midwest Region



HOME: Callaway, Neb.
MEMBERSHIP: 39 years, Post 59
MILITARY SERVICE: Navy, 1967-1973
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., dist. cmdr., dept. vice cmdr.,

dept. cmdr.

NATIONAL POSITIONS: Public Relations Liaison Cmte., National Security Liaison, Legislative Cncl., Law and Order & Homeland Security Cmte., Homeland Security & Civil Preparedness Cmte., National Executive Cmte.

REGION: Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, Wisconsin

PAUL L. ESPINOZA

National Vice Commander, Western Region



HOME: Albuquerque, N.M.
MEMBERSHIP: 12 years, Post 13
MILITARY SERVICE: Army and National Guard, 1983-2005
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post

cmdr., dept. vice cmdr., dept. cmdr.

NATIONAL POSITIONS: National Security Cncl., Foreign Relations Cncl.

REGION: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Mexico, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Philippines, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

PAUL MARTEL

National Vice Commander, Central Region



HOME: Pierson, Fla.
MEMBERSHIP: 51 years, Post 120
MILITARY SERVICE: Army, 1963-1966
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., district cmdr., dept. vice cmdr., dept.

cmdr.

NATIONAL POSITIONS: National Security Cncl., Legislative Cncl., national sgt.-at-arms

REGION: Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia, Wisconsin

FAE CASPER

National Vice Commander, Southeast Region



HOME: Douglasville, Ga.
MEMBERSHIP: 35 years, Post 145
MILITARY SERVICE: Army, 1962-1964; Army Reserve, 1973-1993
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post

adj., post cmdr., district cmdr., dept. cmdr.

NATIONAL POSITIONS: Trophies, Awards & Ceremonials Cmte., Public Relations Cmsn., National Security Cmsn., Media & Communications Cmsn., Americanism Cmsn., Nat'l Historian

REGION: Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia

VINCENT J. TROIOLA

National Vice Commander, Northeast Region



HOME: Windham, Maine
MEMBERSHIP: 24 years, Post 1682 (N.Y.)
MILITARY SERVICE: Navy, 1970-1971
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., district cmdr., county

cmdr., dept. cmdr.

NATIONAL POSITIONS: National Security Cmsn., Membership & Post Activities Cmte.,

REGION: Connecticut, Delaware, France, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont

PAUL D. BENNETT

National Historian



HOME: Sedalia, Mo.
MEMBERSHIP: 41 years, Post 642
MILITARY SERVICE: Army, 1960-1968 and 1970-1985
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post adj., post cmdr., district cmdr.,

dept. vice cmdr., dept. historian, dept. cmdr.

NATIONAL POSITIONS: National Security Cncl.

HARVEY H. KLEE

National Chaplain



HOME: Bluffton, Texas
MEMBERSHIP: 20 years, Post 370
MILITARY SERVICE: Navy, 1951-1955
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., dept. chaplain

KEVIN J. OWENS

National Sergeant-at-Arms



HOME: North Bend, Ore.
MEMBERSHIP: 27 years, Post 34
MILITARY SERVICE: Coast Guard, 1984-1996
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post cmdr., district cmdr., dept. vice

cmdr., dept. cmdr.

NATIONAL POSITIONS: Legislative Cncl., Foreign Relations Cncl., Veterans Employment & Education Cmte., Americanism Cncl.

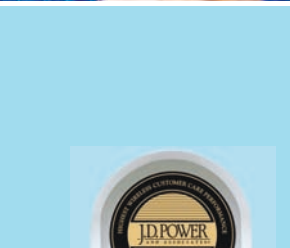
DIRK LEVY

Aide to the National Commander



HOME: Dallas, Ore.
MEMBERSHIP: 6 years, Post 34
MILITARY SERVICE: Army, 1983-2011
LEGION HIGHLIGHTS: Post adj., post cmdr., district cmdr.

NATIONAL POSITIONS: National Security Cncl., Americanism Cncl.



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Photo by Lucas Carter

High hopes for cannabis

Legion calls for research into the potential benefits as PTSD and TBI treatment.

BY STACY GAULT

The American Legion passed more than 300 resolutions at the 98th National Convention in Cincinnati last August, but one drew more attention than others.

The Legion's TBI/PTSD Committee, led by Past National Commander William Detweiler, proposed a resolution through the Convention Committee on Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation supporting research of medical marijuana as an alternative treatment for veterans suffering from combat-related mental health disorders.

"Our veterans deserve the best medical care that we can offer," Detweiler said. "We believe that funding additional medical research in this field will provide another tool in the physician's toolbox for the treatment of TBI and PTSD."

According to the resolution, the Legion "urges the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to license privately funded medical marijuana production operations in the United States to enable safe and efficient cannabis drug development research." It also calls on Congress to amend legislation "to remove marijuana from Schedule I and reclassify in a category that, at a minimum, will recognize cannabis as a drug with potential medical value."

Schedule I drugs – which include heroin, LSD and marijuana – are considered by the DEA to have no medical benefits and strong potential for abuse. Thus, by changing the category, marijuana could be studied by scientists for its healing properties and not solely for negative effects.

Five years ago, the Legion established the TBI/PTSD Committee to evaluate the treatments and challenges veterans face when suffering from conditions often described as the "signature wounds" from the war on terrorism.

"Our interest is to determine what treatments are being employed by (VA and DoD) currently



and what other treatments and protocols may be available that are not being currently used and/or approved," Detweiler said.

Since the resolution passed, Detweiler has received multiple requests for media interviews. In them, he is routinely asked why a veterans organization is asking Congress to change

marijuana from a Schedule I drug to a category with less control. Every time, Detweiler reiterates that The American Legion is only interested in the care of veterans and exploring all treatments that might help them.

With that in mind, the Legion invited Dr. Sue Sisley, a medical cannabis researcher, to speak about her experience and proposed research study prior to the national convention's vote on the resolution. As a doctor trained in psychiatry and internal medicine, Sisley has been treating veterans for more than 20 years at her Arizona-based practice.

In April, Sisley received approval to conduct a two-phase study of more than 70 veterans in various locations, utilizing three different strains of marijuana and a placebo. She believes the study will yield specific data that will hold up against challenges because it relies on concrete numbers.

Noting that she has never personally used marijuana, Sisley says she understands the stigma attached to the drug. She was skeptical it could be used as treatment for PTSD until several of her patients disclosed their personal use and how much it helped them with their symptoms.

"I would be highly judgmental and dismissive because I was never trained in the idea of cannabis being anything other than a highly addictive, dangerous drug," she says. "The notion that it was medically beneficial was so foreign to me."

But the more Sisley talked to veterans and their family members, she concluded that the use of cannabis deserves at least a study in a controlled environment to gain scientific data.

“Finally, we’ll be able to answer this question,” Sisley says. “And if it does work, which strains are best for treatment and which should be avoided?”

In 1996, California became the first state to legalize marijuana for medical use. Currently, 25 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico have followed suit and enacted medical marijuana programs.

Though half the country has legalized the drug for medical use, Sisley says there is a shortage of scientific studies evaluating its health benefits. In fact, there has never been a single randomized, controlled trial here, leaving a crucial void.

Iraq veteran and Legionnaire Roberto Pickering says he doesn’t need a study to believe in the health benefits. As a 100-percent PTSD-disabled veteran, Pickering says that medical cannabis saved his life.

“I was a basket case,” he says. “I lived in my parents’ basement for three years and didn’t speak. I almost forgot how to speak. Cannabis isn’t the only thing that got me out of it, but it really helped.”

Pickering served in the Marine Corps infantry from 2003 to 2011 and was part of the invasion of Iraq in 2003. He currently lives with his family in California, where medical marijuana is legal.

“I’m not looking at this as a means for veterans to access marijuana recreationally,” he says. “This is a real problem.”

It’s one Pickering has witnessed firsthand. He

says he has lost two fellow Marines to alcoholism and an opioid overdose, and wants to help others who have served their country.

In addition to supporting Sisley’s efforts, Pickering established the Battlefield Foundation, a suicide-prevention campaign for non-opiate-based relief through cannabis therapies. Though young, it provides emotional support, medical help and economic empowerment for veterans suffering from PTSD. Eventually, Pickering would like to see the foundation help veterans secure jobs in the medical cannabis industry while providing the medicine that’s helping them and their comrades.

He believes medical marijuana is a potentially revolutionary treatment, as well as a way to bridge the gap between older and younger Legionnaires. He applauds the organization for passing a resolution to lift restrictions that would allow for the health benefits of cannabis to be better explored.

As medical professionals discover more about combat-related mental health disorders and the number of veterans with PTSD hits new heights, Pickering says the new front line is “right here in America, and the enemy is invisible.”

Ultimately, research on medical cannabis should provide more information for veterans and medical professionals to determine the best treatment for each individual, Pickering says. At least, that’s the perspective of a veteran who’s still fighting the battle.

“I just want veterans to have a choice.” 🌿

Stacy Gault is assistant media relations manager for The American Legion.

Mental injury legislation in the 114th Congress

Here is a sample of bills introduced in the 114th Congress that address alternative treatment for service-connected mental health conditions and to control overmedication of suffering veterans. If not passed in the current session, they will need to be reintroduced after Jan. 1, 2017. The American Legion actively supports all five bills.

THE PROMISE ACT (H.R. 4063)

This measure aims to improve pain management policies between DoD and VA by establishing better clinical guidelines, countering overdoses, encouraging more collaboration, and establishing pain management boards to ensure better compliance. It would also strengthen

communication between VA and the veterans community, enhance patient advocacy, and improve research and education on complementary and alternative care.

THE COVER ACT (H.R. 271)

The Creating Our Veterans Expedited Recovery Act (COVER) would establish a commission to explore the possibility of incorporating complementary and alternative medicine treatment models into VA medical facilities nationwide. This legislation would increase the options of alternative treatments and therapies offered to veterans for treatment of service-connected mental health conditions and physical disabilities.

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Marine Corps veteran Andrea Dickerson undergoes acupuncture therapy at the VA medical center in Washington. Photo by Jared Soares

'I didn't want to live like that anymore'

Marine Corps veteran describes receiving acupuncture at her local VA.

BY ANDREA DICKERSON

I limp through the doors of the Washington DC VA Medical Center, carrying the weight of restlessness and anxiety I experience on a daily basis.

I approach the security guard at the front desk and fumble through my wallet for my veteran ID card. All I can hear is the sound of my heart beating as I stand in line. So wrapped up in the moment, I barely feel the strain on my back, knees and feet that constantly ache.

I inch closer until the guard waves me through. People behind me are whispering about how old I might be and what I might be doing there.

My face suddenly feels hot and my hands begin to shake. I'm seething. All I can think about is what got me to this point: my service in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Until that moment, it never really dawned on me that most of the women in the VA building – veteran or not – were employed there. Regardless, I was on a mission.

I board a crowded elevator and notice the embroidered

patches and hats other veterans are proudly wearing. My stomach tightens into a knot. I wonder what type of treatment they're seeking. Have they been through what I'm going through?

The elevator dings. Finally on the right floor, I wander the white hallways until I find the Integrated Health and Wellness Program. I check in and wait for the practitioner to come get me.

I try to watch TV, though I can feel people staring at me. For the first time since turning 30, I feel young again, even though I don't look a day over 18.

I hear a soft voice call my name. She greets me with a smile and hug and walks me back to her office. I take a seat in a chair facing her. We talk like old friends. I report all the aches and pains that are troubling me. She gazes at me attentively.

My nervousness fades slightly when I take off my shoes. I get up and position myself on a table. I close my eyes.

2 Number of prescription drug medications that are FDA-approved for PTSD treatment

64 Number of antidepressants, anti-anxiety drugs, anti-psychotic drugs, mood stabilizers and sleep aids that VA physicians can prescribe to PTSD patients, according to The Huffington Post. The June 2015 story noted that the list is not all-inclusive.

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Warm bean bags rest on each side of my back. Rolling up my pant legs, the acupuncturist places her hand on my knee as she decides on the points to place needles.

I feel a hand slip into mine and another hand on my wrist checking my pulse. I begin to feel anxious, and suddenly think about all the work waiting for me on my desk.

Am I selfish for being here? I could have just taken some pills for the pain. I probably could have continued to endure the side effects.

But I don't want to live like that anymore. I can't eat. I can't sleep. I feel like I can't live without my prescriptions. I find myself saying, "I'll be OK if I can just take my meds."

I feel a slight pinch, and the practitioner asks me if I'm ready. No, I think to myself. Is it too late to change my mind? Hesitantly, I nod in approval.

She quickly inserts the needle in my foot, and I jump a little. Calm down, I tell myself. It's not that bad. It won't be as painful if you just relax.

I open my eyes and look up at the ceiling. Natural light from the open window behind me illuminates the room.

I feel another pinch and I nod again. I don't feel the needle this time. But I do feel something. As I begin to relax more, I feel almost euphoric. The fluorescent lights in the room are off, but the room seems bright.

Suddenly, without expecting it, I do something I have not done in a while. I smile.

It creeps out of me like a guilty pleasure I want to indulge. As overpowering as the experience has been, I commit myself to giving acupuncture a chance. I shift my attention back to the session.

Several pinches and nods later, my knees and feet are surrounded by needles. I feel like I am floating on air. Working her way up to my face, the practitioner lets me know she'll try a few points on my face and ears.

I obviously had no clue what I signed up for. I'm no fan of hypodermic needles, let alone all of these at once. I thought I was just supposed to be participating in a low-key study. I don't know where I thought I was going to get stuck, but I was not expecting the face.



Photo by Jared Soares

I take a deep breath and let her continue. I think the acupuncturist can sense that I am getting tense. She asks if she can place her hand under my back.

Awkward, I think to myself. But I oblige. To my surprise, it isn't that bad. I clearly need to loosen up.

The practitioner checks my pulse again, and I feel the needles being withdrawn from my body.

After she helps me sit up, I realize I feel great. I'm on a natural high.

I'm glad I went through with the treatment. Although the effects aren't long-lasting, I prefer acupuncture over pills – and that is something I never thought I would say.

My only hope is that VA makes alternative treatment options such as this available to more veterans. I hope people will take a chance and try it out.

It pains me to go to different events in Washington and meet families of my fallen brothers and sisters in arms who felt like their only option to battle pain and opioid addictions was to take their own lives. It is up to us – veterans of the post-9/11 era – to demand more and different options, including alternative therapies. Every one of us is different, each with a route to recovery that can be difficult to find.

Andrea Dickerson is media relations specialist for The American Legion.

Mental injury legislation in the 114th Congress

THE EXPANDING CARE FOR VETERANS ACT (H.R. 4887)

Many complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) treatments in the United States are considered conventional approaches in other parts of the world. CAM is an umbrella term that describes a wide range of therapies, including acupuncture/acupressure, deep breathing, healing touch, hypnosis, meditation, yoga, hyperbaric oxygen therapy and more. This legislation would expand the research and education on, and delivery of, CAM therapy for veterans.

VETERANS DOG TRAINING THERAPY ACT (H.R. 359)

This legislation would expand the use of VA's service dog program to assist injured veterans with TBI and PTSD. Service dogs can act as an effective complementary therapy

treatment component for veterans who suffer on a daily basis from physical and psychological wounds.

PUPPIES ASSISTING WOUNDED SERVICEMEMBERS (PAWS) ACT OF 2016 (H.R. 4764)

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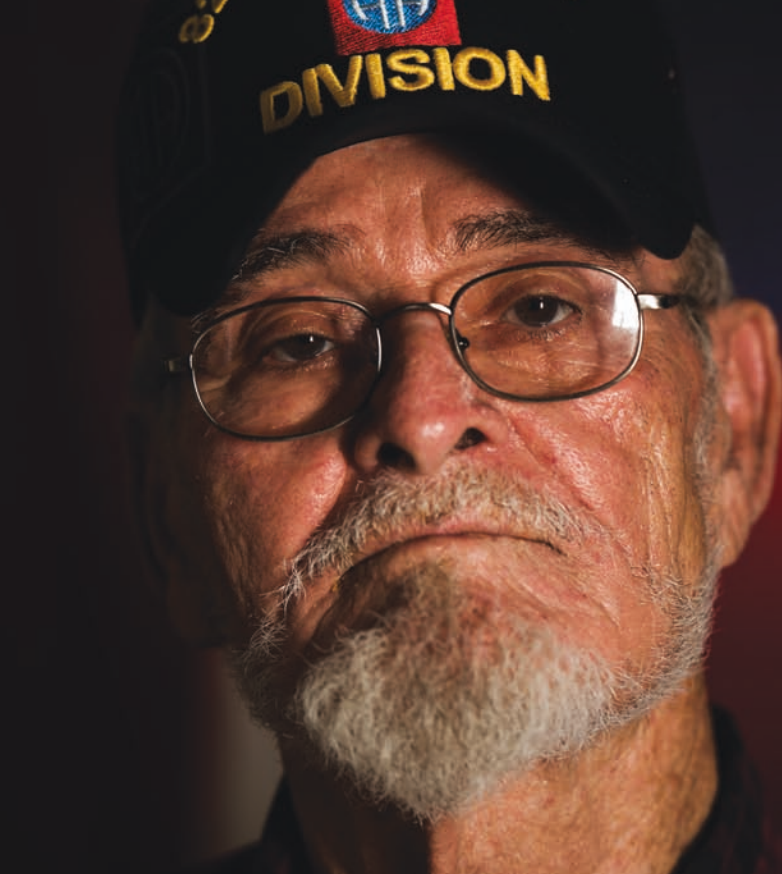
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Jorge Otero-Barreto earned the nickname "Puerto Rican Rambo."

Photo by Lucas Carter

Compassionate Rambo

Jorge Otero-Barreto – the “Puerto Rican Rambo” – was a warrior during Vietnam. Today, he’s still supporting his comrades as a post service officer.

BY HENRY HOWARD

All the windows and doors are open, letting a warm summer breeze waft into Vega Baja American Legion Post 14, about 30 miles west of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Inside, the post commander, who doubles as post service officer, sits at a fold-out table with pens, paper and resource materials neatly arranged. He is patiently assisting a veteran who stopped by the tiny post building with questions about her VA benefits.

It’s a stark contrast to the life the commander led 50 years ago. Jorge Otero-Barreto – who volunteered for five tours in Vietnam, engaged in more than 350 combat and aerial missions and was wounded five times – is among the most decorated Vietnam War veterans, with more than 40 military honors that include multiple Silver Stars and five Purple Hearts.

His exploits on the battlefield earned him adulation from his troops and the nickname “Puerto Rican Rambo.”

FROM MED SCHOOL TO THE JUNGLE Eloy Otero and Crispina Barreto named the first of their six children Jorge (Spanish for George), in honor of the first U.S. president. His mother wanted him to grow up and become a doctor, which he originally pursued. His father encouraged him to consider a military career, and he pursued that, too. But as Otero-Barreto says, “Fate had its own way.”

After three years of studying biology at the University of Puerto Rico and two years of training at the university, Otero-Barreto joined the U.S. Army on Sept. 15, 1959. He completed basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., and jump school at Fort Bragg, N.C., before he was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division and later the 101st.

He trained in Hawaii, the Philippines and Thailand before departing for Vietnam. “We were trained,” he says in a soft, serious tone between appointments in Post 14.

“We were prepared to do whatever we had to do against the enemy.”

Before the Army was officially in-country, Otero-Barreto helped conduct basic training for anti-communist Vietnamese fighters there. “They were farmers. They were trained to be jungle fighters. It’s not that simple.”

Otero-Barreto, a former platoon sergeant, trained his infantry teams both mentally and physically to become “jungle rats We liked to be inside the jungle. I know that a person has to control his mind and his body. Mental and physical courage should prepare you to take care of anything. I was willing to kill. I was willing to die. I was willing to take a cyanide pill. I am a warrior. I believed that, and I still believe that. I am still willing to take a pill instead of being a squealer.”

MIND OF A WARRIOR Otero-Barreto held himself and his troops to a high standard. In training his men, he expected them to become warriors just like him.

“A warrior is somebody who is beyond himself,” he says. “He doesn’t love himself. A warrior is a person who is willing to give his life for his people. A soldier is not a warrior until he convinces himself of the mission purpose. A warrior has to be a special person. You can see it in their faces – they are warriors.”

He recalls one time when his platoon ran into heavy fire from a machine gun. He ordered one of his men to take it out. “Remember what I taught you?” he said to him. “Go out and do it.”

The soldier followed orders and, in doing so, kept the platoon safe.

“If you don’t obey orders from me, you are a dead dog,” Otero-Barreto told his men. “You will never make it.”

He made an impression on everyone from privates to commanding officers.

Retired Lt. Col. John Hay was Otero-Barreto’s platoon leader for about six months in the late 1960s. “I noticed immediately the first night or so we were out, he was very acutely aware of his surroundings,” Hay recalls. “He was somebody I immediately trusted. He was that kind of guy. He was friendly, but he was all business, an extremely professional noncommissioned officer. For a young noncom, he was very mature. He was extremely conscientious. I trusted him with my life, I guarantee you that.”

Often, Hay was on the radio, communicating with leadership or calling in airstrikes or directing other maneuvers. He says he never worried about what Otero-Barreto was doing.

“Otero was amazing,” Hay says. “While I am looking at the mission and trying to accomplish whatever we were doing, he was just everywhere. The troops loved him, and they still love him today. He just left such an impression.”

One time, Hay remembers, Otero-Barreto admonished his troops for not respecting a deceased female Viet Cong fighter.

“He was a man of great morals, which I admired,” Hay says. “That’s something I demand from my leaders. Sometimes in war, you get tired of the booby traps and you want payback. But (what Otero-Barreto did) was never illegal, immoral or any of that. He was just a good all-around person. When you are talking about a guy who is as decorated as he is, morality doesn’t often come to mind. But it should.”

Hay, who retired after 31 years of service that included stints as a noncommissioned and commissioned officer, said Otero-Barreto was unparalleled on the battlefield.

“No one was a better platoon sergeant than Jorge – no one,” Hay declares. “I’ve had good ones, and some not so good, but no one can compare with Jorge. He was the best. No question about it.”

THE ‘REAL RAMBO’ Hay and others attribute Otero-Barreto’s battlefield savvy to his instincts and knowledge. “I was trained in conventional warfare, but (in Vietnam) I learned about guerrilla warfare, which I learned from the enemy,” he says. “To defeat that tiger, I had to know that tiger.”

In his hometown, there’s a song describing Otero-Barreto as the “real Rambo” – someone who actually saw combat, unlike the well-known Hollywood movie character: *“He is the one who goes. He is the one who stays. He is the one who is real. He is the one who chose to fight. The one with courage and plenty of willingness to fight. He is Rambo.”*

Otero-Barreto doesn’t like the character’s actions in the “Rambo” movies, but he embraces the nickname.

“The best Rambo is in my gut,” he says. “Saved my life in Vietnam. Took care of me in Vietnam. He told me when to fight, when not to fight, when to push, when to withdraw, when to kill.”

Throughout his deployments, Otero-Barreto suffered wounds but always returned to the battlefield. His men and platoon leaders were counting on him.

Otero-Barreto was wounded five times, but he



Otero-Barreto, a decorated combat veteran, looks over his collection of papers and photos from the Vietnam War. Photo by Lucas Carter

insists he never had PTSD. “You know why? Because I was trained so good. That was my job. I was responsible for my people. I used to enjoy the fight. That is what I learned: to fight.”

UNHAPPY HOMECOMING Otero-Barreto returned home from Vietnam on Dec. 15, 1970. It was not pleasant. “When I came back from Vietnam, nobody wanted us. Nobody. They were hating us.”

He remembers being spit on by protesters and people “looking at me like I was a monkey.”

Even so, he didn’t react or fight back. “I kept complete control,” he recalls. “When I was in the jungle, I didn’t fight the enemy when they wanted to fight me. I fought them when I wanted to fight them. The same principle applied.”

At home, Otero-Barreto reunited with his young wife and baby. Inside, his demons raged.

“I wasn’t happy,” he says. “I was sad. I was thinking that the U.S. Army in Vietnam was my family. I put the U.S. Army before my family. I felt like a coward because I quit. I was a warrior and a warrior never quits. Christmas Day, Santa Claus, blah blah blah. I felt paralyzed. I lost my mind.”

Otero-Barreto checked into a hospital, where doctors diagnosed him with combat fatigue – the Vietnam-era term for post-traumatic stress. He spent 15 days in the facility.

“I was hating my neighbors,” he says. “I was hating the U.S. Army. I was hating my family. I was hating myself. I was a warrior hating everybody. I was feeling guilty. My wife told me that if I didn’t quit the Army mindset we were through. I was hating everybody for seven years, and it wasn’t their fault. It was me.”

He managed to finish his bachelor’s degree, but he was still troubled. “No one else could see what I was seeing. Those moments in life will always be with me.”

GIVING BACK At one point, Otero-Barreto took his medals to the downtown market. He asked a vendor for a coffee and offered one of his medals instead of the \$1 price. The vendor refused. Believing the medals were worthless, Otero-Barreto threw all of them away. Fortunately, a neighbor collected them from the trash, and eventually Otero-Barreto got them back.

Even without his medals around to remind him of the war, Otero-Barreto remained angry and depressed. Once, while he was away on a trip, his family got rid of his weapons because they were concerned about his anger. “A warrior with no weapons,” he laments.

In time, Otero-Barreto discovered how to control his demons. He looked for ways to channel his leadership impulses into community service and at home. At a school for young boys, he mentored them and taught boxing lessons. He also installed a basketball court and created a program for youths in his community.

“That was my cure,” he says. “Not the pills.”

Otero-Barreto also credits his family for helping him get through postwar struggles.

“Those were moments when I wasn’t thinking of my wife and kids,” he says. “They kept me, more or less, thinking straight. I have 20 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren. You come to my house – that’s my platoon. They call me *abuelo* – grandfather. They keep me in my mind all the time.”

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Photo by Erika P. Rodriguez

'He's our hero'

Jorge Otero-Barreto received the Distinguished Member of the 502nd Infantry Regiment award during a ceremony at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, on June 17.

John Hay, a retired lieutenant colonel who served with Otero-Barreto, pushed for the recognition. Members are selected based on their honorable service and loyalty during wartime or peace.

"John Hay really wanted to do this for Jorge," said Ildefonso Colon Jr., an American Legion National Executive Committeeman from Puerto Rico. "Over the years, he has attributed so much to this man, not only his success but actually being alive today."

Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson spoke highly of Otero-Barreto, citing his leadership and skill on the battlefield.

"Leadership as a noncommissioned officer is our backbone," said Anderson, who served as the 502nd's infantry commander from 2002 to 2004. "Of course, what he did in Vietnam serving with so many different units (was also considered). By all accounts, based on what he has done, he should be dead five or six times over, but there he is standing there. He's a lucky man."

At Fort Campbell, Ky., home of the 502nd Infantry Regiment, a wall of honor displays plaques of all the award recipients, including Otero-Barreto.

"To us, he's our hero," Colon said. "If Michael Jordan were to walk in that door, I might shake his hand. But my hero is right here. In Puerto Rico, there is not a whole lot of fanfare for veterans. But in the veteran community, we know and honor this man because we know what he has done and what he continues to do. Every Wednesday he is at his post for service officer work. And if he has to go to Washington to fight for a case, he will. He's done it before."

— Henry Howard

In the community of Vega Baja, Otero-Barreto is highly regarded for assisting veterans. It's his way of giving back.

"When he joined the post, he became the service officer," says Angel Narvaez-Negron, a past department commander for Puerto Rico. "Then he became commander, and he is still the commander and service officer. With Jorge, he has the experience. Sometimes I read his positions and he sounds like a lawyer. People come from all the towns around his post just to get service from him. I know that is therapy for him."

Otero-Barreto has served as post commander for about 10 years. "He uses the same principles for the veterans as the way he runs the post," Narvaez says. "People love him for that."

Carlos Ramos, an Army veteran and member of Post 14, is among those who have been helped by Otero-Barreto. After he received a less-than-honorable discharge 12 years ago, Ramos worked a series of minimum-wage jobs, which included stints as assistant manager for a manufacturing company and inventory clerk for a pharmaceutical business.

"I didn't know about The American Legion until I met Jorge in February 2012," Ramos says. "I came here with no expectations, and he helped me get my discharge fixed."

With his upgraded status, Ramos began to receive VA benefits and went back to school. "My studies lifted my spirits a little bit," he says. "My life has improved since then." He gives Otero-Barreto credit for turning him around.

Otero-Barreto's life, too, has improved since he refocused his mind, achieved his degree and began helping veterans. "I feel happy every time they call me or come to me," he says. "In Puerto Rico, they don't idolize the veterans. Back in the mainland, it's 'Thank you for your service.' Here, there are no compliments. We don't work for compliments. We work for our people."

"They are my brothers. We were all in the same military."

Otero-Barreto is many things to many people: honorable warrior, community leader, veterans advocate. But he says there are other roles he cherishes more.

"I want to be remembered as a good father," he says. He bows his head and pauses. "A good grandpa. A good father. A good husband. I want them to remember me." 🌿

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



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BASIC TRAINING MEMORIES



U.S. Army photo

Remember basic training? How could you forget, right?

This month, *The American Legion Magazine* kicks off “Basic Training Memories,” an ongoing series in which readers look back on the good, the bad and the humorous experiences of their initiation into the military. This is an opportunity to reminisce about the best and worst days of your life.

It’s not too late to share your story. We’re publishing our best submissions in the magazine and online. Go to www.legiontown.org and click on “Share Your Story,” or mail your submission to Basic Training Memories, c/o *The American Legion Magazine*, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Photos are encouraged.

THE HEAT IS ON

I was almost 24 when I enlisted in the Army. I was excited for the new adventure and sad to leave my family. Like everyone else, I had never shined a pair of boots in my life, much less worn them. I remember sitting on my footlocker in the barracks at Fort McClellan, Ala., and starting to shine my two pairs of boots. To this day, I don’t remember why everyone bought lighter fluid or what it was used for, but I had some.

I thought I saw the other soldiers – women, because we were Women’s Army Corps (WAC) back then – putting it in their shoe polish. I thought to myself it would be good to do this and melt the wax so it would go on my boots with ease.

Well, when I lit the wax, the flames shot up about 3 feet high. I was so shocked I couldn’t move. One of the girls dragged the footlocker out to the fire escape, which was close to my area, fortunately. The alarm was going off, and someone got the fire extinguisher and put the fire out. The next thing I knew, my big, mean drill sergeant came in.

“Who did this?” she asked.

I said that I did and it was an accident. She told me to come to her office later, and I was scared to death. When I walked in her office, she told me to sit down. She then very calmly and rather pleasantly asked what happened. I was so happy that she didn’t string me up by my heels.

That was 38 years ago and my worst memory of basic training.

– Joanne Parmenter, Dyersburg, Tenn.



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TAPS ON PARRIS ISLAND

I have many memories of my time spent on “the Island,” but the most special happened every afternoon at the end of the duty day. I loved to lie in my rack – or if I had fire watch duty, to stand at a window and look over the parade field – and listen to Taps being played. It had a sound that was, to me, both sad and beautiful.

I retired from the military after 25 years of service divided between the Marine Corps, the Alabama Army National Guard and the Air Force Reserve. To this day, if I’m on a base in the afternoon, I love to listen to Taps being played and reflect on my time on “the Island” and my military career.

– Jim Ward, Wilmer, Ala.



'THAT'S MY SON'

In 1967, I was a skinny, non-athletic kid when I reported to the U.S. Coast Guard Recruit Training Center at Cape May, N.J. From the start, I struggled with the physical aspects of training. I couldn't do all the pushups and had to attend special evening sessions to try to pass the requirement. I came in dead last in the running event.

One day, I was in the right place at the right time to be selected for the Recruit Regimental Command. It was a prestigious honor, but I still hadn't completed the requisite number of pushups. I was losing much-needed sleep over it.

I was finally told I had one more chance to solve the pushup problem or I would be dropped.

That evening, I was determined to pass, and I did. Plus, I came in first in my company's final fitness running test.

On graduation day, with my parents, my brother (a former Coastie), his wife and my soon-to-be wife in the stands, I led the regiment onto the parade grounds, and with my saber in hand, stood front and center calling out commands. Prior to joining the Coast Guard, I had not accomplished much, physically or academically, but on Nov. 6, 1967, my parents could not have been prouder of me.

My dad died two years later, while I was stationed in the Pacific. I was grateful that I had been able to give him that moment when he turned to others in the stands and said, "That's my son."

Semper paratus!

— Jeffrey Webster, Green Valley, Ariz.



WHO'S GEORGE?

What I remember most about basic training wasn't the forced night march. It wasn't learning to fire a weapon, nor was it learning combat skills. Believe it or not, what I remember most was trying to remember my name. It may sound corny, but it's true. At times it was embarrassing, and at other times it was amusing.

In July 1963, I turned 18 and volunteered to join the Army. Little did I know that I would spend the next 12 months with an assumed name. When I reported to the Military Entrance Processing Station on North Broad Street in Philadelphia, I was told I needed to sign some paperwork. The name on my enlistment papers did not match the name on my birth certificate. My family's surname is spelled "Giorgio," but the name on my birth certificate was spelled "George." I signed the new documents, not realizing it would cause such turmoil, especially in basic training. As you know, in the service everyone calls you by your last name, and for someone to call out "George" just didn't register in my mind.

On a daily basis I felt like a dunce. During mail call, when "George" was called and I didn't respond, it wasn't uncommon for a fellow recruit to nudge me and tell me I had mail. I can't recall how many times I was humiliated because the drill instructor would call out "George" and I didn't answer. Besides a lot of other choice words, I was called a dumb SOB who didn't know my own (expletive) name.

Maybe I was too embarrassed, but for some reason I wasn't willing to explain to everyone my confusion because it happened so often. Nevertheless, I eventually adjusted to my new name, and a year later I had it corrected.

After three years of active duty, I served 30 more years in the reserves. I can look back at my time in the military, share with others my experience in basic training and get a few laughs.

— Nicholas Giorgio, The Villages, Fla.





An AV-8B Harrier is prepared for takeoff on the flight deck of the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp. The 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, embarked on Wasp, is conducting precision airstrikes against targets in Libya as part of Operation Odyssey Lightning. U.S. Navy photo

WAR ON TERRORISM

Odyssey Lightning

In case you missed it, the United States and its allies have opened up a new front in their widening war against the Islamic State. Add Libya to the growing list, as manned and unmanned U.S. Air Force assets have targeted ISIS positions in the coastal city of Sirte, in north-central Libya. Sirte is considered a stronghold for the ISIS branch in Libya, *The Washington Post* reports.

The airstrikes are being conducted “at the request of the Libyan Government of National Accord,” said Pentagon press secretary Peter Cook. “Additional U.S. strikes will continue to target ISIL in Sirte in order to enable (Libya’s unity government) to make a decisive, strategic advance,” he added, using another common acronym for the Islamic State.

The strikes, which began in August, are not insignificant in number. On a single day in late August, U.S. assets bombed 13 targets, according to the website The Long War Journal. The United States has averaged more than three airstrikes per day.

In addition to U.S. airpower, the *Post* reports that “a small number” of U.S. Special Operations forces “are providing direct, on-the-ground support for the first time to fighters battling the Islamic State in Libya.” The presence of Special Ops personnel has been confirmed by U.S. Africa Command. They are coordinating airstrikes and providing intelligence information.

Along with U.S. personnel, French, British and Italian commandos are operating in Libya, according to multiple published reports.

The American component of the operation is called “Operation Odyssey Lightning.”



Getty

ISIS brutalizes Yazidi minority

ISIS is continuing its genocide against the Yazidi minority of Iraq, according to a special U.N. commission.

ISIS militants murdered some 5,000 Yazidis when the terror group swept into Iraq in 2014, *Military Times* reports. At least 3,200 Yazidi women and children are being held captive by ISIS and are “subjected to almost unimaginable violence,” including sexual enslavement, according to the United Nations. Countless Yazidi boys have been forced to fight for ISIS.

The United Nations urges member states to engage in the “rescue, protection of and care for the Yazidi community.”

ISIS support grows

Citing a classified document generated by the U.S. government agency charged with integrating terrorism-related intelligence, NBC reports that ISIS is rapidly expanding. According to the National Counterterrorism Center, when the U.S. military began its anti-ISIS campaign in 2014, ISIS was operating in only seven countries. Today, the terror group is operating in 18.



45,000

Number of ISIS combatants in Iraq-Syria theater killed or captured

15,000

Remaining number of ISIS combatants in Iraq-Syria theater

Source: AP

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Overjoyed parents greet a veteran returning home from the Great War. Getty

VETERANS DAY

“In a world tormented by tension and the possibilities of conflict, we meet in a quiet commemoration of an historic day of peace. In an age that threatens the survival of freedom, we join together to honor those who made our freedom possible.”

President John F. Kennedy, 1961

Could Stem Cells be the Next Penicillin?

BY DAVID EBNER | Staff Writer

Chances are that you have heard about stem cells—they have been in the news for years. But did you know that stem cells are being used right now in the United States to treat debilitating lung diseases? Sufferers of diseases like COPD and pulmonary fibrosis are receiving life changing stem cell treatments that just a few short years ago had not yet been thought of as possible.

With further advancements in the study of stem cells, the question is posed: are stem cells the next penicillin? Stem cells and penicillin both come from humble beginnings and accidental discovery, they are both used to treat life threatening conditions and diseases and, just like penicillin, stem cell biologists have won Nobel Prizes due to the practical uses of their discoveries.

Consider the history of penicillin. Originally discovered in 1928 by the Scottish biologist, Sir Alexander Fleming, the full potential of the medication was not seen until its wide use in WWII. It wasn't until 1945, 17 years after its discovery, that Sir Fleming received the Nobel Prize. By that time, the medication had saved millions of lives.

Stem cells have also been studied extensively over time and have crept into the national dialogue as a buzzword, particularly the stem cells found in fetuses. However, the actual stem cells that are now being used to treat diseases in the United States, and the same cells that warranted the 2012 Nobel Prize in Medicine, are adult stem cells. This type of stem cell is found in fully developed individuals and flourish in all people — regardless of age or health.



The discovery of penicillin was an early example of ground breaking medical advancements changing the course of modern medicine.

Stem Cells: The Next Big Thing

Lung disease accounts for the loss of 150,000 lives every year and is the third leading cause of death in the United States.

Specialists using stem cells from the patient's own body can offer treatment for people suffering from lung diseases like:

- COPD
- Pulmonary Fibrosis
- Emphysema
- Interstitial Lung Disease
- Chronic Bronchitis

With clinics located in Dallas, Texas; Scottsdale, Arizona; Nashville, Tennessee; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Tampa, Florida, the physicians at the Lung Institute are able to treat patients from anywhere in the United States and around the world.

If you or a loved one suffers from a chronic lung disease, contact the Lung Institute to find out if stem cell treatments are right for you.

Call (888) 246-2941 to find out if you qualify or visit LungInstitute.com/legion

Most cells found in the body have developed into a specific type of cell, like a skin cell or a brain cell. At the turn of the 20th century, biologists discovered that some cells that reside in the body have not yet been assigned as a certain type of cell. Stem cells are simply blank cells standing by to meet your body's needs. The use of these cells to treat diseases traces back to 1968 when the first bone marrow transplant was performed. The result of placing healthy stem cells into a sick individual's body is the creation of healthy blood cells that are not infected with the disease. In turn, these cells replace the diseased ones and start to heal the patient.

Today, a clinic called the Lung Institute is using adult stem cells harvested from the patient's own blood or bone marrow to provide similar healing results for people with lung diseases. Their website, lunginstitute.com, states that they have treated over 2500 patients to date. The physician extracts stem cells from the patient, then they separate the cells and reintroduce them into the patient's body. The result is that the healthy cells replace the damaged ones found in the lungs. Not only can this slow the progression of the disease, but it also works to restore lung function.

Just as penicillin was recognized by the scientists that award the Nobel Prize in Medicine, so have stem cell developments. If the number of people who have already been successfully treated with stem cells is any indication of the future, then it will undoubtedly be heralded as one of the ground-breaking medical technologies of its time. ■



Photo by Monty Brinton

SERVICE

Carey to emcee Veterans Inaugural Ball

Comedian, actor, author and “Price is Right” host Drew Carey will emcee the Veterans Inaugural Ball – A Salute to Heroes hosted by The American Legion on Jan. 20.

Organized by the Veterans Inaugural Committee, which includes 15 congressionally chartered veterans service

organizations, the event is the longest continuous inaugural event for veterans.

Carey served six years in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and is known for supporting the military, veterans and their families. “I am proud and honored to be a part of such a momentous event,” he said. “I look forward to paying tribute to my fellow veterans and the Medal of Honor recipients.”

National Commander Charles E. Schmidt applauded Carey for his military service and commitment to honoring veterans of all eras.

“The American Legion would like to thank Drew Carey for his service to our country and lending his talents to this event,” Schmidt said. “We know with him behind the microphone everyone in attendance will have a fantastic time. It is only fitting that on the night the new commander in chief takes office, the opportunity is given to thank the bravest of the brave – our nation’s Medal of Honor recipients – in person, and we are proud to provide that opportunity once again.”

President Dwight Eisenhower began the tradition of the Veterans Inaugural Ball in 1953 as a way for the newly sworn-in commander in chief to pay tribute to Medal of Honor recipients on the night of the inauguration.

Their sacrifice, courage and service will be honored throughout the event, which includes a video tribute.

The president and/or vice president will attend the ball, as has been the custom since Eisenhower’s inauguration. Other invited guests include members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, congressional representatives, celebrities, corporate citizens and veterans group leaders.

The black-tie event begins with a reception at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m., dessert and coffee at 9 p.m., and entertainment and dancing at 10 p.m. It will take place at the Renaissance Washington.

The American Bombshells, Janine Stange, and renowned band Free Spirit will provide the entertainment.

Tickets for the reception, dinner, dessert and ball are \$300 and available for purchase at www.legion.org/veteransball. Information on sponsorships, premium packages and table purchases are available by emailing info@salutetoheroesball.org.

BY THE NUMBERS

1,059,546

Living veterans who served during the Gulf War era (August 1990 to August 2001) and the post-9/11 era

284,985

Living veterans who served during the Gulf War (August 1990 to August 2001) and the Vietnam War

161,768

Living veterans who served during the Korean War and the Vietnam War

83,558

Living veterans who served during World War II and the Korean War

Source: 2014 American Community Survey



Photo by Amy C. Elliott

PATRIOTISM

Largest Veterans Day parade goes west

The nation’s largest Veterans Day parade in New York City – “America’s Parade” – is making its way to the West Coast.

On Friday, Nov. 11, Los Angeles will host its first “America’s Parade” event, while New York City will celebrate its 97th. Both will commemorate the 15th anniversary of 9/11, with special recognition for post-9/11 veterans and first responders. In addition, the parades will mark the 25th anniversary of Operation Desert Storm.

“America’s Parade: Los Angeles” will start at 11 a.m. PST on the West Los Angeles VA campus, covering about 1 mile. The Los Angeles parade is sponsored by The American Legion, the Los Angeles County Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, and the United War Veterans Council.

Learn more about the Los Angeles parade and how to participate at www.americasparade.org/la.

“America’s Parade: New York City” will start at 11:15 a.m. EST. More than 20,000 participants will march up Fifth Avenue from 26th Street to 52nd Street; the total distance is 1.2 miles. The parade will be preceded by an opening ceremony at 10 a.m. in Madison Square Park and end with a wreath-laying at the Eternal Light Monument at 11 a.m.

Learn more about the New York parade and how to participate at www.americasparade.org.

A Relationship Built on Commitment to Veterans



Medal of Honor recipient James Taylor throws the first pitch at the 2016 American Legion World Series.
(Photo by Lucas Carter/The American Legion)

After graduating from high school in 1955, James Allen Taylor couldn't decide what to do, so he joined the Army. "It was the best decision I ever made — besides marrying my wife," says the retired major.

Taylor served 10 years as an enlisted cavalryman, then filled out the rest of his nearly 25-year career as an officer. His service took him to Vietnam, where he earned the Medal of Honor in 1967 for repeatedly risking his life to save wounded American soldiers endangered by enemy fire.

Taylor is humble about his heroism and insists on dedicating the award to all servicemembers. But it's clear the gratitude of fellow soldiers touches him. Twice recently, men he saved in Vietnam called him out of the blue. "I hadn't heard from them in 50 years," Taylor says, "and they still wanted to call me lieutenant. I told them it's just Jim now."

Taylor's pride in his country and commitment to service led to his membership in organizations that share his values. For more than 50 years, he has been a member of American Legion Post 274 in Arcata, California.

"I liked what I heard from the commander — a commitment to reach out to all vets who've served honorably in times of combat, to support them and be a voice for them in Washington and fight for their rights," Taylor says. "The American Legion has stayed true to that mission."

For almost as long, he has been a loyal USAA member too. Nearly 43 years ago, Taylor needed to make decisions about insurance, investments and banking. "The USAA representative was very professional and knowledgeable," he says, "but what impressed me was that she didn't put any pressure on me." After explaining USAA membership to Taylor, the representative encouraged him to call back if he was interested, but he had already decided to join.

And he says he's never regretted it. "USAA has always been very responsive, and they're always there for me when I need them."

Taylor says it makes perfect sense that The American Legion and USAA would have a close relationship: "Their association is a win-win situation. I'm proud to be a member of both, and I'm glad they can cooperate to reach out to eligible American Legion members and give them the same services I've enjoyed for years."

"Their association is a win-win situation. I'm proud to be a member of both ..."





Photo by Clay Lomneth

TROOP SUPPORT

OCW grant helps couple start 'second half' of life

Chris Cochrane stands at the Klondike Archery Park range in Pensacola, Fla., his wife Ashley beside him. Over and over, he unleashes an arrow at the target, routinely landing his shot inside the small circle some 40 yards away.

But the Air Force veteran isn't shooting in the usual way. Two strokes have left Cochrane partially paralyzed on his right side. He uses a specially adapted bow – provided through an American Legion Operation Comfort Warriors grant – that he operates with his left arm and his mouth.

"It's absolutely amazing," Cochrane says. "(The Legion) doesn't just want to help. It wants to make you flourish."

Following a deployment to Europe in 2013, Cochrane suffered an infection that caused two strokes in two days – one affecting his heart and the other his brain. He spent three weeks in a coma, and when he awoke, he could barely speak.

Eventually he learned to walk and talk again. But it wasn't until Ashley took Cochrane to an Air Force Wounded Warrior (AFW2) camp that he became interested in shooting a bow again. There, he met an amputee veteran who does archery. Cochrane got the bug again and began attending other camps.

The Special Operations Command's Care Coalition told the Legion about Cochrane's situation. Soon, Department of Florida Veteran Services Director Al Diaz and other Legionnaires presented the former pilot with a \$3,400 bow and accessories.

"I cried," Ashley says. "We were still waiting to see what his disability rating was going to be. I wasn't working full-time anymore because I was taking care of him When (the Legion) came along and not only gave him a bow, but a bow loaded with everything he could ask for, that was a great moment."

Cochrane says he plans to compete in next year's DoD Warrior Games. But his road to recovery has also helped the couple find a bigger purpose in life.

"We call it 'the second half,'" Ashley says. "We really feel like, medically speaking, Chris should have died. He's on this earth for a reason, and I'm on this earth for a reason. We have dreams of starting a nonprofit and doing respite retreats for wounded warriors and their spouses. We woke up and realized that this life is so short ... we want to do something big with it."

– Steve B. Brooks

GIVING

Leave a legacy with The American Legion

The American Legion offers opportunities for members to improve the quality of life for millions of veterans, servicemembers and their families through various charitable giving programs.

Together, they provide resources for wounded veterans, build character and develop leadership in youth, fund scholarships for the children of fallen servicemembers and veterans, and more.

Every year, hundreds of Legion Family members name American Legion charitable programs in their wills or trusts through a variety of estate planning alternatives that fit their specific financial circumstances. Through planned giving, donors are able to meet their current and future financial needs while providing the Legion and beneficiaries of its charitable programs with financial support later.

One or more of the seven American Legion charitable funds can be named in an estate plan. These include American Legion Charities, the American Legion Endowment Fund, the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, the American Legion Scholarship Trust, the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund, Operation Comfort Warriors and the National Emergency Fund.

The Legion's new Planned Giving page at www.legion.org/plannedgiving provides details on types of assets (e.g., life insurance, stocks and bonds, real estate) that make the best planned gifts, ways to donate to a favorite Legion charity, the benefits of making a bequest, and stories from donors about why they chose to leave a lasting legacy through The American Legion.

Philanthropy and individual gifts have played a big part in shaping the Legion's history, and will continue to do so as the organization enters its second century.

To learn more about the Legion's charitable programs, download the Planned Giving Guide brochure at www.legion.org/publications.



Photo by Clay Lomneth

Watch a video online: www.legion.org/legiontv

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ACTIVE DUTY

Unable to deploy

The Army has an estimated 100,000 soldiers considered “non-deployable,” *Jane’s Defense* reports. “About 80 percent of those are due to medical problems.”

Given the dwindling size of the Army, this is beginning to affect unit manning levels. “When end-strength levels were higher, the service was able to keep formations at 110 percent to 115 percent manning levels, meaning it could absorb 10 percent non-deployable soldiers and still field a fully manned unit.”

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

China sends arms to Afghanistan

For the first time, China has delivered military equipment to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. As Voice of America reports, the equipment was delivered on a Russian cargo plane and included logistical materials, parts for military vehicles, ammunition and weapons.

“Afghanistan is our close neighbor and a very important neighbor to China,” said Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing. “This is the beginning of our regular military-to-military exchanges and cooperation ... China and Afghanistan are on the same front. We will fight together.”

DEFENSE

Moscow reverts to old ways



Wikimedia Commons

+200

Increase in the number of warheads deployed on Russia’s ballistic missiles, despite obligations under the New START treaty that require both Russia and the United States to decrease their warhead counts

-1,550

Required decrease in the nations’ deployed warheads by February 2018

Source: Radio Free Europe



U.S. Air Force photo

ACTIVE DUTY

Raptor no match for swarming bees

The F-22 Raptor, the world’s most advanced and most capable air-superiority fighter-bomber, appears to have met its match: honey bees.

As *The Washington Times* reports, a swarm of 20,000 bees turned an F-22 at Joint Base Langley-Eustis into a temporary home. The bees covered one of the plane’s powerful engines. “A retired U.S. Navy veteran turned beekeeper was eventually found to relocate the hive,” according to the paper. “The bees were vacuumed up and taken to a colony used by a local beer producer.”

Thankfully, the Raptor was no worse for wear and was soon cleared to return to the air.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

U.S.-Japan alliance deepens

The U.S. military is training to transport Japanese Self-Defense Forces by air and sea, *Stars and Stripes* reports. The transition comes in response to the Japanese government’s recent approval of guidelines allowing the Japanese military to support U.S. forces spread throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

“In January, the Air Force certified Japanese military vehicles to fly on U.S. aircraft at Yokota Air Base and Kisarazu Air Field,” the paper noted. “Three months later, U.S. C-130 cargo planes were moving Japanese trucks in a real-world operation after a series of devastating earthquakes in Kumamoto. And Army landing craft moved Japanese armored cars between Sasebo and Yokohama” in July.

“The new defense guidelines, agreed to in 2015, as well as the security legislation recently enacted by the Japanese Diet, are enabling new, expanded forms of cooperation with Japan,” U.S. Forces-Japan spokesman Maj. John Severns said.

These developments are seen as a reaction to the longtime allies’ increasing focus on China’s aggressive actions in the region.

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62496/62516

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19127205

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drillmaster

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WOW SUPER COUPON

26", 4 DRAWER TOOL CART

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61634/61952

Customer Rating
★★★★★

SAVE \$209

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BUSINESS

How content marketing builds your business

ASK THE VETREPRENEUR



MARK ROCKEFELLER

Q: What is content marketing?

A: Content marketing is another opportunity for you as a small business owner to educate your customers and fans about your business, regardless of whether you deliver a product or a service. Your lead purpose is to attract

and keep customers by providing some sort of value. Content marketing comes in many forms, including blogs, weekly columns, videos, quizzes, infographics and more.

It's also a form of brand journalism that helps you build awareness outside traditional media outlets, and a way to communicate with prospects and customers without pitching or selling your product directly. By providing useful, educational, clever or entertaining content, you're giving your fans another reason to appreciate your brand and share it with their friends, co-workers and families.

Q: How do I start?

A: The key is to choose a medium that best suits your brand and provides the best opportunity to reach your customers. Start by asking yourself, "What are my goals?" Do you want to raise awareness about your brand? Convert an audience to paying customers? Think about content creation and curation as a series of tests to help you determine what works and what doesn't for your business.

A great place to start as you explore options is the Content Marketing Institute. It has a lot of great how-to's and educational tools. I'm also a strong advocate of observing what other businesses are doing – whether they're in the same industry or not. Their content can be a starting point as you begin to think about what you want to create. Find the things that inspire you, and take it from there.

Mark Rockefeller is an entrepreneur, attorney and veteran. He is the co-founder and CEO of StreetShares, an online marketplace where investors compete to provide shares of commercial loans to small businesses.

Follow Rockefeller on Twitter @markrockefeller or StreetShares @StreetShares

Have a question? Send it to him at questions@streetshares.com.

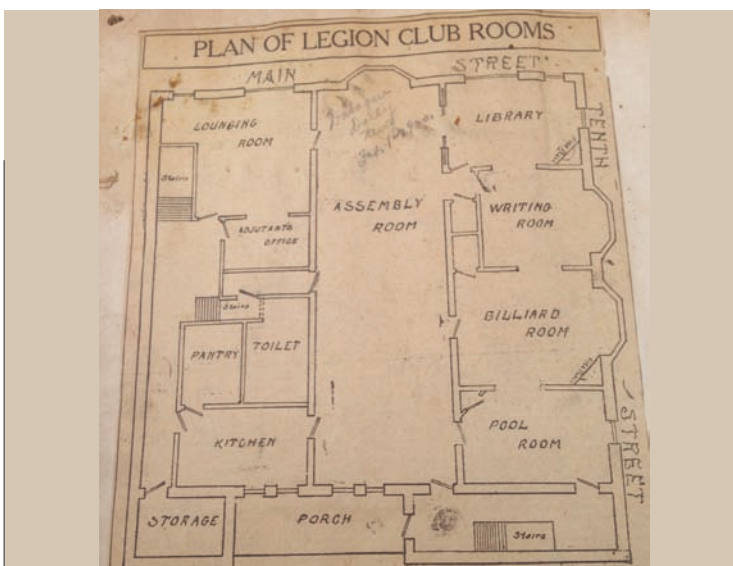


Photo by Bob Felderman

CENTENNIAL

Post 6, Dubuque, Iowa

Post 6, chartered in May 1919, now has the plans for its original post home, found in a book of old newspaper articles at a yard sale.

According to the post's Centennial Celebration page, the "World War Veterans Association of Dubuque voted to become American Legion 15 members of the planning committee first met at Dubuque Commercial Club" at 10th and Main. The building became the Dubuque Chamber of Commerce in 1920, and was torn down in 1964 as part of urban revitalization.

As the diagram shows and the accompanying text confirms, the post's rooms on the second floor were "as well equipped as any club rooms in the city," including separate billiard and pool spaces.

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



What happens if I fail or drop a class?

Q: I am currently enrolled in a calculus class. I am not doing well and may receive an "F" grade. What happens to my Post-9/11 GI Bill? I have heard that if I stay in the class and receive an F, VA will not ask for any money back. Is that true?

A: Yes, VA will pay for an "F" grade, which is a punitive grade but assigned for pursuit of a course used in determining the student's overall progress toward completion of the school's requirements for graduation. If you drop the class, you will probably receive a "W" for withdraw, a non-punitive grade but that doesn't count as earned credit and isn't considered in progress standards for graduation. When you receive a non-punitive grade, VA may request money back for tuition and housing allowance.

Make sure you ask your school about their punitive and non-punitive grades.

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



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HONOR & REMEMBRANCE

World War I memorial effort drives centennial energy

A nationwide project to locate, assess and restore World War I monuments and memorials – many of which were erected by American Legion posts – can start a national conversation about the Great War and its many effects, says Daniel Dayton, U.S. World War One Centennial Commission executive director.

Dayton and American Legion Past National Commander Marty

Conatser, adjutant for the Legion's Department of Illinois and its more than 750 local posts, spoke at the Upper Midwest Regional Meeting of the World War One Centennial Commission on Sept. 20. The Chicago event brought to the Pritzker Military Museum & Library state World War I centennial representatives from across the Midwest, including Deborah York of Tennessee, great granddaughter of Medal of Honor recipient Alvin York, a first-generation member of The American Legion.

The American Legion National Executive Committee passed a resolution in May to support and promote the 100 Cities/100 Memorials grant program that offers matching funds of up to \$2,000 for projects to restore World War I monuments and memorials in local communities throughout the United States.

The 100 Cities/100 Memorials grant application deadline is July 15, 2017. The Pritzker Military Museum & Library plans to publish a coffee table book to showcase the 100 chosen memorials and monuments by 2018.

Conatser said the entire American Legion Family can get involved with the effort to find and revive local memorials in honor of the centennial, whether they pursue grant money or not. Riders chapters, SAL squadrons, Auxiliary units, Boy Scout troops attached to posts and others in communities can work together to locate and take inventory, he said. Conatser advised centennial representatives to make contact with Legion department adjutants to spread the word as the Legion nears its 100th anniversary, to be recognized between August 2018 and November 2019.



Past National Commander Marty Conatser

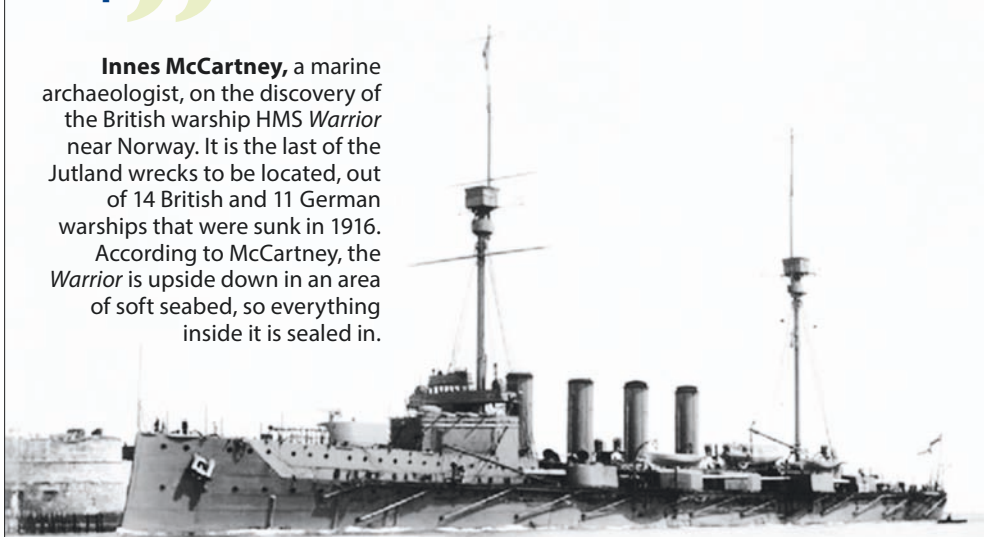
Photo by Jeff Stoffer

VERBATIM

It's the only wreck left from the Battle of Jutland that we can categorically say is completely unspoiled.

Innes McCartney, a marine archaeologist, on the discovery of the British warship HMS *Warrior* near Norway. It is the last of the Jutland wrecks to be located, out of 14 British and 11 German warships that were sunk in 1916.

According to McCartney, the *Warrior* is upside down in an area of soft seabed, so everything inside it is sealed in.



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PERSONAL FINANCE



Renting a car? Know the meaning of 'no'

FOCUS ON FINANCES



J.J. MONTANARO

A friend of mine was in a non-injury fender bender while on vacation.

It put the rental car out of commission, so he arranged for alternate transportation and finished his trip. A quick call to his insurance company confirmed he was covered with the same terms and deductibles as if he'd been driving his own car.

No big deal, right?

That's what he thought – until he received a bill from the rental car agency a few months later. The agency informed him that he owed them for the time the vehicle was being repaired and not rentable. The bill included a charge for the reduced value of the vehicle due to the accident. And the company charged him for administrative costs associated with sorting out the situation.

The total was a hefty \$1,500. He called his insurance company and was shocked to learn that those particular losses were not covered by his auto insurance.

Uh-oh.

However, my friend's story has a happy ending, thanks to his credit card company. One of the benefits of his card is protection that covers what his auto policy doesn't. Does yours?

With the holiday season upon us, it's a safe bet that some drivers are paying more attention to their shopping lists than the traffic around them. That makes now a good time to review your coverage options so a rental car accident doesn't turn your vacation into a financial nightmare.

Here's a brief summary of four major coverage options you'll be presented with next time you rent a vehicle:

■ **Loss damage waiver.** Normally, this coverage runs \$10 to \$20 per day and prevents the rental car company from holding you accountable for damage to the vehicle or loss of use, towing or administrative charges. However, the company may still file a claim against your auto insurance that may show up on your driving record.

■ **Liability.** This coverage extends the protection provided by your own policy if you are found liable in a lawsuit after an accident. The typical cost is \$7 to \$14 per day.

■ **Personal accident insurance.** This covers any medical and ambulance charges incurred by you or your passengers. Your auto policy might include Personal Injury Protection (PIP), or you could be covered by your medical insurance. Typically, this runs \$1 to \$5 per day.

■ **Personal effects coverage.** This insurance covers your personal possessions inside the car if stolen or damaged. Your homeowners or renters policy may also cover this type of loss, subject to deductibles. This protection costs \$1 to \$4 a day.

This holiday season, before you blissfully forgo the insurance when renting a car, check with your insurance carrier, credit card company and any other membership organization that might provide protection. Know how well you're protected before you initial any boxes that say "declined coverage."

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

LEGION CHARITIES

Vehicle donations help Legion programs

Owners of unused vehicles can donate them for tax breaks while benefiting American Legion programs.

The American Legion Vehicle Donation Program accepts trucks, vans, SUVs, boats, motorcycles, RVs and more. Proceeds from each auction sale via Insurance Auto Auctions (IAA) will go toward American Legion charities and programs.

IAA accepts vehicles in almost any condition, whether they can be driven or not, in all 50 states.

Those wishing to donate a vehicle should fill out a form online at www.legion.org/donate/auto or call (844) 353-4466. You will be contacted within 48 hours for free pickup arrangements.

If you have questions about the donation program, such as when you'll receive your tax receipt or if you need your vehicle title, go to www.legion.org/donate/auto/faq for answers.

VERBATIM

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Bryan McLain, principal of Eagle Mountain Elementary School in Fort Worth, Texas, on expanded recess time for young students.

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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

55th & 58th WRS, Branson, MO, 6/7-10, Conrad Layton, (918) 446-6945, conradlay@aol.com;
C-119 Veterans & 60th Trp Carrier Grp, Branson, MO, 9/17, Paul Baldwin, (254) 674-2267; **USAFSS**, St. Augustine, FL, 1/26-29, Jay Johnson, (321) 727-8041, jayjohnson@cfl.rr.com

ARMY

88th Inf Div & TRUST Troopers (Southeast Chpt), North Myrtle Beach, SC, 5/8-11, Preston Bryant, (803) 245-4462, plbboat@atlanticbb.net; **88th Transportation Co (An Khe, Vietnam)**, LaPorte, IN, 3/10-11, Butch Weston, (219) 363-5374, rhondaweston@yahoo.com;
471st Trans Co (Desert Storm), Lawton, OK, 8/4-6, Brian Simms, (580) 713-9864, brian151@hotmail.com; **Army Counter Intelligence Corps**, Herndon, VA, 4/27-5/1, Stan Solin, (714) 998-1562, agentreport@gmail.com; **Battle of the Bulge 72nd Anniversary Commemoration**, Arlington, VA, 12/14-16, John Bowen, (301) 384-6533, johndbowen@earthlink.net

COAST GUARD

All Coast Guard, Reno, NV, 5/13-17, Doak Walker, (907) 789-2579, allships33@gmail.com

JOINT

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans, Jacksonville, AR, 4/29, Danna Kay Duggar, (501) 241-1943, jaxmilmuseum@gmail.com

NAVY

Duluth LPD 6, Duluth, MN, 9/6-10, John Adams, (484) 766-3715, john.adams@ussduluth.org; **John F. Kennedy CV/CVA 67**, Norfolk, VA, 8/23-26, 2018, Bob Haner, (407) 682-2613, bobngnaner@yahoo.com; **Kenneth D. Bailey DD/DDR 713**, Nashville, TN, 5/4-7, Ernie Pina, (401) 333-1964, cpopina@cox.net; **Los Angeles SS(N) 688**, Williamsburg, VA, 11/10-13, Brian Headden, (435) 840-0548, bcsconst@yahoo.com; **Mariner Marlin Seaplane Assn**, Norfolk, VA, 5/17-21, Bob Tibbetts, (859) 223-7871, bobt42@twc.com; **Monticello LSD 35**, San Antonio, 9/6-10, Robert Behm, (209) 772-0543, beamer@ussmonticello.com; **Naval Security Force, Naval Wpns Stn, Fallbrook, CA**, San Diego, 1/13-14, 2018, Todd Voge, (507) 291-1306, todd@vcsconsult.com; **Rich DD/DDE 20**, Ligonier, PA, 5/1-5, Paul Angelicchio, (724) 864-2026, reunion2017@ussrich.org; **Robert E. Lee SSBN 601**, Laughlin, NV, 4/2-7, Joe White, (405) 410-9206, joewhite727@gmail.com; **Sampson DDG 10**, Norfolk, VA, 5/4-7, David Brandt, (803) 478-2617, drbrandt@ftc1.net; **Satyr ARL 23/LST 603**, Charleston, SC, 6/1-5, Charles Massey, (410) 883-3361, ctbwonder@verizon.net; **Shannon DM 25**,

Charleston, SC, 5/1-4, Rodney Tourville, (931) 461-2853, rodney.w.tourville@gmail.com; **Tanner AGS 15**, Nashville, TN, 9/24-27, Tom McDowell, (978) 615-4005, kathyortom61@gmail.com; **Thomas E. Fraser DM 24**, Charleston, SC, 5/1-4, Rodney Tourville, (931) 461-2853, rodney.w.tourville@gmail.com; **Thomas C. Hart DE/FF 1092**, Bloomington, MN/Minneapolis, 6/6-11, Randy Groen, (952) 220-8553, groenrandy@gmail.com; **Tin Can Sailors Midwest Bull Session**, Kearney, NE, 4/7-8, Gregg Jensen, (308) 234-1581, gwjensen@frontier.net; **Waldron DD 699**, Houston, 4/27-5/1, Ron Wells, (512) 282-4507, hughronwells@yahoo.com; **Worden DG/CG 18**, Reston, VA/Washington, 10/4-8, Dennis Royer, (717) 733-9223, dlg18@dejazzd.com

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Post 102, CT: David W. Morsey
Post 25, DE: Terry Beaver Sr.
Post 347, FL: Charles H. Prince, John J. Trenkle
Post AUOI, Australia: Eugene O'Neill, Allen E. Renwick

IN SEARCH OF

2nd Bn 5th Mar Gulf Co (Chu Lai to DMZ, 1966-1967), George Husick, (814) 673-2711, husicdonna6@gmail.com
2nd Sec Co MP (Cam Rahn Bay, Vietnam, 1971-1972), Earl Moss, (563) 422-5448, laddiejo@hotmail.com
7th Inf Div QM Unit (Korea, 1955-1956), Jerry Houghton, (580) 284-1621
14th Cbt Eng Bn AIT Tng (Fort Leonard Wood, MO, 1966-1967), Tom Duke, cduke40176@hotmail.com
67th Med Det 2nd Armd Div (Mainz, Germany, 1954-1957), A.B. Barnes, (919) 688-4775
172nd Inf Rgt Baseball, Team Warner Kaserne (Munich, Germany, 1953), Robert Hornberger, (610) 593-5929
249th Gen Hosp (Asaka, Japan, Dec 1967), Gary Petersen, spudpete71@yahoo.com
329th Comm Recon Co ASA (Korea, 1954-1955), Charles Day, (478) 960-2986, day8204@cox.net
548th Maintenance Co 277th S&S Bn 29th GS Grp Army SPT Cmd 1st Log Cmbd USARV (Tay Ninh, South Vietnam, 1969-1970), Lester Johnson, (615) 766-0741, lstjrjhsn@yahoo.com
937th Eng Avn Co IAGS (Balboa Heights, Panama Canal Zone, 1952-1955), Eugene Galus, (843) 209-1266
1873rd Eng Avn Bn (South Pacific, New Guinea, Ryukyus Islands & Okinawa, 1944-1945), Verdree Lockhart, (404) 794-5208, verdree@aol.com
B Co 2nd Plt (Scotch) 5th Bn 46th Inf 198th LIB (Chu Lai, Vietnam, 1969-1970), R.C. Johnson, (585) 319-2832, 5210@frontiernet.net

C Co 2nd Cbt Eng 2nd Inf Div (Pork Chop Hill, Korea, Nov 1952), Edward Foster, 4377 W. 132nd St., #C, Hawthorne, CA 90250
Co 513 (NTC San Diego, Aug-Oct 1965), Allen Throm, palal16872@gmail.com
Co B / 37th 63rd Sig Bn (Camp Evans, Vietnam, Aug 1969-July 1970), Rick Linnes, (507) 387-6297, blinnes@hotmail.com
D Co 24th Eng Bn 4th Armd Div (Johnson Barracks, Furth, Germany, 1968-1970), Glenn Straub, (570) 462-9540
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HHC 60th Ord Grp (Zweibrucken, Germany, 1974-1975), Richard McEntire, guardman49@yahoo.com
HM-12 Opn Endsweep (1972-1973), Ronny White, rowwhite@embarqmail.com
Hosp Corpsmen, Physical Exam Sect, Marine Corps Air Ground Cbt Ctr (Twentynine Palms, CA, Desert Storm), Bob Eberlein, 12215 Ashland St., Granger IN 46530, ebb23@att.net
L-3-25th 4th Mar Div (Iwo Jima), John Teuchert, 623 Marlin Circle, Barefoot Bay, FL 32976
LSM 218 (South Pacific, Philippines & China, 1945-1946), Richard Walsh, (925) 689-5739
LST 275 (1945-1946), Simon Zayon, (856) 354-1216
MCRD Plt 381 (Aug-Nov 1958), Bob Hundley, (785) 933-3440
Mekong Delta River Div (1970-1971), Mike "Piezon" Cassesse, (203) 605-3307
Naval Regional Dental Ctr (Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, 1975-1978), David Obaza, (570) 258-5229, davidobaza@gmail.com
NMCB-10, H Co Comm (Vietnam, 1968-1969), Gary McGhee, (520) 487-0250, gfmhmc41@msn.com
Savannah CL 42 (1944-1945), Simon Zayon, (856) 354-1216
S&MA Fin Div (Zweibrucken, Germany, 1966-1969), Ron Woods, (303) 263-7217, rdwoods46@att.net
South Campus Vets, "U" of Miami (1947-1948), Simon Zayon, (856) 354-1216
VA-212 Line Crew (Moffett Field, CA, 1957-1958), Joe Lee, (678) 458-0463
VP-11 (NAS Brunswick, ME), Garold Burrell, garold.burrell@syngenta.com

TAPS

Gary A. Berry, Dept. of Alaska. Dept Cmdr. 2000-2001, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2006-2010 and Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2003-2006.
Lawrence Freeman, Dept. of Mississippi. Dept. Cmdr. 1996-1997, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1991-1994 and Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1995-1997.
Michael G. Susag, Dept. of Montana. Nat'l Veterans Preference Cmte. Consultant, 1995-1997.

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Jumping to conclusions is not half as much exercise as digging for facts.

A PHOTOGRAPHER taking a family photo told the teenager, “It will look more natural if you have your hand on your father’s shoulder.”

“It would look even more natural,” the father grumped, “if he had it in my pocket.”

MIDDLE AGE is having the choice of two temptations and choosing the one that will get you home earlier.

TWO SHOPPERS parked at the mall, got out of their car, and realized they’d locked it with the keys inside.

“We’ll have to break a window to get them out,” one said to the other.

“No,” the other replied. “Maybe we can get a wire hanger and use it to unlock the door.”

“That never works.”

“Well, we’d better think of something. It’s starting to rain, and the top is down!”

A PLUMBER had just finished cleaning out a home’s septic tank. He was still wiping off his hands when the owner said, “You always do such good work for us. Is this the field you always wanted to go into?”

“As a matter of fact,” the plumber said, “while I was apprenticing, I briefly considered medical school. I wanted to be a neurosurgeon.”

“What made you give it up?” the owner asked.

Handing her the bill, he answered, “I couldn’t afford the cut in pay.”



“Yeah, I’m full of gluten.”



“He’s pretty cool. It’s the little guy that spreads all the gossip.”



“Of course, we could just drop the audit and agree henceforth to leave each other alone.”

A PRIEST, A RABBI AND A MINISTER walk into a bar. The bartender asks, “Is this some kind of a joke?”

“AT A TRACK MEET last weekend, a 100-year-old woman won a gold medal in her age group in the 100-meter dash. Her opponents dropped out of the race in 1987.” – Conan O’Brien

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