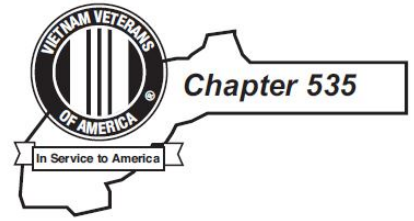




INCOMING

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CHAPTER 535



Website: www.vva535.org

Volume 30 Issue 11

November 2020

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
CHAPTER 535
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
November 2020**

Greetings. For the past seven months we have been schooled on Covid-19 avoidance; one might say we've been battle-tested. To my knowledge we of VVA-535 have escaped illness caused by the virus at hand. Now, with the advent of the usual H1N1 or other variant flu season, we must fight complacency. Though we're tired of the CDC advisories for social distancing, handwashing and use of face masks regarding Covid-19, it may be time to double-down because we'll soon be forced indoors with cooler weather coming nigh. Inherent closeness, we're warned, could translate to an uptick in the incidence of infection. Now, perhaps more than ever, is a time for prudence.

Month after month I have harped about the pandemic. Why? I value each of you as one who has served our country and weathered decades of processing what your service has meant to you and your closest family. Together, we're survivors. Now is not the time to become lackadaisical. If you have not stepped up for a flu shot, consider it. If you are 65 years or beyond, ask for the "senior" dosage, which reportedly has four times the protective capacity as does the vaccine blend administered to others.

Viruses are opportunistic and not one among your friends and cohorts wants to hear of a military Brother or Sister who has been stricken with flu of any kind, or worse, with Covid-19. Please stay engaged in personal vigilance. Safeguard yourself, and in so doing, proactively safeguard your community.

A happy, blessed Thanksgiving to all.
- Bart

**Watch for an Announcement for a possible
November 5, 2020 ZOOM meeting.**

VVA Chapter 535 Mission Statement

To foster camaraderie among members and assist those with disabling mental and physical injuries, to promote the welfare of our brethren affected by the war, and to engender public understanding of the sacrifice, patriotism and bravery of those who served, those who gave all, and those left behind.

Attention

If you do not drive and need a ride to a meeting or any VVA-535 function, please contact Bart Ruud or any local VVA -535 member and we will do our best to arrange transportation for you.

Guest Speaker for October 1, 2020

Bart Ruud will share an overview of his 1971-72 deployment as a 17B40 NCOIC in I-Corp, Vietnam. Note: *ON HOLD* until beyond ZOOM.

While we seek someone to assume the late Tom Woollard's role, please do pass along any ideas you may have for future guest speakers.

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Upcoming Events

NCCVC Meeting - Nov. 5, 2020 ??
General Meeting - Nov. 5, 2020 online via Zoom
Director's Meeting - Nov. 5, 2020
CSC Meeting - Visalia Feb. 4 - 7, 2021

Chapter 535 Officers

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Ray James 478-1126
Dave Johnson 887-8297
Dave Middleton 205-9375
Ric Sheridan 274-1413
Mike Underwood 925-759-2924
Mel Williams1-707-391-7692

Committee Chairs

FinanceRalph Remick & Dave Johnson
Parade and Honor Guard Dick Corn
Membership AffairsRic Sheridan
Newsletter Interim editor Bart Ruud
Victorian Christmas Cancelled for 2020
Nominations Ralph Remick
Veterans Assistance Bart Ruud
NCCVC Mike Underwood
Speakers Bureau Open
Web Master Ralph Remick
Quartermaster Dick Corn
Facebook Master Mike Laborico
Nevada County Fair Cancelled for 2020
CA State Council Rep. Mike Underwood

Nevada County Veterans Service Officer

VSO Officer -David West II (530) 265-1446 office
(530) 913-5046 cell
988 McCourtney Road, Grass Valley 95949
ncvso@co.nevada.ca.us
Thursday, 9:00 to 12:00 and 1:00 - 4:00 is a
"Walk-In" day.

Placer County Veterans Service Officer

Derrick Oliveira ... 916-780-3290.
1000 Sunset Blvd, Suite 115, Rocklin, CA
Mon. - Fri., 8:00 - 12:00 and 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

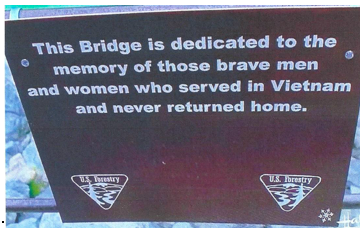
Matters of interest as outlined at Zoom Meeting of Oct. 1, 2020

The county will continue to utilize the Veterans Memorial Hall for an indefinite time as a Covid-19 testing site. The building is closed to public use.

Membership Chair Ric Sheridan reported the VVA-535 roster shows 87 Regular members and 5 Associate members, perhaps the greatest membership count ever.

Chapter 535 members voted to distribute \$1,000 to the Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage. Additionally, \$1,000 was approved for transfer to the Harold Graves Jr. Memorial Scholarship.

Our VVA-535 project, initiated by Keith Grueneberg, for installation of a plaque recognizing Vietnam War veterans at the Hwy. 49 bridge over the S. Yuba River remains as a work in progress. Assemblywoman Megan Dahle, 1st State Assembly District, is assisting. It appears this project will move beyond our hands.



A Word of Thanks from Patricia Graves

“I was truly pleased and honored that the Board and General Membership voted to support the Harold K. Graves, Jr. Memorial Scholarship. Knowing how proud Harold was to belong to Chapter 535 and the regard he felt for all the members, it would have meant a lot to him to know that you have honored his memory in this way. He did love you guys.”

Obituary for Tom Woollard

Published in the Grass Valley Union October 17, 2020



Tom Woollard
May 25, 1946 – October 10, 2020

Thomas Carl Woollard, 74, died October 10, 2020. He was born, May 25, 1946 in Chicago, Illinois, the son of Robert and Virginia (Schilling) Woollard.

He lived with his partner Patricia Conway in Penn Valley, California where he enjoyed boating, boccie, traveling, going to concerts, an occasional night at the casino and visiting friends and family. He loved playing and watching sports. He was an outstanding bowler, having once rolled a 300 game in league play. He was a leader in his community and was actively serving as President of the Lake Wildwood SIRS (Sons in Retirement) Club.

For much of his life, he worked for U.S. Air in Chicago, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and San Francisco making his way from baggage handler to District Sales Manager. He had a great personality was a successful salesman for over 20 years in California.

He was a U.S. Army Vietnam Veteran, receiving multiple medals of honor including a purple heart. He was honorably discharged in February 1968. Tom was a proud board member of Nevada County chapter of Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 535, serving as Speakers Bureau Liaison.

In death he is joining his parents and his daughter, Amy. He is survived by his loving partner, Patti, daughter, Casey, brothers Robert, James (wife Cindi) and William and granddaughter, Carly as well as Carly's family (Eric, Kristy and Judy.) He valued time with his only granddaughter and cherished their visits together.

Tom was deeply loved and will be honored in a formal burial at Fort Snelling Cemetery as well as a private ceremony where he will be reunited in the ever after with his beloved daughter, Amy.

An Innovative Fundraiser for VVA-535

Here is a challenge, suggested by Michael: If you have a era uniform that could be donated to **Eagles and Angels** for the construction of a limited edition hat that would showcase your own deployment and service, there could be realization of further returns that will effectively be used to support our Veteran community in need. Won't you please consider this?

Michael Thompson has the details for facilitating this action. Do contact me, Bart Ruud, for information on how to contact Michael. Phone me, or text me at 530-305-0493 or email me at bruud45@gmail.com Many thanks.

War Crimes

8 Things You Can't Do to Your Enemies

Source: We Are*The Mighty | Brittany Sulc | September 28, 2020

All is fair in love and war? Not so. A war crime is a violation of international humanitarian law committed during armed conflict, in which the perpetrator can be held responsible for their actions. Until World War II, war crimes were not considered incidents worthy of prosecution. Historically, they were seen as inevitable consequences, resulting in wars that were unnecessarily gruesome and destructive.

Spurred on by the horrors of the Holocaust, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 established that war criminals can and must be held accountable. So what does someone have to do to commit a war crime? According to the UN, these eight crimes are as bad as it gets.

1. Willful killing You can't just kill for the hell of it. While death is an unfortunate reality of war, lives should never be taken without good cause. "Black Christmas" was a horrifying example of this. On December 25th, 1941, when the British surrendered Hong Kong to the Japanese. Japanese soldiers blatantly disregarded the rules of peaceful surrender by looting, terrorizing, and murdering residents, and raping an estimated 10,000 women.
2. Torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments 8 | P a g e It's terrifying that this needs to be said, but history has proven that it does. During WWII, many German concentration camps conducted biological experiments on its prisoners in the pursuit of developing different treatments or testing different medical theories. Nazi doctors performed as many as 30 different types of nonconsensual experiments on inmates.
3. Willfully causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or health One might find this confusing since shooting down an enemy plane would by definition cause them serious injury or death. The difference lies in the intent of the attack- which should never be to cause more pain or suffering than necessary, particularly when the battle is over. The Bataan Death March of 1942 demonstrated the horrendous mistreatment of prisoners of war when approximately 75,000 Filipino and US soldiers surrendered to Japanese troops under General Masaharu Homma. The surrendering forces outnumbered their Japanese captors and were already emaciated and malnourished. The day after surrendering, POWs were forced to march 62 miles to the prison, Camp O'Donnell. Many prisoners were randomly beaten and starved.

Those who could no longer bear the trek were shot, bayoneted, or beheaded.

4. Extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly When is pillaging towns and destroying civilian homes and shops ever necessary for military purposes? The Rape of Belgium defied the 1907 Hague Convention of Land Warfare. During World War I, in an effort to flush out Belgian resistance fighters, German occupiers committed a plethora of war crimes against civilians in Belgium, including mass looting and destruction of public and private property.

5. Compelling a prisoner of war or other protected person to serve in the forces of a hostile Power. In other words, if you're taken captive, you can't be forced to fight against your own country. If you're a child, you also can't legally be forced into battle. During the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, Iran used child soldiers under the age of 15 (which in itself is a war crime) as forces. Children fought in highly dangerous situations and did so with limited training.

6. Willfully depriving a prisoner of war or other protected person of the rights of fair and regular trial Say you captured some really terrible people. I mean, they tried to kill you, and they would have done it had they got the chance. Now, however, they're your prisoners. You can't just kill them. Like all humans, they deserve a fair trial. "The Bleiburg Massacre" of 1945 occurred when Yugoslav Nazi-backed troops, compiled of ethnic Serbs, Slovenians, and Croats were executed without trial. It was done in vengeance for the pro-Axis genocide that had occurred during the war. Although this event remains controversial, victims were still held and executed without trial.

7. Unlawful deportation or transfer or unlawful confinement You can't kick people out of their country because it's convenient for you, and you can't capture people without good cause. In

both 1941 and 1949, The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, or NKVD, committed mass deportation of Baltic intelligentsia, landholders, and their families during the invasion of Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia. Additionally, another example includes the enslavement of thousands of Korean and Chinese women during the Second Sino-Japanese War. Imperial Japanese troops pillaged villages within China and Korea, murdering civilians and capturing up to 200,000 women. They were forced to work in military brothels, where they became known as "comfort women."

8. Taking of hostages During both World War I and World War II, Germany repeatedly took hostages of those they suspected of conspiring against them. In World War II, the Nazi SS ruthlessly took civilians hostage in an effort to end the resistance. Most of these hostages were executed.

VA Medical Marijuana Update IAVA Amicus Brief Filed

ConnectingVets.com | Abbie Bennett | October 12, 2020

The Department of Veterans Affairs has long used marijuana's position on the federal controlled substances list as a reason not to incorporate it into veterans' care. That includes allowing its doctors to prescribe it, even in states where it is legal, and stymied research held up by arduous bureaucracy. For years, VA leaders have used marijuana's status as a Schedule I drug as a reason VA cannot prescribe it for medical use, even in states where it is legal, and why research on the drug's usefulness for veterans has been stymied. But the lack of progress has continued to frustrate advocates and veterans who say it can help some, and more research could provide further effectiveness to treat a variety of veteran health concerns.

Recently, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America refiled an amicus brief with the U.S.

Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit stating its support to remove marijuana from the Schedule I list. The drug remaining on that list inhibits further study "that could show the plant's potential in treatment of PTSD," according to IAVA. "Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America's (IAVA) members have made it clear that they support research done on the use of cannabis as a treatment option," said Travis Horr, director of government affairs for IAVA. "Our most recent survey showed 88% support for additional research into cannabis, and 84% believe that VA should drive that research. It is for these reasons that IAVA believes it is crucial to remove cannabis as a schedule 1 drug, to allow this research to be done and potentially provide much-needed relief for veterans."

In IAVA's most recent annual survey, about 22% of members who responded said they were already using marijuana for medical purposes. In its amicus brief, IAVA presents anecdotal evidence of veterans and doctors using marijuana to treat post-traumatic stress disorder in states where the drug is legal, and cites scientific research showing marijuana may be a "safe and effective treatment for PTSD" for some veterans. But because the drug is on the Schedule I list, VA is not allowed to conduct the "necessary research on its therapeutic efficacy," according to the amicus brief. The brief was filed by Dr. Suzanne Sisley, of the Scottsdale Research Institute and Battlefield Foundation, among others. Sisley is one of the researchers aiming to conduct clinical trials on medical marijuana for PTSD with the goal of decreasing veteran suicide deaths, but she's unable to so long as the drug remains so restricted at the federal level.

"Scientists seeking to conduct research on cannabis must submit to an arduous application process that may last years," according to the brief. "The research requires approval from multiple government agencies, including some with stated opposition to any therapeutic uses of cannabis." Then, once the application process is complete, all cannabis used for research has

to be purchased through one national provider, but the levels from that provider are much lower than the THC potency levels used by patients nationwide, hindering research efforts.

In late August, the House was poised to vote on legislation that would remove marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act, effectively ending marijuana prohibition at the federal level -- though states would still get to rule on it for themselves. At the time, House Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-SC) announced that the House planned to bring the bill to the floor after nine months of silence, and "will be voting soon" on H.R. 3884, the Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement (MORE) Act. But now it's been nearly a month and a half, and no such vote has taken place. The legislation, though unlikely to pass the current Senate, is one of the most significant steps from Congress so far in changing federal marijuana policy. The vote in the House would be historic, even if the bill is all but dead on arrival in the Senate.

VA senior leaders, including Secretary Robert Wilkie, told Veterans Affairs lawmakers that it would take an act of Congress for them to be willing to sign off on doctors recommending the drug to vets in states where it was already legal. Past attempts by Congress -- even those with some bipartisan support -- have been met with opposition from VA leaders. In the Senate, some of those measures have been met with opposition from Republican leadership. The bill itself contains a provision specifically for veterans -- allowing VA doctors, or contracted doctors, to make recommendations to qualifying veterans who live in states where use of the drug is legal for medical purposes. In November last year, the House Judiciary Committee took the first vote in Congress to remove marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act. The committee voted 24-10 to advance the bill, and it has not made it to the House floor until now.

Some veterans fear their use or potential use of marijuana could jeopardize their VA benefits and lawmakers have even introduced bills to

prevent exactly that. But VA says on its website that "veterans will not be denied VA benefits because of marijuana use." A few bills have been filed to codify that and ensure that VA could not take benefits from veterans for their marijuana use. None have passed so far. Dr. Ben Kligler of the Veterans Health Administration recently told Connecting Vets that veterans can talk to their VA doctors about cannabis use and ensure use will not interact negatively with existing medications, but VA doctors cannot prescribe or recommend its use to veterans, or replace existing medication with medical marijuana.

Marijuana use for veterans has gained some traction among lawmakers in Congress, but none of the legislation has made significant progress, and some of it has been shut out entirely, especially in the Senate. While some veterans have, anecdotally, shared that marijuana has benefitted them, including in some cases helping to prevent suicide, many lawmakers remain unconvinced, calling for more evidence-based conclusions before a decision can be made. But lawmakers also have supported other alternative treatments and therapies for vets that, in some cases, have questionable efficacy for veterans' health concerns. One thing both Republicans and Democrats seem able to agree on is the need for VA to study marijuana's potential uses for veterans, though some have expressed frustration with the timeline for that research.

USS Bonhomme Richard Update: Navy Has No Good Options for the Fire- Ravaged Ship

Defense News | David B. Larter | September 30, 2020



Smoke rises from the USS Bonhomme Richard at Naval Base San Diego Sunday, July 12, 2020, in San Diego after an explosion and fire Sunday on board the ship at Naval Base San Diego. (Denis Poroy/AP)

In deciding how to move forward with the warped and carbonized hulk of the amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard, U.S. Navy leaders face a series of choices and all of them are bad.

The Navy has not yet produced an estimate to repair the damage to the ship, which burned for five days in July. Assessing the full extent of the five-day fire that gutted much of the upper decks and levels of the ship will take some time yet.

But no matter what the Navy decides, it will be painful.

The bottom line? The Navy can either: • Fix Bonhomme Richard at enormous cost; • Replace her with a new LHA, a class of ship that Congressional Research Service says is running about \$3.8 billion per hull, further constricting an already squeezed shipbuilding budget; • Try to pull an old big-deck out of mothballs and overhaul it for a few years of service; or • Cut bait entirely and lose the capacity all together.

The service is facing a budget crunch, with the Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine slated to have an outsized impact on the service's budget for years. That means replacing the older Wasp-class amphibious assault ship (LHA) with a more capable and much more

expensive America-class LHA would be challenging without a congressional largess.

Officials who spoke on background said that the Navy's working assumption is that the repairs could cost as much as, or even exceed, \$1.5 billion, though that number is subject to change based on a full assessment of the hull that has not been completed yet. If the repair cost \$1.5 billion or thereabouts, it would roughly equal the original cost of construction. But that would still be significantly less than the cost of building a new big deck to replace the Bonhomme Richard.

In a phone call with Defense News, a Navy official who spoke on background said there were four ongoing investigations regarding the July Bonhomme Richard fire. Naval Sea Systems Command is conducting an investigation and a failure review board, geared toward safety and lessons learned. A command investigation delves into how the ship's chain of command handled the situation both prior to and during the catastrophe. And finally, a Naval Criminal Investigative Service investigation joined by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms is also on scene.

On top of everything else, the damage assessment team has to "take a back seat" to the criminal investigation while it is ongoing, the official said.

All the teams are trying to stay out of each other's way, but some spaces that a damage assessment team might need to access are inaccessible because the criminal investigators might be using them, for example, the official said.

This has hampered progress toward getting a fuller picture of what needs to be done and how much it will all cost to repair, the official said. All four investigations feed into one another and the official explained the best guess now is that the results may not be available until the end of the year, either in November or December.

In all, the Navy believes it's possible to repair Bonhomme Richard, but the decision will ultimately be "a strategic one," the official said. He added that on the San Diego waterfront, which teamed up to fight the nearly week-long fire, sailors are hopeful that the ship will be repaired.

Options

The consensus among Navy analysts who have seen the damage to Bonhomme Richard in pictures and heard it described by the chief of naval operations in a July memo obtained by Defense News, is that large sections of the ship will need to be re-fabricated entirely.

"You may have to just cut it off and rebuild it above the hangar deck," said Jerry Hendrix, a retired Navy captain and analyst with the Telemus Group. "Put her into dry dock and rebuild her from the hangar deck on up."

Industry officials who spoke on background said it may be possible to build sections of the ship at Huntington Ingalls Industries' shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi, where the ship was built and float them through the Panama Canal to assemble on the West Coast. But it's unclear if Ingalls has the capacity to accommodate that kind of an interruption to the already jam-packed schedule with more than a dozen amphibious assault ships, dock landing ships, destroyers and Coast Guard National Security Cutters already either under construction or in the planning process, according to an Ingalls Shipyard fact sheet.

It's also unclear if the West Coast's limited dry dock infrastructure, already strained to keep up with maintenance jobs and new ship construction, would be able to support a plan like that.

Likewise, the ship may be able to be towed through the Panama Canal to Ingalls Shipbuilding but the same capacity question arises, said Bryan Clark, a retired submarine

officer and now a senior fellow at Hudson Institute.

If the repair requires “Bonhomme Richard to go back to Ingalls, it is unclear if they have the space and manpower to support the job without significant growth in the workforce,” Clark said.

Repairing, versus procuring a new America-class ship would have the added benefit of pulling money from a different pot of money than the already accounted-for shipbuilding budget. Instead, the money would come from the operations and maintenance fund.

But that approach isn’t exactly a panacea for the Navy’s Bonhomme Richard problem, Clark said.

“Additional O&M funds for BHR would come from existing O&M accounts that are already pressurized,” he said. “If the Navy doesn’t get additional funding from Congress, the repair may not be feasible.” An alternative to a full repair would be to try a partial repair to return the ship to some usefulness, Clark said.

“Wasp was used as a tech demonstration and concept development ship for several years in the last decade because it needed various upgrades,” he said. “Wasp is now back in full service, of course. BHR could, however, be returned to partial service, for example as a F-35 carrier, but the well deck could be left unrepaired if it is too hard to fix.”

Structural integrity

But even that option may not be feasible, and the ship may be much more damaged than we know yet, said Sal Mercogliano, a former civilian mariner and maritime historian with Campbell University who studies the maritime industry closely.

“I think Bonhomme Richard is a total constructive loss and they’re just not admitting it yet,” Mercogliano said. “The amount of

damage done to her is difficult to assess because she burned and held all that heat for so long.

“Even in a building that catches on fire, you immediately start worrying about the integrity of the structure. That’s magnified on a ship because you have all that steel that conducts all that heat throughout the structure. You would have to analyze every centimeter to see where the weaknesses in the steel are, let alone getting her underway and putting all those stresses on the hull.

“She was cooked for six days. In the commercial industry, we’d write it off and get the insurance money.”

If the damage assessment team finds that the hull is too damaged to be salvaged, Hendrix suggests looking at one of the older classes of big-deck amphibs, such as the Tarawa-class ships. Both Peleliu and Nassau are in the reserve fleet.

“I don’t know what that would cost, but I’m betting it would be less than what we’d spend on a Bonhomme Richard rebuild,” he said.

The issue is that the old LHA class is likely incompatible with the F-35, said Mercogliano.

“Even if you broke one of the Tarawas out, they still can’t do the F-35,” he said. “It doesn’t have the flight deck for it and it’s an open question as to whether the elevators could handle it.”

The Navy has cut bait entirely on a fire-damaged ship in the recent past.

When a 2012 arson devastated the Los Angeles-class attack sub Miami, the Navy opted to decommission the ship after the repair bill rose to \$700 million. That was, however, at a time when the Navy was taking a huge financial hit from across-the-board budget cuts.

The Navy took more than a year to decide to scrap Miami. For Mercogliano, if the Navy

doesn't want to lose the capacity, it may just have to bite the bullet and buy a new one from the shipbuilding fund.

"You'd be better off spending the money to get a brand-new ship and getting 30- to 40 years out of it," he said.

Estate Planning

What Happens to Your Email and Social Media After You Die?

MoneyTalksNews | Karen Datko | September 22, 2020

Check this site: <https://youtu.be/nbz9KAcuapl>

Have a Last Will and Testament ready to go today in the case of an emergency. However estate planning has gotten a bit more complicated than it used to be. Not only do you need a will and durable power of attorney, but today you need to make post-death plans for digital stuff, such as photos, email, a Facebook page and a Twitter account. It makes sense to name someone — your legal executor or another trusted person — to be your "digital executor" to manage your online accounts and digital property after your death. The responsibility, as outlined by online estate-planning site Everplans, may include:

- Archiving personal files, photos, videos and other content you've created.
- Deleting files from your computer or other devices, or erasing devices' hard drives.
- Maintaining certain online accounts, which may include paying for services to continue (such as web hosting services).
- Closing certain online accounts, such as social media accounts, subscription services or any accounts that are paid for (such as Amazon Prime).
- Transferring any transferable accounts to heirs.
- Collecting and transferring any money or usable credits to your heirs.
- Transferring any income-generating items (websites, blogs, affiliate accounts, etc.) to your heirs.

- Informing any online communities or online friends of your death.

Record your passwords

If you do nothing else, record all passwords so your executor or someone else you designate can manage or close your accounts after your death. Store the list in a mutually agreed on and secure place. Don't put passwords in your will, though, because that becomes a public document. Passing on your passwords is essential. With many digital assets, privacy policies will prevent survivors from accessing your accounts without them. Spell out how you want each of your accounts handled. Do you want them destroyed? Do you want some photos, communication, creative material or business correspondence left to a member of the family?

Make plans for email and social media accounts

In general, you need to read the terms and conditions of each site you deal with to find out what can be done with your online presence after you die. Some sites — such as Google — allow you to designate someone who can access your data in the event that your account goes inactive. According to Google: "Contacts will only receive notification once your account has been inactive for the specified amount of time — they will not receive any notification during setup." Policies vary, so you need to check company by company.

For more information, check out the following:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Google
- Yahoo
- Microsoft

There's a lively competition among online services that can help you prepare your estate and manage digital assets. Depending on the

complexity and value of your online assets, it may be wise to pay a fee for the expert help. For example, Everplans offers a “secure digital archive of everything loved ones will need” if you are incapacitated or die.

Military Working Dogs: Call for U.S.-Bred Dogs Grows to End 'Outsourced' Security

Bloomberg Government | Roxana Tiron | September 16,
2020

They are some of the fiercest, most specialized weapons in the U.S. military's arsenal. They also are in increasingly short supply and carry a high price tag, leaving the Pentagon to fend off the highest bidders around the world. Working dogs—among the military's most precious resources—can detect scents more than 1,000 times better than any human or equipment, making them ideal for patrols, finding bombs, and chasing down terrorists—most recently the Islamic State leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Despite the military's reliance on German Shepherds, Belgian Malinois, and Labrador retrievers, it is forced to buy them abroad or from stateside vendors, many of whom also buy the dogs from Europe, because the Defense Department doesn't have access to an American breeding program that can satisfy the need.

Now, the Senate is nudging the Air Force—which oversees the Defense Department's military working dog program—to figure out how to breed the dogs domestically to have a secure and stable supply and cut costs. Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) said in a statement to Bloomberg Government, “I was surprised to learn from the Air Force that the vast majority of our working dogs are actually born and bred in Europe, which raises costs and puts us in competition with other countries. I wanted to do what I could to help establish a strong program to breed working dogs here at home, where we already have an expert training program.” Blumenthal, a member of the Senate Armed

Services Committee, is behind a provision in the annual defense policy bill that would back a review of how these dogs are bought. It's the first step toward buying American, “by assessing what resources are necessary for the Department of Defense to meet increasing demands for military working dogs by supporting American breeders,” Blumenthal said.

The Armed Services Committee wrote in the report accompanying the annual defense authorization bill, S. 4049: “Due to the finite number of breeders overseas, as well as rising market demand, the cost for the Air Force and other agencies to procure whelped military working dogs from Europe is skyrocketing.” Military rigors and contracting have posed roadblocks for U.S. breeders, often small-business owners unable to absorb the extra cost and time required to navigate the military's needs and requirements. Canine experts, including the American Kennel Club, have pushed the concept of a national breeding center as a nucleus designed to sell to the government. Without its own breeding program, the U.S. is forced to pay high prices and compete for a shrinking supply of dogs that aren't genetically perfect and come with increasing health issues, they argue. A puppy can cost \$5,500 to sometimes as much as \$25,000 these days on the open market, where border patrol units, the State Department, and private security firms go for canine talent.

There are about 1,600 active working dogs in the military, but only 10% are bred at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. The rest are imports primarily from Central and Eastern Europe, where dog-training culture has deep roots. Military procurement officers make four trips a year to buy European puppies. And about 15% to 25% of the puppies that pass initial muster don't make it through the rigorous training to become military working dogs. The Air Force budgets \$5.3 million to buy dogs each year, and the 341st training squadron at Lackland has an operating budget of about \$8

million. The Air Force buys about 450 dogs a year. Last year, the Air Force bought 427 dogs—214 from domestic vendors and 213 from overseas. Of the 214 dogs bought domestically, all but 20 were born in Europe, according to data provided by Laura Andrews, an Air Force spokeswoman.

Buying a dog overseas costs about \$5,500, and in the U.S. about \$9,000, according to the Air Force's data. Often civilian vendors go to the same overseas markets and then resell the dogs to the Defense Department with an average markup of \$3,000. In addition, it costs \$60,000 to train one dog, the Air Force said. "We make every effort to maximize our domestic procurement, but the majority of dogs are purchased as adults from vendors in Europe," Andrews said in an e-mail. "There simply is no market value to a vendor in operating a breeding program to the capacity needed to meet the demands" of the Defense Department.

Dogs have played a role in battle since ancient times, when Romans sent dogs with razor sharp collars into the enemies' ranks. Since the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001 and an increase in terrorism around the world, dogs have become increasingly important to modern military operations, serving as sentries and bomb sniffers to reduce potential human casualties. That has the U.S. competing with cash-rich Middle Eastern nations and other countries for a finite number of specially trained dogs, most of them from Europe. Puppies enter training for a K-9 unit at Lackland at around 18 months, starting with obedience work and drug and/or bomb detection. Families adopt dogs that fail to make the cut. Some of the dogs get a second round of training in how to patrol, detain an enemy, and attack. A dual-purpose dog spends about 120 days completing both training cycles.

Breeding dogs in the U.S., "is a really valuable thing to consider because we do not want to outsource national security," said Dr. Cynthia Otto, director of Penn Vet Working Dog Center at the University of Pennsylvania, who is one of

the minds behind creating a national breeding cooperative. It's the initial investment "that people have a hard time justifying," even though in the long-run a co-op would provide healthier, more stable dogs able to start work earlier and keep working longer, Otto said. A cooperative would bring together organizations and breeders to produce healthy, purpose-bred dogs, Otto co-wrote in a 2018 paper for the *Frontiers in Veterinary Science* journal. Success would hinge on private breeders and groups retaining ownership of the breeding stock to ensure a lineage of genetically advanced dogs, especially during times of scarce government funding, they wrote.

The American Kennel Club also backs the concept of a national breeding center that would oversee a database of working dogs, a semen bank, genetic evaluations, and standards for the selection of breeding stock. A national semen bank would capture the genetic potential of current high performing dogs, said Sheila Goffe, vice president of government relations at the AKC. "U.S. breeders can and should be a source of military working dogs," Goffe said. "These dogs represent a crucial component of public safety and security that shouldn't be outsourced overseas." The coronavirus pandemic that prevented agencies from traveling overseas to obtain new dogs this year illustrates just one reason the U.S. needs to be able to rely on domestic sources for dogs, added Goffe. But breeding high-quality dogs is expensive and intensive.

Government agencies looking for explosives-detection dogs typically don't work with puppies younger than 10 months, and for the military it's often 18 months. That leaves breeders to raise puppies for longer while preparing them for advanced training, an expensive process. Then there's no guarantee the puppy will be purchased by the government, said Goffe. "There are excellent breeders here in the U.S who would like to supply these dogs, but the incentives are hugely askew," Goffe said in an email. "The process is intimidating, typically

seeks a large number of dogs at one time that a breeder working alone couldn't provide and offers very little incentive for dog breeders." Breeders can sell the same puppy at eight weeks to a home for about the same price the government currently pays, she said.

While the cost of buying and training military dogs is known, the full lifetime expenses of military K-9 operations are more elusive. Blumenthal is pushing for the military work program to have its own dedicated accounting line in the Defense Department's budget to "more accurately capture the facility and resource requirements necessary to successfully and efficiently provide military working dogs to all the military services," according to the defense authorization report. House and Senate negotiators still have to settle on a final version of the defense authorization bill. The House version, H.R. 6395, didn't contain similar language. The legislation must be enacted by the end of December to avoid expiring policies and pay authorizations.

The American Kennel Club has been pressing for more transparency of the actual cost per deployed dog, especially if that dog comes from overseas. "If we can know what the real, total cost per dog deployed is, and that price can be reflected in a fair price offered to U.S. breeders for a well-bred and -raised dog from the U.S., we believe the incentives issue can be addressed," Goffe said in an e-mail.

Writing Your Story for INCOMING

(Ongoing repeat solicitation)

Ideas for your story:

- Think about what you appreciated about the Vietnam experience. There is surely a means to segue into that with very little reflection on the negative aspects of war.
- What did you appreciate about the Vietnamese people during your

deployment?

- Can you steer away from the bad stuff and \reflect on the best experience you had in the Nam?
- Surely you had a close buddy and you supported each other. Maybe there is a story in that.
- What really got you through the day-to-day anxieties and fears? There might be a positive recollection in that regard.
- How did your experience instill in you a sense of patriotism that you possibly express every day of your life.

So far we have heard from Ruud, Epps, Chaix, Hamer, Chuck Holmes, current Marine LCpl. Jesse Hernandez, Kent Hawley, and Mike Laborico. (Thank you!)

No writer needs to dwell on the negatives of war. Each of us who was there lived the negatives, and all of us are better people for having served, especially when we look at how we matured as a result of our experiences. Each of us has derived a sense of being and an energy that is different from what it might have been had we not been sent across the pond.

Do share with us, in your own words, something of that chapter of your life. And, thank you for your service.

Forward your story to Bart Ruud at bruud45@gmail.com or hand deliver to Bart.

Dental Care

New Treatment Halts Tooth Decay with No Drilling

KHN | Michelle Crouch | September 15, 2020

Silver diamine fluoride, an antimicrobial liquid medication, can be painted on teeth to stop decay in its tracks. The lowcost, pain-free technique is being used to treat cavities in

patients who are not good candidates for fillings, such as the very young and the elderly, according to a Kaiser Health News report. The alternate method of treating cavities is relatively new in the U.S. but has been used in other countries for decades. It has one big drawback. According to KHN: “Its biggest downside is that it permanently turns the decayed area black — a turnoff, in particular, for people with decay on a front tooth.” Fortunately, dental providers can cover the black spot with tooth-colored material for an additional cost.

In 2014, the Food and Drug Administration approved silver diamine fluoride for use in reducing tooth sensitivity. But many dentists began to use it in a so-called “off-label” manner to treat cavities, KHN reports. While it has gained attention as a treatment for cavities in children under the age of 5, silver diamine fluoride also increasingly is used to treat cavities in older patients who either cannot make it to the dentist’s office or who do not have dental insurance and cannot afford to pay for fillings. Dental hygienists often provide such care to seniors in nursing homes and homeless shelters, or at low-cost clinics, KHN says. The treatment can be an effective alternative to traditional fillings. A recent 81 | Page study found that a single application of silver diamine fluoride stops decay in 60% to 70% of cases. Following up with a second application six months later pushes that success rate above 90%.

Because the silver treatment is relatively new in this country and can leave a stain, the Colorado state legislature passed a law in 2018 that says hygienists must have an agreement with a supervising dentist to apply it. The law also requires them to get special training on how to use the liquid, which at least 700 hygienists from across the state have completed. Other states, including Maryland and Virginia, have no special requirements for applying the cavity treatment but require some supervision by a dentist, said Matt Crespin, president of the American Dental Hygienists’ Association. In

those places, hygienists apply it under the same rules that govern the application of other fluoride products.

In addition to killing cavity-causing bacteria, the treatment hardens tooth structure, desensitizes the tooth and even stops new cavities from forming. Applying the liquid on the exposed root surfaces of older adults once a year is “a simple, inexpensive, and effective way” to prevent cavities, a 2018 study concluded. One of the most important benefits of the application on older patients is that the liquid can reach decay that forms under existing dental work such as crowns and bridges, said dental hygienist Michelle Vacha, founder of Community Dental Health, which runs clinics in Colorado Springs and Pueblo, Colorado. Previously, a dentist would have had to remove the crown, drill out the cavity and make a new crown — a traumatic, time-consuming procedure with a typical cost of \$1,000 or more, Vacha said. Unable to afford the cost, many patients would instead have the tooth pulled.

The paint-on liquid is significantly cheaper than traditional treatment. Estimates vary, but a private dentist may charge \$10 to \$75 for one application, compared with \$150 to \$200 for a filling. Hygienists often have lower fees. At Vacha’s community clinics, the cost is \$10 a tooth. About half of state Medicaid programs now reimburse for the treatment, said Steve Pardue, scientific officer of Elevate Oral Care that distributes Advantage Arrest, the main brand of the topical medication used nationally. Reimbursement rates range from \$5 to \$75 per application. More private insurers — about 20% to 30% of them — have also started covering it, Pardue said.

It’s a good option for those who have anxiety about dental work or concerns about cost, said Dr. Janet Yellowitz, director of geriatric and special care dentistry at the University Of Maryland School Of Dentistry. Yellowitz noted that dentists still have a financial incentive to drill and fill. She has made presentations

highlighting the benefits of the silver solution at national conferences. A 2017 survey by the American Dental Association found that almost 8 in 10 dentists had never used the treatment. The ADA doesn't have more recent statistics, but ADA spokesperson Matthew Messina said anecdotal reports indicate usage is increasing dramatically. "We're trying to get everyone to use it," she said. "It's a slow process because we're asking dentists who have been trained for their whole careers to do things one way to completely change their mentality. It's like asking them to go to another country and drive on the other side of the road."

How'd You Sleep?

Get the most out of your night

A VA posting



For some people, getting enough sleep is as simple as closing their eyes. Others might spend their nights tossing and turning or never really falling asleep. If you're one of the many people that feel like getting enough sleep is a challenge, you may have insomnia. [Insomnia](#) doesn't only affect your sleep. It can make it hard to function during the day and can cause problems at work or with your relationships. Start getting the sleep you need to wake up feeling refreshed and ready for the day ahead.

Symptoms and diagnosing

It's not unusual to have a night or two where it's hard to sleep. Or wake up earlier than you

wanted. But suffering from insomnia is different. You may have insomnia if you keep:

- having trouble falling or staying asleep
- waking up too early in the morning
- not feeling refreshed by your sleep
- experiencing daytime tiredness or low energy
- having mood problems or trouble concentrating

Some people may have [acute insomnia](#), which can happen for short periods and then go away. While others may experience [chronic insomnia](#), disrupted sleep that occurs at least three nights per week, and lasts at least three months.

Sleep and your health

Sleep plays a vital role in good health and living a long life. During sleep, your body is working to support healthy brain function and maintain your physical health. Mentally, sleep can affect how well you think, react, work, and learn. Physically, sleep loss can raise your risk for some chronic health problems:

- [High blood pressure](#)
- [Heart disease](#)
- [Stroke](#)
- [Kidney disease and type 2 diabetes](#)
- [Obesity](#)

Get back to sleep

When you have insomnia, simply going to bed can make you feel tense. This can make it harder to let your body wind down and prepare to sleep. [Relaxing](#) during bedtime can help you feel calmer and at ease, letting sleep take its natural course. It can help lower your heart rate and calm your thoughts. There are many things you can do to relax, but reducing your stress plays a key factor. Stress comes in many forms and can harm your health if it continues too long or feels overwhelming. A few things you can try to [manage your stress](#) are:

- positive thinking
- pleasant activities
- connecting with others

If you're having trouble sleeping, talk to your health care team at your next appointment or reach out using [Secure Message](#) (*sign-in required*). They may ask you to do a [sleep diary](#) or a [sleep study](#) to help diagnose your symptoms. You can also use the [Insomnia Severity Index](#), which will ask a few questions about your sleeping patterns. You can share the results at your next appointment.

A behavioral modification program for chronic insomnia developed by the VA and delivered by certified psychologists are helping Veterans get a better night's sleep. This 6-session, in-person program also uses the [CBT-i Coach](#) mobile app to teach Veterans positive sleep routines and how to improve their sleep environments. Veterans looking for a self-help web-based program can use the VA's [Path to Better Sleep](#). To learn what options are best for you, use My HealthVet to schedule an [appointment](#) with your doctor.

Application For Membership
VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC., CHAPTER 535

P.O. Box 37, Grass Valley, CA 95945

Membership is open to U.S. armed forces veterans who served on active duty (for other than training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975, or in **any duty location** between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975.

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____ Cell Phone: (_____) _____

Email Address: _____ Gender: _____

(Optional) Chapter Number: _____ Sponsor: _____

_____ I am already a VVA member and I want to become a Life Member. My VVA Number is _____.

Membership: Individual Life Membership: \$50. (Effective Oct. 20, 2018)

ATTENTION New members: You must submit a copy of your DD-214 form along with this application and dues payment.

Payment Method: ___ Check ___ Money Order ___ Credit Card (Visa, MasterCard, AMEX, Discover)

Credit Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Return your completed application, payment and a copy of your DD-214 to:

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., Chapter 535
P.O. Box 37
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Revised: January 2019

OCTOBER

2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 VVA-535	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Columbus Day	13 Navy Birthday 1775	14	15	16 Stand Down?	17 Stand Down?
18	19	20	21	22 VVA CSC Convention	23 VVA CSC Convention	24 VVA CSC Convention
25 VVA CSC Convention	26	27 Navy Day	28	29	30	31 Halloween

November

2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Daylight Saving Time Ends	2	3 Election Day	4	5 VVA-535 Board & General Meeting	6	7
8	9	10 Marine Corps Birthday 1775	11 Veterans Day	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Thanksgiving	27	28
29	30					

DECEMBER

2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 VVA-535 Holiday Potluck ???	4	5
6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8	9	10 Hanukkah Begins (Sundown)	11	12
13 National Guard Birthday	14	15	16	17	18	19 Wreaths Across America
20	21 First Day of Winter	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26
27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve		