



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



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“A Soldier Once And Always”

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Commanders Corner: First and foremost, I want to thank all of you who expressed their condolences and sympathies at the passing of my mom in late March. It was greatly appreciated by me and my family members. Well, I think spring is finally here and, as usual, for me, the month of May will be filled with things to do. Losing golf balls is tops on the list and I'm really looking forward to the 100th running of the Indianapolis 500 Mile Race. It should be spectacular and the entire month of May will be punctuated with exciting events. Hopefully, my buddy Bruce Nielsen (B 2/1) and his cousin, Bill (unfortunately a former Marine) will be able to attend again this year. Bruce and I have been doing this for so many years we have both lost count. We always have a great time and I look forward to each year to see what Bill will drop down through the bleachers. Some of you have had trouble receiving newsletters via email and, even though it's sort of silly to put this in the newsletter if you don't get one, I just thought I'd remind you that all issues of the chapter newsletter are on our web site. I have revamped the financial section on the web site and separated the quarterly reports by years. Also, there is a list of members that have become inactive for non-payment of dues for at least 2 years. If you are not sure about your dues, please check it out. We are actually doing great on payment of dues; of our 130 members, we only have 18 delinquent on dues. We now have 53 Life Members. Just a reminder, our chapter highly recommends that our members join up with the Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA). The ADVA is a great national organization and does a lot for former Americal veterans and their families. They also publish a first-rate magazine for association members. Have a great summer.



Chuck

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



Americal Division and 2/1 Chapter Annual Reunion: It's official; the dates and location for the Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA) and the 2/1 Infantry Chapter reunion will be held in Albuquerque, NM September 14-18, 2016. The information and forms for reserving your hotel and informing the organization staff are printed in the latest issue of the ADVA Journal. The information is also available on the Chapter website. It is not too early to make your arrangements for this reunion. As you know the rooms at the reunion hotel are called for early and there are only a select number of rooms reserved for the reunion. .

Military Stolen Purple Heart Medal Replaced: Sgt. Ron Hinkle was manning the machine gun on the Humvee's roof when it was struck by an IED during a patrol in Iraq. The April 2006 blast ripped the top off the vehicle and threw Hinkle to the ground. Hinkle suffered cardiac, pulmonary and renal failure in addition to traumatic brain injury. He was put in a medically induced coma for 49 days, and still suffers from various injuries. But when he awoke he received his Bronze Star medal and a Purple Heart from then Vice President Dick Cheney at Fort Carson. Just over 10 years later, in July of last year, Hinkle suffered another indignity when thieves broke into his Leitchfield, Ky., home, stealing all of his wife's jewelry and valuables, along with the medals he had received in service to his country. The theft of Hinkle's medals was reported on by a Kentucky ABC news station where he noted that the medals have little financial value, but much personal value. "It's just amazing that someone would even bother to take them, that they would even touch them," Hinkle said.



Tillis Co-Sponsors The Care Veterans Deserve Act: Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC) joined Senator John McCain (R-AZ) to introduce the Care Veterans Deserve Act of 2016, legislation that would expand access to care at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) while enhancing choice and flexibility in veterans health care. The legislation supplements and expands on the major reforms enacted by the Veterans' Access to Care Through Choice, Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014, which was signed into law in the wake of the scandal of denied and delayed care at VA hospitals around the country. "This legislation is critical to expanding access to care for working veterans, while ensuring every veteran has flexibility and choice – no matter where they live or how long they are waiting for care. We have a long way to go to reform the VA, but this legislation offers important short- and long-term solutions to ensure our veterans receive the care they deserve now and well into the future." "The Care Veterans Deserve Act will make it easier for the brave men and women who have served our nation to have access to timely and reliable health care services, regardless of where they live," said Senator Tillis. "The legislation also continues efforts to apply the private sector's best practices to the VA system, which will cut down on waste and inefficiency and ultimately help deliver higher quality care for our veterans." Senators Kelly Ayotte (R-NH). The Care Veterans Deserve Act would address a major complaint by today's veterans of never-ending wait-times for appointments by implementing the following changes:

Marines Investigating Claim About Men in Iwo Jima Photo: The Marine Corps says it has begun investigating whether it mistakenly identified one of the men shown raising the U.S. flag at Iwo Jima in one of the iconic images of World War II after two amateur history buffs began raising questions about the picture. Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal shot the photo on Feb. 23, 1945, on Mount Suribachi, amid an intense battle with the Japanese. Rosenthal didn't get the names of the men, but the photo immediately was celebrated in the U.S. and President Franklin Roosevelt told the military to identify the men. After some confusion, the Marines identified the men as John Bradley, Rene Gagnon, Ira Hayes, Harlon Block, Michael Strank and Franklin Sousley. All were Marines except Bradley, who was a Navy corpsman. Block, Strank and Sousley were killed in fighting at Iwo Jima before the photo was distributed in the U.S. Rosenthal's photo captured a single moment in the 36-day battle during which more than 6,500 US servicemen made the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation and it is representative of the more than 70,000 US Marines, Sailors, Soldiers and Coast Guardsmen that took part in the battle. We are humbled by the service and sacrifice of all who fought on Iwo Jima. Iwo Jima, a tiny island 660 miles south of Tokyo, was the site of an intense 36-day battle that began Feb. 19, 1945. Capturing Iwo Jima was deemed essential to the U.S. war effort because Japanese fighter planes were taking off from the island and intercepting American bomber planes. After Rosenthal shot the photo, the flag-raisers quickly moved onto other tasks, and it was impossible for him to get their names. That task was left to the Marines after the picture prompted an overwhelming response and the government decided to use the image in an upcoming sale of war bonds to finance the continued fighting. Rosenthal died in 2006. The Marines didn't give a timeline for its investigation.



When half of the people get the idea that they do not have to work, because the other half is going to take care of them, and when the other half gets the idea that it does no good to work, because somebody else is going to get what they work for, that is the beginning of the end of any nation!

National Guard Suicides Spike in 2015: Suicides in the National Guard jumped by a third in 2015 from the year before, according to a report from the Defense Department. The number of Guardsmen who took their own lives went from 91 in 2014 to 121 last year. The figure includes 100 Army Guardsmen and 21 Air Guard members. The Defense Department Quarterly Suicide Report for the fourth quarter of 2015 released Friday includes the figures for the entire year. The report shows a small drop in suicides in the active component, falling from 273 in 2014 to 266 last year. The entire reserve component suffered 209 suicides in 2015, up from 170 the year before. Reserve-component suicides include all reported deaths regardless of duty status, according to the report. For comparison, the Guard's figure for 2014 was a sizable decrease from 2013 when 134 Guardsmen took their own lives.

Many Tricare Users to Pay Enrollment Fee under Congressional Proposal: Many Tricare users would face annual enrollment fees in a newly named plan under a draft proposal released by the House Armed Services Committee. Under the plan, current users of Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra would fall into the newly minted Tricare Preferred plan. Users would continue to be permitted to self-refer to providers, but doing so would come with an annual enrollment fee of \$100 for individuals and \$200 for families starting in 2020. New Tricare users would pay even greater fees. Active-duty family members would pay \$300 for an individual or \$600 for families to enroll each year, while future retirees who joined the service after 2020 would pay \$425 for an individual or \$850 for families. New beneficiaries who want to use Prime can do so, but also at a cost. Active-duty families would pay \$180 for an individual or \$360 for a family, while retirees would pay \$325 for an individual or \$650 for a family. Current users would not pay to use Prime. Under the new Preferred option, users would have no annual deductible, but would pay set fees out of pocket. For example, emergency room visits would cost \$40 in network for active-duty families, and \$60 for retirees. The catastrophic yearly cap would be at \$1,000 for active-duty families and \$3,000 for retirees. For Prime users, no annual deductibles would apply unless users chose to receive care without a referral. In that case, they would face a \$300 for individuals or \$600 for families deductible, with the same catastrophic cap as Preferred users. Other services, such as emergency room use, would continue to be free. According to the legislation, the fees would not affect current Tricare users who choose to use the new the Preferred program instead of Prime until at least 90 days after the U.S. comptroller general submits a report to Congress on Tricare access to care, which could be as late as February 2020, the legislation says. All new Tricare users who join the military after January 1, 2018, would immediately face the new fees. The bill also includes proposals that would provide better access to care, including an order that some military treatment facilities operate urgent care centers until at least 11 p.m. each night. Beneficiaries who don't have access to on-base urgent care, the bill says, must be able to use urgent cares off-base without referrals. That order comes on the heels of a Tricare plan announced early this month to allow two referral-free urgent care visits per year, per beneficiary starting in late May. Before becoming law, the House proposals face a rigorous examination by lawmakers, as well as consideration and a vote in the Senate. The measures are unlikely to fully pass or fail until late this year.

Don't worry about avoiding temptation. As you grow older, it will avoid you.

US Remains Army Reverses Decision to Kick Out Green Beret Who Confronted Rapist:

In a stunning reversal, the U.S. Army decided to retain a decorated Green Beret it had planned to kick out after he physically confronted a local Afghan commander accused of raping a boy over the course of many days. Sgt. 1st Class Charles Martland confirmed the Army's decision to retain him which has been covering the story in depth for the past eight months and first broke the story of the Army's decision in August to kick out Martland over the incident, which occurred in northern Afghanistan in 2011. "I am real thankful for being able to continue to serve," said Martland when reached on the telephone. "I appreciate everything Congressman Duncan Hunter and his chief of staff, Joe Kasper, did for me." While deployed to Kunduz Province, Afghanistan, Martland and his team leader confronted a local police commander in 2011 accused of raping an Afghan boy and beating his mother. When the man laughed off the incident, they shoved him to the ground. Martland and his team leader were later removed from the base, and eventually sent home from Afghanistan. The U.S. Army has not confirmed the specifics of Martland's separation from service, citing privacy reasons, but a "memorandum of reprimand" from October 2011 makes clear that Martland was criticized by the brass for his intervention after the alleged rape. Asked for comment in September 2015, an Army spokesman reiterated, "the U.S. Army is unable to confirm the specifics of his separation due to the Privacy Act." An Army spokesman said that Martland's status has been changed, allowing him to stay in the Army. "In SFC Martland's case, the Army Board for Correction of Military Records determination modified a portion of one of SFC Martland's evaluation reports and removed him from the QMP list, which will allow him to remain in the Army," said Lt. Col. Jerry Pionk. Martland's former Special Forces team leader, now out of the Army and living in New York, said the Army is a better place with Martland in its ranks.



Army Studies 38-acre Arlington National Cemetery Expansion:

400,000 people are buried at the cemetery, with as many as 30 new burials a day. Without the proposed Southern Expansion Project, the cemetery will run out of room in the mid-2030s, even with the strict eligibility standards in place for burial there. Cemetery officials briefed the public on the southern expansion, which hinges on a land swap with Arlington County and the Virginia Department of Transportation. The negotiations have been ongoing for several years and the broad outline of the swap is in place: The Army would get land adjacent to the existing cemetery to use for burials, while the county and state would get land to improve transit and traffic on its bustling Columbia Pike corridor, which serves the Pentagon and other commuter hotspots. Negotiations have been ongoing for several years, but no deal has been reached. County officials say the Army is worried that mass-transit operations adjacent to the cemetery would be aesthetically incompatible with the cemetery itself. County officials say they will design and build any new facilities in a way that addresses those concerns. The Army is beginning a yearlong environmental assessment of a proposed 38-acre expansion of Arlington National Cemetery that it hopes will extend the life of the facility by 20 years.

Talk is cheap, except when Congress does it. -- Anonymous

Dunford Acknowledges US Troops in Iraq Conduct Combat Operations:

While the White House maintains that U.S. troops supporting the fight against Islamic State militants are not in a combat role, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff acknowledged that troops are fighting and dying in combat operations in Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East. During a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing with Defense Secretary Ashton Carter about the status of operations against the Islamic State in Iraq and Afghanistan, or ISIS, also known as ISIL, Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford answered a line of questions from Alaska Republican Sen. Dan Sullivan about the March 19 death of Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Louis Cardin due to indirect fire at a small outpost in northern Iraq. "Was he killed in combat?" Sullivan, a Marine reserve officer, asked. "He was killed in combat, Senator," Dunford responded. Army Master Sgt. Joshua Wheeler, who was killed by ISIS fire on Oct. 22 in Kirkuk province, Iraq, also died in combat, Dunford said. "When our [Joint Special Operations Command] troops conduct [counter-terrorism] missions in that part of the world, are they conducting combat operations?" Sullivan pressed. Dunford agreed they were, and also assented that Air Force A-10s and F-16s dropping bombs on Iraq and Syria were also engaged in combat operations. Carter agreed with Dunford that the fallen troops had been killed in combat, but said the language of the White House was intended to emphasize the role of Iraqi forces out front. The role of the troops deployed in support of counter-ISIL operations was "not to try to substitute for local forces ... but to try to get them powerful enough that they can expel ISIL with our support," Carter said. "And when we provide that support, we put people in harm's way, we ask them to conduct combat actions.

House Panel Seeks to Increase Army Ranks by 45,000 Soldiers:

The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee has introduced a defense bill that would increase the U.S. Army by 45,000 soldiers. Rep. Mac Thornberry's version of the fiscal 2017 National Defense Authorization Bill would provide money to add 20,000 soldiers to the active Army's end-strength, bringing it to 480,000. The bill would also add 15,000 to the National Guard and 10,000 to the Reserves, resulting in a Guard strength of 350,000 and a Reserve strength of 205,000. Under the President's current proposed defense budget, the Army projects its end-strength to be at a total of 980,000 soldiers by fiscal 2018, including 450,000 for the active force, 335,000 for the Army National Guard and 195,000 for the Army Reserve. "The Chairman's Mark halts and begins to reverse the drawdown of military end strength, preserving the active duty Army at 480,000," according to summary of the proposed bill. The size of the Army has been a major concern among lawmakers, many of whom have stated that the active force is too small to deal with the growing number of threats facing the U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley has testified that there is a "high-military risk" if the service continues to operate at its current size, but also told lawmakers that growing end-strength without additional funding would lead to a hollow force. Thornberry's revised budget earmarks just over \$2 billion in additional funding for the troop increase, according to language in the bill. That's about \$2.5 billion short of what the Army would need, according to Army senior leaders that have testified it will cost about \$1 billion for every 10,000 soldiers. "Where possible, Chairman Thornberry's proposal cuts excessive or wasteful expenditures and rededicates those resources to urgent needs," according to the bill's summary. "The proposal is designed to restore strength to the force through readiness investments and agility through much needed reforms, while providing a more solid foundation for the next President.. The proposal also would increase the strength of the Marine Corps by 3,000 and the Air Force by 4,000.

US Shifts Troops in the Sinai Peninsula after Attacks by Militants: The Pentagon has shifted more than 100 U.S. soldiers from a desert camp near the Egypt-Israeli border in the Sinai Peninsula after a barrage of attacks by militants linked to Islamic State. The U.S. troops, part of a little-known peacekeeping force that helps maintain the 1979 treaty between Egypt and Israel, were transferred about 300 miles south to a more secure area. The move comes as the Obama administration is considering whether to scale back the 700 U.S. troops in the Sinai and instead use remote sensors, cameras and other technology to monitor the border. Sinai Province, a militant group that last year declared allegiance to Islamic State, has carried out multiple attacks on military outposts in the northern Sinai. Its fighters have killed dozens of Egyptian soldiers, including eight this month when militants fired a rocket at their armored vehicle. The extremist group claimed responsibility after a bomb exploded aboard a Russian-chartered passenger jet over the Sinai on Oct. 31 and killed all 224 passengers and crew. In July, the group hit an Egyptian frigate in the Mediterranean Sea with a shoulder-fired missile. The Multinational Force of Observers, or MFO, has 1,680 troops from a dozen countries. The Americans, who live behind blast walls and travel in armored vehicles, have increasingly found themselves at risk in the insurgency. Four were injured when their convoy hit two roadside bombs in September. Several weeks earlier, an American soldier was shot in the arm when gunmen targeted the camp, near the northern Sinai village of Al-Joura. The Pentagon responded last summer by sending 75 more troops plus counter-mortar radars and new communication equipment. As peacekeepers, the U.S. troops aren't authorized to fire at the militants -- only the Egyptians are allowed to do that.

Headstone Fixes Error for MoH Recipient More than 140 Years Later: A Canadian-born sailor was remembered during a ceremony in Washington last week, more than 140 years after a heroic deed earned him America's highest military medal -- a honor that was omitted on his headstone. Medal of Honor recipient Joseph B. Noil, who moved from Nova Scotia to New York and joined the [U.S. Navy](#) during the Civil War, was honored with a new headstone Friday during a ceremony at St. Elizabeths Hospital Cemetery attended by family members, veterans and representatives from the Canadian embassy. Noil's original memorial also misspelled his name. Historians from the Medal of Honor Historical Society investigated Noil's case and corrected the oversight that was "likely because of a clerical error on his death certificate," a Navy statement said. The day after Christmas 1872, while serving aboard the USS Powhatan near Norfolk, Virginia, Noil jumped into the frigid Atlantic Ocean to save shipmate J.C. Walton from drowning. After hearing the man overboard cry, Noil "ran on deck, took the end of a rope, went overboard, under the bow, and caught Mr. Walton, who was then in the water, and held him until he was hauled into the boat sent to his rescue," the ship's commander wrote in a memo published Jan. 11, 1873, in the Army and Navy Journal. "The weather was bitter cold, and had been sleeting, and it was blowing a gale from the northwest at the time. Mr. Walton, when brought on board, was almost insensible, and would have perished but for the noble conduct of Noil, as he was sinking at the time he was rescued." Noil, who retired with a captain in hold rank in 1881 after being hospitalized with a "paralysis" diagnosis, died the following year, the statement said. "He or she is someone who you know that you can trust and count on to stand by you in good times and bad and who will forever have your back. So by ... rededicating his headstone, we are not only correcting a wrong, we are highlighting and reinforcing the eternal bond which exists between shipmates past, present and those yet to come."

Appeals Ruling Clears Way for Bowe Bergdahl Case to Resume: An appeals court has cleared the way for U.S. Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl's legal case to resume, rejecting prosecutors' arguments that defense attorneys were given too much leeway on accessing classified documents. The United States Army Court of Criminal Appeals denied prosecutors' appeal in a ruling released late Saturday by defense attorneys. The court also lifted a stay from February on pretrial proceedings being heard at Fort Bragg in North Carolina. Bergdahl faces charges of desertion and misbehavior before the enemy after he walked off an outpost in Afghanistan in 2009 and was held by the Taliban and its allies for five years. The latter charge is relatively rare and carries a punishment of up to life in prison. Prosecutors had argued the military judge erred in a decision that "directs the unauthorized disclosure of classified information and grants the defense unfettered access to classified information," according to court documents. In an opinion dated Thursday, the three-judge appeals panel wrote that it disagreed with prosecutors' interpretation. The judge overseeing Bergdahl's military trial, Army Col. Jeffery Nance, had ordered prosecutors in February to turn over many of the classified documents they had gathered, subject to certain rules. His order had also allowed defense attorneys to obtain other classified information without taking steps that prosecutors said were necessary. Prosecutors argued that, in either instance, another layer of approval was needed. Defense attorneys argued that Nance's order was sound and that existing rules already require them to notify the judge and prosecutors if they intend to disclose any classified information during the case. They wrote that prosecutors were trying to make them follow an "endlessly inefficient" process that "would overwhelm these most senior members of our government by requiring their personal decision on every one of hundreds of thousands of documents."

Punishments but No Criminal Charges in US Attack on Hospital: A U.S. gunship attack on a hospital in Afghanistan that killed 42 people occurred because of human errors, process errors and equipment failures and none of the crew knew they were striking a trauma center, a top U.S. general said. No criminal charges have been leveled against U.S. military personnel for mistakes that resulted in last's year's attack on the civilian hospital in Afghanistan operated by the medical charity Doctors Without Borders. The group has called the attack a war crime. Gen. Joseph Votel, the new head of U.S. Central Command, said that the trauma center was on a no-strike list but that the gunship crew didn't have access to the list. The Pentagon was releasing the full report on the investigation, including details about what exactly led a U.S. Air Force special operations AC-130 gunship to bomb the hospital and how those mistakes were made. According to one senior U.S. official, a two-star general was among about 16 American military personnel disciplined because of the attack. A number of those punished are U.S. special operations forces. No one was sent to court-martial, officials said. However, in many cases a nonjudicial punishment, such as a letter of reprimand or suspension, can effectively end a military career. The officials were not authorized to discuss the case by name and requested anonymity. The U.S. airstrike in the northern city of Kunduz last October was carried out by one of the most lethal aircraft in the U.S. arsenal. Doctors Without Borders has called the attack "relentless and brutal." The Associated Press reported in March that more than a dozen U.S. military personnel had been disciplined in connection with the bombing, and that the punishments were all largely administrative. The crew of the AC-130, which is armed with side-firing cannons and guns, had been dispatched to hit a Taliban command center in a building 450 yards from the hospital. Hampered by problems with their targeting sensors, the crew relied on a physical description that led them to begin firing at the hospital even though they saw no hostile activity there.

72 KILLED RESISTING GUN CONFISCATION IN MASSACHUSETTS!

Massachusetts – National Guard units seeking to confiscate a cache of recently banned military style assault weapons were ambushed by elements of a Para-military extremist faction. Military and law enforcement sources estimate that 72 were killed and more than 200 injured before government forces were compelled to withdraw.

Speaking after the clash, Massachusetts Governor Thomas Gage declared that the extremist faction, which was made up of local citizens, has links to the radical right-wing tax protest movement.

Gage blamed the extremists for recent incidents of vandalism directed against internal revenue offices. The governor, who described the group's organizers as "criminals," issued an executive order authorizing the summary arrest of any individual who has interfered with the government's efforts to secure law and order.

The military raid on the extremist arsenal followed wide-spread refusal by the local citizenry to turn over recently outlawed assault weapons.

Gage issued a ban on military-style assault weapons and ammunition earlier in the week. This decision followed a meeting in early this month between government and military leaders at which the governor authorized the forcible confiscation of illegal arms.

One government official, speaking on condition of anonymity, pointed out that "none of these people would have been killed had the extremists obeyed the law and turned over their weapons voluntarily."

Government troops initially succeeded in confiscating a large supply of outlawed weapons and ammunition. However, troops attempting to seize arms and ammunition in Lexington met with resistance from heavily-armed extremists who had been tipped off regarding the government's plans.

During a tense standoff in the Lexington town park, National Guard Colonel Francis Smith, commander of the government operation, ordered the armed group to surrender and return to their homes. The impasse was broken by a single shot, which was reportedly fired by one of the right-wing extremists.

Eight civilians were killed in the ensuing exchange.

Ironically, the local citizenry blamed government forces rather than the extremists for the civilian deaths. Before order could be restored, armed citizens from surrounding areas had descended upon the guard units. Colonel Smith, finding his forces overmatched by the armed mob, ordered a retreat.

Governor Gage has called upon citizens to support the state/national joint task force in its effort to restore law and order. The governor also demanded the surrender of those responsible for planning and leading the attack against the government troops.

Samuel Adams, Paul Revere, and John Hancock, who have been identified as "ringleaders" of the extremist faction, remain at large.