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**1. GI Bill Changes Are Coming:** Last year, the Forever GI Bill was signed into law, revamping veteran education benefits. Some of the changes that will take place this upcoming semester affect the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program, some Purple Heart recipients, students attending classes and internships that are in different zip codes, among other provisions. Please reach out to your individual schools to find out if any changes will impact your enrollment status. Early action could help mitigate effects on tuition or BAH payments. [Read more.](#)

**2. Tax Glitch Affects Veterans:** A recent Pentagon audit revealed that more than 130,000 veterans who were medically separated as a result of injuries sustained in combat, and received a disability severance, may be entitled to a [significant tax refund](#). Under federal law, disability severance paid as a result of combat injuries is intended to be tax-free. However, from 1991 to 2016, the automated payment system maintained by DOD failed to properly identify those payments as being tax exempt and withheld between 20-25 percent of the payment, resulting in an overpayment of federal income tax. If you feel that you may be entitled to a refund, you can [find more information](#) including how to file an amended income tax return through the Internal Revenue Service.

**3. Physical Disability Board of Review:** If you are a veteran who was medically separated from service between Sept. 11, 2001, and Dec. 31, 2009, with a rating of 30 percent or less and feel the rating is inaccurate, you now have the ability to file an appeal through the Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR). The result of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, the PDBR provides veterans a way to appeal their initial Department of Defense disability ratings, and often results in a medical discharge being upgraded to a medical retirement. [Learn more](#) about the application process.

**4. DOD Personnel Assist in Thai Cave Rescue:** Earlier this week, 42 U.S. military personnel and one advisor from the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group–Thailand participated in the rescue of 12 teenaged Thai soccer players and their coach from the Tham Luang cave complex in Chiang Rai province, Thailand. Details about the operation are still emerging, but according to a Pentagon spokesperson, U.S. personnel were instrumental in staging equipment and preparing the first three chambers of the cave system for the extrication of the trapped team. Since 1818, the U.S. has had a close diplomatic and military relationship with Thailand, and is one of our five treaty allies in the Indo-Pacific. [Read more](#) about the rescue.

**5. VFW Convention to Host Women Vets Information Fair:** The VFW will host a women veterans information fair entitled “Women Veterans: Strong & Growing” during this year’s 119th VFW National Convention. The fair will be held on July 24 at 2 p.m. Information pertinent to the veterans’ community with a focus on women veterans will be provided, and all veterans are encouraged and welcome to attend. Participants will include the VFW’s Women Veterans Advisory Committee; representatives from the Department of Veterans Affairs’ offices of women’s health, women veterans, research and development, and veteran experience; the Department of Labor; the National Coalition of Homeless Veterans; and congressional staff from the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs. There will be a raffle with prizes, as well as other giveaways. Learn more about the [119th VFW National Convention](#).

**6. MIA Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has announced identification and burial updates for three American service members who had been missing in action from WWII. Returning home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Navy Seaman 1st Class James C. Solomon**, 23, of Forestburg, Texas, whose identification was previously announced, will be buried July 14, in his hometown. Solomon was stationed aboard the USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The battleship sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen. [Read about Solomon](#).

-- **Navy Fireman 2nd Class Lowell E. Valley**, 19, of Ontonagon, Mich., whose identification was previously announced, will be buried July 14 in his hometown. Valley was stationed aboard the USS Oklahoma, which was moored at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when the ship was attacked by Japanese aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941. The battleship sustained multiple torpedo hits, which caused it to quickly capsize. The attack on the ship resulted in the deaths of 429 crewmen. [Read about Valley](#).

-- **Army Pfc. Willard Jenkins** was a member of Company C, 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division near Nijmegen, Netherlands. On Sept. 20, 1944, while participating in Operation Market Garden, his unit was ordered to cross the Waal River to make an amphibious attack. Jenkins was wounded in the chest by enemy fire. Because of the enemy activity in the area, a search could not be conducted and he was declared missing in action on Sept. 20, 1944. Interment services are pending. [Read about Jenkins](#).

To sign up new veterans’ advocates, click here: <http://capwiz.com/vfw/mlm/signup.htm>.

As always, we want to hear your advocacy stories. To share your stories or photos with us, simply email them directly to [yfwac@vfw.org](mailto:yfwac@vfw.org).