



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



WEBSITE: www.2-1-196th.com
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Volume 11

“A Soldier Once And Always”

April 2021

Commanders Corner: I send my best wishes for great health and Happiness to all my 2/1 Infantry brothers families and friends and fellow brothers from our sister units!

Another spring has arrived and we can only hope that it will be a big improvement on last spring and the entire last year. We are still faced with many challenges in our country and we must all be engaged and active to protect the many things that have made the United States the greatest country in our universe. We have many forces that are trying to tear our country down so we need to stand up for the values that made our country what it has been. It seems like we are going backwards in many ways.

I was able to receive my 2nd COVID Vaccination this past week at my Nashville VA hospital. I must report that they were very organized and the process was excellent that I know is not always the case with VA services. As I stated in the last Newsletter I recommend that everyone attempt to get the vaccination hopefully at a VA facility but if that isn't possible at your local government site. All of us are in the age group to be eligible for COVID vaccinations. This week the government has approved that all Veteran spouses and care givers can now get vaccinated at VA facilities so I would encourage you all to take advantage of this if possible. I keep reading articles that discuss the possibility that there may be restrictions on people that don't get vaccinated I totally disagree with this it would not surprise me if our government agencies move forward with these restrictions.

I don't know how many of you have been following the news about our Department of Defense but our weak leadership throughout our military services seem to be most focused on social issues rather than training our troops to fight wars and defend our country. We even have Senators wanting to do extensive background checks on anyone “volunteering” to join the service. I remember when guys were given the choice by judges when they got in trouble to join the service because they needed some discipline in their lives. Times have really changed.

Enough of my commentary on the state of our union. I hope everyone is planning to attend our reunion this year so we can all catch up and have some good fellowship. It will be great to see everyone. If you haven't made your arrangements I would suggest you do so soon.

I hope you all have a great spring!

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

Dwight Sypolt.
Commander

Growing old is hard work....The mind says “yes” but the body says, “What the hell are you thinking?”



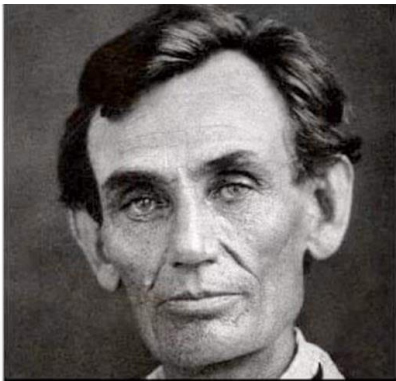
From H Duckworth O'Brien's “The RTO” The Radio Telephone Operator. The Radio Telephone Operator (RTO) is the lifeline in the bush. Without him, you had no contact for support like medevac, resupply, or artillery. It took a special type of Grunt to be a RTO. In addition to humping the normal gear a grunt did, the RTO had to strap it all to an AN/PRC 25 radio. He humped this while being behind a Squad Leader or LT or the unit CO. He had to know frequencies, shack codes (Secret Codes the enemy didn't have to send information over a regular frequency) and call signs. There was the added bonus of a 3 foot antenna the RTO did his best to hide somewhere on his ruck frame. If it waved around in the air, he might as well have had a neon sign that read: SHOOT HERE. –

ADVA 2021 ADVA Reunion Information Update. This year, our annual reunion will be held from 8-11 September 2021 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Most of the attendees will be housed at the Wyndham Indianapolis West. This will be about a week before the Annual Kokomo Vietnam Veterans Reunion which will be held September 16 – 18. The Kokomo Reunion, it is a great time and my old VN buddies and I have been going for about 35 years. Throughout the event, about 30,000 people flow through the site. People come from all parts of the country and you may run into someone you served with or was in your unit. There are good bands every evening, various food and vendor booths and a large circus-sized vendor tent. Camping and RV spaces are available and there are plenty of hotels about 15 minutes away. Some of the hotels provide shuttle service to the reunion. Kokomo, Indiana is located about an hour north of Indianapolis and the location is easy to find. Information is available on their web site at <https://hcvvo.net/contact> or email vveterans@aol.com or indy2021reunion@gmail.com While you're in the area you might as well give it a try.. Also, I previously mentioned posting flyers at your local VFWs and American Legion Posts (or anywhere else you can think of). Printable posters are available on the 2/1 Chapter web site <http://www.2-1-196th.com>. Just click “here” on the main page in the 2021 Americal Reunion area. Already, quite a few people have signed up for the reunion; so you might want to do it early. As always, any questions may be directed to me via the indy2021reunion@gmail.com email above. All 2/1 Chapter members, this will be a great chance to meet your fellow chapter members and participate in our annual chapter meeting.
Chuck Holdaway

P.S. 2021 REUNION HOTEL PHONE NUMBER CHANGE:
The Wyndham Hotel direct number for reservations has been changed to 317-381-6168. Still use our code of **90621ADVA**. The easiest way to make a reservation is to use our special reservation link to the hotel. It is available on our web site <http://2-1-196th.com> near the bottom of the main page in the reunion information area. This information has been updated on the web sites. Sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused anyone. Questions may be directed to indy2021reunion@gmail.com.

Corona Virus rates at VA Medical Centers fall to five-month Low: Department Officials at the Veterans' Administration reported 4,227 active cases spread over 138 medical centers across America. That's down more than 78 percent in the last two months, and the lowest total since early October. All of the VA medical centers reported fewer than 100 active cases among all patients on Wednesday, also the first time that has happened since last fall. More than 237,000 VA patients have been diagnosed with the virus since the pandemic began in March 2020. The decrease comes as case totals across America have also dropped since the height of the pandemic in December and January. More than 29 million Americans — about one in every 11 citizens — have tested positive for the virus in the last 14 months. VA officials have repeatedly noted that, unlike military members who live and work on somewhat isolated installations, veterans live in the civilian community. So their case numbers will mirror national trends more closely.

Fort Bliss to House up to 5,000 Children as Migration Increases along US-Mexico Border: Fort Bliss will have 5,000 beds for migrant children after the west Texas base was approved to temporarily house them, President Joe Biden announced recently. "So what we're doing is we're providing for the space to be able to get these kids out of the border patrol facilities which no child — no one — should be in any longer than 72 hours," Biden said during his first official news conference at the White House. The Pentagon approved a request from Department of Health and Human Services to use Joint Base San Antonio and Fort Bliss in El Paso to temporarily house children who were detained after crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. The DoD will provide [Department of Health and Human Services] officials access to these locations immediately to begin initial actions to prepare for receiving unaccompanied migrant children as soon as preparations are complete," said John Kirby, the Pentagon's chief spokesman. The U.S. border with Mexico has experienced rising numbers in migration, including unaccompanied children, since April due to violence, natural disasters, food insecurity, and poverty in Central America, according to a Department of Homeland Security statement issued March 13.



**WE THE PEOPLE
ARE THE RIGHTFUL
MASTERS OF BOTH
CONGRESS AND THE
COURTS, NOT TO
OVERTHROW THE
CONSTITUTION, BUT
TO OVERTHROW THE
MEN WHO PERVERT
THE CONSTITUTION.**

Abraham Lincoln, 1859, speech in Kansas and Ohio.

John Robert Kelly www.alivepresjournal.com

Intelligence Agencies Warn Most Lethal Threat to US Is Homegrown: U.S. intelligence agencies are warning the country faces a substantial threat from within, fearing a range of domestic extremists could move forward with plans to carry out attacks against fellow citizens or the government itself. The unclassified assessment, released Wednesday, describes the threat as broad, coming from lone offenders and small cells, all subscribing to a diverse set of violent ideologies but "galvanized by recent political and societal events." "Biases against minority populations and perceived government overreach will almost certainly continue to drive DVE [domestic violent extremist] radicalization," according to the report, released by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), with input from other intelligence and law enforcement agencies. The report further warned that a combination of factors, including conspiracy theories surrounding the most recent presidential election and conditions related to the corona virus pandemic, "will almost certainly spur some DVEs to try to engage in violence this year." The unclassified findings, part of a larger, classified report sent to the White House and Congress, comes more than two months after thousands of Americans — including dozens of members of far-right groups — laid siege to the U.S. Capitol, angry over the outcome of November's presidential election.

Border Deployments could be Extended past this Year: Within hours of taking office, President Joe Biden rescinded the national emergency along the U.S.-Mexico border that launched the 2018 deployments of thousands of troops and spurred the rerouting of billions of Defense Department dollars into border barrier construction, and it's possible those deployments will continue. That mission is funded through September, the head of U.S. Northern Command told Military Times on Tuesday. And it could be extended, if Customs and Border Protection gets what it's asked for. "Homeland Security, CBP, would like to continue DoD support," Air Force Gen. Glenn VanHerck said, referring to a current request for assistance. There are currently 3,500 National Guard troops from 22 states assisting CBP along the southern border. They don't perform law enforcement, but they do perform surveillance — both on the ground and with 24 UH-72 Lakota helicopters — to spot attempts to cross the border, reporting them to CBP for follow-up. They also do maintenance and repairs on CBP vehicles, VanHerck said, freeing up border patrol agents to focus on apprehension and detention. For a brief time in 2020, according to a recent Government Accountability Report, Texas Guardsmen were assigned to detention centers, as well as "providing welfare checks, distributing food, and driving trucks and vans."

Yes, There Is a 'Pink Tax' on Women's Military Uniforms, Report Finds: A congressionally ordered report into the out-of-pocket costs incurred by service members for uniform items confirms the long-held suspicion of many female troops that they're paying more than their male counterparts -- and shows that sometimes the difference is dramatic. The 52-page report, released recently by the Government Accountability Office, outlines the realities of what some have called the "pink tax:" the higher cost of female uniform items, not fully covered by clothing allowances. The report finds, among other things, the costs of essentials not included in the allowance calculations are significantly higher for women than men in every service; that female officers have been disproportionately burdened by numerous uniform changes over the past decades requiring the purchase of new items; and that out-of-pocket uniform costs for enlisted women can add up to \$8,000 or more over a career, while some men report allowance overages.

President Biden weighs keeping U.S. troops in Afghanistan until November: President Joe Biden is considering keeping U.S. troops in Afghanistan until November, rather than withdrawing them by a May 1 deadline outlined in an agreement his predecessor negotiated with the Taliban, according to two people familiar with the discussions. In recent discussions with members of his national security team, Biden has pushed back against the Defense Department's efforts to keep U.S. troops in Afghanistan beyond May 1, one of the people said. But he has been persuaded to consider a six-month extension. "Biden wants out," one of the people familiar with the discussions said. This person said Pentagon leaders have been making the case that the Taliban isn't living up to its end of the agreement, describing the argument as "Look, you own this now, Mr. President, and we can't guarantee you what will happen if we just precipitously pull everyone out." The military has presented several options, including pulling troops out by or close to May 1, keeping troops in the country indefinitely or keeping troops in Afghanistan for a defined period to be determined by Biden, which could include a six-month extension, said a second person familiar with the matter. "The decision is with the president," the person said.

Biden: US Troops likely not out of Afghanistan by May, but 'Can't Picture' them there in 2022:

President Joe Biden on Thursday said he "can't picture" having U.S. troops in Afghanistan next year, but added that meeting a May 1 deadline for withdrawing those troops is likely not going to happen. "For tactical reasons, it's going to be hard to get those troops out," the commander in chief said during a news conference at the White House in response to a question about U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan. "If we leave, we're going to do so in a safe and orderly way." About 2,500 American troops are still stationed in the country, where U.S. forces have been engaged in fighting with terrorist groups for nearly 20 years. Troop totals have dropped significantly in the last 18 months after former President Donald Trump pushed to completely end U.S. involvement in the war-torn country. Under a peace deal negotiated by the Trump administration, all U.S. troops are scheduled to leave by May 1. But officials in the Biden administration have cast doubt on that timeline in recent weeks. Biden did not completely dismiss the possibility of meeting the looming deadline, but said he is focused now on reviewing that deal and working with his security experts on the best path forward. "There is a United Nations process beginning shortly on how to end this war. It is not my intention to stay there for a long time," he said. "But the question is, how and in what circumstances can we meet that agreement that was made by President Trump?"

How to Protect Yourself and Others: COVID-19 vaccines are effective at protecting you from getting sick. Based on what we know about COVID-19 vaccines, people who have been fully vaccinated can start to do some things that they had stopped doing because of the pandemic. We're still learning how vaccines will affect the spread of COVID-19. After you've been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you should keep taking precautions in public places like wearing a mask, staying 6 feet apart from others, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces until we know more.

"To ban guns because the criminals use them is like telling the law-abiding that their rights and liberties depend not on their own conduct, but on the conduct of the guilty and the lawless."
Lysandra Spooner

All Veterans, Their Spouses and Caregivers Eligible to get COVID Vaccine through VA under Newly-passed Bill: All veterans, their spouses and caregivers will be able to receive a corona virus vaccine through the Department of Veterans Affairs once doses are made available, under legislation finalized by Congress. Veterans Affairs leaders had supported the move, saying they did not want to turn away any veteran from receiving the shots if they were available. But under current rules, department medical centers were permitted to administer vaccines only to veterans already eligible for VA health care services, and for certain caregivers registered in VA support programs. That totals just under 7 million individuals. Under the new bill, that number is expected to jump to more than 20 million. It would make vaccines eligible "to all veterans, veteran spouses, caregivers, and Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) recipients to the extent that such vaccines are available." The measure also for the first time makes veterans living abroad and enrolled in VA's the Foreign Medical Program eligible to receive the vaccine through department facilities.

Short-Term Use of Cannabis Safe But No More Effective Than Placebo for PTSD, Study Finds: Early results of a long-awaited study on marijuana as a treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder show that veterans who smoked two components of cannabis -- tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, and cannabidiol, or CBD -- saw decreases in their symptoms. But those who received a placebo during the study did just as well, according to data published Wednesday in the journal PLOS One. The research, sponsored by the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, or MAPS, in Santa Cruz, California, aimed to determine whether inhaled cannabis or its components were safe and effective for treating PTSD. For the study, 80 participants were divided into four groups: those who received cannabis containing high levels of THC, those who received hemp with high levels of CBD, those who received cannabis containing an even mix of THC and CBD, and those who got a placebo. According to the results, all four treatment groups, including those who received the placebo, achieved "significant reductions" in their PTSD assessment scores at the end. Specifically, participants who received marijuana with high levels of THC in the first phase saw a mean reduction in PTSD assessment scores of 15.2 points. Those who received a placebo reported a reduction of 13.1 points, and those who got a treatment containing high levels of CBD or the mix saw reductions of 8.4 points and 8.5 points, respectively.

Here's What It Costs to Keep US Troops in Japan and South Korea: The United States spent more than \$34 billion to maintain military presences in Japan and South Korea between 2016 and 2019, the Government Accountability Office said in a report released March 17. The two allies combined provided more than \$18 billion in financial support for the U.S. military presence there over that four-year period, GAO said in the report. During his presidency, former President Trump frequently castigated allies such as NATO nations, South Korea and Japan for not paying their "fair share" of the cost to maintain an American military presence abroad. In 2019, for example, the Trump administration asked Tokyo to roughly quadruple the amount it contributed to the costs of maintaining U.S. troops in Japan. The report on U.S. spending to keep troops in the two countries was required by Congress in the fiscal 2020 defense budget bill. In all, more than 80,000 U.S. troops are deployed to Japan and South Korea. In Japan alone, the U.S. maintains more than 55,000 deployed troops -- the largest forward-deployed U.S. force anywhere in the world.

New Navy Command To Oversee Unmanned Ships As They Work With Fleet: The Navy is preparing a first-of-its-kind operational command to test and develop concepts for its new generation of unmanned surface vessels, a major step in getting autonomous ships into the fleet. The establishment of Unmanned Surface Vessel Division One in 2022 comes as the service is pressing hard to design and field a range of unmanned ships capable of deploying deep into contested waters far in front of crewed ships to hunt mines, monitoring Chinese ships and submarines, and launch ship-killing missiles. Capt. Henry Adams, Commander Surface Development Squadron ONE, (SURFDEVRON 1) who retires recently considers it one of the biggest accomplishments of his two-year tenure. “Getting the agreement from ‘big Navy’ to allow the surface force to establish the subordinate command whose day job is to train and operate USVs is a big deal,” he said, “and it is going to be that initial operational unit from which we’ll be able to scale USV training, maintenance, and operations.” Established in 2019, SURFDEVRON 1 has been one of the more innovative commands in the Navy, bringing together the service’s first unmanned ships and working to integrate them with the first two of three eventual Zumwalt destroyers — a ship which has struggled to find a role or real mission within the fleet. Adams’ command is preparing to help run a major operational exercise in April that will see Medium Unmanned Surface Vessels like the Sea Hunter and Sea Hawk, which have been a major focus of Navy leadership, run through drills with the USS Zumwalt. All of those pieces will come together in April off the California coast for the Fleet Battle Problem exercise, designed to allow the Navy to take a hard look at how its new unmanned ships can begin integrating with crewed ships and drones.

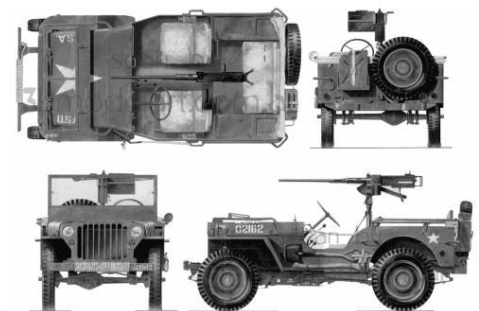
DOD starts 90-day Sexual Assault Review with no Active-duty Panel Members: Two months after President Joe Biden first ordered it, the Pentagon held the first meeting of a 90-day independent review commission on sexual assault in the military that its leader told the *Washington Examiner* will not include any active-duty members of the military. Even before he was seated as defense secretary, at his Jan. 19 nomination hearing, Lloyd Austin indicated that sexual assault and harassment in the military would be one of his priority issues. Austin issued a memo on sexual assault and followed a month later with several “immediate actions,” including evaluating “high risk” installations such as Fort Hood. But the clock for the commission itself only started recently, and senators on the Left are demanding faster action. “DOD’s most recent survey estimated that almost 21,000 service members were sexually assaulted in 2018,” New York Democrat Kirsten Gillibrand said at a Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee hearing on the failure of military leadership to address sexual assault.

GAO Calls for Stop to VA's Electronic Medical Record Rollout Until Early Problems Get Fixed:

The federal government’s watchdog agency has recommended that the Department of Veterans Affairs postpone the rollout of its electronic health records system until problems encountered in the initial deployment are fixed. Last fall, the Government Accountability Office identified issues with the system before it was introduced in October at the VA Medical Center in Spokane, Washington. Many of the problems were addressed at the initial rollout site, and the system has since been deployed at five other locations in Washington and Nevada. Do your life's best work. Bring your unique experience to a company that's changing how health care works for millions. Click here to learn more. But GAO officials said that, while the VA is making progress on addressing concerns, several issues remain outstanding and, if they are not addressed, risk jeopardizing the \$16 billion system's effectiveness going forward.

Lawmaker Wants to Strip Benefits from Veterans Involved in January's Attack on Congress: A Marine-turned-congressman wants federal officials to deny veterans benefits to any current or former military members involved with the attack on the U.S. Capitol building earlier this year, saying they “no longer deserve” the payouts. In letters to the Veterans Affairs secretary and attorney general made public Friday, Rep. Ruben Gallego, D-Ariz., said eligibility for education and vocational training should be stripped from those individuals, as well as disability compensation and VA health care access. “The behavior of these individuals tarnishes the image of American veterans and service members who have given so much to this country,” he wrote. “Yet, many of the veterans and service members who attacked their own government actively and enthusiastically enjoy benefits not available to their fellow citizens.” “This situation is unjust. Any retiree or service member who stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6 forfeited their moral entitlement to the support of the people of the United States.” Gallego did not specify whether veterans should be charged or convicted of a crime to lose their benefits. In the letter, he encourages officials to “use your discretion” to make that decision.

The 1,000,000th Jeep was produced. In 1939, the American Bantam Car Company submitted its original design for an all-terrain troop transport vehicle—featuring four-wheel drive, masked fender-mount headlights, and a rifle rack under the dash—to the U.S. Armed Forces. The Army loved Bantam’s design, but the development contract for the vehicle was ultimately awarded to the Willys-Overland Company for its superior production capabilities. Bantam wound up fulfilling a government contract for 3,000 vehicles during the war; but the Jeep, as designed by Willys-Overland, would become the primary troop transport of the U.S. Army. Mass production of the Willys Jeep began after the U.S. declaration of war in 1941. The name “Jeep” is reportedly derived from the Army’s request that car manufacturers develop a “General Purpose” vehicle. “Gee Pee” turned to “Jeep” somewhere along the battle lines.



Why did Nobody ever Tell us That the Army has a 'Railroad Conductor' MOS? The military keeps a lot of secrets, and sometimes for good reason. But one thing we at Task & Purpose can't wrap our heads around is why they decided to stay quiet about what is quite possibly the best job in the military, the Army's 88U military occupational specialty: railroad operations crew member. Why don't they lead with that at the recruiting office? Forget the “what's your warrior” commercials or the “we're going to save the world” ads, just snap a photo of an 88U soldier on a train with the words “this could be you” in bold underneath and you'll have lines out the door of every Army recruiting station along the Union Pacific. Unfortunately, there are only 180 slots available in the MOS, and they're all in the Army Reserve. Although the Army's railroad corps is small, they sure are mighty: the Army's railways provide a fast, reliable, and incredibly efficient means of transportation for war gear that no other land-based method can match. “Rail is and always will be the fastest, most efficient way to move supplies from one place to another over land,” said Staff Sgt. Teresa George, an instructor assigned to the 94th Division, 80th Training Command, which is an Army Reserve training center based at Fort Lee, Virginia.

Marines field new rifle optic for better accuracy, hit probability: The Marine Corps recently began fielding a new rifle optic to improve shooter accuracy at distances with both the M4 carbine and M27 Infantry Automatic Rifle. The squad common optic is a magnified day optic that has both an illuminated and nonilluminated aim point that's built to increase effective target acquisition and probability of hit, according to a press release from Marine Corps Systems Command. “The squad common optic provides an improved day optic to infantry and infantry-like communities, including reconnaissance units” Tom Dever, project officer for combat optics said in the release. “It's a system that improves situational awareness and decreases engagement times, greatly benefiting Marines.” The SCO will replace the rifle combat optic, and is a bit larger. The new scope weighs 31.5 ounces and is 10.5 inches long — making it nearly double the size of the nearly 6-inch and 10 ounce RCO. But with that size Marines are able to double their magnification, from the current four times magnification of the RCO to eight times with the SCO. The Corps chose the optic in a \$64 million contract with Trijicon, the Michigan-based company that builds both the RCO and SCO in February 2022. The initial order was for 19,000 devices, starting with both reconnaissance and infantry units.

Autonomous Drones Proved Themselves in Army Ammo Resupply Tests. Now, the XVIII Airborne Wants In: Army maneuver officials are pushing for additional testing of aerial resupply by autonomous drones -- which could become a dependable lifeline for delivering ammunition and water to combat units when they need it most. Soldiers with the service's Experimental Force, or EXFOR, at Fort Benning, Georgia, just completed the Army Expeditionary Warrior Experiment (AEWE) 2021, using commercial autonomous quadcopters to fly ammo for the M240 machine gun, M249 squad automatic weapon and M4A1 carbine to units fresh out of gunfights during the force-on-force portion of the exercise. EXFOR, a company-sized unit, ran 15 resupply missions using drones designed to carry loads between 80 and 150 pounds. They delivered supplies directly to unit positions instead of relying on manned convoys or helicopters, which require security and can endanger more lives in combat. One of those missions was the emergency resupply of a unit in a defensive position, Ed Davis, director of the Maneuver Battle Lab, told an audience March 9. “They had about a 45-minute fight; they used up a lot of ammunition, so they had an emergency resupply come in,” he said. “Two birds flew in formation and came in. One dropped off behind one squad. The other dropped off behind another squad, and the same bird had a second drop. “This is the notion that you can get supplies forward to prepare for counterattack or potentially press the attack,” Davis said. “You want to end the attack on your terms, not necessarily because you need ammo.”

House panel advances bill to repeal 2002 War Authorization: The House Foreign Affairs Committee voted 28-19 largely along party lines to approve the bill from Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.) repealing the 2002 authorization for the use of military force (AUMF), advancing it to the House floor. Two Republicans, Reps. Ken Buck (Colo.) and Peter Meijer (Mich.), voted with Democrats in support of the bill. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Gregory Meeks (D-N.Y.) argued the AUMF is outdated. Efforts to repeal it were revived this year amid a push to rein in presidential war powers after President Biden ordered an airstrike on Iran-backed militias in Syria last month in retaliation for militia attacks on U.S. personnel in Iraq. The strike has sparked renewed efforts by lawmakers to repeal and replace AUMF.

Army's new Arctic strategy takes shape in Alaska's frigid interior: Everything takes longer in sub-zero temperatures. Dismantling crew-served weapons, setting up a tent or simply keeping water from freezing solid are among the daily soldiering tasks that become markedly more difficult as temperatures drop and fingers numb. Curbing the cold's deleterious effects on electronics, machines and the human body is something troops assigned to U.S. Army Alaska command once knew well, but two decades of deployments to the Middle East eroded much of that ingrained knowledge. As the Arctic warms, sea ice melts, shipping lanes emerge and resource exploitation booms, the chance for conflict between nations in the region could increase as well. The Army is set to publish a new “Arctic strategy” in the coming weeks to address how the service will defend America's Arctic holdings. But the shift can already be seen for Anchorage-based paratroopers who were dispatched hundreds of miles north this February for a brigade-sized exercise at the Donnelly Training Area, in Alaska's interior. The training event, called Arctic Warrior 21, is part of a renewed focus on cold weather warfare that inverts the old, summer-focused training cycle and pushes soldiers into the field during the winter. “It's a return to the way things used to be in Alaska,” said Maj. Gen. Peter Andrysiak, the Army's top officer in the region. “There used to be a series of large-scale exercises that took place in the February-March time frame, but that really stopped in probably the early 1990s.” The soldiers participating in the February exercise are from 4th Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, an airborne infantry unit that typically parachutes near the relatively warmer installation of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage. “They're going to have to do more of those proficiency jumps here in the north,” Andrysiak said in a recent telephone interview. “When they hit the ground and it's 30 below and wind chill is minus 50, that's a significant difference from what they would do at JBER. That has to be a regular thing to be good at it.” The 10-day Arctic Warrior exercise is also a chance to perfect the minutia of cold-weather living: how to layer clothing properly, how to set up tents with heaters and how to pull a sled full of a squad's essential gear.

Vaccine Refusal Rate at 3% Among Veterans, Slightly Higher in Rural Areas: About 3% of veterans have refused corona virus vaccines when offered them by the Department of Veterans Affairs — an amount lower than the agency anticipated. The refusal rate is slightly higher in less populated areas, equating to 4% among veterans in rural places and 5% in areas designated as highly rural. Refusal rates are lower among the populations of Black and Hispanic veterans. “We were worried we'd see more vaccine hesitancy and disparities across different groups, and we're pleasantly surprised we're not seeing that in large part, at least so far,” said Dr. Ernest Moy, executive director of the VA Office of Health Equity. “We are concerned about rural rates — that seems to be the biggest disparity that's out there that we need to address.” In his role, Moy coordinates efforts to reduce disparities in health care among veterans. In the summer, his office began holding focus groups with different demographics of veterans, asking them about their hesitancy to get a corona virus vaccine. For the VA, that was a “major concern,” Moy said. During the focus groups, the VA learned Black veterans wanted to hear scientific evidence about the vaccines from their health care providers. Black veterans also wanted the department to address the “Tuskegee experiment” — a study that has led many Black Americans to mistrust medical systems. The U.S. Public Health Service, working with the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, recruited hundreds of rural Black men for a study of syphilis in 1932, and then withheld medical treatment from them.

2021 Americal Division National Reunion September 8-11, 2021 Indianapolis, Indiana

LOCATION: Wyndham Indianapolis West, 2544 Executive Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46241

HOTEL RESERVATION PROCEDURE: The reunion room rate is \$115, plus tax, per night, with free daily breakfast. The Group rate is offered 3 days before and 3 days after reunion dates, based on hotel's availability. Various reservation options are listed below. Rates cannot be adjusted at check-in or check-out for guests who fail to identify their affiliation with the **Americal Division Veterans Association** when making reservations. **Note: In accordance with proposed hotel reservation changes for 2021, all reservations will be charged a non-refundable deposit of one night's room rate and tax when the reservation is made.**
Reservation Phone Numbers: When calling in room reservations, **ALWAYS indicate you are with the Americal Division Veterans Association** and use the code **90621ADVA** to avoid any possible complications. Wyndham West Direct: **(317) 381-6123**
Email: adva2021@wyndhamindianapoliswest.com

Wyndham Reservation Web Site Link: A link has been set up by the Wyndham Hotels to allow online reservations to be made. This can be found on both the Americal and 2/1 chapter web sites.

<https://americal.org/cmsaml/index.php/reunions.html> and <http://www.2-1-196th.com/>

Event/Dinner Registration Forms will be available in publications of the "Americal Journal" and on the web sites.

Reunion Questions Contact: Reunion Chairman, **Chuck Holdaway**, at **1-317-847-2756** or email at indy2021reunion@gmail.com.

Tours and Amenities:

Indianapolis 500 Race Track and Museum Tour (Thursday morning Sept. 9th)

Indianapolis War Memorials and Museum Tour (Friday morning Sept. 10th)

(Indianapolis is second only to Washington, DC in the number of monuments and museums which are armed services related. Almost all are within walking distance of each other and near the National Headquarters of the American Legion.)

Dallara Indycar Factory and interactive facility (Saturday afternoon Sept. 11th)

RV parking with hook-ups will be available at American Legion Post 500.

RV parking without hook ups will be available at the Wyndham Hotel at reunion room rate.

Free airport shuttle to and from the Wyndham Indianapolis West Hotel

Free breakfast, Wi-Fi and parking are available at the Wyndham Indianapolis West Hotel

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Individual ADVA chapters contact your membership and urge attendance.

Place a notice or poster at your local VFW, American Legion, etc.

Email your buddies to let them know.

Make your hotel reservations early; we expect a big turnout since 2021 was cancelled.

If you are planning on getting a space at the RV area, please send an email to the 2021

reunion email address above. It will help in our planning at the Legion Post as spaces may be limited. RV reservation information will be posted on both the ADVA and 2/1 chapter web sites as soon as available.

HOTEL AND RV RESERVATIONS MAY BE MADE STARTING JANUARY