VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA

NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION'S WEEKLY REPORT

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December 12 – 16, 2022

STAFF ACTIVITY

- NS Staff attended the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) Centennial Event hosted by The National Press Club. Secretary Charles Djou updated all overseas American cemeteries and monuments and proposed expansion in the upcoming year.

- NS Staff met with Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO.) The discussion focused on the upcoming year and areas of mutual interest between the United States and Taiwan.

- NS Staff participated in a Family/VSO Quarterly conference call hosted by the Defense POW/MIA Accountability Agency (DPAA). The discussion focused on the Department of Defense's past conflicts personnel accounting mission and the continued progress of the agency. Director McKeegan emphasized that DPAA's budget for 2023 was increased by $20 million, bringing the total to $150 million. DPAA sent their deepest gratitude to the National Commander and ALA National President for taking the time to visit their site.

- NS Staff met with Spirit of America, a nonprofit organization that works alongside troops and diplomats. The discussion focused on potential areas for collaboration to assist displaced Afghan refugees in the United States and abroad.

- NS Staff observed a Podcast titled *"Straight Talk with Senator Bill Cassidy"* hosted by David Conley from One More Day. The discussion focused on the different programs working through the United States Senate to reduce suicide and other mental health crises.

- NS Staff participated in a webinar titled "*The Importance of US Alliances in Europe, A Conversation with Senator Joni Ernst*." She has led or participated in several congressional delegations to Europe as a senator. Last week, she led a bipartisan effort with 14 colleagues urging the Biden administration to send MQ-1C Gray Eagle drones to Ukraine. Senator Ernst emphasized the state of Europe, transatlantic relations, and how to best meet America's interests in the decades to come

- NS Staff is preparing for The American Legion's 64th Annual Washington Conference.

- For Legionnaires who would like to sign up for the daily (weekdays only) e-mail version of the Department of Defense's ***Early Bird Brief Newsletter,*** please register at the following link: *Defense News Early Bird Sign Up*

- The 2023 Basic Allowance for Housing rates will increase by an average of 12.1% effective January 1, DOD announced Wednesday. With high inflation and increased cost of living, this is welcoming news; however, there is still more that can be done, but this is a step in the right direction.

POW/MIA

December 12, 2022

- Soldier accounted for from WWII (Simon, W.)

- Soldier accounted for from Korean War (Miller, J.)

December 13, 2022

- Airman accounted for from World War II (Uhrin, M.)

- Airman accounted for from World War II(Harms, R.)

DPAA has identified/repatriated 174 servicemembers so far this year.

PROGRAMS (The American Legion Military Surplus Equipment)

- Processed request: Ammo – 4,960; Rifle – 28; Clips - 0
- Participants: Posts – 6; Department – 5

Tip of the Week

The vaccines and boosters are offered at no cost, but there may be a cost based on your plan for an office visit or if you require follow-on care.

If you've already received your COVID-19 vaccine or booster, you can sign up for v-safe. V-safe is a smart-phone based tool developed by the CDC that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after you receive a COVID-19 vaccine or booster. Through v-safe, you can quickly tell CDC if you have any side effects after getting the COVID-19 vaccine or booster.