

SOUND OFF!



VOL. I, NO 17

THE NEWSLETTER OF VETERANS UNITED FOR TRUTH, INC.

"VETERANS STANDING UP FOR EACH OTHER"

25 MARCH 2006

FIRST CALL - THEME OF THE ISSUE AND/OR CLIPS & QUOTES

SACRIFICE

We just passed the third anniversary of the Iraq War. We may have lost sight of the fact that the Afghanistan War has been going on for 17 months longer. If you mark the beginning of the US involvement in WW II, the Afghan War has gone on 8 months longer than US involvement in WW II, and in just 9 months, the Iraq War will have lasted as long.

[Memories of a 70-year old] In December 1944, the 3rd anniversary of that war, your car had an "A" stamp (probably if your Dad hadn't put it up on blocks for "the duration". Your mother had those red and blue tokens and rationing chits to cover purchase of meat, canned goods, and sugar.

We were down to one pair of dress shoes a year in 1944, because the leather had to go to soldier's boots and other military gear. Forget tires for the buggy – there weren't any. We bought savings stamps (10¢ each) and \$25 dollar war/victory/savings bonds (the name changed as the war progressed favorably).

Our allies, the Brits, were in their 5th year of rationing, and it would go on for them for years more.

"Hey buddy! Don't you know there's a war on?"

RECRUITING

Is anyone confused about the latest reporting on recruiting? I was until I started looking into it. It is hard to get your hands on a single table showing goals and results; the services seem to be hiding these figures deeper and deeper.

Despite stories from individual recruiters (unnamed) and from the press (unattributed) that things are not going well, the official position is that all is going swimmingly and we are making and breaking records.

Interesting bit of information though. They may be making their goals, but, in a time when the services are stretched impossibly thin, they are lowering the total goals every year, and switching more to the Army each year. Since 2003, when

they lowered the goals mid- year to ameliorate their failure, the goals for the active force have been going down. The Reserve/Guard forces are not meeting their goals, partly because the goals there have been gradually going up, reflecting present and future dependency on non-regular forces. <See table at the end of this issue>

They have also switched the per-month goals to lower the numbers in the beginning of the FY far more than normal, to show early success, I guess. So far in FY 2006 (1st 5 months) they have acquired new recruits at a rate that will meet only about 78% of annual goals. Don't know what they are going to do if the summer months don't play out the way they hope. After 42% of FY 2006, they have attained 33% of their FY goals.

So they crow that the active force and reserve are meeting the numbers – on lowered expectations – and lament that the Guard is still missing their numbers – as they quietly and steadily raise their expectations. FYI – a California legislative staffer recently told me that the CANG is losing 300 currently active members for every 200 they recruit. Doesn't sound good to me!

I guess it's kind of easy for the DoD masters to move the numbers around, though. It makes the active and reserve force look good (which helps them build their careers), and makes the state-run Guard look bad - again. Why should they care anyway? They aren't their kids.

Once again we call on Paul Rieckhoff to state our case. Thanks Paul. [Ed.]

"There's almost a total and complete disconnect in this country," he said. "If you walk around in the streets today -- in Manhattan or in Newark or in Trenton -- it doesn't feel or look like a country at war and that's not a pro-war or anti-war statement.

It's about having a healthy public that's connected to the cost of war and what's going on. This is not George Bush's war. It's not the Republicans' war. It's America's war."

Paul Rieckhoff – IAVA

REVEILLE - WAKE-UP CALLS

WAKE UP! SPREAD THE NEWS!

MEMBERSHIP IS OPEN, FREE, AND VERY WORTHWHILE! GET YOUR FELLOW VETERANS, AND VETERANS' FAMILY MEMBERS TO JOIN VUFT! WE ARE BEGINNING TO BE HEARD, AND WE NEED YOU TO HELP US GET THE MESSAGE OUT.

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE!

PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE AT [WWW.VUFT.ORG](http://www.vuft.org). CHECK OUT THE NEW "CANDIDATES" PAGE, WHICH IS OUR EFFORT TO LIST ALL VETERANS RUNNING FOR STATE-WIDE AND FEDERAL OFFICE IN THE U.S.; IT IS BEING UPDATED DAILY. PLEASE HELP US MAKE THIS AS COMPLETE A LIST AS POSSIBLE BY SENDING CANDIDATE INFO TO SANDY.COOK@VUFT.ORG.

If you would like to give some telephone time to those serving in Iran and Afghanistan, the VFW has a donation site at

https://secure2.convio.net/vfw/site/Donation/941705061?ACTION=SHOW_DONATION_OPTIONS&CAMPAIGN_ID=1381&=&=

ASSEMBLY - PROGRESS OF THE ORGANIZATION

NEW MEMBERS are joining us every week. If you are getting this newsletter and have not yet joined, please go to our website at www.vuft.org/membership.html and join. Membership is free. The more our numbers grow, the greater voice we have with legislators. It shouldn't be that way, but it is, so join us and help us take the fight to Congress and the state legislatures.

SUPPORTING THE CAUSE

If you wish to donate to our work you may now do so via PayPal or Visa on our website "Join" page. Every little bit helps. You can also buy our handsome pins using the same method.

MAIL CALL - LETTERS FROM MEMBERS AND OTHERS

Date: Mon, 20 Mar 2006 18:06:32 EST

From: DSNurse@aol.com

Subject: please post this and follow thru and pass on to others and other email lists

Have you called, faxed, or emailed your Reps about:

- HR 2410 – Depleted Uranium Munitions Study Act
- HR 202 – Depleted Uranium Screening and Testing Act
- HR 4184 – You Were There, You Get Care Act

If you have not, would you please do so? If not, Why not? If you have let us know.

Please we need each of you doing this to get movement on these three bills!

It takes all of us talking to the Representatives in DC to get them signed on as cosponsors. Call the Reps in your state at their DC office and just ask them to Cosponsor these three bills. Or Email them. Or Fax them

Take your state and get started.....if you need help the phone numbers are listed at www.house.gov/house/MemberWWW.shtml

Thanks,

Denise

RECALL - FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATION AND LEGISLATORS

EVANS, BERKLEY INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO ALLOW VETERANS A CHOICE IN REPRESENTATION

March 9, 2006

Washington, DC – Congressman Lane Evans of Illinois, Ranking Democrat on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and Congresswoman Shelley Berkley of Nevada, Ranking Democratic Member on the Committee's Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, today introduced a bill (H.R. 4914) that would permit veterans to hire an attorney when they disagree with a benefits claims decision of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Currently, veterans are not allowed to hire

an attorney until the end of the administrative appeals process, specifically, after the Board of Veterans Appeals has rendered a decision. <More at: www.vawatchdog.org/newsflash/newsflash03-10-2006-1.htm>

COMBAT VETERAN'S COMPENSATION, HOSPITAL FOOD

John W. Slagle - American Chronicle - Beverly Hills, CA, USA -March 11, 2006

A bill that would guarantee a portion of retirement benefits to military members forced out of service because of combat injuries was introduced on Wednesday, March 8th. in the U.S. Senate.

The compensation bill would pro-rate retirement pay for injured veterans. Currently, service members who are injured before completing 20 years do not qualify for the benefit.

"People who had planned to make the military a career are being forced into premature retirement because of medical problems," said Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., the bill's sponsor. "That means they lose their retirement pay, and I think that's unfair." <More at: www.americanchronicle.com/articles/viewArticle.asp?articleID=6765>

RECAP OF CURRENT LEGISLATION

This is the issue that is supposed to contain the quarterly update on federal legislation. The list of open bills has expanded mightily, so I will be publishing that list to the entire mailing list as a supplement – when it is caught up. I should be able to get it out by Monday, but don't hold me to that.

It is not that there is new legislation – there isn't much of that. It is that there was so much old legislation languishing in committee that I didn't pickup on before. I want our list to be as complete as possible, but with bills, committee reports, amendments, etc. it is very difficult to track unless you do it full time. The list is important because we should be using it to prod our Representatives and Senators. Too often they drop in legislation and then it dies without their following up; but they don't hesitate to claim that they are busting their b*#s for all of us. Bear with me folks.

RETREAT – NEWS

IN CASE YOU FORGOT WHY YOU JOINED THE NAVY

1,000 MORE SAILORS EXPECTED TO JOIN GROUND FORCES IN IRAQ

By Alex Fryer - *Seattle Times* staff reporter - March 17, 2006

Three years after Baghdad fell, the Navy is poised to dramatically increase the number of sailors in Iraq and Afghanistan, filling gaps in Army and Marine Corps units. The seamen, called "individual augmentees," support ground operations thousands of miles from the nearest port, in deployments that can be far different from the Navy's traditional role.

<More at: http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/cgi-bin/PrintStory.pl?document_id=2002870555&zsection_id=2002111777&slug=navy17m&date=20060317>

US GENERAL PAINTS A DARK PICTURE

March 15, 2006 - Baltimore Sun, Reuters

THE top US military official has warned that Iraq is at a critical juncture and could devolve into civil war, amounting to perhaps his gloomiest assessment to date.

General Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called Iraq "a place that is having some real difficulties right now" and said the country's direction probably would be determined by how it emerged from those difficulties.

His comments, in a speech to the Baltimore Council on Foreign Affairs on Monday, were a clear retreat from his statement a week ago that the war is "going very, very well".

<More at: www.theage.com.au/news/world/us-general-paints-a-dark-picture/2006/03/14/1142098463765.html>

IRAQ WAR VETERAN FIT FOR COMBAT, BUT NOT MAIL DELIVERY

March 21, 2006, 3:37 PM EST

HAMBURG, N.Y. -- Sgt. Jason Lyon underwent months of medical treatment after surviving a roadside bomb that killed three friends. It was an experience he said he never expects to forget.

But it is a relatively minor mishap that occurred six months earlier _ an ankle sprain suffered jumping off a Humvee _ that is proving difficult to move on from.

While military doctors have certified the National Guardsman as physically fit to return to combat if needed, the U.S. Postal Service says the ankle injury has left Lyon physically unfit to deliver mail.

"To me, it really seems unfair," said Lyon, who was recently turned down for a postal carrier job because of the 2004 injury. "The military says I can go to combat. I can march, run, fight in a war and do anything else a soldier can do. But the Postal Service says I'm not fit to deliver letters."

Lyon, 28, has a thick stack of medical reports from the Army declaring him fit for military duty.

"Currently no limitations of military or civilian activity," a National Guard medical officer wrote in a report on Lyon last month. <More at: www.newsday.com/news/local/wire/newyork/ny-bc-ny--veteran-mailduty0321mar21,0,7869093.story?coll=ny-region-apnewyork>

WE CAN TELL ANYONE WHAT HERD AN INFECTED COW COMES FROM [OUT OF 111.9 M US COWS], BUT WE CAN'T TRACK OUR OWN WOUNDED?

U.S. LACKS MECHANISM TO ACCURATELY TRACK TROOPS WOUNDED IN IRAQ

Lorraine Ash - Cherry Hill Courier Post - Cherry Hill, - Mar 20, 2006

There is no disputing the number of American troops who have died in the war on terror. At press time, more than 2,590 soldiers had lost their lives, according to U.S. Department of Defense numbers.

But the number of wounded is not clear-cut. In fact, that count is elusive. DoD numbers have tallied 17,702 wounded.

"Basically, that's everybody who has been through the major military hospitals, like Walter Reed Army Medical Center," said Kryn Westhoven, spokesman for the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. "There are some who are not counted in that roll-up, and the numbers are not broken down by state."

New Jersey Gov. Jon S. Corzine has asked the department to track the number but the task is "nightmarish," according to Westhoven, particularly since the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (known as HIPAA) does not allow patients' medical information to be reported because of privacy issues. HIPAA covers both the civilian and military populations.

"Let's say a soldier comes back and he's the walking wounded. He just needs physical therapy, but he is nonetheless wounded," Westhoven said. "Let's say he comes back to Fort Dix. He might go to a local doctor for two to three months for physical therapy and then be on his way. He might receive a 10 percent disability. He might have no disability. He might be fine afterwards. The point is, he'll never truly be tracked."

When Michael White, a database/Web designer for a Georgia cell phone company, heard conflicting news reports about casualties in Iraq, it bothered him enough to create www.icasualties.org, a Web site that has become a national reference point for war statistics. White, who calls the continuous effort to keep up the site a "labor of conscience," does so on his own, for no compensation. <More at: www.courierpostonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060319/NEWS01/603190369/1006>

THIS ONE IS DEFINITELY WORTH CLICKING ON AND READING THE WHOLE ARTICLE

EFFECTS OF IRAQ WAR VARY DRAMATICALLY IN USA

Rick Hampson - USA Today - Mar 17, 2006

After three years, the Iraq war has not hit the American pocketbook, diet or routine as much as the American psyche. It has changed what we do less than how we feel.

And many of us feel like crying.

The wages of war — roadside bombings, military funerals, shattered mosques, wounded children — have shaken people far from the violence.

Jackie Sanders, a 58-year-old widow who works at the Wal-Mart in Prairie du Chien, Wis., notices "a general sense of foreboding. People cry easily. The tears are right there, all the time."

Half of those interviewed in the latest USA TODAY/CNN/Gallup Poll say the war has made them cry, and almost nine in 10 say it has made them pray. Yet never in U.S. history has such a huge military effort — it has cost \$150 million a day, more than 2,300 American lives and more than 17,000 U.S. wounded — required so little of so many.

Unlike wars past, Americans don't have to pay higher taxes, burn less gas or eat less sugar. Their government has neither drafted them nor told them what to say or publish. There's nothing like the air raid drills of the Cold War or the mass street protests of Vietnam.

To some on the home front, it hardly seems like wartime at all.

<More at: www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2006-03-16-iraq-war-anniversary-effects_x.htm>

VA DATA SHOW SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN MEDICAL NEEDS OF RETURNING VETERANS

March 14, 2006

One in three receive an initial mental health diagnosis

Washington, D.C. – New data from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are “strong proof” that the Administration’s budget is insufficient to meet the mental health care needs of veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. That is the conclusion of Illinois Rep. Lane Evans, Ranking Democratic Member of the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee, and Maine Rep. Michael Michaud, Ranking Democratic Member of the Committee’s Subcommittee on Health.

Evans and Michaud had requested the data, which showed that in the first three months of FY 2006, VA saw a 21% increase in the number of veterans from Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) who have sought care at the VA. The department has seen 144,424 returning veterans through the first quarter of FY 2006, 33,858 more than the Administration had estimated in its budget proposal for the entire year.

According to information VA provided to the congressmen, nearly one in three of the veterans seen have had a VA hospitalization or outpatient visit due to an initial diagnosis of a mental health disorder. VA’s numbers are consistent with a recent Army study that found that one in three soldiers and Marines who have served in Iraq sought mental health care services.

<More at: <http://veterans.house.gov/democratic/press/109th/3-14-06medical.htm>>

TO THE COLOR - GATHERINGS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Where</u>	<u>What</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
4/20 – 23/06		Pleasanton/Camp Parks, CA	AUSA Spring Symposium	AUSA 6 th Region	Periodic Meeting
4/25-26/06		Washington DC	Veterans March	Various Groups	VA funding
4/25	0800	Nationwide – state capitols	Veterans March	Various Groups	VA funding
6/23-6/24		Chicago Armory - North Ave	Veterans Stand down	VVAW	Homeless Vets

Let us know about meetings and gatherings and we will advertise them

Note: We are a non-partisan organization that does not take a position, as an organization, on this war. We will, however, advertise all veterans’ events, regardless of purpose.

TATTOO - CURRENT ISSUES

SOLDIER FEELS ABANDONED IN HIS COURTROOM BATTLE

Amit R. Paley - Washington Post Staff Writer - March 22, 2006; B06

Army Has Refused to Allow Testimony to Aid Case

Cpl. Kendall D. McKibben was prepared to sacrifice his life for the Army. He says he almost did repeatedly over a year of patrols dodging bullets in Baghdad and dealing with a grape-size brain tumor. So the 33-year-old says he can’t understand why the military is refusing a routine subpoena that he believes could help him avoid a 13-year prison sentence.

McKibben goes on trial today in Howard County District Court on charges of assaulting a police officer during what he and his doctors believe was an epileptic seizure related to his now-removed brain tumor. But military officials will not allow his doctors to testify. ... Gergely said the doctors could help win an acquittal for McKibben by showing that he had suffered a seizure during the assault and therefore should not be held responsible for his actions.

Ann Johnson, a spokeswoman for Walter Reed, said the policy restricting testimony of military staff is designed to limit “the loss of duty time by Army personnel” and “to include strict impartiality where the Army does not have an interest in the litigation.” Or, as an attorney-adviser at Walter Reed Army Medical Center wrote in a Dec. 19 letter to Gergely: “Our sole concern in this matter is to protect the interests of the United States Army.”

<More at: www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/03/21/AR2006032101903.html>

WHO CAN FIGHT FOR THE SOLDIERS? [A DIFFERENT LEGAL PROBLEM FROM THE ONE ABOVE]

James C. McKay - January 22, 2006; B02

Veterans Need the Right to Hire a Lawyer

If American soldiers are mature and responsible enough to choose to risk their lives for their country, shouldn't they be considered competent to hire a lawyer? No, not if that lawyer is going to pursue their veterans' benefits claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs. That's the flabbergasting answer from Congress and the Supreme Court.

More at: www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/01/21/AR2006012100100.html>

SENATE RESTORES \$3 BILLION TO DEFENSE BUDGET

Rick Maze – Army Times staff writer - 15 March 2006

Plan to raise veterans' health care fees also axed

The Senate voted Tuesday to restore \$3 billion that was cut from the defense budget by the Senate Budget Committee and to reject a Bush administration plan to increase health care fees for veterans.

The votes came as the Senate worked on SConRes 83, the congressional budget resolution that sets broad federal spending and revenue guidelines. The House does not plan to write its version of the bill until the week of March 27 at the earliest.

By a 100-0 vote, the Senate approved an amendment offered by Sen. Conrad Burns, R-Mont., that adds money to the Department of Veterans' Affairs health care budget to cover the money the Bush administration proposed to raise by increasing prescription drug co-payments and creating an enrollment fee for some veterans.

The amendment adds \$795 million to the veterans' budget to cover the fees, plus \$27 million for prosthetic limb research, which the Bush administration proposed cutting.

"These fees are not what we promised our military folks when they went off to war or when they stand ready to defend this country," Burns said. <More at: www.armytimes.com/story.php?f=1-292925-1599042.php>

SOME TROOPS HEADED BACK TO IRAQ ARE MENTALLY ILL

By Rick Rogers - San Diego Union-Tribune Staff Writer - March 19, 2006

Besides bringing antibiotics and painkillers, military personnel nationwide are heading back to Iraq with a cache of anti-depressant and anti-anxiety medications.

The psychotropic drugs are a bow to a little-discussed truth fraught with implications: Mentally ill service members are being returned to combat.

The redeployments are legal, and the service members are often eager to go. But veterans groups, lawmakers and mental-health professionals fear that the practice lacks adequate civilian oversight. They also worry that such redeployments are becoming more frequent as multiple combat tours become the norm and traumatized service members are retained out of loyalty or wartime pressures to maintain troop numbers.

<More at: www.signonsandiego.com/news/military/20060319-9999-1n19mental.html>

AILING VETS OVERWHELM SYSTEM

Craig Gordon - Newsday Washington Bureau - March 20, 2006

WASHINGTON -- At Ground Zero in lower Manhattan, Larry Provost said, he spent a week digging through the still-smoldering pile for survivors who weren't there.

His Army Reserve unit touched down in Afghanistan a year to the day after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. Then it was onto Iraq a year later, where every trip off base could be deadly, and Provost knew three fellow soldiers who died in a Baghdad roadside bomb attack.

It's why back home he swerves to avoid a piece of trash in the road, or tries to avoid large crowds -- things that would have been danger signs in Iraq, a hiding place for a bomb, or a bomber. Some experiences, he just can't forget, no matter how hard he tries.

But when he sought counseling at a Veterans Affairs hospital near his home in Virginia Beach, Va., he said he felt like the message was, "Take a number." He said he's been waiting several weeks for a counseling appointment and was told by one doctor it could be two months before getting in.

"I say to them, 'Why?' And they say back to me that 'Unfortunately, it's because of all you guys coming back, and we just can't handle you. It's nothing personal. It's just the way it is,'" Provost, 27, recalled.

<More at: www.newsday.com/news/printedition/stories/ny-usvets204669533mar20_0_3202248.story>

TAPS – PASSINGS AND WAR STATISTICS

BENCHMARKS: US IRAQ CASUALTIES STAY HIGH

Martin Sieff - United Press International - 22 March 2006

Washington - As Iraq teeters on - or over - the brink of civil war the pressure is not easing on the hard-pressed U.S. ground forces there.

Over the past month, the average rate at which U.S. troops have been killed in Iraq has significantly fallen, but the rates at which they are being wounded have dramatically increased. ...in the 39 days from Feb. 11 through March 21, 616 U.S. soldiers were injured in Iraq, an average of 15.8 per day. This was more than twice as bad as the Feb. 4-10 period when 47 U.S. soldiers were injured at an average rate of just under seven per day. And it was also more than 36 percent worse than the rate of the five-day period from Jan. 30 through Feb. 3 when 58 U.S. soldiers were injured, according to the DOD figures, at an average rate of 11.6 per day. <More at: http://www.truthout.org/docs_2006/032306J.shtml>

SEVENTH IRAQ WAR VETERAN KILLS HIMSELF

Mark Benjamin - UPI - Mar 23, 2006

A Colorado-based Army Special Forces soldier back from Iraq shot himself in the head in his front yard Sunday night, according to police -- at least the seventh soldier who has committed suicide after serving there.

William Howell, 36, shot himself after following his wife around the yard with a handgun, according to the El Paso County Sheriff's Office. Howell served with the 10th Special Forces group in Iraq and returned to Fort Carson last month, according to the Army.

Another soldier who was attached to that unit in Iraq, Staff Sgt. Georg-Andreas Pogany, has claimed that the 10th Special Forces Group ignored him when he sought help with mental problems there, and then charged him with cowardice instead. Pogany, 32, also says the Army is ignoring the side effects of an anti-malaria drug called Lariam he took with the Special Forces, which has been linked to mental problems, aggression and suicides.

<More at: <http://www.upi.com/inc/view.php?StoryID=20040316-040640-6755r>>

NATIONAL GUARD (IN FEDERAL STATUS) AND RESERVE MOBILIZED AS OF MARCH 15, 2006

This week, the Air Force and Navy announced an increase in the number of reservists on active duty in support of the partial mobilization, while the Army, Marine Corps and Coast Guard numbers decreased. The net collective result is 1,446 fewer reservists mobilized than last week.

At any given time, services may mobilize some units and individuals while demobilizing others, making it possible for these figures to either increase or decrease. Total number currently on active duty in support of the partial mobilization for the Army National Guard and Army Reserve is 97,593; Navy Reserve, 5,426; Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, 7,646; Marine Corps Reserve, 6,916; and the Coast Guard Reserve, 407. This brings the total National Guard and Reserve personnel, who have been mobilized, to 117,988, including both units and individual augmentees.

A cumulative roster of all National Guard and Reserve personnel, who are currently mobilized, can be found at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Mar2006/d20060315ngr.pdf>.

OIF/OEF – HACK DATE THURSDAY MARCH 24, 2006

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

KILLED US	2,322
WOUNDED US [EST. NO DoD UPDATE SINCE 7 FEB]≥	17,269
KILLED UK	103
KILLED OTHER COALITION	104
WOUNDED/INJURED COALITION	600
KILLED CONTRACTORS	312
KILLED IRAQI POLICE/MILITARY	≥ 34,371
KILLED IRAQI CIVILIANS	≥ 37,895
WOUNDED IRAQI MIL/CIVILIANS	≥ 139,262

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

KILLED US	282
WOUNDED/INJURED US	685
KILLED COALITION	69
WOUNDED/INJURED COALITION	393
KILLED AFGHANI POLICE/MILITARY	≥ 8,619
KILLED AFGHANI CIVILIANS	≥ 3,525
WOUNDED AFGHANI MIL/CIVILIANS	32,034

NOTE: SOME NUMBERS DO NOT CHANGE BETWEEN ISSUES BECAUSE UPDATED FIGURES ARE NOT AVAILABLE AT PRESS TIME.

TO SEE THE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON THE CASUALTIES GO TO WWW.MILITARYCITY.COM/2000CASUALTIES/

AFTERTHOUGHTS

THEY AREN'T COMPLAINING SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

We wonder why more and more modern veterans don't come forward and request help. Then we remember how we felt when we came back. Two recent quotes explain in part how they feel (and how we often felt):

"Veterans as a group are usually very reluctant to ask for help. We've been trained that asking for help is an admission that you've failed in some task."

Ricardo Singh
Black Veterans for Social Justice
www.bvsj.org/main.html

And: -

"I don't like being handed stuff just for being in the wrong place at the wrong time! I didn't earn it. Like my Dad. He got disability from the Navy for an injured knee, but the knee healed, so he sent back the checks. That's what I want to do."

B.D. on getting an \$80K check for Traumatic Injury Benefit
Gary Trudeau, *Doonesbury*, 23 March 06

Of course, B.D. doesn't get the check just because he thinks he deserves it. He gets the check because we owe it to him, and he does deserve it no matter what he thinks. We owe them all a lot more.

NOTICE

If at any time you cannot open a link in this newsletter to an article or web page that interests you, please let me know at scook@vuft; I keep a copy of most of the full articles, or can research an alternative route to the information. [Ed.]

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EDITOR'S NOTE: I have been asked what guides my selection of articles. In general, I try to stick with articles that deal exclusively with our target group: serving military, veterans, retirees, and their families. I also favor articles that deal with the effect of Legislative or Executive inaction or bad actions that adversely affect our target group. I try not to pick those articles that have already been beaten to death in the regular press, but rather try to bring the reader articles that he or she might not run across in another medium. While we are non-partisan, I do not believe articles critical of government actions to be partisan as long as they are accurate and fair. Criticism, like dissent, is fair. Finally, I screen hundreds of articles for inclusions and for every article I include, I throw five or six away – good articles, but not as important as the ones selected.

I always appreciate contributions, whether it is opinion in Letter-to-the-Editor form, or articles that the reader believes would be good for our readership. Since I get a chance to vent once in awhile in these newsletters, I will certainly consider Op-Ed copy for inclusion. I always welcome reader comment or complaint. [Sandy Cook](#), Editor

EXTRAS FOR YOUR USE:

RECRUITING HISTORY

	FY 2006						FY 2005			FY 2004			FY 2003		
	[1st 5 mos]			12 mos Extrapolated											
USAF	25,973	25,100	103.5%	62,335	80,000	77.9%	73,373	80,000	91.7%	77,586	77,000	100.8%	73,800	73,800	100.0%
USN	12,454	12,236	101.8%	29,890	38,550	77.5%	37,703	37,635	100.2%	39,871	39,620	100.6%	41,767	41,077	101.7%
USMC	11,572	11,050	104.7%	27,773	38,980	71.2%	32,961	32,917	100.1%	30,618	30,608	100.0%	38,914	38,914	100.0%
USAF	12,064	11,994	100.6%	28,954	30,750	94.2%	19,222	18,900	101.7%	34,361	34,080	100.8%	32,000	32,000	100.0%
Regulars	62,063	60,380	102.8%	148,951	188,280	79.1%	163,259	169,452	96.3%	182,436	181,308	100.6%	186,481	185,791	100.4%
ARNG	20,487	18,991	107.9%				50,219	63,002	79.7%	48,793	56,002	87.1%	NOTE: 2003 would have been 92.4% against the original goal of 201,914 Reserve Forces not available		
USAR	11,063	11,247	98.4%	26,551	25,500	104.1%	23,859	28,486	83.8%	32,699	32,275	101.3%			
USNR	3,415	4,021	84.9%				9,744	11,141	87.5%	11,246	10,101	111.3%			
ANG	3,179	4,064	78.2%				8,859	10,272	86.2%	8,276	8,842	93.6%			
USAFR	4,748	4,647	102.2%				9,942	8,801	113.0%	8,904	7,997	111.3%			
USMCR	2937	3004	97.8%				8,350	8,180	102.1%	8,248	8,087	102.0%			
Reserves	45,829	45,974	99.7%				110,973	129,882	85.4%	118,166	123,304	95.8%			

FINALLY- SOME OF OUR FELLOW CITIZENS ARE INVOLVED
SPORTSBOOK.COM OFFERS ODDS ON US MILITARY ACTION

Andrew B

The speculation over American military involvement in Iran is growing as the standoff over Iran's uranium enrichment program continues.

Sportsbook.com is now offering odds on whether the US will attack strategic targets in Iran. The deadline they have set for action is on or before April 16th, Easter Sunday this year, with odds of a strike currently sitting at 10-1. ... Alex Czajkowski, Marketing Director, Sportsbook.com, said, 'Everyday Americans are watching this crisis unfold and want the world to know how they feel. When people have the opportunity to wager on these types of events, they are also able to express their views on the matter; what they want to happen, what they think will happen.'

<More at:www.onlinecasinonews.com/ocnv2_1/article/article.asp?id=10062>



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