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LEGISLATIVE UPDATES AND NEWS

Arlington Nation Cemetery Problems, Investigations Broaden A number of problems have emerged at Arlington National Cemetery over the past year and a half, including dozens of instances of misplaced or misidentified remains due to poor record-keeping practices. Now Army investigators are looking into why 69 boxes of burial records from Arlington were found abandoned in a commercial storage facility. This new investigation was revealed at a June 23 House Veterans' Affairs Committee oversight hearing to obtain an update on the problems that have plagued the Cemetery. According to various news reports, the records were discovered as the contents of an unpaid storage space were being auctioned off, and include documents such as copies of grave cards, and other records directly related to the interment of veterans.

On Tuesday, the Washington Post reported the Justice Department is also investigating mishandling of remains at Arlington National Cemetery and they have been seeking evidence of possible contracting fraud and falsification of records. The Post says a federal grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia, has been subpoenaing witnesses and records relating to Arlington, and the investigation which is being conducted by the FBI and the Army's Criminal Investigation Command has been underway for at least six months. You can read the story ([HERE](#))

The steady stream of unconscionable mistakes and cover-ups at Arlington National Cemetery cannot be allowed to continue and the individuals responsible should be held accountable for their actions. The blatant lack of respect to our fallen American heroes and their families flies in the face of this country's commitment of unconditional respect and honor for those who have fought and died for our freedom. It's unconscionable that our nations former heroes have been treated in such a manner and AFSA calls on the Army and Congress to get to the heart of the matter quickly, to restore the honor and dignity they deserve.

Post 9/11 GI Bill Changes

President Obama signed S, 3447; the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act of 2010 in January of this year, and a number of substantive changes directed by this important legislation will soon go into effect. Beginning August 1, Guard members will be allowed to count full-time duty under Title 32 toward their qualifying active duty service for education benefits. This provision is retroactive to August 1, 2009, but benefits cannot be paid until October 1, 2011. Other changes slated to begin in August limit the monthly housing stipend by prorating the payment to the "rate of pursuit" (formula based on number of course hours taken); eliminate housing stipend payments during break periods (e.g., spring break); and allow reimbursement for more than one "license or certification" test. Previously only one test was allowed. For a list of other upcoming

changes to the Post 9/11 GI Bill, visit this page
http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/post_911_gibill/Post911_changes.htm.

Khobar Tower Bombing 15th Anniversary Observed

AFSA supported a pair of events last weekend to honor and remember the 19 Airmen who lost their lives in the Khobar Towers bombing. Secretary of the Air Force Mike Donley, former Air Force Secretary Whitten Peters, and AFSA's CEO, Doc McCauslin were among those individuals who joined surviving family members for a small, but moving ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. Later in the day, CEO McCauslin spoke at an AFSA sponsored luncheon directly to the 70 survivors and their friends and ended with the perfect example of our Air Force Creed, "I will never leave an Airman behind" meaning that 15 years later, we still remember and honor the service of those 19 heroes.

At the Arlington ceremony Secretary Donley expressed sympathy and gratitude to the impacted families, vowing never to forget the Airmen who perished during the attack that destroyed an entire wall of the high-rise apartment building where they were billeted in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. "Here at Arlington, we're surrounded by generations of patriots who've generously served our country and stepped up in pursuit of freedom," Secretary Donley said. "The 19 Airmen whose lives were stolen that day are among the kindred spirits who embody selflessness. We will not forget our fallen Airmen and their great sacrifice. We also express our thanks and enduring gratitude, to you, the family members left behind."

The June 25, 1996, terrorist attack at the military residences at the King Abdul Aziz Air Base near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, took a total of 20 lives. 19 Airmen and one Saudi national were killed and another 372 military and civilian personnel were wounded. The housing complex was a temporary home for Airmen assigned to nearby Dhahran Airbase. Their mission at the time-Operation Southern Watch-helped to enforce the no-fly zone over Southern Iraq.

Congress in Recess?

The House met in pro forma sessions this week and no legislative business was conducted, while the Senate focused its time on budget and national debt issues. Both chambers were scheduled to be in recess next week for the Independence Day holiday, but at press time, there was talk they may remain in session to discuss the national deficit issues. If they decide to recess, lawmakers will be in their home states working out of their local district offices. This would be a good time for our readers to contact their elected representatives and let them know their feelings on key issues. There are plenty of items on the table including the Senates yet-to-be finished version of the National Defense Authorization Act which isn't expected to come to the Senate floor for another week or two. Get engaged, be involved and make it a point to write, call, email, or ideally visit with your elected official in the coming week.

Fourth of July

Speaking of the holiday weekend, we wish you and your family a safe and pleasant one. But as you celebrate with friends and family, please take a

few minutes to remember the men and women who have given their lives to preserve and protect the freedoms we all enjoy today

VETERANS NEWS

Veterans Benefits

Veterans of the United States armed forces may be eligible for a broad range of programs and services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. These benefits are legislated in Title 38 of the United States Code. The 2011 VA Benefit booklet contains a summary of benefits effective Jan. 1, 2011. The 2011 VA Benefits book is now available online at http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp For additional information on federal programs and benefits available for Veterans, dependents and survivors, please visit the VA Web page at www.va.gov.

HEALTH CARE

TRICARE begins home delivery education initiative TRICARE Management Activity - TRICARE beneficiaries who still get two or more maintenance prescriptions from a retail pharmacy should start checking their mailboxes. TRICARE Management Activity and Express Scripts Inc. are mailing out home delivery education "alert" letters to promote pharmacy home delivery.

The alerts focus on the convenience and lower cost of home delivery versus retail pharmacies, and include information on how to switch prescriptions over. The alerts also seek to alleviate possible concerns about home delivery by highlighting safety measures and 24/7 access to a pharmacist.

The alerts are targeted to TRICARE beneficiaries who purchase two or more maintenance medications for chronic conditions at a retail pharmacy. These beneficiaries stand to benefit most from switching over to home delivery. The education alerts will be mailed starting in July.

"Providing service members and their families with an affordable, quality prescription drug benefit is a vital part of TRICARE's mission," said TRICARE Deputy Director Rear Adm. Christine Hunter. "When beneficiaries choose home delivery, they are using their benefit wisely."

Switching from retail pharmacy to home delivery spares beneficiaries the inconvenience of picking their prescriptions up from the pharmacy and saves them 66 percent per prescription. Home delivery is also cheaper for TRICARE. Beneficiaries switching from retail to home delivery saved the Department of Defense \$30 million in 2010.

TRICARE and ESI are engaged in an aggressive campaign to promote home delivery with great success. Growth in retail pharmacy prescriptions covered by TRICARE is only 3.4 percent in 2011, down from the historical average of 5.2 percent. Home delivery prescriptions have grown 9.8 percent in 2011, almost double the historical 5.8 percent rate.

"The more TRICARE beneficiaries learn about pharmacy home delivery, the more they take advantage of its benefits," Admiral Hunter said. "The alerts

are the next step in spreading the word."

For more information about home delivery, visit www.tricare.mil/homedelivery. To sign up for home delivery beneficiaries should go to ESI's website, www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE or call the TRICARE Member Choice Center at 877-262-3390.

AROUND OUR NATION

AFSA Chapter Cares for Minot Flood Victims The Minot, South Dakota, area has been devastated with flooding conditions and it adversely affected thousands of our fellow Airmen and their families. In a tremendous show of "I will leave no Airmen behind," the Barksdale AFSA Chapter #615 donated \$15,000 to the Minot "Operation Warm Heart". Thank you members of the Barksdale AFSA Chapter!

WANT INSTANT UPDATES? - AFSA IS NOW ON TWITTER

Be first in getting the latest updates and follow AFSA ON CALL. We are now posting daily and weekly updates on Twitter. As you may already know, Twitter allows for instant updates and happenings around the world, either on computers or your portable devices.

Sign up for your AFSA Twitter updates at - <http://twitter.com/#!/afsahq>

AFSA MEMBER BENEFITS

AFSA NEW MEMBER TERM LIFE INSURANCE BENEFIT New AFSA members under the age of 40 receive \$10,000 of Term Life Insurance provided at no-cost for 12 months. For more information click HERE <<http://www.afsainsurance.com/>> , or call Marsh Affinity Group Services toll-free at (800) 882-5541.

HERTZ

Call (800) 654-6511 and provide the associate with promotional code 10635. Or shop HERE <<http://www.hertz.com/>> and click the I have a discount box under reservations, then enter Code 0010635 under the Discount/CDP/Club Code section and select Quote me the program my company has negotiated.

GREAT WOLF LODGE DISCOUNT

AFSA members get 10% off Great Wolf Lodge's best available rates! Clear your calendar, pack your swimsuit, and head to any of Great Wolf Lodge's eleven Resorts. Just imagine-colossal indoor water parks, exciting arcade, a luxurious spa and fantastic restaurants-all under one roof. After all, you deserve it!

<<http://www.hqafsa.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=About>>

We want to hear your thoughts and opinions. Complete the sentence below! What's your top 10 list for AFSA? Go ahead. Don't be bashful. Send it.

"I THINK AFSA SHOULD _____."

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