

# SOUND OFF!



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THE NEWSLETTER OF VETERANS UNITED FOR TRUTH, INC.

10 NOVEMBER 2005

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

Let's take some extra time in this issue to consider the veteran and his/her community, how those relationships have changed over time, and whether or not that change has been for the good. We'll also consider how we ought to move forward to modify that relationship, where it has gone wrong, to one that we can all support and be very proud of [Ed].

Tomorrow is Veterans' Day, or as some of us ancients still refer to it, Armistice Day. Indulge me a memory or two.

My clearest memory of an Armistice Day parade was in 1945 in Rochester, New York. World War II was just over. Men and women were coming home, some of them still wearing their uniforms with the "Ruptured Duck" stitched above the left pocket on their "Ike" jackets [note the similarity to our logo, which is intentional]. My folks took this 10-year old to the parade, and there was Mr. John Hart riding in a wagon and sitting in a rocking chair. He was 104 years old and one of the last surviving members of the Grand Army of the Republic. A neighbor from a previous home in Texas had fought in the Spanish American War and World War I. Another neighbor, Mr. Koch, was a World War I veteran, and in the last days of WWII he lost his son Donald, a B-17 pilot, over Germany. His son was only 10 years older than I, and I rode his old bike while he flew as a navigator/bombardier. Only five years later I showed up at marching band practice at high school one Monday in our new home in Pennsylvania, and I was the only one of six Sousaphone players left; the other five, all much older juniors and seniors, had been called up the day before with the 28<sup>th</sup> (Keystone) Division. They were on their way to relieve the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division in Wurtzburg so that the 3<sup>rd</sup> (The Rock of the Marne) could go to Korea. And then it was my turn, and I enlisted and saw the warmer part of the Cold War first hand in eastern Turkey during the trans-Caucasus Soviet threat of the middle '50s; Austria during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956; Lebanon in 1958 when Syria started its mischief there that continues today; Berlin in the early 60s; hot war in Vietnam and Laos, and from Thailand in the late 60s and early 70s, Berlin again in the 70s.

But in 1973 the draft ended, and everything changed. The Force ceased to be a Citizens' Force, because the vast middle had been taken out of it. There would still be the patriotically committed, and there would always be the simple job-seekers, but the middle – the group who served because answering the draft was the patriotic thing to do – they were gone. Service for most became the thing that "those other people do, not us, and certainly not our kids".

The draft wasn't eliminated because it was inherently bad, but because bad use had been made of it, and because it had been manipulated in the favor of the well-placed. And when the draft went, so did America's natural, broad awareness of those who served, and consciousness of the nation's obligation to them as they served.

The clear difference between my childhood and that of today's youth is that I knew many serving military intimately as I grew up. The draft was ever-present, and discussions about when to serve were just part of growing up. We discussed it with our parents and our friends – College first? Service first? Draft? Enlist? Always when, never if. Because of that constant awareness of military service as our personal obligation, we were also always aware of those who were serving and those who had already served. Personal service was a given, and was factored into our lives – service was a milestone en route to full adulthood, not merely a delay in getting to our careers. And despite current rumors to the contrary, draftees were good soldiers, and they carried their experience into public life after their two years. Some even stayed on.

Today very few even contemplate service as a possibility except, generally, those who are forced into mercenary service. For many, the subject never comes up. Those serving and veterans seldom cross the ordinary citizen's mind. When they do it is often with nothing more than passing interest at the war stories, or passing contempt of those veterans who need their assistance.

Politicians invoke military service (seldom their own) as political rhetoric, not as national duty. They talk about it to sound patriotic, not because they care all that much. They can talk just as easily about cutting benefits because they are too expensive. They can talk much more fervently about not cutting expensive, unneeded weapons systems to be built in their districts than they can about the shameful shortfall of essential weapons and defensive armament that have never shown up in Iraq or Afghanistan. They talk about all of the legislation that they have passed and the money they have allocated, but they fail to see that

the system is failing on the ground where services fail to get to those who need them.

The military departments, the Department of Labor, the Veterans Administration and others talk about how they have implemented the legislation and how much money they are spending. and they fail to see that very often the services they are responsible for don't get to those who need them when they need them, and often never. Administration after administration takes credit for all of this churning of legislation and money and programs, and never gets down to see if the whole system is really effective. We know that it isn't.

So now Veterans' Day is an opportunity to buy a new mattress cheap, or get a good discount on a new automobile

## REVEILLE - WAKE-UP CALLS

### IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP!

Let's look at a few folks in history who have something useful to say about getting involved.

**"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little"**

Edmond Burke (1729 – 1797)

**"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."**

Margaret Meade (1901 – 1978)

Most of us have busy lives. A few of us, and I am one, are retired and can devote quite a bit of time to various endeavors. The easy thing to say, of course, and a common complaint is that "I just don't have enough time." We have been soldiers, husbands, fathers, mothers, sportsmen, laborers, students, teachers, and on and on, and we did it all at once!

**"Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson, and Albert Einstein."**

H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

We have all spent years serving our country, raising our kids, earning a living. But we can't promote the cause of

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**For gold the merchant ploughs the main,  
The farmer ploughs the manor;  
But glory is the sodger's prize,  
The sodger's wealth is honor:  
The brave poor sodger ne'er despise,  
Nor count him as a stranger;  
Remember he's his country's stay,  
In day and hour of danger.**

Robert Burns (1759 – 1796)

From "The Soldier's Return" 1793

at some merchant's annual Veterans' Day Sale [Macy's LA Times 11/8/05 p.A7]. Sadly it is no longer a time when we remember with profound gratitude the service of those who have gone before, and especially of those who now stand or lie desperately in wait for our aid and assistance.

Let's dedicate ourselves, not just as veterans, but as citizens to working this coming year for change. Veterans United For Truth was founded for the specific purpose of making legislators aware of their duty and of the penalties inherent in their shirking that duty. It was founded to tell the truth to the world when the system fails, for whatever reason, and for telling the truth about what is causing the failure. We can do no less. [Ed.]

the troops and veterans and be successful if we are not all actively engaged. If you have an hour, give it! If you have a day, give it! If veterans don't support veterans, no one else will stand up for us and our brothers and sisters. Those we count on ignore veterans' issues to the point of criminality. Why not? They have no stake in the game other than their reelection: they aren't in the war and neither are their children. If we don't make an effective noise then they are home free. If we are really lucky ...

**"A time will come when a politician who has willfully made war and promoted international dissension will be as sure of the dock and much surer of the noose than a private homicide. It is not reasonable that those who gamble with men's lives should not stake their own."**

H. G. Wells (1866 – 1946) (The Salvaging of Civilization)

We are citizens and we have proven our patriotism in cold and hot wars. Empathy alone is not action, rather it often nothing but maudlin sentiment. Empathy plus action, however, is progress. We don't have to prove anything about ourselves now; it is they who are on the spot – the politicians, the legislators and the bureaucrats.

This willful ignoring of veterans' issues is not a new phenomenon; it has plagued those who serve from the dawn of history. And it is something we can fight if we all get truly active – if we all fight together. [Ed.]

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**For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Chuck him out, the brute!"  
But it's "Saviour of 'is country" when the guns begin to shoot;  
An' it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' anything you please;  
An' Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool -- you bet that Tommy sees!**

Rudyard Kipling(1865 – 1936)

From "Tommy"

And for those who believe that we must be silent and support whatever stand the government takes lest we commit treason – those “My country right or wrong” types – let’s set the record straight. First of all the quotation is from a toast by Commander Stephen Decatur, the victor against the Barbary pirates in 1816, in which he expressed his love of his country – note the comma after “country”:

**"Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations, may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong."**

The later formation of this sentiment by Carl Schurz, a Republican Senator after the Civil War, is more to my liking:

**'The peace and welfare of this and coming generations of Americans will be secure only as we cling to the watchword of true patriotism: "Our country -- when right to be kept right; when wrong to be put right.'"**

On our issues as veterans, let's all work hard together to put our country right and keep it so. [Ed.]

## **ASSEMBLY - PROGRESS OF THE ORGANIZATION**

**REMINDER:** Part of our task is to expand our current anecdotal evidence of the failure of the system to include factual and referenced instances of failures. If you know of specific cases of failure of service to any current or past veteran of our wars, or their families, please forward the information to [muren@vuft.org](mailto:muren@vuft.org), with a copy to the editor at [scook@vuft.org](mailto:scook@vuft.org).

**WEBSITE:** We have had a slow start, suffering all of the growing pains of new organization, but changes are coming that will invigorate our website and make it much more useful to all of our members and subscribers.

**MEMBERSHIP:** We have acquired our membership cards and they are on their way to all of our patient members. I'll take the gig for not getting them done before this, but from now on we'll be able to proudly present our proof of membership in the one organization that is dedicated solely to making the system really work for our military and our veterans.

## **MAIL CALL - LETTERS FROM MEMBERS AND OTHERS**

### **VETERANS RALLY WORTH STORY**

For the first time in California history, all veterans groups united with supporters for a nonpartisan march and rally at the state Capitol on Oct. 29. The event highlighted the many service gaps veterans face when they come home, and why all Americans must ensure adequate funding for veterans aftercare. More than 200 people from around the state came together to show that taking care of veterans when they return from war is a top priority.

We were disappointed that The Bee chose to overlook our event. Clearly, The Bee doesn't understand that "support our troops" is more than a nifty slogan for bumper stickers. Maybe if we had a riot, veterans would have received the coverage they deserve.

Don Harper, Sacramento Veterans Rally Event Chairman

<http://www.sacbee.com/content/opinion/letters/story/13817307p-14658174c.html>

Send us your letters, especially those nominating legislators for the “Hall of Fame” - “Hall of Shame” feature.

## **RECALL - FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATION**

### **DECIPHERING THE SENATE VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

As those who have tried will tell you, deciphering the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee website and its press releases is often difficult. After reading a couple of dozen of their releases I am convinced that there is no one on the committee except Sen. Craig, the Chairman, and he does it all. A current post cites the following goals of the committee:

- Maintain an affordable prescription drug program for veterans.
- Protect in-state veterans nursing homes from proposed cuts.
- Adopt the President's request to spend an additional \$100 million for mental health services.
- Fund the President's request to spend an additional \$100 million for prosthetics.
- Meet the President's requests to increase the staff who handle disability claims, continue to increase the number of cemeteries for veterans, and add \$116 million in increased funding for construction.

Unfortunately, there is no information as to what the **NEED** is. As far as the information is available, the need for funds far exceeds the proposals. Further, in-state programs are being destroyed by lack of funding from the federal level: apparently the committee is proposing to protect veterans from the previous actions of the committee.

Our goal remains to convince legislators that a reformed and vastly simplified benefits and support program that cuts through the current red tape, paucity of funding, and political and bureaucratic gobbledygook is the only thing that will give our brothers and sisters what they deserve. [Ed.]

## RETREAT – NEWS

### **WOMAN SEES HUSBAND OFF TO IRAQ, GETS FIRED**

Oct 26, 6:26 PM (ET)

CALEDONIA, Mich. (AP) - A woman who took an unpaid leave of absence from work to see her husband off to war with an Indiana National Guard unit has been fired after failing to show up for her part-time receptionist job the day following his departure.

"It was a shock," said Suzette Boler, a 40-year-old mother of three and grandmother of three. "I was hurt. I felt abandoned by people I thought cared for me. I sat down on the floor and cried for probably two hours."

Officials at her former workplace, Benefit Management Administrators Inc., a Caledonia employee-benefits company, confirmed that Boler was dismissed when she didn't report to work the day after she said goodbye to her husband of 22 years. "We gave her sufficient time to get back to work," Clark Galloway, vice president of operations for Benefit Management, told The Grand Rapids Press for a story Wednesday. <More <http://apnews.excite.com/article/20051026/D8DG054OA.html>>

### **GAO: EQUIPMENT WEAR IS CAUSING READINESS TO DECLINE**

By [Gordon Lubold](#) – Army Times staff writer - October 27, 2005

Equipment owned by the four services, including the Army's Bradley Fighting Vehicle and the Marine Corps' CH-46 Sea Knight, are wearing out and causing readiness levels to decline, a new Government Accountability Office report found. The report, issued Oct. 26, said the Defense Department should do a better job reporting its readiness issues to Congress and keep a better eye on critical equipment platforms that show signs of wartime wear and tear.

Unless the Pentagon addresses issues pertaining to critical equipment platforms, it runs the risk of failing to meet its mission requirements, the study said. <More <http://www.armytimes.com/story.php?f=1-292925-1206919.php>>

### **ARTICLE RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT VIETNAM WAR**

Associated Press | November 01, 2005

WASHINGTON - The National Security Agency has been blocking the release of an article by one of its historians that says intelligence officers falsified documents about a disputed attack that was used to escalate the Vietnam War, according to a researcher who has requested the article.

Matthew Aid, who asked for the article under the Freedom of Information Act last year, said it appears that officers at the NSA made honest mistakes in translating interceptions involving the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident. The incident was a reported North Vietnamese attack on American destroyers that helped lead to President Johnson's escalation of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. <More <http://www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,79647,00.html?ESRC=eb.nl>>

### **YOUTHS IN RURAL U.S. ARE DRAWN TO MILITARY**

#### **Recruits' Job Worries Outweigh War Fears**

By Ann Scott Tyson - Washington Post Staff Writer - Friday, November 4, 2005

As sustained combat in Iraq makes it harder than ever to fill the ranks of the all-volunteer force, newly released Pentagon demographic data show that the military is leaning heavily for recruits on economically depressed, rural areas where youths' need for jobs may outweigh the risks of going to war. More than 44 percent of U.S. military recruits come from rural areas, Pentagon figures show. In contrast, 14 percent come from major cities. Youths living in the most sparsely populated Zip codes are 22 percent more likely to join the Army, with an opposite trend in cities. Regionally, most enlistees come from the South (40 percent) and West (24 percent).

Many of today's recruits are financially strapped, with nearly half coming from lower-middle-class to poor households, according to new Pentagon data based on Zip codes and census estimates of mean household income. Nearly two-thirds of Army recruits in 2004 came from counties in which median household income is below the U.S. median.

<More at <http://www.vawatchdog.org/senatecvanews/senatecvanews11-04-05.htm>>

### **MILITARY ORDERED TO TRIM BUDGETS**

#### **5-Year Plans Must Be Cut By \$32.1 Billion**

By Renae Merle and Bradley Graham - Washington Post Staff Writer - Friday, November 4, 2005

The military services have been ordered to cut \$32.1 billion from their projected spending plans for the next five years as part of government-wide belt-tightening forced by rising war costs, a growing deficit and hurricane-relief spending.

<More [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/03/AR2005110302085.html?nav=rss\\_nation](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/03/AR2005110302085.html?nav=rss_nation)>

## GOVERNORS CHAFE AT GREATER MILITARY ROLE

Matt Gouras, Associated Press Writer - Fri Nov 4, 2:55 PM ET

Several governors are fuming over a Bush administration suggestion that the active military take a greater role in disaster response, calling it an attempt to usurp state authority over National Guard units. Governors in Washington, Mississippi, Michigan, Arkansas, West Virginia, Delaware and Alabama are among those who have panned the idea, questioning whether it would even be constitutional. Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer, among the harshest critics, said the issue promises to be a major topic at the Western Governors Association meeting in Phoenix next week.

"I'm going to stand up among a bunch of elected governors and say, 'Are we going to allow the military without a shot being fired to effectively do an end-run coup on civilian government? Are we going to allow that?'" Schweitzer said. "We're going to have a little civics lesson for some leaders who are apparently out of touch in the military."

<More [http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20051104/ap\\_on\\_re\\_us/military\\_role](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20051104/ap_on_re_us/military_role)>

## U.N. EXTENDS TROOPS IN IRAQ FOR ONE YEAR

By Edith M. Lederer - ASSOCIATED PRESS - November 9, 2005

NEW YORK -- The U.N. Security Council voted unanimously yesterday to extend the mandate of the nearly 180,000-strong multinational force in Iraq for a year, a move the United States called a strong signal of the international commitment to Iraq's political transition. The resolution, co-sponsored by the United States, Britain, Denmark, Japan and Romania, was adopted in response to a request from Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari for the U.S.-led force to remain in the country.

The current mandate authorizing the presence of the force expires Dec. 31, about two weeks after parliamentary elections -- the end point of the political process as defined by the Security Council.

<More at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/world/20051108-095819-2282r.htm>>

## **TO THE COLOR - GATHERINGS**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Where</u>	<u>What</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
11-Nov	11:00	NYC – Madison Sq Park /5 <sup>th</sup> Ave	Parade	NYC Event Planning	Celebrate Vets
2-Dec	-	Phoenix AZ, Wyndham Hotel	Meeting	DNC Vets & Mil Fam Cmte	Establish Goals

**“With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan--to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations. “**

A. Lincoln, Second Inaugural

On 29 October several hundred of us participated in a rally in Sacramento on the North Steps of the Capitol Building. Three of VUFT's officers, several members of our Advisory Committee, and several other members were there. The speeches were good and the spirit was great. Praise to Don Harper and his gang for a job very well done. (See Don's letter, above)

The vigilantes of the "Minuteman" movement and their opponents fielded four times as many on the West Steps as we did on the North Steps. The Sacramento Bee and the LA Times covered their rally and the confrontation with their opponents; the Times gave their show 22 column inches and a picture. Although there was a Bee reporter and cameraman at our rally, there was no mention of us in either paper. The San Francisco Examiner covered neither. Apparently the arrest-them-or-kill-them folks singing about "crown thy good with brotherhood" was better news than several hundred folks and their families who had served their country honorably, and who had a serious message for the American people. There seem to be several layers of irony in these events and the press coverage.

If the war can't make page one, I guess we can't be surprised that an appeal for the individual troops, for their families, and for all veterans wouldn't even get a mention. Maybe if there had been more of us, we might have made more of an impact and had more of a chance to get these critical issues some public exposure. I was saddened but not very surprised to hear from many attendees that many more veterans had said that they would come, but never showed up.

We have to start standing up! Other constituencies, most with nowhere near the valid claim on the attention of the American people that we have, are getting the attention because they are standing up for their causes, no matter whether they are important or trivial. They are the squeaky wheels. We can only succeed if we organize and if we show up.

**Life has meaning only in the struggle  
Triumph and defeats are up to the gods  
So let us celebrate the struggle**

Swahili warrior song



## TATTOO - CURRENT ISSUES

### **VA'S NICHOLSON FAILS DISABLED VETERANS, NO PROGRESS IN VA PROCESSING, LACK OF PRODUCTIVITY BLAMED IN DELAYS ON DISABILITY CLAIMS**

By Chris Adams, Knight Ridder Newspapers, Thursday, October 20, 2005

WASHINGTON - Months after the Department of Veterans Affairs told Congress it expected processing time on veterans' disability claims to drop, agency internal reports show little or no progress. Records obtained by Knight Ridder show that the department is struggling to reduce the waiting time veterans face, in part because VA employee productivity nationwide is only three-quarters of what's expected. In some regional offices, it is far lower.

<More at <http://www.veteransforcommonsense.org/?Page=Article&ID=5158>>

### **POSSIBLE INCREASE IN TRICARE PREMIUMS**

Stars and Stripes reports the Defense Department's top health official has warned Congress that it will worsen a near crisis of runaway military health care costs if it enacts a Senate-backed provision to open the new Tricare Reserve Select program to all drilling Reserve and National Guard members. Military health costs have doubled in just the last four years to more than \$36 billion because of enhancements in benefits for retirees and their families, a decade-long freeze on Tricare enrollment fees and co-payments. Dr. William Winkenwerder, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs has suggested the DOD would try to raise fees and co-pays after consulting military leaders and Congress.

<http://www.military.com/MilitaryReport/0,12914,79813,00.html?ESRC=miltrep.nl>

### **PTSD: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

Brad Johnson | November 03, 2005

As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan wear on, hundreds of thousands of veterans are at significant risk for a particularly distressing and impairing mental health syndrome: Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. First documented in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders in 1980, PTSD becomes a serious risk when a service member experiences, witnesses, or is confronted with an event involving actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others -- welcome to any day in the Global War of Terror.

<More <http://www.military.com/opinion/0,15202,79791,00.html>>

### **INSIDE HOSPITAL CORRIDORS**

Nancy Sherman | November 01, 2005

The news of impending military base closures throughout the country has brought an outcry from those who work at the bases and from communities that depend economically on their presence. But in the case of military hospital closings, such as Walter Reed Army Medical Center in the nation's capital, what few have commented on is just what goes on inside those hospital corridors -- more precisely, what goes on inside the mind of the soldier who returns from war having left behind an arm or leg, or perhaps more, in Iraq. The paradox of war is that those who are most fit are at risk of becoming the most physically damaged.

<More at <http://www.military.com/opinion/0,15202,79674,00.html?ESRC=eb.nl>>

### **GIS, PASS UP THAT SURVIVAL-GEAR SALE AT YOUR OWN PERIL**

Al Martinez - October 17, 2005 - NEWS item:

**WASHINGTON — Under pressure from Congress, the Pentagon on Wednesday issued overdue regulations for reimbursing troops in Iraq and Afghanistan for body armor and other gear they bought to protect themselves. The program, effective immediately, allows reimbursement for helmets, ballistic eye protection, hydration systems and tactical vests, including body armor inserts to protect areas such as the throat and groin.**

<More at <http://www.smirkingchimp.com/viewtopic.php?topic=60174&forum=17>>

### **TROOPS TO CALL FOR INDEPENDENT COMMISSION ON TORTURE**

**Press Conference on Open Letter signed by 3,700 veterans and family members**

Charles Sheehan-Miles, 202-558-4553 Nov 08, 2005

Nearly four years after the beginning of the War on Terror, the U.S. continues to struggle with the issue of torture. With the exception of the demotion of a Brigadier General, not a single investigation has had the scope to look beyond low ranking enlisted soldiers and junior officers. Senate Republicans, led by Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham, have proposed legislation which would restrict the United States from the abuse of prisoners. This legislation, known as the "McCain Amendment," currently faces a veto threat from the White House. This week a group of nearly 4,000 military veterans and family members published an open letter calling for the creation of an Independent Commission to investigate the torture scandal.

<More at <http://www.veteransforcommonsense.org/?Page=Article&ID=5344>>

## TAPS – PASSINGS AND WAR STATISTICS

Four soldiers of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 184<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment (CANG – Modesto, CA) were killed in two days last month. These soldiers came from a variety of backgrounds. October 27<sup>th</sup>: CPT Michael McKinnon, USA, 30, Helena, MT (USMA West Point); Col. William Wood, USA, 44, Panama City, FL (Florida State University ROTC); October 29<sup>th</sup>: Spc Shakere Taffari Guy, 23, Pomona, CA – CANG; CPT Raymond Hill, 39, Turlock, CA – CANG. COL Wood was killed by a second IED in a “1-2 attack” when rushing to aid CPT McKinnon who had been mortally wounded by the first IED. This unit had lost 7 other members during its deployment., and had suffered more than 100 wounded.

### **BITTER FRUIT - PHOTOGRAPHS AND COMMENTS BY PAUL FUSCO**

“As increasing numbers of families grieve in the small towns of America, Paul Fusco shows is the bitter truth associated with the intolerable loss and pain from this war. In November 2003 Magnum photographer Paul Fusco began his essay on the funeral of the soldiers killed in Iraq. He travelled to some 27 different cities and towns, from Florida to Minnesota, Maine and New York.”

Worth seeing. <See article at <http://www.magnuminmotion.com/bitterfruit/player.html>> Requires Macromedia Free Reader – [http://www.macromedia.com/shockwave/download/download.cgi?P1\\_Prod\\_Version=ShockwaveFlash](http://www.macromedia.com/shockwave/download/download.cgi?P1_Prod_Version=ShockwaveFlash)

### **OIF/OEF – HACK DATE WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 9, 2005**

#### **OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM**

KILLED US	2,058
WOUNDED US [14 Oct + ESTIMATE]	≥ 15,568
KILLED UK	97
KILLED OTHER COALITION	103
WOUNDED/INJURED COALITION	597
KILLED CONTRACTORS	278
KILLED IRAQI POLICE/MILITARY	≥ 33,438
KILLED IRAQI CIVILIANS	≥ 30,318
WOUNDED IRAQI MIL/CIV	≥ 138,235

#### **OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM**

KILLED US	250
WOUNDED/INJURED US	750
KILLED COALITION	122
WOUNDED/INJURED COALITION	366
KILLED AFGHANI POLICE/MILITARY	≥ 8,619
KILLED AFGHANI CIVILIANS	≥ 3,525

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

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## INFORMATION EXTRA

### STATISTICS GIVE INFO ABOUT LIVES OF VETERANS

By Scripps Howard News Service - November 4, 2005

The total number of veterans in the United States	<b>24,500,000</b>	8.2% of the population
The number of living World War I veterans	<b>19</b>	
Percent of vets age 70 or older	<b>27%</b>	6,615,000
Percent of vets younger than 50	<b>29%</b>	7,105,000
Percent of vets who are married	<b>75%</b>	18,375,000
Percent of vets who are widowed is	<b>5%</b>	1,225,000
The number of women vets	<b>1,700,000</b>	7%
Percent of Persian Gulf War vets who are women	<b>16%</b>	656,768
Percent of Vietnam vets who are women	<b>3%</b>	244,412
Percent of Korean War vets who are women	<b>2%</b>	68,469
Percent of World War II vets who are women	<b>5%</b>	195,778
The number of African-American vets	<b>2,300,000</b>	9.4%
The number of Hispanic veterans	<b>1,100,000</b>	4.5%
The number of Asian-American veterans	<b>276,000</b>	1.1%
The number of Native American veterans	<b>185,000</b>	0.7%
The number of veterans in the workforce	<b>14,000,000</b>	9.6%
Percent of private-sector workers who are vets	<b>11%</b>	15,692,000
Percent of federal workers who are vets	<b>25%</b>	
The unemployment rate for veterans	<b>4.5%</b>	
The unemployment rate for non-veterans	<b>5.9%</b>	
Percent of vets with a family income above \$50,000	<b>35%</b>	8,575,000
Percent of vets with education beyond high school	<b>59%</b>	14,455,000
Percent of vets who have a service-related disability.	<b>9%</b>	2,205,000
The total federal spending on vet benefits in 2004	<b>\$59,600,000,000</b>	\$2,433 per capita
The number of homeless veterans	<b>200,000</b>	0.8%

The 10 states with the highest number of veterans are:

California	2,196,843	Ohio	1,016,326
Florida	1,790,761	Illinois	875,769
Texas	1,635,674	Michigan	807,330
New York	1,130,943	North Carolina	758,607
Pennsylvania	1,120,074	Virginia	738,545

Numbers of living veterans who served during certain conflicts are:

World War II	3,915,550	Vietnam	8,147,075
Korean War	3,423,446	Persian Gulf War	4,104,799

[http://www.sanangelostandardtimes.com/sast/news\\_local/article/0,1897,SAST\\_4956\\_4211941,00.html](http://www.sanangelostandardtimes.com/sast/news_local/article/0,1897,SAST_4956_4211941,00.html)

Numbers of veterans serving in Congress [1978 –77%; 2004 – 26%]:

Senate	31 of 100	Combat Veterans	8 (8.0%)
House	110 of 435	Combat Veterans	29 (6.7%)

Number of federal legislators with children in uniform - 14

[http://archive.parade.com/2005/1106/1106\\_intelligence.html](http://archive.parade.com/2005/1106/1106_intelligence.html)

The "Bridge to Nowhere" in the Transportation bill, a pork perk for Alaska, will cost \$228,000,000.

Number of body armor sets that would purchase – 148,667

Number of M1114 armored HMMWVs that would purchase – 1,487

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