

Veterans Studies Interest Group Listserv issue #26 December 2018

This month's Listserv includes Pearl Harbor; former president George H.W Bush and the military; veterans elected to Congress this year; a suit against airlines re bathrooms for the disabled; foreign trolls on Facebook; the VA electronic health record on the iPhone; and. a World War II quote from Winston Churchill

Pearl Harbor

December 7 is the 77th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor In which about 2400 American military service members, 56 Japanese aviators, 9 Japanese submariners and many civilians [died](#). As recently as last March 26, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency reported that the remains of an Iowa sailor killed in Pearl Harbor were uncovered. He was Navy Reserve Musician First Class Henri Mason from [Iowa](#). About 60,000 individuals survived the Pearl Harbor attack but there is no accurate count of how many remain alive [today](#). Of the 1512 on board the USS Arizona which was the hardest hit ship, only about 300 survived and it serves as the burial ground for 100 individuals still trapped in it. For the first time this year, none of its survivors could come to the commemoration ceremony in Hawaii - 5 remain alive all above age [95](#).

A description of Pearl Harbor and its aftermath, is in the Listserv #4, [December 2017](#).



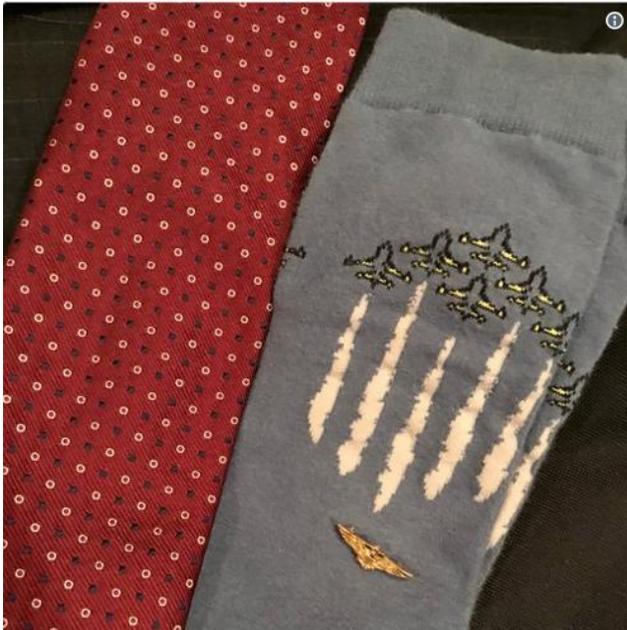
Pearl Harbor survivor, Everett Hyland, former crew member of the USS Pennsylvania, salutes along with his granddaughter, Cmdr. Anna-Marie Fine as the USS Michael Murphy passes Pearl Harbor. From the Anchorage Daily [News](#)

Former President George H.W. Bush and the Military

In the nation's mourning of the death of former Pres. George H.W. Bush, his World War II military service played a prominent role. Bush was the last president to serve in that war or face combat and he served heroically.

Pearl Harbor moved Bush to join the Navy six months later after his graduation from Phillips Academy. He enlisted on his 18th birthday, making him the youngest naval [aviator](#). Bush was a torpedo bomber pilot on the aircraft carrier USS San Jacinto in the Pacific theater. In one mission, when the squadron was attacked by Japanese antiaircraft guns, he bailed out of his burning plane over the ocean but not before he managed to release his bombs at Chi Chi Jima. Bush floated on a raft for 4 hours when a submarine crew fished him out of the water - he was the only survivor. For his bravery in action, he earned a Distinguish Flying Cross. He previously had another close call when he made a crash landing on water after a bombing run and was rescued by a destroyer. Bush flew 58 combat missions and in December 1944 was reassigned to Norfolk Naval base to train pilots. He won three air medals and a Presidential Unit Citation and was honorably discharged from the Navy in September 1945 after the Japanese [surrender](#). The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier George H W. Bush (CVN-44) is named after him.

During his Presidency, Bush dealt with a number of momentous military and veteran-related issues. He presided over the end of the Cold [War](#) and over Operations Desert Shield and Desert [Storm](#). He signed the Americans with Disabilities [Act](#) which is so important to disabled veterans. For the last 6 months of his life, Bush had a service dog, named "Sully" (after Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, the hero of the Hudson River powerless [landing](#)) and he willed it to Walter Reade Hospital. A devotee of flashy socks, Bush will be buried clad in socks that pay tribute to his [Navy service](#).



George H.W. Bush's burial socks, a tribute to his Navy [service](#). From the Washington [Post](#).

Veterans elected to Congress 2018

In spite of the large number of veterans running for Congress this year and the publicity that they received, the 116th Congress will have fewer veterans than its predecessor. Of the 173 veterans who appeared on midterm ballots, 95 were elected, comprising 18% of Congress and down 7 from the start of the last congressional [session](#). After the Vietnam War, in the mid 1970's, 81% of Congresspersons were veterans (see [Listserv #19](#)). However, an encouraging sign was that 19 freshmen and 6 female veterans were elected, the highest number in a decade.

Veteran-member characteristics are as follows and the complete list of veteran-members in Congress is [here](#):

- 95 total veterans in the 116th Congress.
- 30 are Democrats, 65 are Republicans.
- 18 will serve in the Senate, 77 will serve in the House.
- 47 served in the military after 2000.
- 21 served in the military in the 1960s or earlier.
- 19 are first-time lawmakers.
- 6 are women.

A number of organizations encourage and help veterans to seek elective office including *With Honor*, a super PAC, and *HillVets*, whose mission is to transform the power and presence of veterans in government, policy and [politics](#).



Congresspersons Dan Crenshaw (R TX), former Navy SEAL and Mikie Sherrill (D NJ), former Navy Pilot, at a member-elect orientation. Crenshaw had a widely-publicized interaction with Saturday Night Live's Pete Davidson who mocked his eye patch. Crenshaw took the high road and appeared with him on the show. From the Military [Times](#)

Foreign Trolls on [Facebook](#)

Military veterans have been targets for all sorts of scams and computer phishing in relation to use of the G.I. Bill, loans and many other topics. One such scam on Facebook was recently uncovered and reported in an Op-Ed in [Wired](#). The Facebook page impersonated the Vietnam Veterans of America, complete with the organizations registered trademark name. The page contained recycled news accounts made to look sinister including stories about the VA, an apparently smeared Vietnam Veterans' monument and even a fake Vietnam veterans' song. After 3 months, Facebook scrubbed the page when notified of the scam. An informal investigation uncovered digital trolls in Bulgaria, the Philippines and 27 other countries all with Facebook pages targeting American troops and veterans with political propaganda.

Veterans Sue Airlines re [Bathrooms](#)

The Paralyzed Veterans of America has filed a lawsuit in the U.S. Court of Appeals to force the Department of Transportation to make bathrooms on single-aisle aircraft accessible to those with disabilities. Multiple-aisle aircraft already have such requirements. Airlines increasingly use single-aisle aircraft, such as the popular Boeing 737, for longer flights. It is difficult enough and most distressing for the disabled to navigate today's crowded airlines much less to have to worry about bathrooms. One paralyzed Navy veteran said that getting into the airplane bathroom is such an ordeal that he limits how much he eats and drinks on the day before the flight and wears protective undergarments on the flight. Installing larger bathrooms would limit the galley space or the number of seats and the monetary return.

VA Electronic Health Record to the [Iphone](#)

Apple is in talks with the VA to provide access to Electronic Health Records on the [iPhone](#). The company will also potentially provide engineering support for the agency as well as other health services such as prescription refills through its Health App. Health systems such as MedStar in the DC/Maryland area, also make medical records available on the [Iphone](#) - in fact it was one of the first to do so. The ability of veterans to communicate their VA and civilian medical information has many clear benefits.

Famous World War II Quote from Winston [Churchill](#)

In War, *Resolution*

In Defeat, *Defiance*

In Victory, *Magnanimity*

In Peace, *Goodwill*

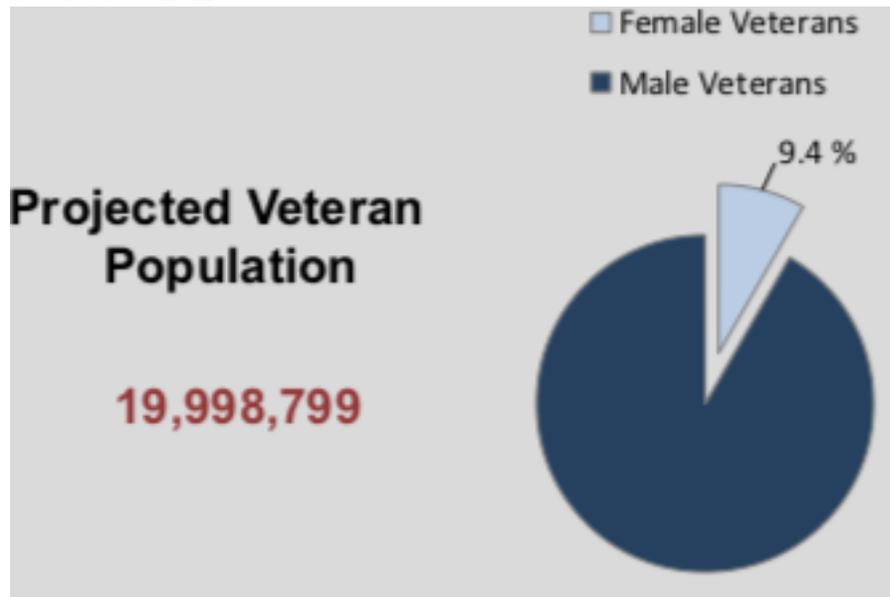
The Veteran's Creed

1. *I am an American Veteran*
2. *I proudly served my country*
3. *I live the values I learned in the military*
4. *I continue to serve my community, my country and my fellow veterans*
5. *I maintain my physical and mental discipline*
6. *I continue to lead and improve*
7. *I make a difference*
8. *I honor and remember my fallen comrades*

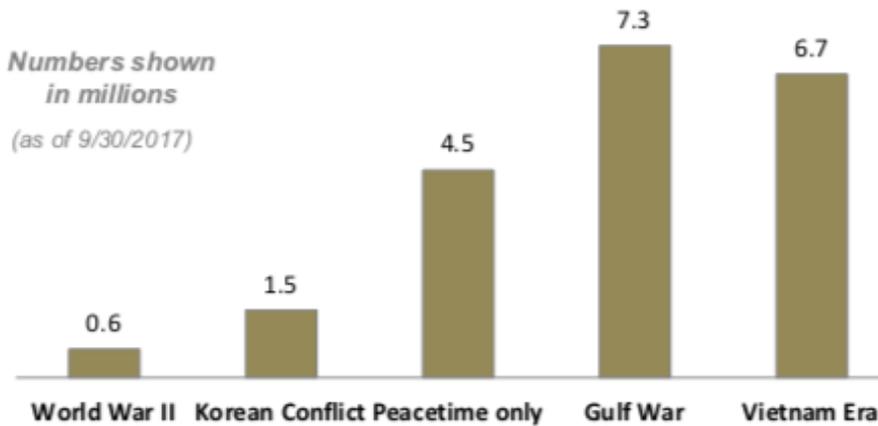
The Listserv is available as an archive on the Georgetown University Library website under the title "Veterans Interest [Newsletters](#)".

Joel Kupersmith, M.D.
Director, Georgetown University Veterans Initiatives
Professor of Medicine

Stats Section



Veteran population as of 9/30/2017



Numbers of veterans in each era (in millions). Note that the number of Gulf War veterans (i.e. in all Gulf War conflicts since 1990) has surpassed that of the Vietnam era. From the [VA](#).