



**VFW** VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

## WASHINGTON WEEKLY



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### **More Remains Disposed in Landfill**

Thursday, a front page *Washington Post* article revealed that the Air Force disposed of the incinerated partial remains of at least 274 American troops in a landfill in King George County, Va. According to the article, 976 fragments from 274 military personnel were incinerated and taken to the landfill between 2004 and 2008. An additional group of 1,762 unidentifiable remains were collected from the battlefield and disposed of in the same manner. Those fragments, according to the Air Force, were too badly burned or damaged from explosions to undergo DNA testing. VFW National Commander Richard DeNoyer said in a press statement last month that this "exceeds on many levels the nationwide anger that resulted from reports of mistreated wounded at the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center in 2007 and reports of lost or misplaced graves at Arlington National Cemetery in 2009. You only get one chance to return our fallen warriors to their families with all the dignity and respect they deserve from a grateful nation," he said, "and that mortuary affairs unit failed" at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. [Read](#) the full article.

### **Young Vets Still Struggling to Find Jobs**

Last week, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics published its monthly employment situation, which showed a drop in unemployment among veterans of all conflicts, including Iraq and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the report demonstrated disturbing trends for young veterans, whose unemployment figures rose to more than 37 percent in the last month, and women veterans, whose figures rose to more than 18 percent. To the VFW, these trends indicate that the overall job market seems to be improving, but that veterans of the current conflicts—particularly young veterans who still have military obligations—continue to face significant disadvantages in finding work once they return from overseas. [Click here](#) to learn more about these trends and how VFW wants to address them.

### **Veterans Heritage Firearms Act**

The VFW is supporting the Veterans Heritage Firearms Act (S. 798), which was introduced by Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.) to

allow veterans to register firearms they legally brought home from war many years ago, or bequeathed to their descendants as family heirlooms. The bipartisan measure would open a 90-day window for owners to register weapons that were acquired outside the continental U.S. between June 26, 1934, and Oct. 31, 1968. As VFW National Commander Richard DeNoyer said, "We thank Senator Tester and all his bill supporters for helping to preserve the American right of gun ownership, and for ending a registration dilemma many families may have faced. Now they can proudly and legally keep their family heirlooms in the family."

### **VFW Washington Office Remembers Pearl Harbor**

On Wednesday, Dec. 7, VFW Washington Office staff joined Congressional leaders and Pearl Harbor survivors at the Rayburn House Office Building to reflect on the 70th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. The event, organized by students from American University, brought together survivors to share their experiences and discuss the significance of remembering the men and women who gave their lives in defense of the Pacific Fleet. [Click here](#) to learn more about the Capitol Hill event and the significance of this year's Pearl Harbor Day.

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