

**VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA**

**NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION'S WEEKLY REPORT**

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**February 20 – 24, 2023**

**STAFF ACTIVITY**

* NS Director met with a organization that has developed a web-based application in which the value of military service is depicted in tangible terms and benefits for potential military recruits. The tool has been adopted by the Air Force Recruiting Command and other military branches of service are looking at it. As the American Legion continues to advocate for a strong national defense, opportunities such as these can assist DoD Recruiters in their mission. Follow-on meetings are scheduled and there will be more information in the near future.
* NS Director attended the Personnel Committee meeting on matters involving staff and a formal briefing on the status of Quality-of-Life program development.
* NS Staff is finalizing logistical preparation for both the wreath-laying at General Lewis B. Hershey gravesite and the ANAVICUS breakfast during the 63rd Annual Washington Conference.
* NS Staff is finalizing preparations for the upcoming 63rd Annual Washington Conference. More information about the conference, including the schedule of events, is available [here](https://www.legion.org/washingtonconference).
* NS Staff reviewed a [RAND Report](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1230-1.html) entitled "Food insecurity Among Members of the Armed Forces and Their Dependents" to research food insecurity in the military.
* NS Staff followed up with each service branch on their progress regarding nominations for The American Legion Spirit of Service Award.
* NS Staff began research on the usage of illegal fentanyl among servicemembers so that we can make informed recommendations on how to combat the issue.
* NS Staff attended an all-hands staff meeting for a Washington Conference.
* NS Staff met with National Security Commission Chairman Matthew Shuman to brief the Chairman on the Washington Conference commission meeting.

**POW/MIA**

**February 23, 2023**

NS staff, alongside Virginia Legionnaires, attended the funeral service for GM3 Schmidt, Herman, at Arlington National Cemetery who was identified by DPAA on January 3, 2023. Among the attendees were members of all 6 branches of the military, Arlington County Police and First Responders, with an approximate total of 300 people to pay respects. GM3 Schmidt’s biography can be read [here.](https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/2725504/uss-oklahoma-sailor-accounted-for-from-world-war-ii-schmidt-h/)

DPAA has identified/repatriated 23 servicemembers this year.

**PROGRAMS (The American Legion Military Surplus Equipment)**

* Processed request: Ammo – 8,680; Rifle – 31; Clips – 60; Static Display – 0
* Participants: Post – 8; Department – 7

**ROTC/JROTC Awards**

Department of Pennsylvania

* Scholastic Excellence Award – 1
* Military Excellence Award – 1

**TIP OF THE WEEK**

Need a great and credible source for information as you write national security resolutions for consideration by The American Legion? Highly recommended are reports from the Congressional Research Service (CRS), a public policy research institute of the U.S. Congress. Operating within the Library of Congress, it works primarily and directly for members of Congress and their committees and staff on a nonpartisan basis. CRS is sometimes known as Congress' think tank due to its broad mandate of providing research and analysis on all matters relevant to national policymaking.

As of 2018, most CRS reports are available to the public through the official US Congress website [crsreports.congress.gov](https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11542/2). Previously they were confidential, although some were leaked and archived at websites like the Federation of American Scientists (FAS), a nonprofit policy research and advocacy organization founded in 1945 to meet national security challenges with evidence-based, scientifically-driven, and nonpartisan policy, analysis, and research. CRS reports are considered in-depth, accurate, objective, and timely.

* CRS Reports on General National Security Topics can be found here: [Congressional Research Service Reports - General National Security (fas.org)](https://sgp.fas.org/crs/natsec/index.html)
* Shorter CRS Defense Primers are here: [Congressional Research Service Reports - Defense Primers (fas.org)](https://sgp.fas.org/crs/natsec/primer.html)
* The FAS overview page on CRS Reports is here: [Congressional Research Service Reports (fas.org)](https://sgp.fas.org/crs/)