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1. VFW Heads to Charlotte for 117th National Convention: From July 23-27 several thousand VFW and Auxiliary members will gather in Charlotte, N.C. for our annual convention. New this year, the VFW has launched a mobile app to give attendees the tools needed to make the most of their visit. As the official mobile guide to the 117th VFW National Convention, the app is available in both the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. If you are attending, make sure to stop by the National Legislative Service/Action Corps booth to learn more about what NLS is doing for you. On Sunday at 10 a.m., there will be a workshop hosted by the National Legislative Service staff introducing our new grassroots campaign. To see more about the convention, including live streaming beginning July 24, or download the mobile app, visit: <http://www.vfw.org/Convention/>.

2. Women Veterans Panel Discussion at Convention: The VFW Advisory Committee for Women Veterans, along with the Department of Veteran Affairs, is set to host a panel discussion regarding women veterans. The panel will take place at the Charlotte Convention Center on Saturday, July 23, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Participants from VA will be the Director of the Center for Women Veterans, Kayla Williams, and Dr. Sally Haskell, deputy chief consultant for clinical operations and director of comprehensive women's health in women's health services. Main topics covered will be outreach, recognition, homelessness and health care. VA is set to give a presentation before the discussion and a half hour at the end will be open for questions. To learn more about the Center for Women Veterans, visit: <http://www.va.gov/womenvet/>.

3. VA Expands Health Care Eligibility for Camp Lejeune Veterans: On Monday, VA issued a final rule to expand VA health care eligibility for veterans affected by

contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune. Starting this week, veterans who served at least 30 days at Camp Lejeune from August 1, 1953 through December 31, 1987, are eligible to receive no-cost health care for 15 medical conditions that have been linked to the contaminated water. Previously, only veterans who served at Camp Lejeune from January 1, 1957 were covered. Veterans who have been diagnosed with any of the 15 medical conditions may receive reimbursement for the cost of treatment if the care was provided on or after December 16, 2014, when the law expanding eligibility was signed. However, veterans must submit a request for reimbursement no later than July 18, 2018. For more information on benefits and services for Camp Lejeune veterans, visit: <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune>.

This rule does not impact disability compensation benefits. VA is still in the process of finalizing a rule to grant Camp Lejeune veterans presumptive disability compensation for 8 of the 15 medical conditions found to be associated with exposure to the contaminated water at Camp Lejeune. However, veterans who have been diagnosed with any of the 15 conditions should file a claim when possible to preserve the effective date. To contact a VFW Service Officer for assistance filing a disability compensation claim, visit: <http://www.vfw.org/NVS/>.

4. VFW Life Member Receives Medal of Honor: President Obama presented the Medal of Honor on Monday to Army Lt. Col. Charles Kettles in a ceremony at the White House. Lt. Col. Kettles is credited with saving some 44 lives on May 15, 1967, while serving as a UH-1 Huey helicopter commander. Kettles, of Ypsilanti, Mich., is a Life Member of the VFW. Early that morning, his platoon had dropped about 80 soldiers into a river valley, but the troops were ambushed and surrounded. Kettles and his fellow pilots made several trips back and forth, bringing in reinforcements and evacuating the wounded, but by afternoon, it was clear that the situation was hopeless. Only 44 troops remained, facing what Kettles estimated was a battalion-sized force. During the emergency extraction, Kettles learned eight men had been left behind. He immediately turned around and headed back to the landing zone. “The bottom line is those soldiers went home to their families,” said Kettles. “Their names aren’t carved in stone on a wall in D.C. No medal can compare with that.” Read more at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2016/07/18/president-obama-awards-medal-honor-lt-col-charles-kettles>.