

DEOMI NEWS LINKS 2 JUNE 2023

HIGHLIGHTS

[Biden picks Brown to be Joint Chiefs chairman](#) [Stephen Losey and Bryant Harris, *Defense News*, 25 May 2023]

President Joe Biden on Thursday announced he has nominated Air Force Gen. CQ Brown to be the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in a brief ceremony in the White House's Rose Garden. The Senate voted unanimously to confirm Brown's nomination to become Air Force chief of staff in June 2020, which made him the first Black person to head a branch of the U.S. military, and he is expected to be easily confirmed as the nation's top military officer.

[DOJ Has a Newly Updated Policy on Preventing Bias in Federal Law Enforcement](#) [Courtney Bubl , *Government Executive*, 30 May 2023]

The Justice Department has issued updated guidance on how federal law enforcement officers should avoid bias on the basis of a person's race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. This was one of many actions the [Justice Department announced recently](#) at the one-year mark of President Biden's executive order on increasing accountability in policing. This guidance was originally released in 2003 in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and focused on racial and ethnic profiling, and [last updated in 2014](#) to expand the protected characteristics, among other things.

[A Proclamation on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Pride Month, 2023](#) [Joseph R. Biden, Jr., *White House Press Office*, 31 May 2023]

During Pride Month, we honor a movement that has grown stronger, more vibrant, and more inclusive with every passing year. Pride is a celebration of generations of LGBTQI+ people, who have fought bravely to live openly and authentically. And it is a reminder that we still have generational work to do to ensure that everyone enjoys the full promise of equity, dignity, protection, and freedom. This country is stronger and more just when America's leaders reflect the full diversity of our Nation, so I have appointed a historic number of highly qualified openly LGBTQI+ judges and public servants at all levels of the Federal Government. Our Armed Forces are most capable when all patriots can serve their country, so I protected the right of transgender people to once again serve openly in the military.

[\[SECDEF STATEMENT ON PRIDE MONTH\]](#)

[\[USD\(P&R\) PRIDE MONTH OBSERVANCE MEMO\]](#)

[White House orders Pentagon to probe antisemitism, Islamophobia](#) [Nikki Wentling and Allison P. Erickson, *Military Times*, 1 June 2023]

The White House directed the Pentagon to probe antisemitic and Islamophobic behavior across the U.S. military and offer an estimate about the prevalence of the problem by November. The order was part of the White House's new national strategy to counter antisemitism, which includes 100 steps President Joe Biden's administration and its partners plan to take to address the recent rise in antisemitic incidents. The sweeping document requires the Defense Department to analyze existing research to better grasp the prevalence of antisemitism and Islamophobia across the military. The Pentagon is required by November of this year to provide that estimate and review its current training for gaps in identifying those biases. It's the first analysis of its kind to specifically address antisemitism and Islamophobia across the armed forces.

CULTURE

[75 Years of “Flags In” at Arlington National Cemetery](#) [DOD News Service, 25 May 2023]

An honored tradition. Soldiers assigned to the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, known as “The Old Guard,” and other service members placed American flags at headstones at Arlington National Cemetery, Va., in advance of Memorial Day. This was the 75th anniversary of “Flags In,” during which service members adorn gravesites at Arlington National Cemetery and the U.S. Soldiers’ and Airmen’s Home National Cemetery to honor the nation’s fallen heroes.

[Alabama’s law limiting transgender athletes in sports now includes college students](#) [Ayana Archie, NPR, 31 May 2023]

Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey signed a bill into law Tuesday that would make it illegal for public higher education institutions to allow transgender people to participate in sports that do not correspond with the gender they were given at birth. Public two- and four-year schools would “prohibit biological males from participating on an athletic team or sport designated for females and prohibit biological females from participating on an athletic team or sport designated for males,” [House Bill 261](#) says.

[As Fort Bragg becomes Fort Liberty, Army leaders promise the base won’t forget its history](#) [Jay Price, North Carolina Public Radio, 1 June 2023]

After more than a century as Fort Bragg, the Army’s largest base by population officially becomes Fort Liberty this week. But as the old name goes away, base officials are working to bind the installation’s new name to its storied history. Bragg troops have played key roles in every major United States conflict beginning with World War I. As home to the 82nd Airborne Division, the special forces school, and the commands over Army airborne and special operations units, the base is often called “the center of the military universe.” Fort Bragg is among nine Army bases that are dropping the names of Confederate leaders. The renaming, dictated by Congress, comes after a three-year process. The other eight bases will be renamed for people, but Bragg leaders chose to rename the base for an ideal instead.

[Defense Secretary Orders No Drag Shows on Military Bases After Political Furor](#) [Rebecca Kheel and Thomas Novelty, *Military.com*, 1 June 2023]

*A Defense Department-wide prohibition on drag shows on military bases has resulted in the cancellation of at least two events that were planned for Pride Month and previously approved by base officials, two defense officials confirmed to *Military.com*. Shows at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada and Ramstein Air Base in Germany scheduled for this month were canceled, participants and defense officials confirmed. The two officials told *Military.com* the cancellations were part of a direction from Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin that drag shows, which have become a target of the political right, not be hosted on bases.*

[Here are 10 words that will be featured in the African American English Dictionary](#) [NBC News, 31 May 2023]

*Last year, [Oxford University Press revealed its plan](#) to publish the “Oxford Dictionary of African American English,” an entirely unequaled list. During a recent online presentation, those tied to the publication revealed that they already selected 100 words to include in its dictionary and has its eyes set on publication in March 2025, according to *The New York Times*. The public can contribute to the collection by submitting relevant words [here](#).*

[Norfolk’s monument for Black Civil War veterans is a rarity in the South. Some say it’s been neglected.](#)

[Steve Walsh, *WHRO News (Norfolk, Va.)*, 25 May 2023]

In the middle of West Point Cemetery stands a statue to Sgt. William H. Carney. Born in Norfolk to enslaved parents, Carney enlisted 160 years ago after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. He joined the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment and was eventually awarded the Congressional Medal of honor. Though he was not buried in Norfolk, this statue became a symbol of what local African American soldiers accomplished during the war. Historian Cassandra Newby-Alexander, professor of Black History and Culture at Norfolk State University, said she doesn’t think the city has done enough to recognize the rare monument to Black Civil War veterans.

[Sign with a homophobic slur in front of Florida business sparks backlash](#) [Jay Valle, *NBC News*, 31 May 2023]

A sign with a homophobic slur outside a Florida auto repair shop has sparked backlash from the local community and social media users. The sign, which appeared to have gone up over Memorial Day weekend outside Rick’s Repair Shop in Tallahassee, said, “Veterans get a day fags and child molesters get a month why,” appearing to refer to Pride Month in June. Shop owner Rick Hughes is known in the community for sharing controversial messages outside his store. Hughes was unable to be reached for comment.

[Target Pride backlash exposes “rainbow capitalism” problem, designer says](#) [Helen Reid, *Reuters*, 31 May 2023]

U.S. retailer Target’s decision to remove some LGBTQ-themed merchandise after customer backlash in its stores highlights the problem with companies’ “rainbow capitalism,” said Erik Carnell, a transgender designer whose products were pulled from its stores. Target has sold LGBTQ-related goods tied to Pride month for years. But last week the big-box chain removed Carnell’s products, citing an increase in confrontations between customers and employees and incidents of Pride merchandise being thrown on the floor. Companies like Target that launch products and campaigns for Pride Month seek to profit from LGBTQ people but fail to stand by them when challenges arise, London-based Carnell said in an interview.

[\[SEE ALSO\]](#)

[Tony Awards have gendered actor categories—where do non-binary people fit?](#) [Jeff Lunden, *NPR*, 1 June 2023]

Most theater, film and television awards feature gendered performance categories, but in recent years, some theater ceremonies have done away with male/female distinctions. Not the Tony Awards, Broadway’s highest honors. But this June, for the first time, there’s a chance that a couple of non-binary performers will take home statues. Many theater awards around the country have chosen to make performance awards non-gendered, including Washington’s Helen Hayes Awards, Chicago’s Jeff Awards, and New York’s Drama Desk, which recognizes both Broadway and Off-Broadway theater.

DISCRIMINATION

[Air Force veteran once imprisoned for being gay still endures the stigma of a felony record](#) [Jim Axelrod and Jessica Kegu, *CBS News*, 30 May 2023] [VIDEO WITH TRANSCRIPT]

The U.S. military has made no affirmative effort to identify and revisit cases where service members were convicted of crimes and saddled with felony records for being involved in same-sex relationships, a

[CBS News Investigation has found.](#) *“There are thousands that have been incarcerated for their sexuality over the years,” said Rachel VanLandingham, a law professor who spent 24 years in the Air Force and is now the president of a nonprofit dedicated to improving fairness in the military justice system. Identifying the thousands of cases has posed an immense challenge, VanLandingham said, because of the wide variation in charges employed to force gay and lesbian service members out of the military. Before the 2011 repeal of “don’t ask, don’t tell”—the policy that barred them from serving openly—there was no single charge used by U.S. military courts to expel gay men and women from the service.*

[Native American high school graduate sues school district after she says she wasn’t allowed to wear sacred eagle feather at graduation](#) [Nicole Chavez, CNN, 26 May 2023]

A high school graduate is suing her former Oklahoma school district after she says school officials prevented her from wearing a sacred eagle plume on her graduation cap. At issue is an encounter that occurred last year shortly before graduation, according to the lawsuit, which was filed last week in Tulsa County against Broken Arrow Public Schools and two district employees by attorneys representing the student, Lena Black. She is an enrolled member of the Otoe-Missouria Tribe and of Osage descent, according to the lawsuit. Black was waiting to take her seat for the graduation ceremony at Broken Arrow when, according to the lawsuit, two school officials told her she needed to remove the “decoration” from her cap and then attempted to pull off the eagle plume.

[New anti-transgender laws will hurt Indigenous peoples’ rights and religious expression](#) [Rosalyn R. LaPier, *The Conversation*, 1 June 2023]

Montana’s Republican Gov. Greg Gianforte became the latest to sign several new anti-transgender laws, including one that will prevent gender-affirming medical care for minors. One thing these new laws do not take into account is that the 12 federally recognized tribes in Montana have historically recognized multiple gender identities, including transgender identities. Most Indigenous peoples recognize multiple gender identities that are [believed to be the result of supernatural intervention](#). In this regard, Montana state Rep. Donavon Hawk, a Democrat from Butte who is Crow and Lakota, said, “It surprises me that this country is only a couple hundred years old, and we are [not able to function with LGBTQ people in our communities](#).” Indigenous communities have incorporated LGBTQ+ peoples within their societies for centuries.

[A trans inmate wins health care and will move to women’s prison after suing Minnesota](#) [Jaclyn Diaz, NPR, 1 June 2023]

Christina Lusk, a transgender woman who sued the Minnesota Department of Corrections over her treatment while in prison, has reached a settlement that includes a move to the state’s women-only Shakopee prison and access to gender-affirming health care. Lusk had been fighting for these rights since she was incarcerated in 2019 and filed the lawsuit against the Minnesota Department of Corrections nearly a year ago. Lusk’s situation is one that’s shared by many transgender people behind bars in the United States. Many advocates and attorneys have said that lawsuits are the main way that individuals have been able to be moved into facilities that align with their gender identity, as Lusk’s case shows.

DIVERSITY

[Andrea Motley Crabtree, Army’s first female deep-sea diver, reflects on her accomplishments](#) [Elise Preston and Anam Siddiq, CBS News, 31 May 2023] [VIDEO WITH TRANSCRIPT]

In 1982, now retired Master Sgt. Andrea Motley Crabtree became the U.S. Army's first female deep-sea diver, and the first Black female deep-sea diver across all U.S. military branches. It was a remarkable moment in her remarkable life. "I was happy to be there, happy to be in that suit," said Crabtree, who told CBS News she was inspired by her father and grandfather, both veterans. At the time she earned her Army diver badge, she posed for a photo that later became the basis for a 2017 portrait by artist Henry Taylor that was [featured in the U.S. Army Women's Museum in Fort Gregg-Adams](#) in Virginia. "I always wanted to be in the military, but a lot of people didn't think the military was a good thing for women," Crabtree said.

[Army vet turned DC insider now a historic nominee for Veterans Affairs](#) [Leo Shane III, *Military Times*, 30 May 2023]

Colleagues call Tanya Bradsher, the current chief of staff for the Department of Veterans Affairs, a behind-the-scenes star in Washington, D.C., someone known to get things done quickly without leaving bruised egos in her wake. Now the Army veteran is set to step into a more visible—and historic—role. Last month, President Joe Biden nominated her to serve as the next deputy secretary for VA, the second highest post at the department with the second-largest budget in all of federal government. If confirmed, she'll be the first woman to hold the role full time; three others have served as acting deputies. Bradsher, who is Black, would also be the first woman of color to ever hold the post.

[Black Hawk pilot finds her calling in the Army](#) [Joe Lacdan, *Army News Service*, 11 May 2023]

In the heart of the Mojave Desert, tucked under the grip of a harsh dry climate, 13-year-old Georgia Cervantes flourished. After her family moved to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Cervantes' penchant for adventure eventually led her to applying for enrollment at the U.S. Military Academy. A decade later, Georgia straps on her flight suit as she and fellow Black Hawk pilot inspect a UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopter at Robert Gray Army Airfield in Fort Cavazos, Texas. Through the tutelage of her West Point mentors, she saw the possibility of a career in aviation. Few women enter the career field. But at West Point, Cervantes saw that trend changing. "I don't see Hispanic women in aviation, and if I focused only where I see Hispanic women in the field right now, I'm putting significant restrictions on myself," Cervantes said. "We're starting to prove that we can be aviators."

[The differences between race and ethnicity—and why they're so hard to define](#) [Harmeet Kaur, *CNN*, 30 May 2023]

Governments, workplaces and educational institutions often collect data on these categories to determine things like which programs require funding, what disparities exist between different groups and when civil rights violations are occurring. But you might have also felt that checking a box on a form requires you to define yourself in ways that don't necessarily align with your own identity. "It's not like there is some truthful race and truthful ethnicity out there, and that we bestow it on the population," said Tomás Jiménez, a sociology professor at Stanford University who studies race and ethnicity. "It comes from an observation of how people use these ways of categorizing themselves and each other." Put another way, race and ethnicity are social and political constructs. Still, they carry enormous consequences in the U.S., Jiménez and other scholars say.

[Female electricians: a climate solution?](#) [Danielle Renwick, *BBC News*, 25 May 2023]

The U.S. needs a million more electricians to meet its climate goals. Breaking down barriers for women in the industry could help recruit them. The trades in general, and electrical work specifically, are [overwhelmingly male](#). Only 2% of electricians in the U.S. are women, according to the Bureau of Labor

Statistics (BLS). It's also a [sector facing a massive labour shortage](#) as the country looks to transition away from fossil fuels and toward electrifying cars and buildings. According to Rewiring America, an electrification non-profit, the United States will need one million more electricians to make updates like installing solar panels, heat pumps and electric vehicle charging stations to help the country meet its goal to reach 100% "carbon pollution-free electricity" by 2035.

[Franchetti viewed as likely choice to lead Navy, would be first woman on Joint Chiefs](#) [Justin Katz, *Breaking Defense*, 26 May 2023]

Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti is widely seen as the most likely candidate to lead the Navy as the next chief of naval operations, an appointment that would make her both the first woman to lead the Navy and the first woman to serve as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Franchetti, a native of Rochester, NY, is a career surface warfare officer and just one of just a handful of female four-star officers in the U.S. military. She's previously served as the director for strategy, plans and policy on the Joint Staff and commanded U.S. 6th Fleet.

[Navy selects first active duty female gunner's mate for Master Chief](#) [Diana Stancy Correll, *Military Times*, 31 May 2023]

For the first time, the Navy has tapped an active duty female gunner's mate for promotion to master chief petty officer. Senior Chief Gunner's Mate Jessica Saunders, who enlisted in the Navy in 2002, screened for E-9 on May 23, according to the Navy. "This is not only a significant milestone for my naval career, but also for all Sailors," Saunders said in a Navy news release. "The glass ceiling is shattered! From the day I enlisted, I understood that with hard work, motivational leadership and a warfighter mentality, I could achieve my goals and help better our Navy for future generations."

EXTREMISM

[Army veteran affiliated with Oath Keepers sentenced to 3 years in prison for role in January 6 riot](#) [Hannah Rabinowitz and Holmes Lybrand, *CNN*, 1 June 2023]

An Army veteran was sentenced to three years in prison Thursday after being convicted of seditious conspiracy in connection with the Oath Keepers' sprawling plot to stop the certification of Joe Biden's 2020 victory, which culminated in the January 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol. Edward Vallejo, who was affiliated with the Oath Keepers but not a member of the far-right militia, was one of the alleged leaders of the armed, so-called quick reaction force staged just outside of Washington, DC, on January 6. Judge Amit Mehta said he "can appreciate" Vallejo's concern over election integrity that brought the Arizona native to DC after the election and said that "people like Mr. Vallejo are victims in their own right" of misinformation. "That doesn't mean that people aren't responsible for their own actions," Mehta said.

[Jessica Watkins: Oath Keepers member and Army veteran sentenced to 8.5 years in prison for January 6](#) [Hannah Rabinowitz, *CNN*, 26 May 2023]

Jessica Watkins, an Army veteran and member of the far-right Oath Keepers, was sentenced Friday to 8.5 years in prison for participating in a plot to disrupt the certification of the 2020 presidential election culminating in the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. Judge Amit Mehta said Watkins' efforts at the Capitol were "aggressive" and said she did not have immediate remorse, even though she has since apologized. Watkins, who is transgender, gave emotional testimony during the trial about

struggling with her identity in the Army while the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy was still in effect, and about being dragged into the underbelly of conspiracy theories around the 2020 presidential election.

[Woman who threatened Nancy Pelosi with hanging during Capitol riot gets over 2 years in prison](#)

[Michael Kunzelman, *The Associated Press*, 30 May 2023]

A Pennsylvania restaurant owner who screamed death threats directed at then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi while storming the U.S. Capitol was sentenced on Tuesday to more than two years in prison. Pauline Bauer was near Pelosi’s office suite on Jan. 6, 2021, when she yelled at police officers to bring out the California Democrat so the mob of Donald Trump supporters could hang her. In January, U.S. District Judge Trevor McFadden convicted Bauer of riot-related charges after hearing trial testimony without a jury. The judge sentenced her to two years and three months of imprisonment, giving her credit for the several months she already has served in jail, court records show.

HUMAN RELATIONS

[To Have Better Disagreements, Change Your Words—Here are 4 Ways to Make Your Counterpart Feel Heard and Keep the Conversation Going](#) [Julia Minson, *Government Executive*, 31 May 2023]

For many years, psychologists have touted the [benefits of making parties in conflict feel heard](#). Making someone you’re arguing with feel that you’re listening can calm the troubled waters, allowing both parties to get safely to the opposite shore. Two problems can get in the way, though. First, when encountering disagreement, most people jump into “persuasion mode,” which doesn’t leave much room for listening, or even for pursuing other goals for the interaction. Any conversation could be an opportunity to learn something new, build a relationship that might bear fruit later, or simply have an interesting experience. But most of those goals get forgotten when the urge to persuade sets in. Second, and just as important, is that even when people do wish to make their counterparts feel heard they don’t know how to do so.

INTERNATIONAL

[British Cycling to ban transgender women from competing in female category](#) [Dan Roan, *BBC Sport*, 26 May 2023]

British Cycling is to ban transgender women from the female category of its competitions following a nine-month review and consultation. Under a new participation policy that the governing body said was “predicated on fairness”, such athletes will compete in an ‘open category’ with men. Female races will be “for those whose sex was assigned female at birth”. British Cycling’s policy had allowed transgender women to take part in elite female events if they met testosterone-based regulations. Transgender women will be able to participate in non-competitive recreational and community cycling without restriction. The new policies will be implemented by the end of the year.

[Hamida Banu: The incredible life of India’s “first” woman wrestler](#) [BBC News, 26 May 2023]

Indian woman wrestler Hamida Banu rose to stardom in the 1940s and 50s, when the sport was still a male bastion. Her spectacular feats and larger-than-life persona brought her global fame—but then she disappeared from the scene. BBC Urdu’s Neyaz Farooquee traced Banu’s story to find out what happened to the woman whom many call India’s first professional woman wrestler.

[Miss Trans Africa’s Long Wait for Freedom](#) [Nick Schönfeld and Julia Gunther, *NPR*, 1 June 2023]

In South Africa, beauty pageants have played an important role in the country's social fabric since the beginning of the 20th century. The Spring Queen competition, which is one of the oldest and largest pageants in South Africa, and in which Sharon participated, was established by the Southern African Clothing and Textiles Workers' Union as a means of supporting the 1973 Durban strikes and the 1976 Soweto Uprising. After 1994, as South Africa's regime of segregation and discrimination was being torn down and Archbishop Desmond Tutu's "The Rainbow Nation" was rising from the ruins, LGBTQ rights rose along with it.

MISCELLANEOUS

[Has loneliness become a national security issue?](#) [Brig. Gen. Jack Hammond (Ret.), *Military Times*, 31 May 2023] [OPINION]

Last month, we learned that top-secret military documents, which provided insight into Russian moves within Ukraine, were leaked on the internet—straining relationships with American allies and compromising our intelligence collection assets. The culprit was not a foreign spy or ideology-driven digital warrior. It was a socially awkward airman first class in the Air National Guard with low self-esteem, attempting to show off for a group of teenage gamers on a chat platform. The breach calls into question the standards the national security community applies in determining who gets top secret clearance. We must move beyond the current vice-based criteria that look for people who are vulnerable to blackmail, have a connection to "bad actors," or have highly recognizable psychological issues. Loneliness, low self-esteem, and narcissism must be added to the list of red flags to look for.

[OPM Wants to Do More for Federal Workers' Wellness](#) [Eric Katz, *Government Executive*, 26 May 2023]

The Office of Personnel Management, spurred by a provision of President Biden's management agenda tasking agencies with promoting "awareness of employee well-being and [supporting] initiatives that extend beyond the workplace," underwent a year-long effort to design a "standardized approach" to employee wellness programs, consulting with focus groups, health experts and vendors who provide assistance programs to employers. The result is a [19-page guidance document](#) for agencies to reassess their assistance program offerings and, if necessary, expand them.

[What the 2020 census can—and can't—tell us about LGBTQ+ people](#) [Hansi Lo Wang and Connie Hanzhang Jin, *NPR*, 25 May 2023]

States along the West Coast and in the Northeast have the highest shares of households with same-sex couples, [according to the latest 2020 census results released Thursday](#). The new numbers from the Census Bureau make up the most comprehensive statistics the federal government has produced to date about married and unmarried same-sex couples living together. But many other LGBTQ+ people, including those who are not living with a partner or are in different-sex relationships, remain invisible in this key national dataset that's used to determine political representation, enforce civil rights protections, inform research and policymaking, and guide an estimated \$1.5 trillion a year in federal money for public services in local communities.

MISCONDUCT

[Air Force two-star to retire as colonel after sex crime conviction](#) [Rachel S. Cohen, *Military Times*, 30 May 2023]

Maj. Gen. Bill Cooley, the former Air Force Research Laboratory commander who was convicted of abusive sexual contact last spring, will retire as a colonel on Thursday, two sources tell Air Force Times. Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall chose to demote the two-star general to a field-grade officer after the April 2022 trial, an Air Force Materiel Command spokesperson said Tuesday. Cooley was charged with three counts of abusive sexual contact under Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, which covers sex-related crimes.

RELIGION

[What is Theravada Buddhism? A scholar of Asian religions explains](#) [Brooke Schedneck, *The Conversation*, 31 May 2023]

Theravada, which means “the way of the elders,” is one of the two main schools of Buddhism. Its adherents consider Theravada to be the most authoritative branch because they believe their teachings come directly from the historical Buddha. As a scholar of Buddhism, I explain in my 2023 book [“Living Theravada: Demystifying the People, Places and Practices of a Buddhist Tradition”](#) that Theravada Buddhism has a number of distinguishing features. Its canonical literature is preserved in the ancient language of Pali, while other branches use Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan. An important ritual for Theravada monks includes collecting alms every morning. Another cultural feature in mainland Southeast Asia is that young men can enter into monastic life for a short time and return to lay life. Most often they do this as young boys, but a male at any age can become ordained for any length of time.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

[Wisconsin legislators consider bills on National Guard sex assaults](#) [Todd Richmond, *The Associated Press*, 31 May 2023]

Lawmakers are considering a package of legislation that would tighten prohibitions on sexual assault within the Wisconsin National Guard [after a scathing federal report found](#) commanders had for years been flouting federal requirements for handling complaints. A study committee made up of legislators, district attorneys and military veterans began working on legislation last summer to tighten oversight of sexual assault complaints within the Wisconsin National Guard. The state Assembly’s military affairs committee began the process toward floor votes with a public hearing on the bills Wednesday.

SUICIDE

[USAF Should Rethink Its Approach to Mental Health and Suicide](#) [Maj. Gen. John M. Klein, Jr., and Chief Master Sergeant Courtney C. Freeman, *Defense One*, 31 May 2023] [COMMENTARY]

As the senior leaders of the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center, we see the incredible work Airmen do every day to provide expeditionary warfare capability to America’s armed forces. However, this vantage point also allows us to see areas for improvement and even radical change in service culture. One area of concern is mental strength and resiliency across the Air Force. We see a need for a cultural overhaul that will return to tried-and-true methods designed to build strength and confidence into our Airmen. Year by year, Air Force mental health clinic use has dramatically increased, while the preponderance of those seeking help do not carry diagnosable conditions.

VETERANS

[America Faces a Tidal Wave of Aging Veterans, Including a 237% Increase in Women Over 65 by 2041](#)

[Sonner Kehrt, *The War Horse*, 1 June 2023]

As Vietnam and eventually Gulf War-era veterans grow older, they bring with them new needs, different expectations for care, and greater diversity than the Korean War and World War II veterans who came before them. The Department of Veterans Affairs and veterans organizations across the country are working to care for a new generation of older veterans who tend to have greater expectations for longevity and independence than earlier generations, yet also may struggle with more complex medical conditions. This means veterans' care must change as well. Women, for example, have a greater life expectancy than men do.

[VA's mission to better serve all: Building equity and ending harassment for underserved population](#)

[Maria Shores, *VA News Service*, 7 May 2023]

VA has renewed its focus to foster a safe and inclusive environment for all Veterans and employees. [VA's new mission statement](#) reflects a new VA that is intent on creating an environment where all have equitable opportunities to thrive, including women, LGBTQ+ individuals and underserved populations. Empowering all who served includes providing a space for all Veterans who identify as female and educating others at VA about the importance of equitable care. [White Ribbon VA](#) is a national call to action that encourages individuals to commit to eliminating sexual harassment, sexual assault and domestic violence throughout the organization. The White Ribbon VA pledge encourages everyone to commit to making a change and to stand against violence.