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August/September 2016

YOUR VFW: NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS!

Convention Celebrates VFW Victories in Serving Others

Participants in the 2016 VFW State Convention in June witnessed many positive reports and award presentations worthy of celebration, but one success story in particular required a more careful study of the delegate crowd itself: the Pennsylvania VFW's membership represents veterans from more service eras—both men and women, and from varied backgrounds—than probably ever before.

More than 400 delegates attended including veterans from World War II and the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Operations Desert Storm and Shield, the Global War on Terror, ongoing campaigns against terrorism, peacekeeping missions and other membership qualifying operations. These dedicated patriots gathered in Lake Harmony to combine their collective passion for veterans issues into a powerful, life-changing force for serving others.

In front of a veteran crowd whose service ranges from modern-day wars back to the 1940s, State Commander Thomas A. Brown of Swarthmore (Post 928) took control of the



Led by State Commander Thomas A. Brown holding the flag, Department leaders pledge to bring honor, integrity and dedication to their service of the PA VFW.



The Department's top membership performers are shown with 2015-16 State Commander Glenn Umberger (right) and Department President Karen Hoover: Post 7043 won the Joe Salvo, Robert Musser and James Van Zandt awards, led by Commander William Hewitt, Quartermaster William Dubler and recruiter George Fletcher; All-State District 14, led by Commander Mark Webster, took home the Chosnyk Award; and Post 1810, with All-State Commander Captain Robert Emerick and Quartermaster Captain Henry Mannella, earning the State Commander's Award. See page 10 for a complete list.

Convention ... continued on page 9



Vietnam veterans received a Vietnam War 50th Anniversary pin during a special ceremony.

Chief Biedrzycki's Outstanding Service Makes PA Department Proud

After a year-long, whirlwind, international journey as the Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Past All-American Department Commander John A. Biedrzycki, Jr. finished his term as the VFW's highest executive officer on July 27, 2016. Witnessing his returning of the Chief's gavel during the National Convention in Charlotte was a large contingent of Pennsylvania VFW leaders and members who joined 11,000 other delegates in congratulating Chief Biedrzycki for achieving many accomplishments during the 2015-16 program year.

A member of McKees Rocks Post 418 and an Army veteran of service in Korea during the Vietnam War, Chief Biedrzycki became only the 10th Pennsylvanian to serve as the National VFW's Chief and the first Pennsylvanian to do so since 1971-72.



During his journeys Chief Biedrzycki thanked U.S. troops serving in Europe.

"I will be forever grateful in my heart for all the support that the Department of Pennsylvania has shown me leading up to and during my year as Chief," commented "Big John" recently, whose travels as Chief included stops in Korea, Taiwan/Taipei,

Chief ... continued on page 2

PA VFW's Eagle Award Honors Combat Veterans and Builds Relationships with Nat'l Guardians



PA Army National Guard Cpt. Israel A. Miller and his wife Dana hold the PA VFW Eagle Award and Certificate, which was presented by State Commander Glenn R. Umberger, Jr., who was joined by Past VFW National Commander George Cramer. Also shown are PAARNG Col. David Wood and BG (Ret.) Jerry Beck, Deputy Adjutant General of Pennsylvania's Veterans Affairs.

The strong bond shared among combat veterans is not easily explained to those who never served in a war zone. The depth of the camaraderie and support felt among brothers and sisters who have "been there" comes from too deep within veterans' souls for words to adequately define. In fact, the value of this fellowship expressed through heartfelt embraces, shared activities and unspoken support is beyond measure.

Collectively, the impact of this treasured trust crosses generations, which is why the VFW continues on today after 110 years to bring together veterans from all service eras. It is also why the Pennsylvania Department created a special award program six years ago to connect with younger generations of veterans—specifically, PA Guard troops who have gone into harm's way.

So when Army National Guard Captain Israel A. Miller looked out from the podium during the State Convention in June—after receiving a standing ovation from 400 VFW members and humbly accepting a PA VFW Eagle Award—he spoke about his respect for and appreciation of his fellow VFW comrades. He extended his heartfelt gratitude to them for their service, their support and their acceptance of him as one of their own.

"It is truly an honor to accept this award, but it is even more of an honor to stand in front of a large crowd of generations of men and women, who chose to serve a cause greater than themselves—our nation, our flag and the cause of freedom. Thank you, VFW, for all that your members have done to keep us free."

With six overseas deployments during his 16 years of **VFW Eagle ... continued on page 10**

"It is truly an honor to accept this award, but it is even more of an honor to stand in front of a large crowd of generations of men and women who chose to serve a cause greater than themselves... Thank you, VFW, for all that your members have done to keep us free."

**— Captain Israel A. Miller
OEF/OIF Veteran**

*From the State Commander***Let's Advocate for All Veterans' Well-Being**

Thomas A. Brown - paatom1@verizon.net or (610) 551-2541



The mental health of those who have served in the military is not a new topic, but recently this subject has moved to the forefront with our latest generations of veterans.

These combat zone veterans joined thousands of Global War on Terror veterans who came home since 2001, many now living with PTS, TBI and other issues. Since the 2001 terrorist attacks, these 20-, 30- and 40-year-old warriors joined the many veterans from earlier wars as veterans living with invisible wounds.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars and our Auxiliary must be committed to ensuring that our nation does everything possible to assist these veterans with support services and programs so they can enjoy life to the best extent possible. Let's make this a



Anna Buzan Brown proudly places the State Commander's hat on her husband, Tom.

major project during the VFW's 2016-17 year because we must study, learn and react to emotional and brain health issues that impact our comrades.

Advocating for life-changing action on this issue gives us a great opportunity to show those living with PTS and TBI effects that the VFW does more for them than any other veterans organization.

Fortunately, there is much we can do for veterans who suffer from mental health concerns and mental illness. First, we must change the culture in our state and nation so mental health is recognized as being just as important to our overall health as is our physical well-being.



Thomas A. Brown takes the State Commander's Oath of Office as Past National Chief George Cramer officiates the ceremony.

Let's all learn to identify the signs of emotional suffering in ourselves, those we love and veterans we may not even know. If we see these signs we must reach out, connect with them and offer help. Finally, we must make sure they have easy access to a range of treatment options because one size does not fit all.

To that end, licensed mental health professionals in your area should heed the call given by you to provide mental health services to veterans and their families. This effort will provide direct counseling. Coatesville VA Hospital and other VAMCs will help coordinate and integrate services for our returning service members and their families so help is available when and where it is needed.

Speak with your VA Hospital and local hospitals in your area to take that extra step to live up to who we are: *"NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS"* – yes, the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Caring for our community's mental health is everyone's responsibility. Supporting the emotional well-being of our veterans and their families—those who have sacrificed so much for our country—is especially important.

Our military keeps our nation strong and our families safe. We have a chance to ensure that they have the necessary resources they need to come home and enjoy life with their families.

May God Bless You and God Bless the United States of America.

Chief ... continued from page 1

Laos, Japan and Europe. "These last four years have been such a wonderful and memorable experience, and it has been an honor to serve the Veterans of Foreign Wars and to represent our Department."

Chief Biedrzycki's highlights over the past year include meeting international dignitaries, giving testimony before the U.S. Congress, discussing key veterans issues in the Oval Office with President Barack Obama, placing a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and other memorials that honor veterans, visiting with military personnel around the world, and providing VFW statements on breaking news stories.

During his testimony to the joint congressional committee on veterans affairs, Biedrzycki urged lawmakers to stop at nothing short of providing veterans with the best healthcare and adequate VA funding to meet current and evolving needs. He echoed those remarks when meeting with President Barack Obama.

He participated in many VFW department conventions and attended patriotic events across the nation.

"Having served in the highest positions at all VFW levels, I fully appreciate the depth of how the VFW works in all areas of veterans issues," he stated. "This experience has shown me that our motto, *"No One Does More than the VFW,"* is absolutely true. I will dedicate my future working with anyone



Chief Biedrzycki presents his Commander's Medallion to Russian General Valery Vostrotin during a MIA/POW meeting.

at any level to share what I've experienced so others fully appreciate the importance of the VFW to veterans' future.

"With all of my experiences as Chief, I must say that attending dinners that the VFW held for wounded warriors deeply touched my heart. To see the sacrifices that these troops have made to serve their nation and the cause of freedom just tugs at your heart so strongly. It was an honor and inspiring to spend time with them."

During Chief Biedrzycki's term, the PA Department was also well represented on the national level by Allen Q. Jones (Post 92) as Biedrzycki's Chief of Staff, Robert C. Eiler (Post 8805) as a National Council representative and Dwight R. Fuhrman (Post 8896) as National *Voice of Democracy* Chairman.

Comrade Eiler (Post 8805) will continue his term while State Chaplain Peter R. Hook (Post 6393) was elected as the VFW's National Chaplain.

District Meeting Schedule**AUGUST 2016**

DIST.	LOCATION	DATE	TIME
13	VFW Post #6150 – Sinking Spring	August 14	2:00 P.M.
14	VFW Post #6824 – Rome	August 21	2:00 P.M.
18	VFW Post #2385 – Lykens	August 14	2:00 P.M.
19	VFW Post #212 – Bradford	August 21	2:30 P.M.
21	VFW Post #7012 – New Freedom	August 28	1:00 P.M.
27	VFW Post #6743 – Jones Mill	August 28	2:30 P.M.

SEPTEMBER 2016

1	Cpl. Michael J. Crescenz – Phila. VAMC	September 14	7:30 P.M.
7	VFW Post #928 – Folsom	September 28	7:30 P.M.
8	VFW Post #7088 – Emmaus	September 18	1:30 P.M.
9	VFW Post #5667 – Elizabethtown	September 11	2:00 P.M.
10	VFW Post #5544 – Jessup	September 18	2:00 P.M.
11	VFW Post #8317 – Benton	September 18	2:30 P.M.
12	VFW Post #3432 – Pine Grove	September 18	2:30 P.M.
15	VFW Post #6753 – Knoxville	September 18	2:00 P.M.
16	VFW Post #5954 – Red Hill	September 21	7:30 P.M.
17	VFW Post #5640 – Middleburg	September 18	2:00 P.M.
20	VFW Post #8008 – Nesquehoning	September 25	2:00 P.M.
22	VFW Post #5825 – Pine Grove Mills	September 18	2:30 P.M.
23	VFW Post #7023 – Perryopolis	September 11	2:00 P.M.
25	VFW Post #3577 – Aliquippa	September 18	2:00 P.M.
26	VFW Post #7524 – South Fork	September 11	2:30 P.M.
28	VFW Post #470 – Erie	September 11	1:00 P.M.
29	VFW Post #803 – Clairton	September 18	2:00 P.M.

Visit www.vfwpahq.org for the entire list of District Meetings for 2016-17.





AT YOUR SERVICE: MEMBERSHIP SUPPORTS BENEFITS ASSISTANCE



Support the State Veterans Trust Fund

The Veterans' Trust Fund (VTF) is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA), to assist and support veterans and their families.

The VTF issues grants to statewide charitable organizations that assist veterans, veterans service organizations and county directors of veterans affairs to provide veterans with shelter and daily needs.

Funding for the VTF was established by law to include transfer of funds after the sale of the former Scotland School for Veterans' Children; proceeds from the voluntary \$3 donations from people applying for or renewing their Pennsylvania driver's license or photo ID, and renewing motor vehicle registrations; proceeds from the sale of the "Honoring Our Veterans" standard and motorcycle plates; grants, gifts and donations from a person,



business, or governmental entity; and appropriated monies.

One hundred percent of all donations go into the VTF, and DMVA charges no administrative costs, salaries or contract costs to the fund. However, a portion of the VTF is used to reimburse PennDOT for costs to implement the check-off for applications for drivers' licenses and vehicle registrations, and veterans' designation on drivers' licenses. Pennsylvanians can make a donation to the VTF the next time they apply for or renew their Pennsylvania driver's license or photo ID, renew their motor vehicle registration, or by making a tax-deductible grant, gift or donation to the VTF.

You don't need to be a veteran to show your support of those who have defended freedom. Purchase one of the "Honoring Our Veterans" license plates for your car or motorcycle.

Commonwealth Asks All Veterans to Register Online

Released by Pennsylvania's Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA), the State Veterans Registry is an online application that allows veterans to connect with DVMA to request information related to the valuable State benefits, programs and services offered.

All registrants' information will be shared with County Directors for Veterans Affairs and other Commonwealth agencies in order to facilitate local connections.

By registering with the DMVA Registry, veterans can also opt-in to

receive timely communications such as newsletters, press releases and program updates. After registering, veterans can continue using their choice of service organization representatives or government agencies to apply for benefits.

The Veterans Registry is DMVA's first step in a long-term strategy to achieve a higher level of communication with veterans as well as partners who support them.

To register visit "Veterans Registry" on the DMVA's website at <https://register.dmv.pa.gov/>

VA Benefit News & Other Important Health Updates

This information is provided by the PA VFW Veterans Service Officer program. For an appointment call (717) 234-7927. State HQ thanks the State of PA for Act 66 grant funds.

VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY DETAILS

UPDATED DECEMBER 1, 2015

To be eligible for the Veterans Choice Program, a veteran must be enrolled in VA health care and meet at least one of these criteria:

- The veteran is told by his/her local VA facility that they will not be able to schedule a care appointment either within 30 days of the date the veteran's physician determines he/she needs to be seen, or within 30 days of the date he/she wishes to be seen;
- The veteran lives more than 40 miles driving distance from a VA medical facility with a full-time primary care physician;
- The veteran needs to travel by air, boat, or ferry to the VA facility closest to home;
- The veteran faces an unusual or excessive burden getting to VA care based on geography, environmental factors or a medical condition.

Staff at the veteran's local VA medical facility will work with him/ her to determine if he/ she is eligible for any of these reasons:

- The veteran's specific health care needs, including the nature and frequency of the care needed, warrants participation in the program;
- The veteran lives in a state or U.S. Territory without a full-service VA medical facility which includes: Alaska, Hawaii and New Hampshire (note that Veterans are not eligible under this criterion if they live in New Hampshire and live within 20 miles of the White River Junction VAMC), or the U.S. Territories (excluding Puerto Rico which has a full service VA facility).

To verify eligibility call the Choice Program call center at: 866-606-8198.

NATIONAL GUARD/RESERVE BENEFITS

This is a **partial list** of VA benefits that National Guard and Reserve members with active service may qualify to receive.

Active service includes: Active duty (Title 10) - full-time duty, such as a unit deployment during war, including travel to/from such duty, except active duty for training, or; Full-time National Guard duty (Title 32) - full-time duty, such as responding to a national emergency or duties as an Active Guard Reserve, where you Federal government pay.

HOME LOANS – VA Home Loan benefits help servicemembers and veterans purchase, retain or adapt a home. Guard and Reserve members may qualify for a VA-guaranteed home loan by meeting one of the following conditions: six years of service in the Selected Reserve, and discharged honorably, or placed on the retired list, or transferred to the Standby Reserve or an element of the Ready

Reserve other than the Selected Reserve after service characterized as honorable, or continues to serve in the Selected Reserve longer than six years, or served for 90 days or more on active duty during a wartime period, or were discharged or released from active duty for a service-connected disability.

Learn more about eligibility and how to apply at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans/>

EDUCATION – VA Education benefits provide financial support for undergraduate and graduate degrees, vocational and technical training, licensing and certification tests, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training. Guard and Reserve members may be eligible for the following benefits:

- Post-9/11 GI Bill - at least 90 aggregate days of active service after September 10, 2001, or were discharged with a service-connected disability after serving at least 30 consecutive days after that date.
- Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty - Various eligibility criteria for this program and a minimum service obligation.

- Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) - must have 6-year obligation to serve in the Selected Reserve, completed Initial Active Duty for Training (IADT), served in a drill unit and remain in good standing, and have a high school diploma or equivalency.

- Reserve Educational Assistance

Program (REAP) - served on active duty on or after September 11, 2001 for 90 consecutive days.

LIFE INSURANCE—VA programs consider the extra risks involved in military service to provide you and your family with added financial security at competitive rates. Each of the following insurance programs has different eligibility requirements; however, coverage enrollment is automatic for SGLI, FSGLI, and TSGLI.

Servicemembers Group Life Insurance (SGLI) - Guard or Reserve member scheduled to perform at least 12 periods of inactive duty training per year, or; IRR member who volunteers for a mobilization.

Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) - Servicemember separating, retiring or being released from Reserve or Guard assignment and already covered by SGLI or; Guard or Reserve member covered by part-time SGLI who incurred a disability or aggravated a pre-existing disability during inactive duty training or traveling to/from duty; or Member of the IRR or Inactive Guard.

Family Servicemembers Group Life - Spouse or dependent child of an active duty Servicemember covered by full-time SGLI; or Spouse or dependent child of a member of the Guard or Reserve of a uniformed service covered by full-time SGLI.

SGLI Traumatic Injury Protection (TSGLI) - member of the uniformed services and have SGLI, or suffered an injury that resulted in a qualifying loss between October 7, 2001-November 30, 2005.



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Produced by Department Communications/Public Affairs Director David A. Sandman

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General Orders #1



Having been duly elected and installed, I, Thomas A. Brown, State Commander, Dept. of Pennsylvania, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., for 2016-2017, hereby assume command.

1. PREVIOUS APPOINTMENTS: All previous appointments have expired and are null and void.

2. THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS HAVING BEEN PROPERLY ELECTED on June 18, 2016, in conjunction with the 97th Annual Convention in Lake Harmony, PA, will be recognized and respected in accordance with the positions they occupy:

STATE SENIOR VICE COMMANDER: Dwight R. Fuhrman, VFW Post 8896
 STATE JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER: Thomas M. Hanzes, VFW Post 7599
 ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER: John B. Getz, Jr., VFW Post 3376
 NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER: Robert C. Eiler, VFW Post 8805
 STATE JUDGE ADVOCATE: Frank J. McGovern, VFW Post 3460
 STATE SURGEON: Nelson E. Lowes, Sr., VFW Post 734
 STATE CHAPLAIN: Peter R. Hook, VFW Post 6393

3. DISTRICT COMMANDERS: The following members having been properly elected for the ensuing year are officially recognized as Commander of the District and members of the Department Council of Administration:

DISTRICT 1 COMMANDER: Zbigniew Laska, VFW Post 8051
 DISTRICT 7 COMMANDER: John R. Kennard, VFW Post 3460
 DISTRICT 8 COMMANDER: Theresa Reeser, VFW Post 9264
 DISTRICT 9 COMMANDER: John W. Miller, VFW Post 7294
 DISTRICT 10 COMMANDER: John Tomasovitch, VFW Post 7251
 DISTRICT 11 COMMANDER: Kenneth W. Smith, VFW Post 821
 DISTRICT 12 COMMANDER: William Begis, VFW Post 2110
 DISTRICT 13 COMMANDER: James L. Lindsey, VFW Post 6558
 DISTRICT 14 COMMANDER: Mark Webster, VFW Post 8488
 DISTRICT 15 COMMANDER: Jesse Olson, VFW Post 6611
 DISTRICT 16 COMMANDER: Louis Varga, VFW Post 6956
 DISTRICT 17 COMMANDER: Ralph E. March, VFW Post 5754
 DISTRICT 18 COMMANDER: Scott Fritz, VFW Post 3502
 DISTRICT 19 COMMANDER: Ronald Peters, VFW Post 212
 DISTRICT 20 COMMANDER: Ronnie Byrd, VFW Post 3448
 DISTRICT 21 COMMANDER: Jeffrey Loncar, VFW Post 6954
 DISTRICT 22 COMMANDER: Mark Nelson, VFW Post 8724
 DISTRICT 23 COMMANDER: Robert Grimplin, VFW Post 4584
 DISTRICT 24 COMMANDER: Martin A. Puchi, VFW Post 553
 DISTRICT 25 COMMANDER: Ruth Fairchild, VFW Post 315
 DISTRICT 26 COMMANDER: Joseph Kopsic, VFW Post 7605
 DISTRICT 27 COMMANDER: David Hunter, VFW Post 734
 DISTRICT 28 COMMANDER: Ronald Craker, VFW Post 264
 DISTRICT 29 COMMANDER: Robert Emerick, VFW Post 1810

4. THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENT APPOINTMENTS ARE ANNOUNCED:

ADJUTANT: John B. Getz, Jr., VFW Post 3376
 CHIEF OF STAFF: Cecil K. Dennis, VFW Post 5958
 INSPECTOR: Michael McLane, VFW Post 7069
 STATE PARLIAMENTARIAN: John A. Brenner, VFW Post 2493
 STATE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:
 ARTHRITIS/DIABETES CHAIRMAN Robert A. Mander, VFW Post 402
 BARGER SCHOLARSHIP CHAIRMAN William A. Snyder, VFW Post 1599
 BUDDY POPPY CHAIRMAN Richard Olvitt, VFW Post 8951
 BY-LAWS CHAIRMAN John B. Getz, Jr., VFW Post 3376
 CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION CHAIRMAN Daniel L. Rieppel, VFW Post 6757
 COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIRMAN Thomas M. Hanzes, VFW Post 7599
 CREDENTIALS CHAIRMAN Barbara Moore, VFW Post 1586
 DISTRICT COMMANDER'S ADVISOR Wayne Perry, VFW Post 7505
 EMPLOYMENT CHAIRMAN Norman E. Brower, Jr., VFW Post 7362
 FINANCE CHAIRMAN Robert C. Eiler, VFW Post 8805
 HEALTH CARE AWARD CHAIRMAN Ruth A. Fairchild, VFW Post 315
 HOMELESS VETERANS CHAIRMAN Dwayne A. Anders, VFW Post 8724
 HOSPITAL/VAVS CHAIRMAN Nelson E. Lowes, Sr., VFW Post 734
 HOSPITALITY CHAIRMAN Harry P. Carper, VFW Post 1754
 INTERNAL AFFAIRS CO-CHAIRMAN Robert C. Eiler, VFW Post 8805
 INTERNAL AFFAIRS CO-CHAIRMAN James R. Frisbie, VFW Post 7251
 INTERNAL AFFAIRS CO-CHAIRMAN Roy E. Schrimp, VFW Post 1568
 INTERNAL AFFAIRS CO-CHAIRMAN Wayne Perry, VFW Post 7505
 LEGISLATIVE CO-CHAIRMAN Dominic A. DeFranco, VFW Post 764
 LEGISLATIVE CO-CHAIRMAN Nelson E. Lowes, Sr., VFW Post 734
 LOYALTY DAY CHAIRMAN Ronald Herman, VFW Post 8951
 NATIONAL HOME CHAIRMAN Peter Walter, VFW Post 6495
 PATRIOT'S PEN CHAIRMAN Robert Body, VFW Post 92
 POW/MIA CHAIRMAN John J. Rybcinski, VFW Post 3474
 SAFETY CHAIRMAN Ronald Smith, VFW Post 7045
 STUDENT VETERANS ASSOCIATION Jesse Olson, VFW Post 6611
 VETERANS/MILITARY SUPPORT CHAIR Sandra L. (Showalter) Miller, VFW Post 43
 VETERANS COURT ADVOCATE Terry Stokes, VFW Post 1446



Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain of the Year: Patrick H. Johnson, Sr.

Rev. Peter Hook, Chaplain - peterhook@verizon.net



At the Council of Administration meeting held in January 2011, approval was given to present a Chaplain of the Year Award. The award is given annually at the Department Convention to recognize a District or Post Chaplain who demonstrates a commitment to the ministry and duties of a Chaplain, and who exhibits exemplary performance above and beyond normal expectations.

The recipient of the Chaplain of the Year Award for 2016 is Patrick H. Johnson, Sr., who serves as Chaplain of All-American VFW Post 7043 in Coalport.

Patrick was nominated for the award by District 22 Commander George P. Fletcher and his Post Commander William Hewitt. Commander Fletcher stated that he has been a member of Coalport Post 7043 for over 50 years, and in all that time, Patrick is the best and most efficient Post Chaplain he has ever had the privilege of knowing. He performs his duties in a professional and orderly manner.

Patrick has a caring and giving heart and is very dedicated to his duties as a Chaplain. Monthly, he sends Thinking of You, Get Well, and Sympathy cards to members and their families. He gets out and personally visits elderly veterans, and the sick and recuperating veterans who are homebound. He has attended and performed funeral and memorial services for departed Post Comrades and family members of comrades.

Patrick visits the Hollidaysburg Veterans Home on a regular basis and each month he visits Tomorrow's Hope for Homeless Veterans. Often he is

there multiple times each month. He takes the veterans at Tomorrow's Hope to appointments and organizes special events for the homeless vets. In addition to his duties as Post Chaplain, Patrick is a member of the Post Color Guard. He also helps at the evening bingo at the James Van Zandt Hospital in Altoona.



Patrick H. Johnson, Sr. accepts the Chaplain of the Year Award from State Chaplain Hook. Patrick's wife, Betty, is also shown.

Patrick is a Desert Storm veteran who served in the Navy on the USS Proteus (AS 19), which is a Fulton-class submarine tender, from 1988-1991. He has been married to his wife Betty for 17 years, and they have 3 children and 2 grandchildren.

It was truly an honor for me to present this award to Patrick, a true servant and model for those of us who are called to serve those who served. The Chaplain of the Year receives a framed certificate and a VFW watch. He also gains possession of a framed picture to be displayed at his Post for the coming year.

On the Department Website <http://www.vfwpahq.org> you will find my Chaplain's Page which has information concerning the award, the Monthly Chaplain's Report and various resources to help comrades.

Blessings as you serve.

VETERANS SERVICE CHAIRMAN John J. Foster, VFW Post 2
 VFW MOTORCYCLE RIDERS GROUP David A. Dibelius, VFW Post 6493
 VOICE OF DEMOCRACY CHAIRMAN Glenn B. Owen, VFW Post 6824
 WOMEN VETERANS CHAIRMAN Elizabeth Salvador, VFW Post 188
 YOUTH ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN James B. Miller, VFW Post 12019

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN Henry Mannella, VFW Post 1810
 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRMAN John J. Rybcinski, VFW Post 3474
 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRMAN Cecil K. Dennis, VFW Post 5958
 LIFE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN Leslie Harvey, VFW Post 249
 RECRUITER Stephen K. Calles Jr., VFW Post 509

STATE SGT-AT-ARMS

STATE SGT-AT-ARMS Robert I. Hayes, VFW Post 6615
 STATE ASST. SGT-AT-ARMS Cecil K. Dennis, VFW Post 5958
 STATE ASST. SGT-AT-ARMS James J. Ritchie, VFW Post 6495
 STATE ASST. SGT-AT-ARMS James Gubash, VFW Post 1810
 STATE ASST. SGT-AT-ARMS Babara Loncar, VFW Post 6954
 STATE ASST. SGT-AT-ARMS William J. Mankey, VFW Post 2754
 STATE ASST. SGT-AT-ARMS Joseph Benacci, VFW Post 470
 STATE ASST. SGT-AT-ARMS Nathaniel Smith, VFW Post 7293

General Orders ... continued on page 5

Commander's Testimonial Weekend is October 21-22

State Commander Thomas A. Brown will be the guest of honor at the Commander's Testimonial Weekend scheduled for Friday, October 21 and Saturday, October 22 at the Clarion Hotel in Essington, just off of Route 95 outside of Philadelphia.

The hotel address is 76 Industrial Highway, Essington, PA 19029. To reserve a room call Ms. Toner at (610) 521-9600, ext. 1156.

Friday evening's theme is an "Irish Wake" so wear your favorite Irish green. Buffet to be served from 7-9.

Saturday evening's banquet begins with a 6 p.m. cocktail hour and a dinner program beginning at 7. Attire is tux or dark suit for men and "Sunday's Best" for women. Cost is \$40 per night.

Banquet seating will be by tables of eight. Please provide the names in your party if you have a preferred seating request. A Testimonial Ad Book will be produced with proceeds going to offset the cost of the event.

See the forms at right to register for the event. Forms can also be found on the Department's website, www.vfwpahq.org, under the "Events" section.

Please pay special attention to the deadline dates. Checks for the Ad Book and Friday/Saturday event should be made out to "Tom Brown Steering Fund."

State Commander's Testimonial Reservation Form for Both Nights

Checks payable: "Thomas Brown Steering Committee"

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post/Auxiliary: _____ District: _____

Phone: _____ # of Reservations: _____

Email address: _____

Friday tickets - \$40 _____ # Saturday tickets - \$40 _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____ (\$80 for both nights per person)

(Saturday evening meal selections - must equal ticket total):

_____ Prime Rib _____ Stuffed Talapia _____ Vegetarian

Special Diet (provide details) _____

RESERVATION DEADLINE: October 1st Check # _____

Mail reservations to: Barbara Percival, 214 Carre Ave., Essington, PA 19029

Tickets can be picked up in hotel lobby Friday afternoon.

Please attach a separate sheet listing who you want to sit with. The cost of the tickets helps to offset the event expenses.

Testimonial Commemorative Program Book and Boosters

The Brown Testimonial Committee will be having a Commemorative Program Book with Boosters for the Testimonial to offset the cost of the events.

Check your ad size: (this form must be sent with ads)

___ Full page \$80 ___ Half page \$50

___ Quarter page \$35 ___ Eighth Page \$25 ___ Patron Ad \$5

Please type or print all advertisements or attach camera-ready ads. Ads can be sent via e-mail to: jackkennard707@gmail.com. If e-mailed, the ad must be done in Microsoft Word and a copy of the ad must be sent with payment. The ads will be black and white. If a photo is submitted, it must be camera-ready. If the ad information is not submitted with your check, an ad will be designed for you. All ads must be accompanied by check or money order (no cash) payable to: Thomas Brown Steering Committee: **Mail ads to: Jack Kennard, 224 Market St., Apt. 2, Marcus Hook, PA 19061. His phone number is (484) 485-0747. Ad deadline is September 1st.**

Payment enclosed _____ Check # _____

Name/phone: _____

This order is a contract. No agreements have been made other than those in this agreement. This order is legal and binding. By submitting this form, you have read, understand and agree to these terms. Ad revenue will help offset the cost of the events.

Signature _____

Date _____



Pictured after the Installation of Officers at the State Convention are members of the Department's Council of Administration (left) consisting of Line Officers and District Commanders; and State Sergeants-at-Arms, Membership Recruiters and Program Chairpersons (right).

General Orders ... continued from page 4

REGIONAL SERVICE OFFICERS:

Service Officer Chair: John Foster, 133 E. Wolfert Station Road, Mickleton, NJ 08056

NORTHEAST: WILKES-BARRE - Albert Pritchard, ASDO; Claims Consultant: Joanne Kane, 123 E. End Blvd., Bldg. 35, Suite 1, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702-1521 (570) 821-2535/2536 Fax (570) 821-2539; OUTREACH: Louis Ybarra

EAST: PHILADELPHIA - John Foster, DSO/, Allen Dick, ASDO; Claims Consultants: Gertrude Strain; Secretary: Angela Johnson; VA Center 5000 Wissahickon Ave., P.O. Box 42938, Philadelphia, PA 19101-2938 (215) 381-3123 Fax (215) 381-3491; OUTREACH RENOVA: David Bower, ASDO WEST: PITTSBURGH OFFICE - Linda Eshenbaugh, Claims Consultants/Office Manager; Administrative Assistant Kyra L. Price; 1000 Liberty Ave., Room 1601, Pittsburgh, PA 15022 (412) 395-6259/6260 Fax-(412) 395-6261; OUTREACH: PITTSBURGH- Elizabeth Salvador, Joshua Croner; OUTREACH ALTOONA none at time of print, ASDO; OUTREACH BUTLER Clarence Madigan, ASDO

ERIE OFFICE- Michelle Messina, Claims Consultant/Office Manager; Secretary: Charlene Kontsky; 3112 Buffalo Road-Suite A, Erie, PA 16510 (814) 835-8494 Fax (814) 835-8493; OUTREACH: Michelle Messina, Claims Consultant and Melissa Davis, ASDO

CENTRAL/HARRISBURG OFFICE - ADSOs Audrey Bergstresser, John Chiodi, Edward Fake and Christine Frederick; Claims Consultant Linda Jayman; 4002 Fenton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17109 (717) 234-7927 Fax (717) 909-7817

4. Every Post chartered by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States will be expected to participate in the following programs during the 2016-2017 year: Voice of Democracy, Patriots Pen, National Citizenship Education Teacher's Awards, Buddy Poppy and National Military Services. Additionally, it is necessary that all Post and Department Commanders comply with all provisions of the National By-Laws and the Manual of Procedure and Ritual.

5. The distribution of VFW Buddy Poppies will be conducted according to the provisions set forth in sections 711 of the National By-Laws/Manual of Procedure. Department, District,

County Council and Post commanders should arrange now for the distribution of Buddy Poppies in their respective areas. All profits accruing from the distribution of Buddy Poppies shall be used in accordance with section 704 of the National By-Laws and the Manual of Procedure.

6. **POST RESERVE:** Attention is directed to section 218(a)(5)(f), Manual of Procedure which mandates Post Quartermasters to maintain a dues reserve fund as prescribed in sections 717 of the National By-Laws and the Manual of Procedure.

7. **Attention of commanders at all levels is directed to section 703 of the National By-Laws requiring that each accountable officer be bonded** with an indemnity company in the sum at least equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which he may be accountable.

8. **Attention of Post Commanders is directed to section 218(a)(11), Manual of Procedure, Trustees**, which states that Post Trustees shall prepare and submit quarterly, through their Post Commander, a Post Trustees' Report of Audit to the Dept. Quartermaster for referral to the Department Inspector. The first report is due at the close of September. Do not mail these reports to National Headquarters.

9. **Attention of Department and Post Commanders is directed to the requirement of timely filing of Internal Revenue Form 990, 990/N and 990/T, where applicable.** Forms may be secured from your local Post Office or branch office of the IRS.

10. **Posts are urged to start planning suitable programs now to observe Veterans Day (see section 223/Manual of Procedure).**

11. **A thorough program of Post inspection is necessary to ensure compliance with National and Department By-Laws and directives.** Department and District Inspectors shall make every effort to inspect every Post under their cognizance on an annual basis and correct such discrepancies as may be disclosed.

By: Thomas A. Brown, State Commander - 1056 Georgetown Road, Swarthmore, PA 19081

ATTEST: John B. Getz, Jr., State Adjutant/Quartermaster

Focus on Mission Success



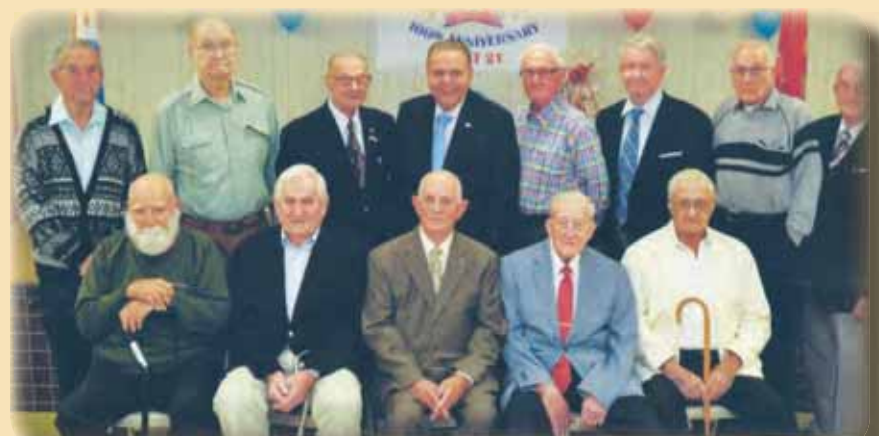
During Memorial Day services in Connellsville Post 21 gathered for a photo by the town Veterans Memorial. Pictured are (from left) Commander Donald Sipie, Chief of Staff Allen Jones, then State Sr. Vice Commander Thomas Brown, Past Department President Nancy Jones, VFW member Thomas McFadden (American Legion Post 301 adjutant) and Post 21 member Gerald Browell.



Cranberry Township Post 879 adopted the local Army Reserve Quartermaster Company to show military personnel and younger veterans that the VFW supports them. Pictured (from left) are: MSGT. Dolphuss Addison, Post Senior Vice Commander Charles Lewis, Quartermaster Rex Brown, Lt. April Ferry, First Sergeant Richard Sears, Post Commander Hugh MacPherson and Sgt. Nicholas Vaccaro.



Greensburg Post 33 members, Auxiliary members and local Boy and Girl Scouts welcome hospitalized veterans from the Aspinwall VA facility to the post for a semi-annual spaghetti dinner and bingo party. Each veteran received a gift bag. The guests of honor expressed their gratitude for a delicious meal and entertaining bingo games.



Helping Connellsville Post 21 celebrate its 100th Anniversary were World War II veterans (front row, left to right) Angelo Alesantrino, Joseph Fierschaller, Allen Jones, Fred Luckey and Charles Nicholson; (back row) Joseph Arnold, R. Brady Mitchell, Tom Stefancin, Guest Speaker Commander-in-Chief John Biedrzycki, Harry McGann, Harry Porter, Robert McKnight and Joseph Layman. *Congratulations Post 21!*



Selinsgrove Post 6631 donates \$500 to the Pennsylvania State Police Camp Cadet program. Shown are Commander Douglas Hammett, Trooper Rick Blair and Post 6631 Quartermaster Harold W. Aucker.



Representatives of Hershey Post 3502 and District 18 present VFW Voice of Democracy certificates to Hershey High School students who participated in the speech writing contest. By appointing a post chairperson and reaching out to local school officials VFW posts of all sizes can participate in this patriotic classroom program.

Focus on Mission Success



Winners of the Department's Annual Golf Tournament stand proudly with their trophies. Indiana Post 1989 is the long-time sponsor of the tournament, which brings together golfers from across the state. Congratulations to the winners and to Post 1989 for operating a well-organized, enjoyable event for golfers of all ages.



Carlisle Post 477 staffed a VFW information table during the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center's "Army Heritage Days." Shown are Post Commander Rick Olson, Sr. Vice Commander Cheryl Rudd and Jr. Vice Commander Bob Gambert.



Honorary Consul of France in Pittsburgh, Jean-Dominique Le Garrec, right, congratulates World War II veteran and Post 914 member Glenn E. Kempf on being awarded the Chevalier of the Legion of Honor. (Photo by Michael P. Mauer)



Huntingdon Post 1754 members Past State Commander Frank Mills and Past State Inspector Ray Shipp set up a VFW information display in a local Tractor Supply. This National VFW project opens doors for VFW posts across the nation to have a prominent presence in retail settings where members can meet veterans and current military personnel.



West Mifflin Post 914 Past Commander Richard Fleischer (left) and Quartermaster Gary Ruston display an Allegheny County Council Certificate of Achievement presented by Bob Macey, District 9 County Council representative. The post was recognized for earning "All State Post honors." (Photo by Michael P. Mauer)



On Veterans Day, Lower Allen Post 7530 presented the Lower Allen Fire Department and the Lower Allen Police Department each with a check for \$5,000 to support public safety operations. Handing the checks to police and fire personnel is Past Commander and current President Don Prescott. All posts are encouraged to support their local public safety departments.

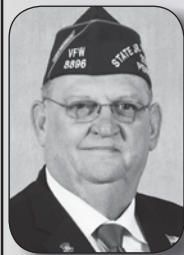


Student Marisa Sankey—winner of the District 7 and Folsom Post 928 *Voice of Democracy* Contest— is shown after receiving her award with (from left) Post 928 Auxiliary President Carol Roger, Post Commander Robert McGarry and Post member and then State Sr. Vice Commander Thomas Brown. Sankey joined 23 other district winners who enjoyed a weekend of activities in Gettysburg as part of the *Voice of Democracy* Banquet.



Work Our Programs and Members will Come

Dwight R. Fuhrman, State Sr. Vice Cmdr. - dmfuhrman@comcast.net



What an honor it was for me to serve with immediate Past State Commander Umberger as his Department Junior Vice Commander. He and his "LDRSHIP"

Team and you, my fellow veterans, accomplished much!

Now it is time to focus on Commander Brown's year. He, his elected and appointed officers and chairman, and yes, you again my fellow brothers and sisters, must keep strong our mission of serving veterans, our military and our communities.

Our priorities must continue to be community service projects, VFW programs, legislative advocacy and keeping the VA system strong in order to care for today's veterans and veterans in the future.

Commander Brown believes that if we accomplish these goals, the

membership and the next generation of veterans will seek us out; I could not agree with him more.

New members will come to our wonderful VFW and current ones will stay on board if we continue to accomplish much in many areas.

"Our priorities must continue to be community service projects, VFW programs, legislative advocacy and keeping the VA system strong in order to care for today's veterans and veterans in the future."

You can help our Department and your post to touch many lives by making sure that the VFW mission drives and controls your post. Having a canteen and social members in your post can be very beneficial, but remember that it is not the reason why the VFW exists.

May God Bless America, you and your families and our military.



Your Outstanding Service & Support is Appreciated

Thomas "Ace" Hanzes, State Jr. Vice Cmdr. - thomashanzes@yahoo.com



Last year was a banner year for the Department of PA VFW and Community Service. A very impressive 92% of our posts reported activity in this program area.

Your hard work raised an outstanding \$7.2 million dollars in donations and generated more than 700,000 hours of volunteer time.

The following districts were 100% for submitting community service reports in the year 2015-2016: Districts 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18, 21, 22, 28 and 29.

Job well-done!

Let's strive to maintain the good work and keep those reports coming in. There are so many wonderful comrades and posts in this Department.

Thank you Past State Commander Glenn R. Umberger Jr. and Commander Thomas A. Brown for the appointment as I continue to serve the Department as Community Service Chairman.

A great job was done by Commander Umberger and the Department during the 2016 State Convention. Thank you to District 20 Commander Ronnie Byrd and

District 20 for all they did to make the Convention a wonderful event.

There are so many comrades I wish to thank for their support, advice and their confidence in me being elected to the high office of State Jr. Vice-Commander.

I am truly honored and humbled. It was an experience of a lifetime for my family, friends, District 28, Reynolds Post 7599 and me.

I am proud to serve under the leadership of Commander Thomas

Brown and Sr. Vice-Commander Dwight Fuhrman. With this new year, some new faces have been brought into the mix, but the goals remain the same: completing VFW programs,

helping veterans, veterans' families, the community and keeping the Department one of the best in the nation!

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the Post Officer Training Instruction events throughout the state. When you read this there may still be a few events left: August 14 at VFW Post 5958, Titusville; August 27 at Post 7069, Clarks Summit; and August 28 at Post 245, Sellersville.

I am proud to serve. Thank you for all you do.



Membership Moment

Reselling Your VFW Post Can Be Done

Henry R. Mannella, State Membership Chair - h.mannella72@yahoo.com



I recently read some great information circulated by our National VFW Membership Department that I think is worth sharing with you. It reinforces why it's important for us to reach out to past members and encourage them to become active members again.

Sales professionals know that selling to former customers is easier than acquiring new ones. In fact, average success rates for turning former customers into current ones range from 20 percent to 40 percent!

However, recovering lost customers is only possible if you're willing to find out why they left in the first place.

Numerous surveys reveal that when customers stop using a product or service, the reason is almost always either bad customer service or poor quality.

When you're looking to win back a customer, you first need to find out the REAL reason that the customer bailed. The ONLY way to do this is to summon up the courage to ask, honestly and humbly, with the full expectation that you might get an earful of unpleasantness.

Once you've figured out where the

error lies, address the issue and explain what's changed to ensure that the customer will have a better experience. This is easier than you think because the member initially found SOMETHING about your post that was appealing.

Many former members WANT to come back to the fold, provided the issue that caused them to leave is being addressed.

Comrades, as State Membership Chairman, I cannot say it any better than this. Our membership challenge would quickly be accomplished if we each brought one new member into the organization and recovered members who have left.

If you run a business that did not attract new customers, keep existing ones and reactivate previous supporters, you would have to close down.

The same applies to the VFW. We can and must take steps to be all inclusive, to be open to new ideas, to resolve differences and to fight hard for what we believe in—just like we did in the military.

Post leadership should have received our Membership Contest Program Book. Here's the bottom line: the goals are reachable for all posts, and the incentives are rewarding. We respectfully urge all posts and members to dedicate the time and energy needed to be 100% plus one.



Facts and Figures

HQs Can Help Officers Fulfill Their Duties

John B. Getz, Jr. - State Adjutant/Quartermaster - adjutant@vfwpahq.org



Comrades: I look forward to working with all of you this year. If you need my support in any way please call or email me anytime.

As post officers, I know you are serving as volunteers and sometimes it seems that the required post operation steps seem daunting or even unnecessary. However, until all official paperwork is properly filled in with all information, and submitted to HQs on time, reporting duties are not completed.

There may be times when we request post minutes or to have a post trustee report done again because of missing information. Remember, your responsibilities are not finished until you follow all regulations, which are in place for good reasons.

The VFW has a proud history. You are part of our great story as we continue our mission. Please show the same pride you had in the military when you carry out your post operation responsibilities.

Here are some hints for post

quartermasters to help you carry out your duties, especially as we start a new VFW fiscal year. These tips will save you time by making many duties quick and easy:

- Please visit the National VFW website and log in to get your password. Under "My VFW" section, you will gain access to a range of very helpful resources in the Quartermaster Tools area. You can check for members in your post who have not paid, and also see their dues deadline.
- You can update member info such as addresses and phone numbers, order replacement membership cards and update a member's status if he or she passes away.
- Check your membership percentage, transfer members and file election results.

So please log into www.vfw.org and start using this very effective tool.

Post commanders can better lead their unit by utilizing the Post Training section, which answers many basic questions like how to properly run a post meeting.

If you need any help with carrying out your duties or with anything related to running your post, feel free to call me at (717) 234-7927. *Thank you for all you do!*

Convention ... from page 1

nation's largest Department promoting continued growth through community service.

Brown earned his eligibility through service in the Navy and Navy Reserve from 1950-56 and 1957-67 with the 6th and 7th Fleets. His service included time in Cuba, Korea and Germany.

"The VFW is all about service—service to veterans, service to today's military troops, service to local communities, and service to citizens of all

Commander and Thomas M. Hanzes (Post 7599) won a contested election to serve as State Jr. Vice Commander.

(Please see "General Orders" on page 4 for a list of line officers, district commanders and other elected or appointed leadership positions. See page 10 for a list of award winners who were honored during the State Convention.)

The Convention featured a special ceremony during which several hundred Vietnam veterans received a 50th Anniversary Vietnam War

Commonwealth's Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans Affairs, encouraged all VFW members to visit www.dmva.pa.gov to review the State's veterans benefits administered by the agency. He also urged veterans to enter their information in the State Veterans Registry to keep informed about services and benefits.

Among the program results reported by VFW program chairpersons were:

- National Military Service donations totaling \$26,848, second nationally among all Department totals,
- Veterans Service Officers recovered \$35 million in federal benefits,
- Thousands of dollars in donations to help homeless veterans,
- Growing support of student vets,
- Continued outreach to and support of female veterans,
- An expanding VFW Riders Group initiative giving veterans of all ages camaraderie through motorcycle rides and military escort events,
- Steady support of student essay and speech contests which develop

"Your Department of Pennsylvania truly makes tremendous things happen by working our VFW programs that serve veterans, support our troops and benefit communities. Your hard work keeps the VFW strong and relevant."

**– George R. Cramer
Past VFW National Chief**



"Pennsylvania Wounded Warriors makes sure every returning service member in need receives assistance. We thank you for the outstanding financial support we receive from the VFW. Ninety-five cents of every \$1 helps wounded warriors including the 1,500 families we assisted in 2015. We are all volunteers; there are no paid staff."
**– Major General (Ret.) Randall R. Marchi
PWW Representative and Volunteer**

ages and walks of life," stated Commander Brown. "The VFW was created more than a century ago as a service organization and our future success as a member-driven organization lies in continuing that tradition of service."

In addition to Commander Brown's election, Dwight R. Fuhrman (Post 8896) was voted to ascend to State Sr. Vice

Commemoration Pin honoring them for their service to their nation.

All posts were encouraged to join the Department as a Commemorative Partner and to hold similar pinning ceremonies in their communities. For more information visit www.vietnamwar50th.com.

VFW life member and Brigadier General (Ret.) Jerry Beck, the

patriotism and a respect for veterans,

- Impressive community service worth \$7.2 million in donations and 700,000 volunteer hours during the 2015-16 program year,
- First responders were honored for heroic actions to keep the public safe,
- Outstanding support of youth scouting, sports leagues, kid's holiday events and scholarship programs.

Outgoing State Commander Glenn R. Umberger, Jr., thanked his leadership and all posts for their many achievements that enhanced many lives. The Department finished the 2015-16 membership year at 97.8% of the 2014-15 total.

With veterans from varied service backgrounds working together to advance the organization's mission, leadership and delegates left the Convention dedicated to continue proving that "No One Does More for Veterans" than the VFW.



Past State Commander Allen Jones from Post 21 enjoys reuniting with fellow World War II veterans Adolph Slovik of Post 6708 (left) and Thomas Spingola of Post 1785.



Post delegates salute the United States flag at the start of a daily session.



State Commander Umberger and PA Veterans Affairs Deputy Adjutant General Jerry Beck place Vietnam War Commemorative Pins on veterans.



Downingtown Post 845 presented numerous donations during the Convention including \$10,000 to the VFW's National Home in Michigan.



Members from all service eras participated in the Convention including post 9-11-2001 veterans.



The Department presented a plaque to Past State Commander Ruth Fairchild for securing two medical response bags for use at State VFW functions. State Commander Umberger thanked Commander Fairchild's employer—Jamison Health System—for donating supplies to treat veterans' medical needs.

2015-16 Dept. of PA VFW Award Winners

MEMBERSHIP CONTESTS

ALL-AMERICAN & ALL-STATE DISTRICTS:

Post Commander/Quartermaster

District 14 - Mark Webster, Richard Dykeman
 District 22 - George Fletcher, Sandra Miller (Showalter)
 District 29 - John Winters, Henry Mannella

ALL-AMERICAN POSTS:

Post/Commander/Quartermaster - 5207- John Croom, William Lamond; 1568 - Cornelius Blokzyl, Oliver Crisp; 6824 - Jeremy Perez, Steven Hakes; 212 - Ronald Peters, Charles Beattie; 7043 - William Hewitt, William Dubler; 5958 - William McCrillis, Jamey Duncan; 914 - Jake Bradich, Gary Ruston; 1810 - Robert Emerick, Henry Mannella

CAPTAINS ALL-STATE TEAM:

Post Commander Captain - Robert Emerick, Post 1810
 Quartermaster Captain - Henry Manne lla, Post 1810

ALL-STATE DISTRICT CAPTAINS:

District Commander - John Winters, District 29
 District Quartermaster - Henry Mannella, District 29

CHOSNYK PLAQUE: (GREATEST PERCENTAGE INCREASE NEW/REINSTATED AMONG DISTRICTS):

Commander Mark Webster, District 14

COMMANDER'S PLAQUE (HIGHEST NUMERICAL INCREASE AS OF APRIL 30 AMONG POSTS):

211 members - Post 1810 Cmdr. Robert Emerick, QM. Henry Mannella

ROBERT MUSSER MEMORIAL PLAQUE (GREATEST POST PERCENTAGE INCREASE BY APRIL 30):

133.03% - Post 7043 Cmdr. William Hewitt, QM. William Dubler

VAN ZANDT AWARD (MOST NEW/REINSTATED POST MEMBERS AS % OF MEMBERSHIP):

26.40% - Post 7043 - Commander William Hewitt, Quartermaster William Dubler

JOE SALVO AWARD (INDIVIDUAL MEMBER SIGNING UP THE MOST NEW/REINSTATED MEMBERS OVER 25):

83 Members - George Fletcher, Post 7043

ALL-STATE POSTS

Post/Commander/Quartermaster

175 - James Mc Comb, Louis Rizzo
 3258 - Elwood Hippel, James Dunn
 6393 - Thomas Hauserman, Horace Mundy
 531 - William Long, Scott Smith
 6221 - Dennis McCulla, Barry Sarick
 7155 - Edward McDade, George Henderson
 5754 - Ralph March, Melvin Brant
 1213 - Patrick Morrow, Charles Kuebaugh
 1620 - John Stutzman, Ricky Snyder
 6497 - Gregory Showers, Joseph Heaney
 7530 - David Barninger, John Hafer
 1446 - Donald Boyce, Terry Stokes
 8896 - Tony Groft, Dwight Fuhrman
 1600 - Larry Gingerich, Robert Corman
 1785 - John Rowles, Edward Neeper
 7689 - Richard Thomas, Paul Orris
 8724 - Richard Dively, William Nelson
 9575 - Walter Mayes, Timothy Foust
 879 - Hugh MacPherson, Rex Brown
 7505 - Wayne Perry, Robert Carrara
 4843 - Daryl Ray, Donald King
 7377 - Michael Hoover, Dennis Wyland
 470 - Michael Staab, Joseph Benacci
 740 - Robert Nesbitt, Edward Denk
 1338 - Patrick Kelley, Justin Enkis
 6345 - LaVerne Campbell, Albert Chambers
 7599 - Clark Eberhart, Thomas Hanzas
 7842 - Michael Peirce, Tim Watson

DEPT. SCHOLARSHIP CONTESTS

Voice of Democracy Winner - Hanna Houtz, Post 7463, District 17;
 VOD Teacher of the Year - Kathy Jo Reinsmith, Post 6168, District 18;
 Patriot's Pen - Eden Beichler, Post 8896/Auxiliary, District 21.

ANNUAL VFW SAFETY AWARDS

Radko Law Enforcement: Eric Schmitt of Ephrata, nominated by Post 3376. District 9; Firefighter of the Year: Anthony Suplizio, nom-



Congratulations to Post 7043's George Fletcher for earning the Department's Joseph Salvo Award as the top individual recruiter for the 2015-16 VFW year. George's hard work recruited or reinstated 83 members. Thanks, George, and all members of Post 7043, for having such a terrific membership year that resulted in All-American and All-State honors.

inated by Post 813, District 2; EMT: C. Steven Lyle of Wrightsville, nominated by Post 2493, District 21.

CITIZENSHIP TEACHER AWARDS

Department's National Citizenship Education Teachers of the Year:
 K-5 - Steve Heffner, nominated by Post 4843; grades 6-8 - Michalee Christ, Post 6345; and grades 9-12 - Cheri Gensel, Post 5207

DEPT. EAGLE SCOUT AWARD

1st - Elliot Dereck Copeland from Troop 665, Post 6393; 2nd - Braeden Gonzales from Troop 110, Post 8951; 3rd - Katharine Burke from Troop 21116, Post 6495

DANIEL GIEGER SCHOLARSHIP

A \$500 scholarship for pursuing higher learning beyond high school:
 Breana Marzka of North East, PA - nominated by Post 4789

BUDDY POPPY AWARDS

State Convention Display Contests:

Category 1 - 1st place: Post 4843; 2nd place: Post 8724 Auxiliary; and 3rd place: Post 3376 Auxiliary

Category 2 - 1st place: Post 470 Auxiliary; 2nd place: Post 8826; and 3rd place: Post 4843

Category 3 - 1st place: Post 7465 Auxiliary; 2nd place: Post 23 Auxiliary; and 3rd place: Post 1463

Category 4 - 1st place: Post 5507 and Auxiliary

DEPT. COMMUNICATIONS CONTESTS

Post Newsletter - Shellsville Post 9639 first place award, Editor Michael Stephens; Chalfont Post 3258 second place, Bill Malone

District Newsletter - District 16, Editor Earl Colella first place

Post Website - Spring Grove Post 5265 first place, Webmaster Tina Hinkle; Chalfont Post 3258, Webmaster Michael St. John second
 District Website - District 22, Webmaster Dwayne Anders first place
 National Department Communications Awards Category - PA VFW News and Post 914 member Michael Mauer for a first-place Grand Award for writing the best feature story in Department papers.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

Record Books: 1st place - Post 928; 2nd - Post 1620; 3rd - Post 33

Contest Number 1: DIVISION 1: DISTRICT 21 VFW POST 1599; DISTRICT 28 VFW POST 5958; AND DISTRICT 28 VFW POST 2006; DIVISION 2: DISTRICT 18 VFW POST 6168; DISTRICT 21 VFW POST 8896; AND DISTRICT 18 VFW POST 2385; DIVISION 3: DISTRICT 14 VFW POST 1568; DISTRICT 8 VFW POST 6393; AND DISTRICT 20 VFW POST 509; DIVISION 4: DISTRICT 11 VFW POST 8227; DISTRICT 10 VFW POST 4712; AND DISTRICT 20 VFW POST 3448

Contest Number 2: DISTRICT 8 COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIRMAN PETER WALTER; DISTRICT 10, WILLIAM LAMOND III; DISTRICT 13, JAMES LINDSEY; DISTRICT 16, EARL COLELLA; DISTRICT 18, CLIFFORD KREISER; DISTRICT 21, ROBERT HARRIS; DISTRICT 28, JOSEPH BENACCI, DISTRICT 29, JOHN WINTERS; DISTRICT 22, SHELLY NELSON; DISTRICT 14, JAYNE YARLING; DISTRICT, ANNA BUZAN BROWN

Contest 4: DISTRICT 7 VFW POST 3460; DISTRICT 7 VFW POST 7213; DISTRICT 8 VFW POST 6393; DISTRICT 8 VFW POST 6493; DISTRICT 9 VFW POST 3376; DISTRICT 9 VFW POST 4480; DISTRICT 9 VFW POST 7362; DISTRICT 11 VFW POST 8317; DISTRICT 14 VFW POST 6223; DISTRICT 14 VFW POST 8306; DISTRICT 16 VFW POST 7155; DISTRICT 17 VFW POST 1754; DISTRICT 20 VFW POST 294; DISTRICT 21 VFW POST 1599; DISTRICT 21 VFW POST 8896; DISTRICT 23 VFW POST 3504; DISTRICT 24 VFW POST 3491; DISTRICT 26 VFW POST 4843; DISTRICT 27 VFW POST 92; DISTRICT 28 VFW POST 470; AND DISTRICT 28 VFW POST 2006

VFW Eagle ... continued from page 1

service, Captain Miller knew he was with a family of veterans who continue their service by fighting for veterans and the troops. His remarks clearly show that the PA VFW Eagle Award is fulfilling the program's objectives.

In 2009, the Department created the award program in recognition of the thousands of Guardians who deployed overseas since the 2001 terror attacks, and to:

- Honor the State's National Guardians for their exemplary service in combat zones,
- Create a bond and mutual respect between younger veterans and their older comrades, and
- Develop relationships that lead to membership growth and generate future VFW leaders.

State HQs invites the Adjutant General—who is the PA National Guard's commanding officer—to nominate a Guardian whose service exemplifies the VFW's tradition of dedication to duty, honor and selfless service. VFW membership is not a criteria for nomination.

Captain Miller—a veteran of both Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, as well as of a tour in Kosovo—recently became a life member to fulfill his long-time goal of joining the VFW. All 13 PA VFW Eagle Award winners were either already VFW members or signed up within months of receiving what has become known as a very distinguished military award.

"I'm proud to be part of that 1% of our population that is serving today," said Captain Miller, the Administrative Section Chief for Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 28th ID. "I'm also proud to be part of the 6% who are veterans like you. Thank you for stepping up. I am proud to stand with you in the VFW."

Acceptance remarks from all winners dating back to the first award have commended VFW members for setting the service bar high for those who follow. They also expressed their gratefulness for the many ways that the VFW has shown its support to military personnel.

In 2011, award recipient Air National Guard Master Sergeant William Meiser, commented, "I am deeply honored and very appreciative to received your Eagle Award. Thank you all for your service to keep our nation free.... You reached out and accepted me as one of your own in my post. I am glad to be in your ranks."

In addition to recipients nominated by the Adjutant General, the Department has presented Eagle awards to command officers for their outstanding leadership and for helping the VFW to develop mutually beneficial relationships with Guard units across the state. These recipients all noted that joining the VFW was a top priority when coming home after a qualifying deployment.

"This program is one of our best military support campaigns," notes State Adjutant/Quartermaster John B. Getz, Jr., who as State Commander traveled to Iraq in 2008 to visit PA Guardians. "The feedback we get from Guard leadership is extremely positive, which creates opportunities to build relationships within the Guard.

"There are Guard units all over the Commonwealth. With more than 35,000 deployments since 2001," Getz continued, "Guardians have played a vital role in the defense of freedom. They deserve our support and have earned our respect. We honor them as our brothers and sisters—comrades who have served well in harm's way."

By honoring Guardians for their service, supporting younger war veterans and creating avenues to both promote the VFW's mission and membership, the VFW Eagle Award has become a top highlight at Department conferences. The award has also become one of the most effective VFW military support projects in the nation.

The VFW Auxiliary ... Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes



The Department President Says...

Important Changes are Making Us Better

By Donna K. Mills fd1mills@comcast.net or (814) 658-2130



Thank you to every member of the VFW Auxiliary Department of Pennsylvania for electing me to serve as your Department President for 2016-2017. I'm excited and

honored to have the opportunity to visit each District, VA Hospital and Veterans Home, and spend time with Auxiliary brothers and sisters and Comrades across this Great Commonwealth.

Once again, there are many changes for the Auxiliary this year, all of which are good changes that will lead to growth and successes within our Auxiliaries. First and foremost is the new eligibility to the VFW Auxiliary of male relatives of veterans who have VFW eligibility. This new eligibility became available during the 2015-2016 year, but we have only begun to scratch the surface of all of the potential new members to our VFW Auxiliary.

Your Department has a new redesigned website available at www.pavfwaux.org. I encourage you to check it out and let us

know your thoughts on this new and easier to use tool.

The VFW Auxiliary Department of Pennsylvania has also made an appearance on Facebook with a new Department Facebook page. The page can be found by typing VFW Auxiliary Department of Pennsylvania in the search bar in Facebook. Please find our page and follow it for valuable information that will be provided throughout the 2016-2017 year.

These are just a few of the many tools, ideas and events that are available to Auxiliaries and VFW Posts to guarantee program and leadership success.

The "UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR UNCOMMON HEROES" that every one of us gives will allow us to continue "SERVING AMERICA'S HEROES" for many years to come.

We are here to provide assistance to you for your success. I look forward to meeting many of you in my travels during the 2016-17 year.

We will lead this year with kindness, gratitude and loyalty to our mission. We will finish with a year that will not soon be forgotten.

There Are Still Many Eligible Auxiliary Members Out There!

By Deborah Sigman - Membership Chairperson - debs322@comcast.net



Last year, our Department Auxiliary had an outstanding year surpassing the 107% mark. There are enough eligible Auxiliary members out there to go even higher, well beyond 100% by June 30, 2017.

Our goals for membership are simple: recruit new members; retain our current members; rejoin members who have left; and grow our organization

COMRADES OF THE VFW: I am asking for your help. For every VFW member, there is an average of eleven eligible Auxiliary members. Please encourage them to join our ranks. There are awards at both Department and National level for the VFW member who recruits members for the VFW Auxiliary.

Our Department will award \$25 to the VFW member who secures the most new and/or rejoined members by April 30.

On the National Level, VFW members who recruit 20 new or rejoined Auxiliary members from July 1, 2016 through April 30, 2017 that are received at National HQ by May 31, 2017 will be entered into a drawing for 10 awards of \$50.00.

In order to qualify, the application must be signed by the VFW member as the recruiter. Forms for both awards are available through the PA Department Headquarters and also at pavfwauxiliary.org

The forms must be sent to State HQs in Harrisburg for verification by the Department Treasurer.

"SERVING AMERICA'S HEROES" we must increase our membership, and rejoin and retain our members to show our "UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR UNCOMMON HEROES."

President



Donna Mills
Aux. 1754

Senior Vice



Kelly Lepak
Aux. 2754

Junior Vice



Charlotte Lopes
Aux. 92

Sec-Treas.



Jodie Hollinger
Aux. 5956

Chaplain



Sandra Wilder
Aux. 267

Conductress



Wendi Hennemann
Aux. 8488

Guard



Pamela Sopher
Aux. 5958

Chief of Staff



Bonnie Eichelberger
Aux. 1754

Nat'l Council



Lynn Musselman
Aux. 11322

Parliamentarian



Theresa Groce
Aux. 974

Historian



Louise Gerhart
Aux. 5956

Patriotic Inst.



Patricia Donovan
Aux. 2754

Attention Posts: An Auxiliary Can Be a Great Asset

By Bonnie Eichelberger - Chief of Staff (814) 669-4349 or bke11@verizon.net



What does a Chief of Staff do? A Chief of Staff is the main point of contact for the Extension Program, which includes establishing new Auxiliaries.

VFW members: this is where you can make a difference. If you are a VFW Post that doesn't have an Auxiliary, I encourage you to contact your District President or District Chief of Staff and see how you can establish an Auxiliary.

An Auxiliary can help you by supporting the VFW with projects and programs such as Buddy Poppy campaigns, *Voice of Democracy* and *Patriot Pen* Essays, Hospital Parties, youth projects as well as help with meal preparation and serving, to name a few.

A good VFW Auxiliary will assist you with all of your projects within the community. This is one way to let the community know what the VFW and VFW Auxiliary stands for, and could also help you with attracting the attention of and recruiting new members for both the VFW and Auxiliary.

As Department Chief of Staff, I am looking forward to helping both the Posts and Auxiliaries increase their membership, establish new Auxiliaries and aid and support our existing Auxiliaries.

Focus on Mission Success

PERIODICALS



Enlisting in the Navy in 1936, Post 6393's Carroll Scott was honored by his Post on the 80th anniversary of the start of his Navy career. Public officials and Navy personnel joined the Post in recognizing Master Chief Scott for his outstanding military service. Before his passing Scott, 89, was believed to be the oldest living Navy Master Chief in America.



Post 8685 Senior Vice Commander Michael Brandt and Quartermaster Bert Green present a \$200 check to Post 43 member Sandy Miller to support the Department's Women Veterans Retreat. Miller is the chairman of District's 22 Women Veterans Committee. Posts can send donations for this retreat to State HQs.



During Greencastle Post 6319's 70th Anniversary Ceremony, the Post's only living charter member—Max Izer, 96, the Post's "Last Man Standing"—participated in the festivities. Izer, a World War II Army veteran, is shown with Past Post Commander Vietnam veteran Rick Hess. (Photo *Echo Pilot* newspaper)



Pat Gorton, a social member of the North East Veterans Club, was presented an Award of Appreciation for arranging for a tractor and wagon for veterans to ride in during the North East Cherry Fest Parade. Presenting the award was District 28 Commander Joseph Benacci and Harry Adams, Post 4789 Commander.



Juniata Post 8685 Commander Bill Craig presents a \$500 donation to Patrolman First Class Chris Bender of the Logan Township Police Department, which will be used to upgrade security measures at the Police Department building.



Knud Hermansen, VFW Youth Programs Chairman at East Berlin Post 8896, and Post Auxiliary President M. Kathi DeCarlo, present the Department's Loyalty Day Poster Coloring Contest First-Place Award to Taylor Botterbush, a Bermudian Springs student.



Rob Witmore of Post 7878, Chairman of the Clothing Drive of Valley Forge, hands gift cards to the chairperson for the Homeless Veterans program. Post members responded tremendously when asked to support the clothing drive. The Department hopes that all posts support local food and clothing collection projects.