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YOUR VFW: NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS!

Ronald J. Peters to Command Pennsylvania Veterans of Foreign Wars

Harrisburg, Pa.- In a ceremony on June 12 at the Pennsylvania Veterans of Foreign Wars State Headquarters, the new Pennsylvania State VFW Commander Ronald J. Peters was inducted into service. Peters who was originally from Olean, New York, is currently a resident of Bradford, Pa.

Previously, he served as the Pennsylvania Sr. Vice Commander. Peters served in the U.S. Army on active duty for 12 years, to include serving as an armored cavalryman in Vietnam eventually becoming a track commander. He later served as a drill sergeant at Fort Dix, New Jersey, for three years and a recruiter in Olean, New York for six years.

Peters noted the devastating blow that COVID-19 has had on the small VFW posts across the state.



Robert Eiler, Member of the National Council of Administration, administered the oath of office to the new Pennsylvania VFW State Commander Ronald J. Peters in a ceremony June 12.

“Like any combat veteran, we just need to adapt and overcome,” said Peters. “We must accomplish our mission of serving veterans, their families and our communities.”

One of the first official acts Peters made was to send a letter on behalf of the state VFW urging the Governor to support any assistance to the VFW.

“With nearly 69,000 members, Pennsylvania has the largest VFW membership in the nation,” Peters writes. “With nearly 400 posts across the state, some struggle to stay open in the best of times.”

Peters also noted the veteran’s outreach and services that the VFW provides to get veterans benefits and assistance.

“I am so honored and humbled to lead our great department,” said Peters. “God bless all of you. Now lets go to work.”

Midwinter Conference 2019-2020 Covered Many Topics

Marking the halfway point of the 2019-20 program year, the Department’s Mid-Winter Conference in Gettysburg during end of January and the beginning of February covered a variety of topics, events and awards surrounding the Pennsylvania VFW.

Serving Veterans

Many VFW members volunteer their time to support Veterans Courts across the state, while Department programs assist homeless and unemployed veterans, and veterans impacted by diabetes and arthritis symptoms.

The Department continues visiting VA medical sites in the state to discuss healthcare issues with staff and interview veterans to ensure their needs are met.

The VFW is actively engaged with student veterans by providing support on campus at local posts and through several partnership programs.

Protecting veterans’ rights remains a top priority as evidenced through conference reports about VFW advocacy at the state and national levels. VFW staff are frequently consulted by lawmakers about key issues facing veterans, which often leads to the VFW giving testimony during legislative



The VFW Pennsylvania State Commander Wayne D. Perry (right) welcomed the VFW Commander-in-Chief William J. “Doc” Schmitz (left) to present the Pennsylvania VFW Eagle Award to Chief Warrent Officer 4 Corey J. Kaczmarek, an Army Aviator and former enlisted military policemen who is a veteran with service in Kosovo and

hearings in Harrisburg and Washington, D.C.

Serving the Military

The Veterans of Foreign Wars Pennsylvania State Commander Wayne D. Perry welcomed the VFW Commander-in-Chief William J. “Doc”

Conference ... see page 4

David Sandman Recognized for his Service to the VFW



After more than a decade of service, David Sandman retired from serving as the director of communications for the Pennsylvania VFW.

Presentations were made to him at the midwinter conference in recognition of his service by Pennsylvania VFW Commander Wayne D. Perry and the Pennsylvania Adjutant General, Maj.

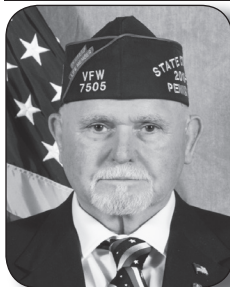
VFW Websites ... see page 8



From the State Commander 2019-2020

Treat Each Other with Honor and Respect

Wayne D. Perry



Comrades,
I am ending my year as your commander. I would like to thank all of you for your service. First, I would like to welcome to our department family, Cory

Angell. Cory is our new director of communications. He was mobilized with the National Guard for three months, so he has had trouble getting out the word for us but he is now back. He is replacing David Sandman, who retired after many years of service with us. David will be greatly missed but I know Cory will do a good job for us.

I know we have all faced many challenges with the COVID-19 restrictions. As we progress forward and we operate under new leadership we will continue to face challenges but together there is

John Getz was also always there for me and keeping me up to date on things at headquarters. He always lets me know when we have problems and suggesting solutions on how to handle them.

My Chief of Staff Cecil Dennis is always on the go with me all over the state. If I forget something in the hotel room or car he tells me to take it easy and he will go get it. I thank him for all his help and support.

Now let me get a little serious. Before COVID-19 being an issue, we were getting a lot of complaints about comrades and commanders going out to the canteen after meetings and discussing business. Business should be done at the meeting and it should be business-like. Post officers should be professional during meetings. Understanding the social aspect of the canteen is a good thing; temper it when it comes to conducting post business.

Also, we need our Auxiliary as much as they need us. I hear complaints about not being able to get help. With the



Pennsylvania VFW Commander Wayne D. Perry waives to people in the audience at the banquet during the midwinter conference in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

nothing we can't overcome.

I welcome Commander Ronald J. Peters aboard and he has all my respect and support as we all continue to battle the challenges that lie ahead.

Being commander this year has been outstanding. I have met and made a lot of new friends. I have been fortunate to participate in a lot of events in the state and I could not have been successful without all of you.

I have two great friends and line officers that also helped me out. Ron Peters a great friend and Sr. Vice Commander. He would always call and ask me if needed anything or if I needed him to go anywhere. Thank you Ron for all your support and help. You will make a great commander.

Another great friend is Nate Smith. He is the same as Ron and he has always been willing to help. He will be another great commander and I am asking you all to give them all of your help and support. I should also say that Debbie Smith and Cindy Peters are always willing to help me in any way, love you ladies.

Auxiliary will help with your dinners, events, ect. Ask the auxiliary if they would help with poppies. If they do, share in the profits, they deserve it. They will be out there in the cold, the wind and the rain also.

Posts with canteens: please let your managers and bartenders know that although they have the right not to serve someone, they do not have the right to ban anyone from the canteen. Let's remember that it's the responsibility of the post commander to run the post and its canteen. Managers and stewards are important to a good canteen but in the end the command is responsible. I would also like to remind everyone that we should be courteous to each other and treat others as we expect to be treated.

In closing, I would like to say you have two great comrades moving up to department commanders. Please help support them, as I intend to do. I will be there for them and help out anyway I can.

God bless each and everyone of you and god bless America.



From the State Senior Vice Commander

Lets Keep Working towards Success

Nathaniel Smith



Comrades;

I am very honored and humbled to be your Department of Pa. Sr. Vice Commander. I want to congratulate all you Comrades that have been elected to leadership positions of this great organization.

I am confident that we will adapt and overcome our setback of COVID-19 by getting our posts back open to be able to continue providing support to our Veterans and their families.

I want to thank the Posts and Districts that achieved Allstate and All-American status. I also want to give a big shout out to Past Department Commander Perry for his superb Leadership despite this pandemic that was beyond his control and Department Auxiliary President Sandra Wilder for reaching her goal of 100% Membership.

It is important that the Post Leadership, Commanders, Sr. Vice Commanders, Jr. Vice Commanders, Chaplains, Adjutants, and Quartermasters attend the Officers Training Institute, so they will have a better understanding of their duties and responsibilities.

We need to continue to work with our counterparts in our posts to host events and

show the community that we are a family-oriented organization. This in return will give them a reason to join and increase our membership in both the VFW and Auxiliary. It is important to invite your Community leaders and publish your events in the local newspaper so everyone will see what the VFW is doing in their communities.

Commander Peters's motto this year is to "Bridge the Gap" by encouraging our younger Comrades to fill positions within the Post and District Levels as we properly train them to be the future leaders of the VFW, and ensuring they understand the VFW's Mission, Vision, and Core Values, so as we get older, the success of this great organization will flourish and to continue to work closer with our VFW Auxiliary.

We need to continue to strengthen membership by collaboration with Military Organizations, Employers, and the Community providing facts about the VFW. I believe that more posts need to promote the adopt a unit program Veterans need to know that "Nobody does more for Veterans than the Veterans of Foreign Wars".

Thanks for your service to the VFW and this great nation. I also want to thank our Vietnam Veterans for their selfless service and sacrifices.

By-Laws Establish Election and Installation Rules

Post officers, elected and appointed, shall submit proof of eligibility to the Post Adjutant. Post officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed. Such proof of eligibility shall be open to and reviewed by the Commander, Adjutant and Quartermaster prior to the installation of office. If an elected or appointed officer does not prove eligibility within 60 days of election or appointment, the right of the officer to hold office shall be forfeited and the office vacated. Section 217 of the National By-Laws refers to the Manual of Procedure for details on installing officers immediately after elections. Send the election report to: State Adjutant, Department HQs, 4002 Fenton Ave., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17109 and National HQs.

Editor's Note

Due to the COVID epidemic the paper missed an issue. The content from that issue is included in this issue. We hope to get everything back on track but it is challenging so we ask for your patience. Anyone that wishes to submit stories, photos and description or events coming up can do so by emailing:

cangell@vfwpahq.org

James A. Danner VFW Post 537 Holocaust Remembrance Dinner



girl in the Terezin concentration camp in Czechoslovakia. When she was only three years old she experienced Kristallnacht (the night of broken glass); a night of antisemitic riots that swept her father and grandfather to Dachau concentration camp where they were tortured but released after a few weeks. Later, Inge and her parents survived imprisonment from 1942-1945.

She tells her tragic story with a message of caring for each other and at times she uses humor. It proved to be educational, entertaining and deeply moving for the packed room. Her book, *I'm a Star*, has been in print for 30 years and printed in nine languages. State VFW and Auxiliary leadership were honored to attend.

James A. Danner VFW Post 537, Etters, Pennsylvania, held a Holocaust Remembrance Dinner Jan. 22. Dr. Inge Auerbacher, guest speaker, talked about being a little



Munhall-Witaker VFW Post 6673

Quartermaster Dan Pavasko Presents a check to Carmine Caveeck of Steel Valley Banner Program for maintenance of veteran's banners as part of their contributions to veterans and the community.

Monessen Veterans donate to Greater Monessen Historical Society Museum

The Monessen American Legion Post 28 and Monessen Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1190 each donated \$250 for a total of \$500 to the Greater Monessen Museum and historical society.

The donation was driven by the need to preserve materials that contribute to telling a veteran's story. Many of these items have historical significance or personal value to the veterans and families.

Perhaps the most important reason for preservation is that this material aids the efforts of researchers

and educators.

To be able to hear a veteran's voice, read their words and view one-of-a-kind images; provides a first-person, grassroots level account of what military life, particularly during a time of war, is all about through the Veterans history Program.



The Greater Monessen Museum and historical Society

will also aid in making this Happen. The Museum located at 505 Donner Ave, in Monessen is open weekly, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10AM until 2PM, you can call them for information at 724-684-8460

Legislative Note

The State Commander, Ronald J. Peters, started out his first day of duty with a letter to the Governor's office asking for assistance to alleviate stress on our VFW Posts. We ask that you all follow our Facebook page and any messaging we put out to support this type of legislation. Your support can make a great difference for all of those in the VFW. House Bill 1048 passed and that takes a \$700 surcharge off the canteen license. However, that was a long term effort and during these times we need action sooner rather than later. There are other bills that may assist VFW Posts in the aftermath of COVID. Two bills look to allow for a post to spend all of its games of chance dollars with no restrictions for a duration of time. Some of these bills may hopefully have passed by the time of publication. We encourage you to speak to your local elected officials and have our voices heard.

Do You Need Help With Veterans Benefits?

Full-time, VA-accredited VFW State Service Officers are ready to answer questions about government benefits, help you file a claim and represent you at a VA appeal hearing. These phone numbers connect you with your nearest State Service Officer. You can ask about outreach locations and home visits.

Philadelphia: 215-381-3123

Northeastern Region: 570-821-2535/2536

Harrisburg/Lancaster/Reading/Lititz Region: 717-234-7927

York/Gettysburg/Chambersburg Region: 717-884-7927

Altoona/Johnstown Region: 814-943-8164

Pittsburgh/Southwest Region: 412-395-6259/6260

Butler Region: 724-287-4781

Erie /Northwest Region: 814-835-8494

Northcentral/State College Region: 570-748-5929

Mid Winter...Continued from page 1

Schmitz to help present the Pennsylvania VFW Eagle Award to Chief Warrant Officer 4 Corey J. Kaczmarek, a combat veteran of service in Kosovo and Afghanistan.

"I stand here today to accept the Pennsylvania VFW Eagle Award I join a distinguished group of awardees," said Kaczmarek. "I'm honored, thank you."

According to the biography read at the event, Kaczmarek started his military career Aug. 5, 1993 in the Army Reserve as a military police officer. He would later transfer into the 28th Military Police Company while attending the Indiana University of Pennsylvania where he would graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in May 1999.

After college he graduated the Warrant Officer Training Course and became an Army aviator. His first overseas mission was to Kosovo where he flew more than 280 imminent danger hours and more than 100 missions to help maintain peace in the country.

He deployed twice to Afghanistan. In 2013, he flew more than 490 combat hours and more than 150 combat missions in the Kunar Valley, providing close attack, convoy escort and reconnaissance and security.

In 2017 he deployed the second time to Afghanistan and flew more than 350 combat hours and over 100 combat missions. His unit and those they supported were responsible for the direct liberation of multiple villages from Taliban control.

Pennsylvania VFW State Commander Wayne D. Perry took time to recognize Kaczmarek's impressive record.

"To have worked so hard for all these years as an enlisted man and a warrant officer; it's a very impressive record," said Perry. "He has accomplished so much. Three overseas tours with two of them in Afghanistan and all those combat flight hours. It's an honor to recognize him."

"Today, less than one percent of the U.S. population will raise their right hand and volunteer to serve in the Armed Forces of the United States of America," said Kaczmarek. "Even less will serve in a war, campaign, or expedition on foreign soil or in hostile waters. I am honored and humbled to be standing here with you; my fellow warriors."

Kaczmarek said he is a life member at post number 4795 in Windber, Pennsylvania, and emphasized the importance of the VFW.

"We must not turn our backs on those that have served and the VFW realizes that and continues to serve and support the community and veterans now and in the future," said Kaczmarek. "I'm proud to be a member of a brotherhood that continues to give back."

Among the other ways that the VFW Department of PA supports military personnel is through continued financial and moral support of those returning from war with physical and emotional injuries. PA Wounded



VFW members from across the state pay close attention to information being provided during the daily sessions at the Mid-Winter Conference in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

THE 2019-20 VOICE OF DEMOCRACY FINALISTS

Shown below are the District winners and State Program leadership



Warriors, Inc. Founder Helen Sajer thanked the VFW for donating many thousands of dollars, which helped PAWW surpass the \$1 million mark in fundraising.

Serving Students

The VFW Pennsylvania State Commander Wayne D. Perry welcomed the VFW Commander-in-Chief William J. "Doc" Schmitz to help honor the Pennsylvania Voice of Democracy winner, Lillian Baird, Leola, Pennsylvania, at the Midwinter Conference Feb. 1, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The following placed:

2nd Gabriella Ritter, District 13, Alburtis, Pennsylvania

3rd Jace Izellah Mary, District 8, Whitehall, Pennsylvania

4th Victoria Waite, District 22, Roaring Spring, Pennsylvania

5th Liam Dicken, District 26, Rochester Mills, Pennsylvania

"You are all winners," said VFW Pennsylvania State Commander Wayne D. Perry. "You are our country's future and we thank you all for competing for this honor."

Established in 1947, the Voice of Democracy audio-essay program provides high school students with the opportunity to express themselves in regards to a democratic and patriotic-themed recorded essay. Each year, nearly 40,000 9-12 grade students from across the country enter to win their share of more than \$1.9 million in educational scholarships and incentives awarded through the program.

Last year's winner, Christine Troll, a senior home-school student from Somerset, Pa., was named the 2018-19 Voice of Democracy first-place winner. Christine's speech on the theme, "Why My Vote Matters," won her a \$30,000 college scholarship. Christine was sponsored by VFW Post 554 and its Auxiliary in Somerset, Pennsylvania.



Patriot's Pen State Winner William J. O'Bryan Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania. Takes a photograph with VFW Leadership at the Midwinter Conference



Right to left: The VFW Commander-in-Chief William J. "Doc" Schmitz joined VFW Pennsylvania State Commander Wayne D. Perry who were welcomed to help honor the Pennsylvania Voice of Democracy winner, Lillian Baird, Leola, Pennsylvania, at the Midwinter Conference Feb. 1, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Department Auxiliary President Sandra Wilder and Sr. Vice President Wendi Hennemann joined in presenting the award.



Left to right: The VFW Commander-in-Chief William J. "Doc" Schmitz and VFW Pennsylvania State Commander Wayne D. Perry Recognized the Pennsylvania Voice of Democracy Teacher of the Year, Jan Price, Clifford Township, Pennsylvania, at the Midwinter Conference Feb. 1, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Department Auxiliary President Sandra Wilder and Sr. Vice President Wendi Hennemann joined in presenting the award.

General Orders #3

1. Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 222 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure, which provides that each Post will pay, in advance, a National Convention registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and materials and one identified registered delegate for the National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten dollar (\$10) delegate fee. Posts are encouraged to register their Post delegate(s) online through the Online Membership System (OMS) or by submitting their National Convention Post and Delegate Registration form that will be mailed to all Posts as part of the Election Report/Convention Registration mailing going out later this month. Registration forms for the 121st National Convention may be mailed to: Convention Registration, 406 West 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111.

2. Attention is directed to Section 217 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure covering the nomination, election and installation of Post Officers. Post Election Report forms are being mailed to Post Quartermasters with instructions that they complete the form online through the Online Membership System (OMS) or they can complete the form and return directly to National Headquarters immediately following the election of Post Officers but not later than June 1.

3. Section 222 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure provides that delegates and alternates for the District Convention and meetings, Department and National Conventions shall be elected at a regular meeting in April. Posts are entitled to one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate for each thirty (30) members or fraction thereof in good standing in the Post as of March 31.

4. Pursuant to Section 403 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure, each District shall hold an annual District Convention for the purpose of electing District officers, such convention to be held not less than ten (10) days nor more than seventy-five (75) days prior to the convening of the Department Convention. Pursuant to Section 403 of the National Bylaws – Regular Meeting, Districts shall hold at least two (2) regular meetings each year for purposes of transacting business and conducting schools of instruction.



VFW Donations Benefit PA Wounded Warriors

VFW Posts from across the state presented checks to Hellen Sajer, President of the Pennsylvania Wounded Warriors.

The late Maj. Gen. Gerald Sajer and his wife, Helen, founded Pennsylvania Wounded Warriors Inc. in 2006 to support and assist Wounded Warriors and their families as the soldiers returned from deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq.

They started out by visiting wounded soldiers and their families in Washington D.C., then invited them for a relaxing weekend at their farm in Adams County. As the word spread, PAWW began to work with the Lebanon VA Hospital to address other veteran needs.

Ten years later, PAWW has grown tremendously thanks to the generous support of Pennsylvanians and in our statewide capability to assist Wounded Warriors, Veterans in Crisis and their families.

Cocalico Valley VFW Post 3376 donated \$10,000. Oil City Post 464 donated \$5,000 and Mechanicsburg VFW Post 6704 donated \$15,000.

Thank you to all who helped support this fine organization.





Focus on Mission Success



Trooper Johnathan Cox received the Life Saving Award from the National VFW Headquarters in December at a ceremony held at Cocalico Valley VFW Post 3376. He saved two different individuals in the course of his service as a Pennsylvania State trooper.



Ron Chromulak, Commander VFW Post 1190 surrounded by members of VFW and American Legion at their Flag Burning Ceremony in December. A respectful Ceremony was conducted beginning with the presenting of Arms to salute the flag, followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag, an invocation asking gods blessing of those who are and have defended the Flag. Then an explanation of why and how the Flags, worn out in worthy service, committed to a clean and purging flame, will be removed from further use. Following the United States Code, When a U.S. Flag is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, it should be destroyed in a dignified manner, preferably by burning.



The Harrisburg Military Entrance Processing Station presented a thank you to their local VFW Post 7530 Lemoyne for all the support they have provided them over the years.



A Purple Heart Monument was installed at the Lititz Springs VFW Post 1463 in honor of "all who shed their blood in defense of their country."



On November 13th, Jim & Sue Frigm presented Lloyd Greenwood & Robert Shank with a Quilt of Valor at West York VFW Post 8951 in front of their families, Veterans, Auxiliary and friends.



Chaplain Gene Arnold of VFW Post 7530 (Lower Allen) attended the United States Marine Corps Ball held at the Radisson Hotel in Camp Hill. Deputy Commandant of the Marine Corps for Installations and Logistics Lieutenant General Charles Chiarotti attended. The Ball celebrated the 244th Birthday of the Marines' distinguished service to our nation. Chaplain Arnold was part of the opening ceremony and recited the Marine's Prayer to kick off the event.



Nate Smith, left, Pennsylvania Jr. Vice Commander, presented Commander, John Otte, right, with the award of top recruiter in the state for 2018-19. Through Johns efforts, the Chalfont Post 3258 is over 120+% of last years membership, and are not only leading the District but also the State, in reinstating previous members and recruiting new members.



Veteran, Marlene Brusco lost her husband to PTSD. Her home was in disarray due to being a single mother and having to deal with such traumatic events in her life. Her roof had been damaged and rain leaked inside the house, so much that she had catch buckets in various areas.

Chalfont Post 3258 secured roofing materials (supplied by Dale Rimmer) and labor was secured, free of charge to Marlene. One day, Post members showed up along with some professional help, and a new roof was installed. Additionally, trees were trimmed, the back yard was cleaned and all debris removed, as well as



Focus on Mission Success



Vietnam Memorial Post 4200 and its new Auxiliary of Tire Hill, Pennsylvania, donated over \$1,200. worth of toys to the Marine Corps Toys for Tots Drive. Monetary donations came from the Post Veterans and Kerr Construction, a veteran owned company. Auxiliary Members did the shopping. Shown with Sgt. Carter, USMC, are Carol Loushe, wife of Commander Dennis Loushe and Auxiliary Member and Janice Ott, auxiliary treasurer.

Pennsylvania VFW Commander Wayne D. Perry, along with Auxiliary Commander Sandra Wilder, escort the Pennsylvania Voice of Democracy winner, Lillian Baird, to the stage where she competed against the national competitors. Congratulations on winning two scholarships Lillian, Pennsylvania is proud to have you as our competitor. The top four states were: Illinois (4th), Utah (3rd), Massachusetts (2nd) and the winning state was the great state of Nebraska.



Feb. 27 Franklin's Jesse G. Greer Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1835 presented the Commission to Remember Our Heroes with a check for \$4000 to help in rebuilding the World War II and Korean War Veterans memorials in Franklin. Pictured right to left are Post Quartermaster Mike McNany, Post Commander Matthew Gaertner, Committee Chairman C. Robert Bowen, Project Chairman George E. Jolley. Thanks for your hard work and dedication to our veterans.



Left: State VFW Commander, Wayne D. Perry attended a ceremony honoring the service and sacrifice of an Airman from Scranton, Pennsylvania, who was executed by the Nazis during WWII. State Commander Perry and Commander James Kuchwara placed a wreath 75 years after the tragic event occurred. Post 25 Commander Kuchwara and Chaplain Ken Frisbie were among those speaking. The guest speaker from the German Consulate in New York was Christian Resing. Family of Staff Sgt. Joseph E. Prokop were in attendance.

Volunteers turned out in force for the Veterans Stand Down at the Harrisburg Military Post the weekend of Feb. 21. People were eager to help the stand up team of the YWCA Greater Harrisburg and selfless volunteers at the Harrisburg Stand Down, now in its 14th year of providing a hand up to our region's homeless veterans. Pictured in the top of the two photos is the Pennsylvania Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Anthony Carrelli and the second of the two photos includes U.S. Rep. Scott Perry who represents the district. The Harrisburg Military Post was used as a temporary shelter to help over the weekend. Veteran assistance was provided and the VFW played a substantial part.

Photo submissions may be sent to: CANGELL@VFWPAHQ.ORG. Photo prints with a description can also be sent by regular mail.

Sandman...continued from page 1

Gen. Anthony Carrelli.

“Thank you to my VFW and Auxiliary Friends,” said Sandman. “I am deeply honored to be here today to accept these presentations.”

Sandman served for 15 years as the department’s communications director.

“This was the highlight of my career, one which I tried to manage with professionalism, humility and passion,” said Sandman. “Thank you for the many letters, emails and phone calls that I received after retiring.”

Sandman noted his close work with the Pennsylvania National Guard, the VFW Eagle Award and other proud moments in his career.

“That’s why creating the VFW Eagle Award is one of my most rewarding accomplishments,” said Sandman. “That and helping to manage VFW-Wendy’s grant program that has donated \$225,000 dollars to Guard families.”

In conclusion Sandman made not of his strong religious convictions and a quote he attached to all his emails.

“I always included the scripture reference of Philippians 4-13, which reads, ‘I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,’” said Sandman. “May God’s grace and peace be with you all. May you glorify and honor him in all that you do.”

Pa. National Guard Soldiers awarded Octavius V. Catto Medal

by Brad Rhen, Pennsylvania National Guard Public Affairs Office

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, Pa. – The Pennsylvania National Guard awarded its Maj. Octavius V. Catto Medal to two Soldiers Feb. 22 at the Union League of Philadelphia.

This year’s recipients were Maj. Louis Fabrizi of the Eastern Army National Guard Aviation Training Site and Staff Sgt. Bryan Brandmeir of the 213th Regional Support Group.

The Catto Medal recognizes members of the Pennsylvania National Guard who distinguish themselves as leaders through community support and public service.

“By issuing the Catto Medal to Soldiers and Airmen who follow the example of excellent military and community service set by Major Catto, we are doing our part to keep the memory of this important American alive and relevant,” said Brig. Gen. Dave Wood, director of the joint staff for the Pennsylvania National Guard. “The Guard members to whom we award the Catto Medal are proof that the civic leadership and selfless service he demonstrated are

as alive as ever in our communities, and across the Commonwealth.

Fabrizi, 38, is a UH-60 Blackhawk Helicopter Pilot and works full-time as EAATS’s Utility Training Battalion’s executive officer at Fort Indiantown Gap. He is an active member of the Pennsylvania National Guard Association, the U.S. Senator Pat Toomey Academy selection board, Players Using Competition Helping Others Grow, and several Central Pennsylvania local music and performing arts initiatives.

“It’s an honor to be awarded the Major Octavius Catto Medal,” Fabrizi said. “I would like to thank my family, my chain of command at EAATS and also the board members of the Pennsylvania National Guard Associations for their support.”

A native of Murrysville, Pa., Fabrizi currently resides in Hershey, Pa. He is a 1999 graduate of Kiski Area High School in Vandergrift, Pa.

Fabrizi has a master’s degree in leadership and professional advancement from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh and a bachelor’s degree in criminology

experience in the military; he assisted a Boy Scout on his Eagle Scout project which was to build a Ceremonial Flag burning pit; and for the past several years coordinated and supported a Veterans Day program assembly at an elementary school across the street from the Allentown Armory.

“I am extremely grateful and honored to be chosen as an awardee for the Major Octavius Catto Award,” Brandmeir said. Major Octavius Catto was a Civil War-era Pennsylvania militia officer who was killed in Philadelphia in 1871 while on duty defending African-Americans at polling places by those who opposed their right to vote. He was a professor at the Institute for Colored Youth, now Cheyney University, and a community leader who led desegregation efforts in Philadelphia in the 1860s. The medal was originally created in the 1880s, but there are no records that show it was ever awarded before it disappeared. It was approved for re-introduction into the commonwealth’s military decorations system in December 2011 and first awarded in 2012.



Maj. Louis Fabrizi (left) and Staff Sgt. Brian Brandmeir (right) stand at the foot of the Major Octavius V. Catto Memorial after a wreath laying ceremony on Feb. 22, 2020 honoring the Civil War-era militia officer and African-American civil rights leader from Philadelphia. Both men were awarded The Major Octavius V. Catto Medal, which is bestowed upon guardsmen and women who display qualities of selfless service in the military and local community. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Wil Acosta)

from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Brandmeir, 35, is a religious affairs NCO and works full-time as the S3 operations non-commissioned officer at the 213th RSG’s headquarters in Allentown.

He helped raise over \$500,000 toward the construction of a Veterans Memorial in his hometown of Whitehall, Pa.; he volunteers several times a year to speak to students from his alma mater, Whitehall-Coply School District, about his

“Major Fabrizi and Staff Sgt. Brandmeir have distinguished themselves through their military and civic leadership,” Wood said. “Their commitment to public service exemplifies the values displayed by Major Catto, who risked his life in the defense of his country and ultimately gave his life to see African Americans be able to exercise their right to vote. He was an individual who put others before himself; to make a positive impact in Pennsylvania.”

#StillServing Campaign

Every day, men and women who have served our country and defended our freedom continue to serve in ways outside of the military. America's veterans and service members are actively involved in their communities. They're helping others, and they exemplify the best of the American spirit.



The Pennsylvania VFW chose to highlight John and Ted Wassmer on social media. John, a life member of the VFW, was a Marine who served in Vietnam in 1968. Ted was a Navy Corpsman who would retire from the Pennsylvania National Guard as an officer. He served with the 56 Stryker Brigade in Iraq in 2009. These two brothers now #StillServe on the Quakertown volunteer firedepartment.



What to do When Someone Leaves Your Post

Rev. Peter R. Hook, Pennsylvania VFW Chaplain - peterhook@verizon.net



About six months after I joined the VFW, I became the Post Chaplain. One of the first things I did was to review the membership list to familiarize myself with who was a member of my Post. I remember coming across several names of comrades I had never met or had not heard their names mentioned.

I remember asking about one or two individuals and was told, "They were once actively involved at the Post, but no longer attend." I tried to find out more about the persons but never got a clear answer as to why they stopped coming. When I inquired if anyone had contacted them to see how they were doing, the answer was, "no."

As Post Chaplains, we

should be concerned for all the members of our Post. So, I began to systematically contact these individuals. Some I called. Some I sent a note. In each case, I introduced myself as the new Post Chaplain. I gave a little background information about myself and explained I just wanted to reach out. I explained some of the things that were taking place at the post, reviewed the meeting times, and said that I would love to meet them some time. Not everyone returned, but amazing things began to happen. So, this article will help you know what to do when someone leaves your Post.

One of the most difficult issues to deal with as a Post Chaplain is handling those who leave your Post. I'm not talking about those who leave because of a job transfer, retirement and move to a different state, or

a move to be closer to family members. I'm talking about those who for years have been active and involved and suddenly and silently stop showing up at the Post and Post meetings.

It usually takes a few months to realize an active member has been absent. When it finally dawns on us, there is nothing in our Ritual and Manual of Procedure that tells us what to do. And, most of us are unsure how to respond. In most instances, we freeze and do nothing. That is not good!

As a Pastor of a Church and as a Post Chaplain, it bothers me every time someone drifts away or decides to leave. And it should concern you as well. Mature and good people usually leave quietly. When it happens, it is time to evaluate and do a deep gut check on why members leave.

what today's VFW embodies.

The Pennsylvania VFW also encourages veterans and service members to share stories on social media with #StillServing to show how they continue to answer the call to serve in their communities.

Family and friends can use the hashtag in social media posts to honor a veteran in their lives who continues to serve.



Sgt. Eric Schmitt, center, receives drone batteries from VFW Post 3376, Commander Dwayne MacKenzie, right, and Post Adjutant Timothy Frey, left. The Eherata Police Department started using drones after a barricaded person incident. We're grateful for the VFW's generous donation to this important public safety asset," said Lt. Christopher J. McKim

VFW Chaplain of the Year

Chaplain Gene Arnold was recognized by the National VFW Headquarters as the VFW Chaplain of the Year. Chaplain Arnold is with Post 7530, Lower Allen Township, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, and serves as the District 18 Chaplain. Congratulations to Chaplain Arnold on this very rare accomplishment. Thank you for your service to the Pennsylvania Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Department Membership Update: 96.18% as of June 16, 2020 Total

Top 5 Performing Membership Districts as of March 7 Congratulations District Commanders for Leading the Way Forward!

Place	District	Membership	Current Membership 2020	Members needed for 100%
1	1	100.44%	923	4
2	18	99.47%	5299	-28
3	16	99.39%	1786	-11
4	15	98.34%	2015	-34
5	8	97.78%	2769	-63

Jack E. Barger Sr. Scholarship Golf Scramble

The Jack E. Barger Sr. Scholarship Golf Scramble will be held on Friday, August 14, 2020 at the Briarwood Golf Course (West). This is a new venue for the scramble but only a few miles from where it was last year. The East Course was previously used but it will be at the West Course this year.

The Jack E. Barger Sr. Scholarship Fund is a nursing scholarship established in 1989 in memory of Jack E. Barger Sr., Department Commander 1987-88, who passed away during his term of office. A \$500 scholarship was awarded in 1990 and has since grown to give six (6)-\$1,000 scholarships per year. There have been various fundraising efforts made over the years, but the two main efforts have been requesting donations from VFW Posts and the nursing scholarship golf scramble.

Candidates are solicited through the Pennsylvania Nursing Association and its contacts with nursing schools in Pennsylvania. Names are submitted by chairpersons and deans of nursing schools and are chosen by lottery. The lottery is conducted by the P.N.A. with the VFW State Commander and Barger Scholarship Chairman drawing the names.

If you have any questions concerning the scramble, please get in touch with Mr. Fuhrman at 717-225-3149, 717-578-3151 or dmfuhrman@comcast.net.

Post	Dist	Percent	Need for 100%	Location
2	5958	28	101.51%	13 TITUSVILLE
2	1599	21	97.22%	-21 CHAMBERSBURG
2	8951	21	82.45%	-157 WEST YORK
3	8896	21	102.15%	8 EAST BERLIN
3	1446	21	101.82%	7 RED LION
3	6319	21	101.64%	6 GREENCASTLE
3	23	18	101.60%	6 LEBANON
3	7530	18	101.11%	5 MECHANICSBURG
4	2493	21	101.81%	5 MOUNT WOLF
4	315	25	101.58%	5 NEW CASTLE
4	106	9	100.95%	3 WEST CHESTER
4	1600	22	100.40%	1 BELLEFONTE
4	813	22	100.35%	1 DU BOIS
5	537	21	108.08%	16 ETTERS
5	1620	18	103.98%	8 MIDDLETOWN
5	2540	20	102.77%	6 EAST STROUDSBURG
5	6076	18	102.53%	5 MYERSTOWN
5	6495	8	102.43%	5 LEVITTOWN
6	8488	14	109.44%	17 KINGSLEY
6	734	27	107.94%	12 LIGONIER
6	5020	22	106.53%	10 OSCEOLA MILLS
6	148	18	104.14%	7 HARRISBURG
6	5825	22	104.14%	7 PINE GROVE MILLS
7	7343	18	109.16%	11 MT HOLLY SPRINGS
7	8826	23	102.45%	3 SALISBURY
7	3502	18	102.20%	3 HERSHEY
7	6070	18	101.73%	2 NEWVILLE
7	298	12	101.49%	2 DANVILLE
8	3258	8	136.63%	37 CHALFONT
8	1074	16	113.86%	14 CONSHOHOCKEN
8	6824	14	109.34%	10 ROME
8	8023	18	107.86%	7 ANNVILLE
8	25	10	106.60%	7 SCRANTON
9	7919	16	118.75%	15 MONTGOMERY Co.
9	6755	15	110.66%	8 LIBERTY
9	499	25	107.50%	6 EVANS CITY
9	9575	22	104.05%	3 POTTERS MILLS
9	9220	8	102.89%	2 EDDINGTON
10	8051	1	124.13%	14 PHILADELPHIA
10	6231	25	109.25%	5 SLIPPERY ROCK
10	6982	12	103.84%	2 COALDALE
10	3975	12	103.50%	2 AUBURN
10	333	1	103.44%	2 PHILADELPHIA
11	6700	1	127.27%	9 PHILADELPHIA
11	9788	16	111.62%	5 HORSHAM
11	8308	24	108.00%	2 LAWRENCE
11	6303	24	106.12%	3 GREENSBORO
11	4040	29	105.55%	1 PITTSBURGH

The VFW Auxiliary ... Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes



The Department President Says...

It's Been an Honor...Continue to Serve Our Veterans

Sandra Wilder



It is very hard to believe that I am writing to you for the last time as Pennsylvania Department VFW Auxiliary President!

It has been an amazing journey visiting comrades, brothers and sisters across this Department in their home Posts, at community events, Veterans Hospitals and Veterans Homes. Witnessing the hard work that is being accomplished for our Veterans and their families, promoting patriotism, youth activities, and legislation so our Veterans receive every benefit they have earned; has been more than I ever dreamed. Wow, just in the blink of an eye our "Working Hard for Our Veterans & Their Families" year is winding down.

A huge thank you to each member for working hard to meet our goals, with dedication, enthusiasm and devotion. We must continue to recruit, retain and rejoin members on a daily basis. As of May 31, our Department Membership stands at 101.24% with 37,135 brothers and sisters strong! By making recruiting a part of our daily routine, we will continue to grow and prosper as an organization. Continued mentoring, will help to make our Auxiliaries stronger and more effective. Our "Pennsylvania Wonderful Warriors for Veterans," will continue to scan the masses for eligible prospective members. We will continue "Serving Our Veterans with Aloha."

Working as a team will assure us smooth transition to the 2020-2021 year. Working hand in hand with our VFW Comrades allows us to accomplish so much for so many.

Never forget the reason why you joined our organization. Always remember the person who gave you eligibility sacrificed their life for our freedom. That is a very real incentive for us to work hard every day for our Veterans and their families.

It has been an honor to serve as your Department President with Pennsylvania VFW State Commander Wayne Perry. It has been an exciting time working together to raise funds and awareness for the "Friends of the Pittsburgh Fisher House." I am looking forward to completing our membership year; then gathering together at our state convention once again, where we will celebrate our accomplishments.

To Ron Peters, Wendi Hennemann and their teams for 2020-2021, best wishes for a great and successful year as we continue our service to all Veterans.



What are you Doing to Support Youth Activities

Bonnie S. Drake, Youth Activities Chairman



Thank you, Sandra Wilder, Pennsylvania VFW Auxiliary Department President, for allowing me to serve as Youth Activities Chairman during your term.

As the 2019/2020 term nears an end, it's imperative we look over the year-end report forms and make sure we have participated in each program. Check deadlines to have paperwork where it needs be and not wait until the last minute.

Have you?

Participated in National VFW Auxiliary Youth Activities National VFW Auxiliary Activities: "Patriotism through Literacy" and "Illustrating America" programs.

Been "Thinking Outside the Box" and come up with your own unique youth activity for the Department of Pennsylvania VFW Auxiliary.

Did you?

Send in Citation Request forms for "Youth Groups Supporting our Veterans." Sponsor or work with Junior ROTC, Sports or Special Olympic Teams, Scouting Groups or Church Groups

Have you?

Handed out R.A.P. coins and/or cards to those showing Random Acts of Patriotism, Partnered with youth groups to do community outreach, Taken youth to support troops being deployed, Hosted a letter writing campaign for deployed service members. Recognized local youth for their patriotism with a Patriotic Youth Award

UTILIZED THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE?

*Department of Pennsylvania or *National VFW Auxiliary Program Books, Read Blogs from the National VFW Auxiliary Program Ambassadors or General Orders from both Department of Pennsylvania and National Headquarters; Visited the National VFW Auxiliary website www.vfwauxiliary.org or Pennsylvania VFW Auxiliary website www.pavfwaux.org

Pennsylvania will continue "Working Hard for our Veteran and Their Families" (Pennsylvania President's Theme) while "Serving our Veterans with Aloha!" (Peggy Haake, National President's Theme)

Thank you to my Chairmen, Central Area, Nancy Kreiner; Eastern Area, Brenda Johnson and Western Area Chairman, Nancy Mallinder, and all those who accepted positions within your Auxiliary and District. I appreciate the commitment you made to make this year successful!



Education is Knowledge

Linda Dilling, Dept. of Pennsylvania VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program



Be knowledgeable – educate yourself and others on the different health care needs and what is currently being done for our veterans in the VA Health System.

A good resource is www.research.va.gov/topics. You will find many topics from the special health issues veterans' face from different wars, also advances in research along with one-page printable fact sheets. Have you heard about Soldier Strong? A dozen VAMC's across the country are being provided virtual reality systems for Veterans suffering from PTSD.

Check it out at www.soldierstrong.org/strongmind/.

Did you know that women are the fastest growing group within the Veteran population? Learn more about the changing face of women Veterans and what the VA is doing to meet their health care needs. Such as sex-specific primary care programs, reproductive health care, mental health programs geared specifically for women.

We are here to support veterans! We must rally together, by "Working Hard for Our Veterans and Their Families" while "Serving Our Veterans with Aloha".



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FOCUS ON MISSION SUCCESS



Post 7530 VFW and Auxiliary Volunteer Warriors made their quarterly visit to the Lebanon VA Hospital. The post members went out and made a difference in bringing some cheer and comradeship to our fellow Veterans. Special thanks to VFW Santa and Mrs. Claus for donning their Christmas outfits to make the extra difference!

PERIODICALS



Commander Carl Trusiak and Auxiliary Treasurer Debbie Belles present a \$1,931 check to Coach Aaron Albert and Baseball Booster Amy Perroz. Money raised in the Bingo Fund Raiser to help send the Kiski Baseball Team to Spring Training Camp.



Andy Sterner, Commander We just got done packing the boxes to send 22 boxes over 675 lb of items to two young ladies from Albrightsville, Pennsylvania, serving in Iraq.



Greensburg, Pennsylvania, Dec. 14, 2019, VFW Post 33 Honor Guard and members of Company D, 1st Battalion, 110th Infantry, 28th Infantry Division of the Pennsylvania National Guard, present the colors at the opening ceremony for the 75 anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. Joe Folino Veteran of the battle of the Bulge and Agnes Lapa family member lay a wreath at the Memorial on the National Guard grounds. Whitey Shaller (left) and Joe Folino (right) both Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge enjoy lunch at the VFW 33 Post home sponsored by the Post 33 Honor Guard. photos by Paul Yeckel VFW Post 33 member

Lenox Post 8488 and its Auxiliary collected \$12,000 worth of toys to be donated to Toy & Tots an organization that services the children of Susquehanna County. This is the 10th year the Post has been involved in the program. Pictured from left to right Post Commander Mark Webster, Auxiliary Member Dana Randall, Tots & Tots CEO Kristen Latting, Auxiliary Member Dulcey Albert, Raymond Fallon and Jr Vice Commander Philip Price.