



Pennsylvania VFWnews



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VFW NEWS - Celebrating 50 Years of Keeping VFW Members Informed and Inspired

Conference Motivates VFW Leaders to Increase Outreach and Impact

The Department's Mid-Winter Conference was a time of celebration, information-sharing and inspiration, and gave 300 VFW officers in attendance the direction and resources they need to continue the VFW's 119-year mission of service.

Representing VFW National Headquarters, Past Commander-in-Chief John Moon of Ohio stressed the importance for all posts to expand their outreach to better interact with veterans who represent the future of the VFW.

"I am proud of how well Pennsylvania is doing in recruiting," said Past Chief Moon. "But we all need to strive to do much more in membership and our programs. Please give this organization—*your VFW*—your utmost effort. Let's work harder for our comrades who cannot help themselves. The VFW's future is up to us, you and me. Everyone needs to step up how they support our great organization."

The conference agenda also featured a three-hour recruiting workshop led by Tara Fajardo Arteaga, a



Pennsylvania VFW Eagle Award recipient PAARNG SSG Joshua Hedetniemi, a human resource sergeant for the Headquarters of the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, accepts his award from State Commander Thomas Hanzes. Joining SSG Hedetniemi for the ceremony is PAANG Brig. Gen. Gregg Perez, the primary assistant and advisor to the State Deputy Adjutant General-Air.

Global War on Terror veteran and the associate director of membership at National Headquarters. (*Posts interested in the workshop should email adjutant@vfwpahq.org.*)

Conference attendees received an overview of all VFW programs, updates on veterans benefit issues and a briefing on women veterans initiatives. Other presenters included leaders of the PA Wounded Warriors (PAWW), the Gold Star Mothers and Pittsburgh Hires Veterans, represented by its director and VFW life member Jack Wagner.

Numerous donations were given during the sessions including \$30,000 from the Department and District 21 to the American Diabetes Association, \$6,000 from Oil City Post 464 to the PAWW and \$6,000 from East Berlin Post 8996 for the Department's Jack Barger Nursing Scholarship Fund. Many posts combined to donate nearly 1,200 pairs of socks and other clothing items for homeless veterans.

The State *Voice of Democracy* banquet served as a **Mid-Winter Conference ... see page 4**

Cross of Malta Remains

New Logo Sets VFW Apart as Top Overseas Vet Group

The Veterans of Foreign Wars, America's largest and oldest major combat veterans organization, recently announced that it has deployed a new look.

The new VFW logo and visual language embraces the organization's storied 119 years of service to America's veterans, service members and their families, while underscoring its forward-thinking approach to service and its distinguished membership base. The VFW believes the new logo improves its market position and provides visual clarity to its mission of serving others.



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

"We're excited about the bold, new look," said B.J. Lawrence, national commander of the VFW. "There's a lot of complex meaning built into our new logo, yet it clearly communicates who we are and what we're about – service to nation while in the military and continuing service to our nation as veterans."

The new VFW logo is a drastic change from its

Rebranding the VFW ... see page 6

PA Department's VOD Winner is State's First National Champ



Representing Post 554 in District 23, Christine A. Troll reacts to winning the Department's *Voice of Democracy* contest and then reads her essay during the Mid-Winter Conference. (Top) Six weeks later, she received \$30,000 for winning the National VOD competition. Troll is shown with Commander-in-Chief B.J. Lawrence and National Auxiliary President Sandi Kriebel during the VFW Legislative Conference in Washington. She is believed to be the Department's first National winner. See the next issue for more coverage.



Left to right: *Patriot's Pen* state winner Rory Decker—representing VFW Post 531 and District 10—smiles after delivering her speech. The Department's *Voice of Democracy* Teacher of the Year Marchia Bartlett—representing District 15 and Post 6757—proudly poses with her plaque.

PA Department to Celebrate 100th State Convention in Erie

VFW leaders from across the state will gather at the Ambassador Conference Center Hotel in Erie, June 12-15, for the 2019 State Convention to celebrate VFW successes during the 2018-19 program year under the leadership of State Commander Thomas M. Hanzes. This event will be the 100th State Convention for the Pennsylvania Department and all participants will receive a special commemorative gift to remember the occasion.

Events begin Wednesday night with the Annual Memorial Service and end Saturday night with a reception for incoming State Commander Wayne Perry and Auxiliary President Sandra Wilder.

Daily information and award sessions are scheduled for Thursday and Friday. The Patriotic Rally will be held Friday evening and Department elections will occur Saturday morning.

The first 2019-20 Council of Administration meeting will be held Saturday afternoon and is open to members.

There will be plenty of time for camaraderie and networking. Convention participation forms will be mailed to post commanders and quartermasters, and will be available soon on the Department's website.

*From the State Commander***Excellence Increases Your Potential in Everything**

Thomas M. Hanzes - thomashanzes@yahoo.com or (724) 815-9164



Greetings to all of you!

Excellence in anything increases your potential in everything!

As the PA VFW's season rounds third base, I emphatically want to say how proud I am of what all of you have accomplished, not only in membership, but in all VFW programs! I have witnessed much excellence!

Most certainly, this comes as no surprise, as the VFW Department of Pennsylvania has a legacy of great accomplishments, both on the VFW and the Auxiliary side! All posts and districts have much to be proud of as well. I ask everyone to continue working with increased enthusiasm on all the VFW programs during the final quarter of the 2018-19 year. Our train is not yet to the station. Let's all get on board!

I have been blessed beyond words to be your State Commander. I had the pleasure to meet so many of you. A year simply isn't enough time to visit every post and district. You have all been an inspiration to me with your tremendous examples of helping veterans, veterans' families and the communities in which you live. I am in awe of the magnitude of teamwork I have witnessed.

It would be impossible for us to make the progress that the VFW has accomplished without the dedication and support of all posts, regardless of size or location. The expertise provided by State Quartermaster/Adjutant John Getz,



Commander Hanzes and his Chief of Staff James Lewis enjoy speaking with a Korean War Veteran at the State Farm Show.

and everyone at State Headquarters, is invaluable. Thank you does not seem adequate to express my gratitude! I hope all posts will tap into the experience, resources and ideas that are available through our State Headquarters.

Let's continue to let everyone know what the Veterans of Foreign Wars stands for and what we do for others. It's necessary and vital to our organization that we *"toot our own horn."*

It is imperative that we continue to find new and inventive methods to attract more female members and younger members. If you have successful ideas,



State Commander Hanzes and National Commander Lawrence, joined by Department President Swogger-Lopes and National President Kriebel, proudly pose with National VOD Champion Christina Troll of Pennsylvania.

please share them at district meetings.

While we still have three months to go in the program year, I thank everyone for their hospitality, courtesies, friendship and support shown on this journey. My year has been so special in the hearts of Anne and I, and my Chief of Staff Jim Lewis and his wife Linda.

Mentorship means so much in creating effective VFW leaders. I am fortunate to have followed Past Department Commanders Thomas Brown and Dwight Fuhrman, whose guidance, encouragement and, above all else, friendship have been very helpful.

Having a strong Department President like Charlotte Swogger-Lopes has also helped to make my year productive and enjoyable.

As the last quarter of my year unfolds, I hope to continue "Serving, Mentoring and Inspiring" each of you in some form or fashion. I look forward to seeing you all at our State Convention in Erie. It is Pennsylvania's 100th Convention anniversary and we have several special things planned to commemorate this milestone!

Please finish out this year as best as you can. Never forget, *"No one does more for veterans than the Veterans of Foreign Wars!"*

**VFW Delivers Veterans' Voice to Congress**

WASHINGTON—More than 500 members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Auxiliary rallied in the nation's capital in early March to urge their respective members of Congress to continue improving the programs and services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Conference highlights included the VFW national commander's testimony before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees. Chief Lawrence presented the VFW's legislative priorities topped by calling for congressional oversight of the execution of the VA Mission Act of 2018 and the combined VA/DOD electronic record initiative.

"Unlike appeals modernization, the VA has elected to largely ignore the views of the nation's largest war veterans' organization when drafting rules to implement the VA Mission Act," said Lawrence. "VA executive leadership should be embarrassed that they have discontinued the VA's strong collaborative relationship with the VFW and chosen to make arbitrary decisions without consulting those who most intimately understand the VA's mission and veterans' needs."

Other priorities include getting the Blue



Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act signed into law, improving burn pit research and accountability, eliminating the so-called "Widow's Tax," allowing military retirees to receive full retirement pay and disability pay without offset, and expanding and improving VA health care and research.

To read the VFW's full list of Priority Goals, visit www.vfw.org, "Advocacy."

The VFW hosted its fifth VFW-Student Veterans of America Legislative Fellowship Program, which paired nine Fellows with mentors during visits to federal lawmakers.

VFW Returns Veterans Remains to Grateful Family

(Story/Photo by Ephrata Review Correspondent Kevin Frye)

On Dec. 14, 75-year-old Barbara Dixon drove three hours from Middletown, DE, to Ephrata.

Her destination was VFW Post 3376, and her goal was to be reunited with her brother, Ronald, who had died and was cremated in 1996. Those remains were discovered on Nov. 19 by Lititz resident and GSM Roofing employee, Shane Hanna. While on a job site in New Castle, Del., Hanna and his co-workers took a peek at four industrial dumpsters that they would use later in the day.

"It was first thing in the morning," explained Hanna. "It was just something that caught my eye. I picked up the brass box, and it was heavier than you would expect. The wooden box was a few feet away from it."

That wooden cover had a U.S. Navy insignia and USS Saratoga imprinted on it.

"After putting it in my truck, I called my dad during the day," continued Hanna. "He's a veteran and lives in Akron. He said to bring it home."

Two days later, Hanna came to the VFW.

"He dropped off the remains with one of our managers," said VFW Quartermaster Amy MacKenzie. "I got in touch with the funeral home the week after Thanksgiving. It took several times to explain what I had. The clerk I spoke to said she would do her best to go through the archives and see if she could put me in touch with a family member."

And that led her to Barbara Dixon.

"When the lady called, she asked if I have a brother Ronald Lee Pruitt, who died in 1996," described Dixon. "When I said yes, she said 'then I have the right Barbara Dixon."

Family Grateful for VFW ... see page 5



Pictured are Post Quartermaster Amy MacKenzie, Commander Dwayne MacKenzie and Barbara Dixon.

VA Initiates Appeals Modernization Act Program

All veterans who disagree with their VA rating decision now have three new options to resolve their benefit dispute:

- request a higher-level review from a more experienced person,
- submit a supplemental claim with additional evidence, or
- appeal directly to the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

Over the past two years, the VFW worked closely with VA and other veterans' organizations to craft this new framework, which was authorized by the VFW-supported Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017. The goal of the new system is to offer veterans greater flexibility and transparency to resolve benefit disputes in a timely manner, instead of waiting years for the VA to adjudicate their appeals.

VA's goal is to complete Supplemental Claims and Higher-Level Reviews in an average of 125 days, and decisions appealed to the Board for direct review in an average of 365 days. Under the legacy process, decisions averaged three to seven years.

The VA remains committed to reducing significantly the inventory of legacy appeals. VA's fiscal year 2019 budget included funding for 605 additional appeals employees, which the VA used to establish two new Decision Review Operations Centers at the St. Petersburg, Florida, and Seattle, Washington, regional offices. The former Appeals Resource Center in Washington, D.C., was converted to a third Decision Review Operations Center.

For assistance appealing a decision on your benefits claim, starting a new claim or requesting a benefits upgrade, contact a highly trained and accredited VFW Service Officer. Phone numbers for locations across the state appear at the bottom of this column.

Do You Need Help With Veterans Benefits?

Full-time, VA-accredited VFW State Service Officers are ready to answer benefit questions. These phone numbers connect you with your nearest Service Officer, who can inform you about office locations and outreach sites.

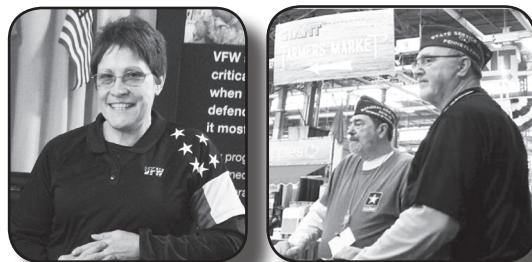
Southeast PA/Philadelphia: 215-381-3123 • **Northeastern PA:** 570-821-2535/2536

Harrisburg/Reading/Lititz: 717-234-7927 • **York Area/Gettysburg:** 717-884-1705

Altoona/Johnstown: 814-943-8164 • **Pittsburgh/Southwest PA:** 412-395-6259/6260

Butler: 724-287-4781 ext. 4579
 • **Erie /Northwest PA:** 814-835-8494 • **Northcentral PA/State College:** 570-560-1382

Visit the Department's website www.vfwpahq.org, "Claims Help" for more information or call State HQ at (717) 234-7927.



State Service Officers Liz Graybill and John Chioldi were part of the Department's team providing benefits information at the PA Farm Show. Also shown is State Membership Co-Chair Cecil Dennis.

PENNSYLVANIA VETERANS HOMES



- Delaware Valley Veterans' Home, Phila., 215-856-2718**
- Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center, Scranton, 570-961-4348**
- Hollidaysburg Veterans' Home, Hollidaysburg, 814-696-5352**
- Pennsylvania Soldiers' & Sailors' Home, Erie, 814-878-4917**
- Southeastern Veterans' Center, Spring City, 610-948-2406**
- Southwestern Veterans' Center, Pittsburgh, 412-665-6782**

We are here to make you feel at home!



Visit dmva.pa.gov and click on Veterans Homes.

Veterans Claims and Benefit Information

This information is provided by the Department's Veterans Service Officer program. For assistance call State HQs at (717) 234-7927 or see below for an office listing. State HQs thanks the State of Pennsylvania for Act 66 grant funds.

VFW Blue Water Navy Vet Wins Federal Appeals Court Ruling

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit reversed a decade-old ruling that potentially paves the way for the return of earned disability benefits for some 90,000 so-called Blue Water Navy veterans from the Vietnam War.

Blue Water Navy USS Thomaston, The case, Procopio v. Wilkie, was supported by the Veterans of Foreign Wars and a number of other veterans service organizations and advocates. It had Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert L. Wilkie Jr. being sued by Navy veteran and VFW Life member Alfred Procopio Jr., who was denied service connection for prostate cancer and diabetes mellitus because he never was on dry land or served in Vietnam's inland waterways.

Procopio, a Life member of VFW Post 6587 in Spring Lake Park, Minn., was assigned aboard the aircraft carrier USS Intrepid, which was stationed inside Vietnam's 12-mile territorial waters. Both of his illnesses are listed among the VA's 14 presumptive diseases associated with AO exposure.

The Federal Appeals Court focused on the intent of the 1991 Agent Orange Act, which was to grant a presumption of service connection for certain diseases to veterans who "served in the Republic of Vietnam." At issue was whether service within territorial waters constituted service in the "Republic of Vietnam." By a 9-2 decision, the court ruled it did.

"Although very pleased with the ruling, the VFW isn't quite ready to celebrate," said VFW National Commander B.J. Lawrence. "That's because the VA can always appeal the ruling and Congress has yet to pass a Blue Water Navy bill. The VFW now calls on the VA to make Blue Water Navy veterans whole as soon as possible, and we stand ready to assist VA."

NEW FORMS FOR HEALTHCARE & RELEASE OF INFORMATION

The new VA Healthcare Enrollment form 10-10EZ (Apr 2017) and Request for and Authorization to Release Health Information (Sept 2018) forms have been updated. Post service officers make sure that veterans are using the correct forms.

PA VETERANS REGISTRY

We encourage veterans, family members and people who work with veterans to visit the online PA Veterans Registry to request information related to state benefits, programs and services offered by the DMVA. Registrants can also opt-in to receive informative communications such as program

updates. The weekly newsletter contains Veteran-related news items, employment opportunities, events and much more. Visit www.dmva.pa.gov.

VA COMPENSATION COST OF LIVING INCREASE

In October 2018, President Trump authorized a 2.8% cost of living increase for veterans receiving VA benefits. This increase went into effect December 1. Veterans should have seen increased payments starting with December 31, 2018 VA benefits deposit.

NEW VA.GOV WEBSITE

The VA reformatted its VA.gov website to enable veterans to use their MyHealtheVet, DS Logon, or ID.me account to track the status of benefits and claims, refill prescriptions, message their doctors and request a Veterans ID card. This is part of a plan to modernize the way that veterans access their benefits and care. Visit www.va.gov.

NEW VET CENTER, LANCASTER

Since 1979, the Vet Center program has been providing quality readjustment services to veterans and their families. All Vet Center services are free and your benefit will never expire. You do not have to be enrolled for VA Medical care in order to take advantage of your Vet Center benefit.

Family members of eligible veterans also qualify for Vet Center services for military related issues. Available services include support groups and counseling for individuals and groups. Topics include marital and family, post traumatic stress, sexual trauma/harassment, bereavement issues as well as outpatient substance abuse treatment, liaison with community agencies and referrals for homeless veterans.

The new Lancaster Vet Center is located at 1817 Olde Homestead Lane, Lancaster PA 17601. The phone number to reach that office is (717) 283-0735. www.vetcenter.va.gov.

Mid-Winter Conference ... continued from page 1

stepping stone for District 23 representative Christine A. Troll, a home-schooled senior who won the Somerset Post 554 contest and then the district title to earn a spot in the Department finals. She was chosen as the top State VFW contestant, earning her a \$5,000 scholarship for her essay about "Why My Vote Matters."

By winning the Department-level contest, Troll advanced to the National VFW competition where, during a special

Post 3258; sophomore Morgan M. Steiner, District 10/Post 5207; and senior Katrina E. Henne, District 9/Post 3376.

VFW and Auxiliary leaders provided a standing ovation for PA Army National Guard SSG Joshua A. Hedetniemi, a two-tour Iraqi war veteran who received the Department VFW Eagle Award, which is presented to a PA Guardian whose service shows high levels of honor and integrity.

A resident of Oreland in Montgomery

For his extreme bravery, Hedetniemi received the Bronze Star Medal with Valor device.

In August of 2005, Co. A 1-111th IR suffered the greatest number of casualties of any PA Guard unit since World War II. Six squad members died in ambushes between August 6 and 9, rendering the squad and platoon combat ineffective.

The platoon never lost heart or gave up on the mission, but instead reorganized and returned on mission cycle to complete the remainder of the deployment with honor.

He returned home in February of 2006. In 2007, he was promoted to Sergeant and assigned as a Regimental recruiting and retention NCO. The staff sergeant was chosen as the NCO of the quarter for Southeastern PA and was the primary instructor for the Recruit Sustainment Program in Philadelphia.

In light of his demonstrated qualities and abilities, he was selected and promoted



Three hundred Department, district and post leaders from across the state participated in the conference.



"Posts that get out of their buildings—and are involved in their communities, working with other organizations—tend not to have membership problems."

"Mentoring is such a huge part of recruitment. If you have a new member, don't leave them alone to figure out the VFW. Assign someone to help them learn about the VFW and they will turn into your next post leaders."

— Tara Fajardo Arteaga, National Headquarters

reception held in Washington, D.C., she found herself standing on the stage with Commander-in-Chief B.J. Lawrence as one of the top winners, though not certain how high she would finish.

Department officials in Washington loudly cheered when their home-state student was announced as the first-place winner while she accepted a \$30,000 check flanked by Chief Lawrence and National Auxiliary President Sandi Kriebel. Troll is believed to be the first PA Department representative to capture the national title.

To see Troll deliver her essay, visit <https://www.vfw.org/media-and-events/2019-vfw-legislative-conference>.

During the State VOD banquet, a crowd of 425 VFW and Auxiliary leaders congratulated teacher Marchia Bartlet for winning the VOD Teacher of the Year Award (District 15/Post 6757) and Rory Decker (District 10/Post 531) for receiving the Patriot's Pen first-place award in the "Why I Honor the Flag" speech contest.

The remaining top five VOD students were (second to fifth): sophomore Katherine T. Lewandowski, District 11/Post 5010; senior Helena N. Volpe, District 8/

County, SSG Hedetniemi serves as a Human Resource Specialist with the Higher Headquarters Company for the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

He has served with exceptional dedication in Pennsylvania's 28th Infantry Division for nearly 16 years. He entered military service in 2003 when he enlisted as an infantryman with Co. B, 1st Battalion, 111th Infantry Regiment (IR).

Private Hedetniemi volunteered to deploy to Iraq in June 2004 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (III), and deployed with Co. A, 1st Battalion, 111th IR, with Task Force Dragoon. He served as a mounted machine gunner in the 2nd Platoon, and successfully completed over 340 combat missions in the Northern Suni Triangle area.

On June 9, 2005, Specialist Hedetniemi and his convoy were attacked by a suicide vehicle-borne explosive device that detonated and destroyed the lead vehicle in the patrol. Without regard to his own safety, the Specialist dismounted his Humvee and entered the burning vehicle pulling out four platoon members who were trapped inside while ammunition cooked off.

"I am proud of how well PA is doing with recruiting... But we all need to strive to do much more in membership and our programs."

Please give this organization—your VFW—your utmost effort. Let's work harder for our comrades who cannot help themselves. The VFW's future is up to us, you and me. Everyone needs to step up their support."

— John Moon, Past National Commander



to Staff Sergeant in April of 2008. In September, his Regiment was once again sent to Iraq. SSG Hedetniemi again volunteered to deploy and resigned from his non-deployable role as a recruiting NCO to mobilize with his old unit.

The sergeant served as a Platoon Sergeant and on Personal Security Detail, the NCO in charge. During this deployment, his platoon participated in Counter

In addition to his Bronze Star, Hedetniemi's other awards include: Army Commendation Medal for Valor (under fire); Army Commendation Medal with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters; Combat Infantryman Badge. Global War On Terror Expeditionary Medal; Iraq Campaign Medal with 2 Campaign Stars; and Army Good Conduct Medal (5th Award).

When presenting the award, State Commander Thomas Hanzes proudly recognized SSG Hedetniemi as a VFW comrade who serves as the Sr. Vice Commander at North Penn Post 676.

"This is a great honor," said Hedetniemi. "What I did to earn my combat medals and this Eagle Award is the same as what the VFW continues to do in the States: take care of your brothers and sisters in arms. It's nice to know someone back home has our backs once we get home."

Hedetniemi's comments about the VFW caring for veterans and military troops echoed throughout the workshop-driven conference as mission successes were reported.



Shown above are the VOD District winners, youth scholarship program leaders and VFW and Auxiliary officers.

McMurray Post Donates \$30,000 to Homeless Vet Shelter

When VFW Post 764 gets involved with a community project, the 400-member McMurray unit goes all out. The latest example in the post's long history of impressive service projects is a \$30,000 donation to support the "Patriot's House" homeless veterans shelter.

The post donation helped build a transitional housing facility as part of the City Mission's campus in Washington, PA. Post 764 representatives proudly raised a United States flag in front of the facility during a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Post 764 contributed the highest amount of any veterans organization. The



McMurray Post 764's S.B. Crowley (left), Ron Demicheli and Gary MacArthur raise a U.S. flag during a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Patriot House.

(Photo by Celeste Van Kirk/Observer-Reporter)

Post 764 Auxiliary was also recognized for providing blankets and pillows for the shelter, which in addition to housing veterans provides medical services.

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 their duties until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed. Such proof 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, PA 17109 and National HQs.

District Meeting Schedule

APRIL 2019

Dist.	Place	Date	Time
1	VA Office Medical Center-Phila.	April 10, 2019	
7	VFW Post #974-Darby	April 24, 2019	7:30 P.M.
14	VFW Post #5642-Montrose	April 14, 2019	2:00 P.M.
16	VFW Post #6956-Gladwyne	April 17, 2019	7:30 P.M.
24	VFW Post #8308-Lawrence	April 28, 2019	2:00 P.M.

MAY 2019

1	VA Office Medical Center-Phila.	May 8, 2019	
8	VFW Post #9264-Macungie	May 19, 2019	1:30 P.M.
9	VFW Post #7418-Gap	May 5, 2019	1:00 P.M.
10	VFW Post #3474-Dunmore	May 19, 2019	2:00 P.M.
11	VFW Post #6615-White Haven	May 19, 2019	2:30 P.M.
12	VFW Post #3432-Pine Grove	May 19, 2019	2:30 P.M.
13	VFW Post #6558-Womelsdorf	May 19, 2019	2:00 P.M.
14	VFW Post #6223-Great Bend	May 19, 2019	2:00 P.M.
15	VFW Post #7863-Duboistown	May 19, 2019	2:00 P.M.
16	VFW Post #32-Lamsdale	May 15, 2019	7:30 P.M.
17	VFW Post #882-Marysville	May 5, 2019	2:00 P.M.
18	VFW Post #23-Lebanon	May 5, 2019	2:00 P.M.
19	VFW Post #212-Bradford	May 19, 2019	2:30 P.M.
20	VFW Post #509-Tobyhanna	May 19, 2019	2:00 P.M.
21	VFW Post #8951-York	May 19, 2019	2:00 P.M.
22	VFW Post #1600 - Bellefonte	May 19, 2019	2:30 P.M.
23	VFW Post #554 - Somerset	May 19, 2019	2:00 P.M.
25	VFW Post #249-Butler	May 19, 2019	2:00 P.M.
26	VFW Post #7605-Twin Rocks	May 5, 2019	2:30 P.M.
27	VFW Post #92-Lower Burrell	May 5, 2019	2:30 P.M.
28	VFW Post #7599-Transfer	May 5, 2019	2:00 P.M.
29	VFW Post #402 - Coraopolis	May 19, 2019	2:00 P.M.

ALL POSTS MUST HAVE REPRESENTATION AT ALL DISTRICT MEETINGS

4. LOYALTY DAY AND MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE: Section 223 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure provides that each Post shall make the necessary arrangements for proper observance of Loyalty Day and Memorial Day. Officers should see that suitable grave markers, wreaths and flags of the United States are placed on the graves of deceased veterans.

5. "BUDDY" ® POPPIES DISTRIBUTION: The distribution of VFW "Buddy" ® Poppies will be conducted according to the provisions set forth in Section 711 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure. Department, District, County Council and Post Commanders should arrange now for the distribution of Buddy Poppies in their respective areas.

In the ongoing effort to provide as much assistance as possible to those serving in the military, we recommend that proceeds or portions from this year's annual poppy distribution be designated for the purpose of providing VFW support to our military. Posts and Departments now have the opportunity to assist qualified military personnel through the VFW Veterans and Military Support Programs.

In keeping with the intent of Sections 219(a)(c) and 704(a)(c) of the Manual of Procedure "Relief Fund," this year's poppy campaign can play a direct role in demonstrating to those who are charged with protecting and defending our way of life that we appreciate and value their sacrifice.

For questions about the Buddy Poppy program, please contact Daniela Garcia at 816.756.3390, ext. 6722 or email at BuddyPoppy@vfw.org.

6. Announcement is made of the authorization of the charter for the following Post: Post No. 12184 - Roswell, New Mexico

BY COMMAND OF VINCENT B.J. LAWRENCE, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
OFFICIAL: Kevin C. Jones, Adjutant General

Family Grateful for VFW ... from page 2

She said I have another strange thing to tell you. Your brother's ashes were found and they are in Lancaster County."

Ronald Pruitt was born in 1955, and was in basic training in Michigan in 1973. After three years in the Navy, he moved home to help care for his recently widowed mother. He died at the age of 41.

"To my surprise, the next thing I knew I was receiving a phone call from Barbara," added MacKenzie. "The funeral home reached out to her and she called me."

"I can't believe they found them in a dumpster, I was shocked," said Dixon. "When my brother was cremated, his ashes went to my older sister. Then my sister died in 2000. My brother-in-law remarried and we didn't hear from him again."

Dixon is still missing additional pieces in this case. She does not know where her older sister's cremains are. There were

originally seven siblings, including one that died before Barbara was born. She has also lost touch with Ronald's son, William.

In addition to the cremains, the post presented Dixon with a U.S. flag. "It would have been easy just to give up," added MacKenzie. "But that's not how we do things. We did our job here. We stand ready to assist any military member or their family."

"I can't thank them enough," said Dixon. "It does give a boost to the holidays. I'm just so glad that he's going home. I think he would really like that. Hopefully, he'll be interred in a military cemetery close to where my husband is. It means a lot."

As to the roofer that started the ball rolling? "I'm happy," stated Hanna. "I couldn't believe anyone would throw remains in a dumpster. I'm glad she could have some kind of closure after 15 years. I'm glad he's back where he's supposed to be."

VFW General Orders Number 3

1. INSTALLING OFFICERS: Installing officers will see that the provisions of Section 216 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure are properly carried out and that all officers are members in good standing and qualified to hold office prior to installing Post officers for the current year. Post officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed.

Post Election Reports must be submitted following Post election of officers in April and no later than June 1 to the National Headquarters. We highly encourage all Post Quartermasters to use the online Election Report process featured in the Online Membership System (OMS). Post Election Reports received electronically will be forwarded to the Department HQ.

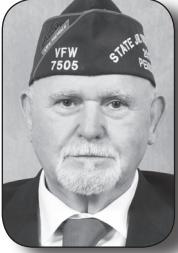
2. Attention of Post Commanders is directed to Section 222 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure, which provides that each Post will pay, in advance, a National Convention registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and materials and one identified registered delegate for the National Convention. Each additional delegate at the National Convention will pay a \$10 delegate fee.

Posts are encouraged to register their Post delegates online through the Online Membership System (OMS) or by submitting their National Convention Post and Delegate Registration form that was mailed to all Posts as part of the Election Report/Convention Registration mailing that went out in February. Advanced registration for the 120th National Convention should be mailed with each delegate's name and address to: Convention Registration, 406 West 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111.

3. 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 is to be held not less than ten (10) days nor more than seventy-five (75) days prior to the convening of the Department convention. District officers shall not assume the duties of their office until the Department Commander is installed. District officers shall not be installed or assume the duties of their office until proof of eligibility has been submitted and properly reviewed in accordance with Section 416 of the Manual of Procedure.

Taking a Few Steps will Boost Post Membership

Wayne D. Perry, State Sr. Vice Commander - wayper@zoominternet.net



Comrades: As we all know, we are losing veterans every day. It is up to all of us—post officers and every member—to get out into the community and recruit. If we sit on our butts, our organization will fade away. It's just that simple.

An easy way to offset your membership losses is to retain the members you already have in your post. Treat your post comrades with respect and invite them to help out at post events. Seek out and embrace new ideas. Create a family environment so spouses and entire families see their VFW post as an important part of their lives.

If we make all members feel like they are appreciated and valued, fewer post members will walk away.

What about those members who have left the post over the past five years. The VFW has their contact information, so why not give them a call. Or, better

yet, ask if you can stop by their homes or invite them to the post so you can address the reasons why they left. You might find out all it takes to reinstate them is a pleasant conversation and updating past members about the good things happening at your post.

Have an open house to inform prospective members what the VFW is all about. Let them know the many ways that the VFW makes life better for people of all ages—veterans, our troops, youth, senior citizens and so many others.

Did you know that we can help veterans secure state and federal benefits including veterans emergency assistance, real estate tax exemption, paralyzed veterans pension, blind veterans pension, reduced fees for fishing licenses for former POWs and National Guard and Reserve personnel, and free hunting licenses for certain disabled veterans?

You can request state benefit pamphlets from your state lawmakers.

Today's generation of VFW members will determine the future of our organization. *Let's get the job done!*

Rebranding the VFW ... continued from page 1

predecessor, and is the first-ever official logo that was designed without the organization's traditional Cross of Malta shield, which remains the official VFW seal. It includes an artistic representation of service stripes which represent length of service on most U.S. military uniforms.

As such, the first and leaner of the two service stripes represents the organization's steadfast entry into its second century of service to America's veterans, service members and their families. The second, broader stripe, represents its first storied century of service, spanning back to 1899.

In addition to the direct metaphor of the stripes, the visual progression leading to the build of the letter "V" represents our sustained and forward movement into achieving the VFW's service mission.

The distinctive gold coloring gives

nod to the VFW's stringent membership eligibility requirements and the gold standard of service the VFW provides. The red represents the danger each of its members has faced and the energy with which the VFW operates.

In support of the project, the VFW has created individual custom logos for use by each of its State Headquarters in all 50 states and overseas, and nearly 6,300 individual VFW posts.

"The VFW is such an amazing organization and just as relevant, if not more so, than at any other time in our history. It's time all of America notices us and I feel confident this is another step in accomplishing just that," said Lawrence.

If you need generic VFW logo files, email dsandman@vfwpahq.org. For post specific logos, email rlaw@vfw.org.



Deadlines Coming for Submitting Conv. Resolutions

At VFW State and National Conventions, resolutions are approved to establish goals and policies that govern activities for the following year. Members in good standing may submit resolutions to the Department Convention through their post, county council or district. All proposed By-Law Amendments and Resolutions must be sent to State HQs by **May 31, 2019**. Make sure to leave adequate time to get your resolution properly submitted.

For more information or guidance on how to submit a proposed By-Law Amendment or Resolution, contact State Adjutant/Quartermaster John Getz at adjutant@vfwpahq.org or (717) 234-7927.

Keep the Great VFW Momentum Moving Forward

Ronald J. Peters, State Jr. Vice Cmdr. - acavrp@hotmail.com



Comrades: The speed of life is hard to keep up with sometimes. It's hard to believe how fast the VFW year is moving along!

As I travel across the state, it's amazing how much is being accomplished to bring more veterans into the VFW. I recently visited a district that could barely get half of its posts to attend district meetings five years ago, but the day I visited that district this year, there were 20 of 21 posts present. This is terrific!

Progress happens because people who value the VFW and recognize its good impact on veterans invest the time needed to rejuvenate their posts and district. I have observed this new wave of energy and dedication across our state, which results in an increase in participation at all levels. This is quite uplifting. I salute those who have stepped up to make this happen.

As I checked membership while writing this article, our Department stood at 97.25% of its objective. We are moving forward, thanks to your hard work.

We have just over three months to

reach 100%. Our goal is attainable, but it comes down to our posts putting in a little more extra effort to keep new and reinstated members coming in. Please do not delay installing these members.

I have seen a variety of programs and events used to increase our outreach to find veterans where they live, worship, work, serve, dine and recreate. You can make critical connections with people by telling them how the VFW carries out its mission. If we close the information gap that exists about the VFW, people will be impressed by who we are and what we do.

Have you ever held a Buddy Poppy drive in local shopping areas? Not only will this help you raise funds for your needy members, you will meet veterans who do not know how the VFW benefits them and their communities.

These Buddy Poppy events will create membership growth opportunities and chances to let our "target audience" know what defines the VFW today.

Remember, if we're not out in our communities recruiting, volunteering, supporting our community and holding patriotic events, then we are INVISIBLE!

Please join and support the VFW's "Yes We Can" movement!

Facts and Figures

Election Reports, VFW Technology and Trustee Reports

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



Here we are once again approaching the time when we nominate and elect our new officers for the 2019-2020 year. Please remember that the March meeting is when the first nomination is made, followed by the April meeting when you have the second nomination and election of new officers.

When the new post officers are elected in April, please go to the National VFW website—www.vfw.org—log in, then complete the election report. Do not wait until May or June; do it right after your election even though officers might not be installed yet.

While you are on the website, I encourage post quartermasters to check the many administrative steps that they can complete online. Much time and energy was spent to make fulfilling your responsibilities easier, so take advantage of the technology

you have at your fingertips.

Visit the "Training and Support" section and make sure all post officers watch the videos that cover some important operational areas. Better yet, schedule a special meeting to view these resources together including videos on how to recruit new members and how to run a proper post meeting.

Thank you to everyone for doing a great job filling out the Trustees of Audit form. The data on this form is critical to keeping your post on solid financial footing. We are seeing fewer errors and more complete forms. Trustees: be sure you closely review bank records and the form before you sign.

Please always remember that the post quartermaster must be in control of all post and home association funds including writing checks and depositing monies. There should be no exceptions!

Do not hesitate to call or email me if you have questions or concerns.

Thank you for all you do for the largest combat veterans organization—the VFW.

State VFW Golf Tourney at Post 1989 Set for June Tee Times

VFW State Tournament at Indiana Post 1989: June 3-9th, 2019, practice June 3-6 and Tournament June 7-9. Entry Fee of \$120.00 includes: 4 practice rounds and 3 rounds tournament play; cart and lunch for 3 rounds; 2 light breakfasts; gifts; skill prizes; trophies; and cash prizes. Players must submit application and entry fee by May 15. Two or more foursomes from a post receive \$20 discount for all players. Tournament is limited to 120 entries. For info, call (724) 465-2121 or email vfwgcc@gmail.com.



Focus on Mission Success



West Mifflin native and Commanding Officer at the United States Marine Corps Recruiting Station in Pittsburgh Major Andrew Hornfeck delivers the keynote address during a Memorial Day ceremony at Mitchell Paige Park. Looking on are All-American VFW Post 914 Intrepid West Mifflin Commander Jake Bradich, right, and PA State Representative Austin Davis.



Rome Post 6824 displays VFW and military history items during its anniversary celebration. Among those pictured are Commander Glenn Owen (right), who also serves as the State Chairman of the *Voice of Democracy* program, and next to him then State Commander Dwight Fuhrman.



VFW State Surgeon Nelson Lowes (third from left) tours Pennsylvania to inspect VA medical centers and speak with veterans about their care. Joining Lowes at the Lebanon VAMC are District 18 Commander Dave Gyger, LVAMC Director Robert Callahan, Past District 18 Commander Donna Coulter, Post 148 Commander Pat Shupp and LVMAC Chief of Volunteer Services Jeremy Fees.



Tobyhanna Post 509 holds Buddy Poppy drives at numerous locations during the year to raise funds for helping veterans in need. This photo shows Sr. Vice Commander Jim Parker, Post Auxiliary member Mary Parker and Post Judge Advocate Ronnie Byrd.



VFW State Service Officer Dave Bower provides remarks during a recent monument re-dedication event in North Bend to honor local World War I veterans PFC Ira Keller and CPL Beale Darby, who were killed within days of each other. Family members of both veterans attended the ceremony, which was held 100 years after the soldiers died in battle, and they accepted Purple Heart medals on behalf of their descendants.



Mt. Pocono Post 3448 donates military branch service plaques, made by Comrade Roland Zeh, to Lehigh Valley Hospice. The plaques were presented at Hospice House in East Stroudsburg for use in the in-patient Hospice facilities at Lehigh Valley Medical Center. Shown are (from left) Commander George Piller, Adjutant Zeh, Volunteer Coordinator Tammy Hiestand and Hospice Chaplain Dean Frey.

DUE TO THE MANY PHOTOS RECEIVED AT STATE HQ, SOME PICTURES ARE BEING HELD FOR THE NEXT ISSUE. PLEASE NOTE: VFW NEWS CANNOT REPRODUCE NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS. ASK YOUR LOCAL PAPER FOR PERMISSION TO REPRINT A PHOTO AND SEND THE FILE OR PRINT (WITH THE PERMISSION STATEMENT) TO DSANDMAN@VFWPAHQ.ORG.

Focus on Mission Success



The Department presents two of its Honorary Pennsylvania VFW Eagle Awards to Pennsylvania Adjutant General Anthony Carrelli and his Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans Affairs Eric Weller. During the presentation, State Commander Thomas Hanzes remarked that the awards were given to honor and thank Major General Carrelli and Major General (Ret.) Weller for their military service and their support of veterans. VFW State Adjutant John Getz was also on hand to express the Department's gratitude for the outstanding service of the award recipients. (Photo by Tom Cherry/PA DMVA)



Butler Post 249 donated \$15,000 to the Butler City Police Department to support the unit's K-9 fund. Shown holding the check are Butler Police Chief Robert O'Neill and Commander Stephen Freeman, surrounded by post officials and police officers.



The VFW has a proud tradition of helping others who are impacted by natural disasters. Shown here is then Pennsylvania District 9 Commander John Miller presenting a donation to North Carolina Post 6018 to help them recover from hurricane and flood damage.



Greensburg Post 33 members Robert Stricklin and Ken Komlos welcome guests from the Heniz VA Medical Center for a dinner and bingo party event. The semi-annual dinner is sponsored by the post and auxiliary members. (Photo by post member Paul Yeckel)

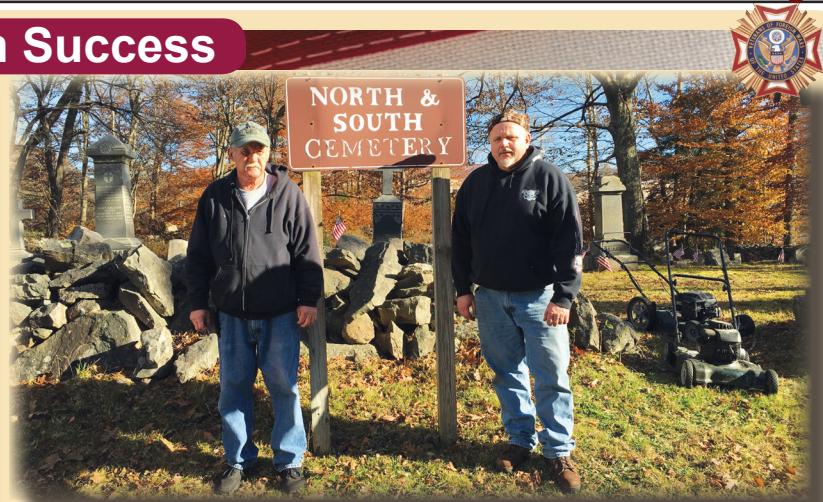
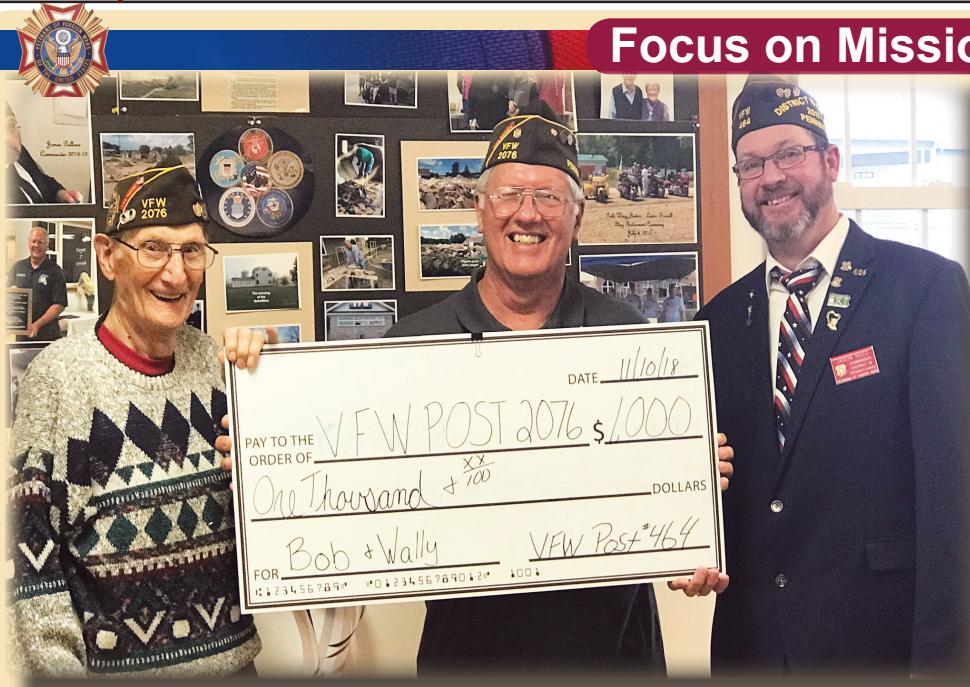


Kingston Post 283 hosts the Annual Wyoming Valley Veterans Day Parade, the area's 73rd parade event. Pictured are (from left): First row: George Brown, Parade Committee Vice President; Sam Greenberg, Committee Treasurer; Mike Favata, Post Steward; Laura Pugh, Auxiliary member; Nicole Hilstolsky, Auxiliary President; and Diane Koonrad, Auxiliary member. Second row: MSGT John Karpovich, PAARNG; LCDR Mike Boettcher, USNR; Lorraine Acker, Auxiliary member; and COL Charles Luce, Parade Secretary.



Department leaders have made it a tradition to attend the PAARNG 28th Infantry Division Dining Out event to show support for soldiers and officers in what is the nation's longest running Army combat division. Shown enjoying the company of PA Adjutant General Anthony Carrelli is (from left) State Commander Thomas Hanzes, State Jr. Vice Commander Ronald Peters, State Sr. Vice Commander Wayne Perry, PSC Gary Smith, PSC Glenn Umberger, State Service Officer Chairperson Christine Smith and State Chief of Staff James Lewis.

Focus on Mission Success



Tobyhanna Post 509 Commander Robert Kearney and member Terry Milheim provide an important public service by cleaning a local cemetery before Veterans Day activities. (Photo by Past Post Commander Steve Calles)

World War II Army veteran Walter Hurd (left) is headed back to France in June for the 75th anniversary of the American invasion on D-Day 1944. A member of the 82nd Airborne Division, Hurd spent many days behind enemy lines and looks forward to enjoying a peaceful journey on some of the same land where he fought to survive. He will be accompanied by VFW Post 2076 member Robert Lott, shown accepting a \$1,000 check from Oil City Post 464 Commander Jason Reed to help offset the costs of the trip. A GoFundMe page has been set up to help pay trip expenses: visit gofundme.com/pvt-walter-hurd or send donations to Punxsutawney Post 2076.



Greenville Post 3374 Board of Directors follow the activity during the Post 75th Anniversary Dinner. Pictured are (from left): Bill Richardson, Boxy Arnold, Jim Clark, Larry Sanker and Commander Al Marzano, along with Representative Mark Longietti. State FVW Commander Thomas "Ace" Hanzes spoke to post members and congratulated them for their dedication to keeping the Post legacy alive.



Holding the original VFW Post 1989 charter, Commander Greg Marsh and Sr. Vice Commander Don Becker pause for a photo opportunity as members gather to celebrate the post's 88th anniversary.



All-American VFW Post 914 Intrepid Commander Jake Bradich and Post Surgeon Bernie Zurawski show support for youth sports by attending a game featuring the West Mifflin Titans girls softball team, which the post sponsors.



During a Veterans Day event, Post 3405 hosts 97-year-old World War II veteran Bert Winzer, who was one of the first members of "The Devil's Brigade." Winzer, who trained with the parachute commando 1st Special Service Force, shared his experiences with the event crowd. He received the Bronze Star, Combat Infantry Badge and Purple Heart, among many other decorations and awards.



Focus on Mission Success



Trappe Post 7155 presents \$13,000 to the family of Alex Pigliacelli using funds raised during its 11th Annual Frank H. Martin, III, Memorial Car and Truck Show. Alex battles a rare and severe form of epilepsy called Dravet Syndrome. Among those present at the check hand-off are (front, from left) - Glenn Dunlap, Home Association President; Alex Pigliacelli and sister Chloe; back row - David Maris, committee member; Howard J. Helbert, Jr., Post Commander; Christina and Dan Pigliacelli, parents; and Buddy Martin, committee member. Congratulations Post 7155 for this outstanding community service!



During a Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Program at North Union Post 8543, guest speakers State Commander Thomas Hanzes and Senator Pat Stefano gather with WW II Veteran Allen Q. Jones and Past Department Auxiliary President Nancy Jones. Every post is encouraged to sponsor and participate in patriotic events.



Indiana Post 1989 and Auxiliary volunteers gather Christmas gifts to distribute to veterans in the Indiana area who live in nursing homes and retirement communities.



Joining PA Adjutant General Anthony Carrelli and his command staff, Huntingdon Post 1754 member Ray Shipp and Post 1754 Auxiliary member Cathy Shipp (far left) attended a 100th birthday celebration for Stella Shubella at the Hollidaysburg Veterans' Home.



Navy veteran Robert Crossett, a Post 6393 member, has participated in over 2,000 funeral services at Washington Crossing National Cemetery (WCNC). He also serves with the Joint Veterans Service Organization (JVSO) Honor Guard unit, which provides services for veterans buried in private cemeteries through the Quakertown, Plumsteadville and Morrisville region. Bob is recruiting more veterans to help provide services at WCNC and through the JVSO. As Bob says, "This mission needs to be done." Call Bob at (267) 738-0095.



Lancaster Post 1690 Commander Mark Giblin thanks a veteran for his service during a pinning ceremony held as part of the Post Veterans Day Ceremony. Residents at the Country Meadows retirement community were among those honored.



Carlisle Post 477 conducted a "Leadership Exchange" with two U.S. Army War College Colonels and a group of primarily World War II and Korean War veterans. Shown with the War College officers and participating veterans is Post 477 Commander Rick Olsen.

New "Spearhead" Book Spotlights PA VFW Member

New York Times Bestselling author Adam Makos recently visited Harrisburg to meet with World War II tank gunner and VFW Post 2124 life member Clarence Smoyer of Allentown to promote, "Spearhead: An American Tank Gunner, His Enemy, and a Collision of Lives in World War II." The book tells the heroic story of now 95-year-old Smoyer's journey into the heart of the Third Reich.



WW II Army Tank Gunner Clarence Smoyer—a VFW life member—enjoys camaraderie with his VFW Post 2124 buddies while signing copies of "Spearhead."

A demilitarized Sherman tank owned by collector Frank Buck was driven to the Midtown Scholar Bookstore, providing Smoyer with a chance to get reacquainted with the tank.

The scene was later recreated at Allentown VFW Post 2124.

To order the book, contact your local bookstore or visit Amazon.com.

Department Membership Update: 97.25% of the 2017-18 Year-End Total

Top five posts ranked by Membership Division			
Div.	Post	Location	%
1	8951	WEST YORK	117.53%
1	5958	TITUSVILLE	106.86%
1	1599	CHAMBERSBURG	96.16%
2	7505	MARS	106.54%
2	249	BUTLER	104.28%
2	845	DOWNINGTOWN	103.63%
2	6704	MECHANICSBURG	103.08%
2	1446	RED LION	101.81%
3	7599	TRANSFER	115.58%
3	813	DU BOIS	111.81%
3	3376	EPHRATA	108.25%
3	464	OIL CITY	104.84%
3	315	NEW CASTLE	102.84%
4	3460	MEDIA	107.46%
4	537	ETTERS	105.26%
4	8803	TIDIOUTE	103.96%
4	4793	WAYNESBURG	103.06%
4	6495	LEVITTOWN	102.89%
5	1620	MIDDLETOWN	107.55%
5	5542	BRISTOL	106.57%
5	4795	WINDBER	104.91%
5	4714	NORTHAMPTON	104.29%
5	148	HARRISBURG	103.75%
6	879	CRANBERRY TWP	111.62%
6	6675	PITTSBURGH	110.85%
6	5286	FARRELL	106.50%
6	7463	NEW BLOOMFIELD	105.73%
6	32	LANSDALE	105.51%
7	8008	NESQUEHONING	129.80%
7	914	WEST MIFFLIN	113.54%
7	3258	CHALFONT	109.09%
7	7343	MT HOLLY SPRINGS	108.18%
8	7134	PALMERTON	114.08%
8	8023	ANNVILLE	110.81%
8	6773	UNION CITY	107.14%
8	747	POINT MARION	106.97%
8	3090	PHILADELPHIA	106.02%
9	974	DARBY	108.62%
9	6617	PHILADELPHIA	105.45%
9	5756	SEWICKLEY	104.83%
9	7250	CONFLUENCE	104.68%
9	5205	PHILADELPHIA	104.54%
10	4040	PITTSBURGH	135.00%
10	3610	PHILADELPHIA	125.00%
10	1606	NEWELL	118.18%
10	7632	ELIZABETH	114.70%
10	317	COAL TOWNSHIP	111.76%

On March 18, 2019, Dept. membership stood at 71,643 members or 97.25% of the 2017-18 year-end total. So far this year, 1,212 new members and 465 reinstated members have been recruited. Posts should read the State Membership Program to learn about all membership contests and the criteria for "All-State" and "All-American."

Quartermasters are encouraged to visit www.vfw.org to use the Online Membership System and to ask their District Membership Chairman for their post delinquent member list.

Join Loyalty Day Celebration at State Capitol on May 1

The Department will hold its annual "Loyalty Day" celebration at the State Capitol on Wednesday, May 1, beginning at 10 a.m. All VFW districts, posts and auxiliaries are encouraged to attend. Vans from VFW State HQ will provide transportation. Please arrive at least 60-90 minutes early. Large groups are encouraged to travel directly to the Capitol and use the parking lots located around the Capitol complex.



Department Bids Farewell to PSCs Thomas and Allen

Past State Commander Al Thomas (1998-99): Albert Stanley Thomas, Jr., passed away in November at the age of 84. Al served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War era as a field artillery man with the 101st Airborne and Third Armored Cavalry, and he was awarded the Occupation Medal. He joined the VFW in 1966.

Comrade Al's engaging smile showed his kind heart and his compassion for others.

He was life member of Darby VFW Post 974. He was elected as post commander in 1973-74 and earned "Outstanding Post Commander" honors. Al also held the office of post quartermaster for many years, and was named to the Department of Pennsylvania VFW's "Post Quartermaster Team" in 1990-91.

He served in many higher VFW leadership positions including as Department By-Laws Chairman, when he would frequently say, "It's in the book (Manual of Procedure)," when responding to questions about VFW procedures. In addition to State Commander and Department Parliamentarian, he served as chairman of the State VFW Community Activity Committee, the Political Action Committee and as a member of the State VFW Legislative Committee. Al was an award-winning district commander and district quartermaster.

Nationally, Al attended VFW Legislative Conferences and National Conventions for more than 30 years. His National VFW appointments included serving on the Youth Activities, Americanism, Legislative, Political Action, Hospital, *Voice of Democracy* and National Security committees. He was a member of Cootie Pup Tent 8 and was Supreme (National) Commander in 1987-88.



Past State Commander William Allen (1992-93): William C. Allen passed away in January at the age of 87. Bill served in the Military Police during the United Nations occupation of Germany from 1951-53 with the 7792 Security Team for the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany.

He joined the VFW in 1955 at Post 231, where he served as both post commander and post quartermaster. He then held those same positions with Norwood Post 7213, and as commander, quartermaster and judge advocate of District 7.

Bill was honored as an "All-State Post Commander" and "All-State Post Quartermaster."

On the Department level, he served as Judge Advocate, Community Activities Chairman, Chief of Staff and member of the Eastern States Conference. He was chosen by National Headquarters to serve on committees for Veterans Service, Finance, Internal Organization and Americanism. Bill was also named a National Aide-de-Camp.

He remained active on the Department's Finance Committee through 2018.

Thank you, Comrades, for your many years of service to your nation and the VFW.



Top 10 Performing Membership Districts as of March 18

Congratulations District Commanders for Leading the Way Forward!

- First Place: DISTRICT 1 - 102.15%: Commander Zbigniew Laska
- Second Place: DISTRICT 20 - 101.79%: Commander Richard Ellis
- Third Place: DISTRICT 25 - 100.57%: Commander James Hodge
- Fourth Place: DISTRICT 10 - 100.05%: Commander Chester Potoski
- Fifth Place: DISTRICT 21 - 100.00%: Commander Richard Olivitt
- Sixth Place: DISTRICT 19 - 99.14%: Commander Jason Reed
- Seventh Place: DISTRICT 16 - 98.80%: Commander Jonathan Bittner
- Eighth Place: DISTRICT 18 - 98.46%: Commander David Gyger
- Ninth Place: DISTRICT 28 - 97.70%: Commander Donald Christy
- Tenth Place: DISTRICT 9 - 97.53%: Commander William Stellfox



**Holding the Top Spot:
District 1 (Philadelphia County)
Commander Zbigniew Laska**



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Dedicated to the comradeship of those who borne arms in defense of the USA, to the principle of informed and active patriotism, working to keep us strong and free.

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

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Membership Recruiting Moment**Recruiting 101: Get Out, Shake Hands and Talk to Veterans**

Regardless of post size, there are proven recruiting practices that will yield success. For example, by participating in local events, VFW recruiters will have opportunities to speak with eligible members, many who don't know enough about the VFW to value the benefits of membership.

State Headquarters recently coordinated VFW participation in numerous events with good success. At the PA Farm Show, recruiters signed up 25 members. During a large outdoor show that attracted thousands of people who hunt and fish, VFW recruiters brought 26 new members into the organization. Many more information packets were handed out with applications.



Recruiters Dave Gyger and Donna Coulter sign up two new members during the PA Farm Show.

VFW recruiters also attended a local RV Show during which six new VFW members were secured.

VFW State Service Officers were also present during these events to help answer questions that veterans and their survivors had about benefits and services provided by the state and federal governments. Their expertise started many conversations that, in addition to addressing benefit issues, showed veterans how the VFW works hard to support them on many fronts.

To further expand the VFW's



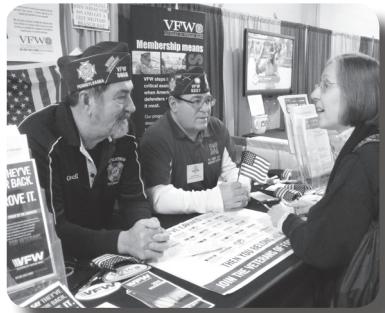
Recruiting at an outdoor show in District 29 are Gary Rustin, Commander William Roland, Bob Emerick and State Membership Chairman Henry Manella.

outreach campaign, recruiters will participate in the United States Concealed Carry Association's conference in Pittsburgh (May 17-19, www.usconcealedcarry.com), where veterans will be among the 10,000 attendees.

Recruiters will also set up VFW tables this summer at large air shows in Reading and Latrobe.

VFW recruiting can be highly successful if post members spend time with veterans away from the post home, as shown by the fact that the Department has recruited 1,212 new and 465 reinstated members so far during the 2018-19 year.

At a minimum, all posts can carry out VFW-sponsored events for local military units and offer veterans appreciation events to



Recruiter Cecil Dennis and State Service Officer Luis Ybarra speak with a veteran about membership.

veterans from all service eras.

You can order membership recruiting necessities like a VFW tablecloth, brochures, applications, banners and outdoor canopy at www.vfw.org, log in, then "Training and Support." *Also, cut out page 13 so you have facts and figures showing the value of membership.*

State Commander Thomas Hanzes has released new Spring Contests. Visit www.vfwpahq.org, "Post Info" and "Membership Program" to read the details.



Mt. Joy Post Commander Jonathen Leggore reviews VFW eligibility and membership benefits with a veteran.

Dept. Membership Contest Rewards are Still Open for Recruiters, Posts

INDIVIDUAL RECRUITERS: Any member who recruits 10 new and/or reinstated members by April 30, 2019 will have his/her name entered into a random drawing for one (1) of two (2) Life Memberships or Bronze Legacy Life Memberships, if already a Life Member.

POST AWARDS: (Divisions 1-6) All Posts that properly report 100% in membership, including 15 new/reinstated members, will receive a monetary award and VFW Store gift certificate: Contest #11 - Deadline April 30, 2019, \$200 plus \$100 Gift Certificate; Contest #12 - Deadline June 30, 2019, \$100 plus \$100 Gift Certificate.

GRASSROOTS POST AWARDS (Divisions 7-10): Posts that properly report 100% in membership, including 5 new/reinstated members, will receive a monetary award and VFW Store gift certificate: Contest #15 - Deadline April 30, 2019, \$200 plus \$100 Gift Certificate; Contest #16 - June 30, 2019 \$100 plus \$100 Gift Certificate.

POST LEVEL - Legacy Life Memberships: Contest # 17 - Each post who gains two (2) New Legacy Life Memberships or Upgraded Legacy Life Memberships will be entered into a drawing for a Legacy Life Membership or an Upgrade depending on the recipient. Department must be notified of the recipient by May 31st. Contest #18 - Any post that obtains at least 95% in membership plus reports all mandatory criteria by April 30, will be entered into a random drawing for one (1) of five (5) Life Memberships or Legacy Life Memberships.

NOTES: The All-State Post Contest was designed to be achievable by posts of all sizes. The mandatory All-State Post Worksheet must be completed in order for a post to qualify and must be postmarked no later than April 30, 2019. Visit www.vfwpahq.org, "Post Tools" to see all remaining contests.

PA Dept. will Host VFW National Chaplain Weekend Retreat

Rev. Peter Hook, State Chaplain - peterhook@verizon.net or (267) 229-7722



For 50 years, the members of VFW Post 1865, and the citizens of Kenosha, Wisconsin, honored the VFW National Chaplain and other VFW Chaplains for the service they provide.

This was a special event unmatched anywhere else in the world.

Unfortunately, a few years ago, the tradition stopped when post leadership changed. Past National Chaplain, Ted Bowers, presented the idea of bringing this event to Pennsylvania to his home post (Richard J. Gross VFW Post 8896) in East Berlin. The East Berlin Post decided to take on the responsibility of honoring the VFW National Chaplain and the work of Chaplains.

They held their first event in 2017 when I served as National Chaplain. Last year, we honored Rev. James Gray from Decatur, GA. This year, our VFW National Chaplain is Charlene Cobb from Darien, Wisconsin. The event will take place May 17-19, 2019.

This is a retreat weekend for post, district, and state chaplains and their spouses. We will check in on Friday evening and have dinner together. Here is a preview of our schedule on Saturday, which is Armed Forces Day:

- 9:15 a.m. - Meet at the Gettysburg Museum & Visitors Center
- 9:30 a.m. - See movie/Cyclorama

- 11:00 a.m. - Visit Museum/Gift Shop/ Lunch in cafeteria
- 12:00 p.m. - Board Bus for Tour: A special guided tour of the Gettysburg battlefield by Chaplain John Wega, an expert, not only in Civil War history, but in the role chaplains and faith played in the Civil War
- 3:15 p.m. - Return to Hotels/Bed & Breakfast
- 6:00 p.m. - Banquet at East Berlin VFW Post 8896 with dinner, program and time for informal fellowship.

We have reserved eight rooms at the Altland House (<http://altlandhouse.com/inn-suites/>), 1 Center Square in nearby Abbottstown, PA 17301; (717) 259-9535. These rooms are for guests who will check in on Friday, May 17, 2019, for two nights (departing on Sunday, May 19, 2019).

Those planning on attending the National Chaplain Event, and who desire to stay at the Altland House, should call the Altland House to review room features and confirm the nightly rates. Rooms will be reserved on a first-come, first-serve basis.

There are numerous hotels located close to East Berlin and in Gettysburg.

Chaplains, and anyone else who would like to attend, should put this on the calendar now and contact Chaplain Hook at (267) 229-7722 or email PeterHook@verizon.net to fill out a reservation form.

Blessings as you serve!

Cigarette smoking is the top cause of preventable disease and death. Only 14% of Americans smoke, down from 21% in 2005. Please keep these numbers in mind when planning for the future of your VFW post.

Take secondhand smoke off the menu



SOME SAY THEY'VE GOT YOUR BACK. WE PROVE IT.



FACT SHEET



As the nation's oldest major war veterans' organization, the VFW has an impeccable and longstanding record of service and stewardship. More than 4 million patriotic Americans, both members and non-members, entrust the VFW with financial contributions and dedicate millions of volunteer hours.

Since its founding, the VFW has been a staple in the community. Troop support, youth activities, volunteering, veterans assistance and scholarship programs are some of the ways the VFW shines in many communities and cities.

Youth Programs: *Voice of Democracy* (VOD) for high school students • *Patriot's Pen* for junior high school students • Scout of the Year • Youth Sports and Scouting Sponsorships • JROTC Unit Recognition and Support

Teacher Recognition: *VOD* Teacher of the Year • Citizenship Education Teachers of the Year

Patriotism: Sponsor Teacher Participation in the Freedoms Foundation • Echoes from the Wall Curriculum Honoring Veterans • Veterans in the Classroom • Post Patriotic Events • Flag Folding and Flag Raising Demonstrations • Buddy Poppy Drives

Community Volunteerism: Each year, VFW members volunteer nearly nine million hours of service to various community endeavors.

Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service: VFW volunteers donate millions of hours of service annually at VA medical facilities.

Military Troop and Family Support: Military Assistance Program (MAP) - The link between the VFW and the military community has provided over 4,000 grants for morale-boosting events since 2005, hosting more than 2.3 million military family members • Adopt-a-Unit with more than 2,900 units and ships adopted through VFW posts since 2007 • Care packages from posts across the country show their support of our military by collecting and distributing much-needed personal items • VFW Unmet Needs administers emergency financial grants to military families to help cover basic living expenses. Since 2004, more than 9,600 grants have been issued totaling more than \$10.8 million.

Student Veteran Program: Enacted in 2013, this program offers direct assistance to student veterans who have questions or are experiencing problems accessing their VA benefits • VFW "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" provides up to \$5,000 to qualifying veterans and service members including 1,287 scholarships worth \$5.7 million.

Service to Veterans: From lobbying Congress and monitoring the Department of Veterans Administration to assisting veterans filing claims, the VFW remains a dedicated advocate for America's veterans, service members and their families. No organization has had more of an impact on federal legislation that benefits veterans than the VFW. Remember, **No One Does More for Veterans!**

YOUR DONATION OF

\$20

ENSURES THE VFW CAN

Educate a separating service member about his or her well-earned VA benefits through a private benefits counseling session with a VFW Service Officer.

Provide training to 4 VFW Service Officers on signs of emotional suffering so they can better direct veterans to programs and services.

Help cover rent, utilities or groceries for a military family struggling with the hardships of war.

Serve 5 morale-boosting "welcome home" meals for service members recently back from combat.

2,000+

Number of VA-accredited VFW representatives across America and abroad, helping veterans fight for the VA benefits they have earned.

39

Number of VFW-SVA Fellows (student veterans) who have traveled to Washington, D.C., to advocate for veterans' rights.

\$8.3 billion+

The total annual amount the VFW helped veterans recoup in VA disability compensation and pension benefits — which includes \$1.4 billion in new benefits paid to veterans in fiscal year 2018.

2.3 million+

Number of service members and their family members hosted at VFW Military Assistance Program (MAP) events since 2005.

27

Number of times the VFW has testified before Congress in the last 12 months alone. The VFW has been instrumental in virtually every major legislative victory for veterans in the 20th and 21st centuries.

\$3 million

Amount of scholarships, monetary awards and other incentives the VFW distributes annually to middle and high school students through two major patriotic essay competitions.

\$10.8 million+

Value of financial assistance awarded to military families since 2004 to help cover basic needs in times of crisis. 43% of the funds covered basic housing needs.

\$5.7 million

Amount of scholarships awarded to more than 1,287 veterans and service members through VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" since January 2014.

The VFW by the numbers

1.6 million+

Number of VFW and VFW Auxiliary members.

6,278

Number of VFW Posts worldwide.



Helping veterans get justice

109,000+

Number of veterans the VFW assisted in submitting new VA claims in fiscal year 2018.

15,000

Number of VA claims filed by the VFW's Pre-Discharge offices in fiscal year 2018 resulting in more than \$155 million in disability compensation.

Helping struggling military families

9,653

Number of grants provided to military families facing financial hardship through **VFW Unmet Needs** since 2004.

\$4,725,869

Amount of grants provided through **VFW Unmet Needs** covering housing for struggling military families since 2004.

3,172

Number of military families who received assistance with housing needs since 2004.



Improving life in America

10.3 million

Number of volunteer hours contributed by VFW members annually.

Year the VFW started to fight for veterans, service members and their families.



Honoring the fallen

9.3 million+

Number of VFW "Buddy"® Poppies distributed by the VFW last year.

\$12 million

Amount raised through the VFW "Buddy"® Poppy program for needy veterans.



Inspiring patriotism in young people

33,000+

Number of high school students who competed in the 2017-18 VFW Voice of

The VFW Auxiliary ...

Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes



The Department Auxiliary President Says...

Our Focus is Always on Serving Veterans

By Charlotte Lopes - swoggerlopes51@gmail.com



As I sit here writing this column, our Department Auxiliary stands at 99.19% (as of March 1) in membership. Our goal was to make 100% by March 31, so when you read this I hope that we've accomplished this objective.

Our success in membership and programs show that when we work together as a team, we can accomplish anything.

As I visited the districts this year, I have seen great creativity and dedication for raising funds that support our veterans and their families. Our VA hospital representatives and deputies are doing wonderful work. At one VA medical center, we met a woman who has volunteered more than 16,000 hours. Soon to celebrate her 95th birthday, she still works everyday and she loves helping others. Her mission of service keeps her going strong.

Please remember that March 29 is a day of remembrance for Vietnam War veterans. Make sure that you thank our Vietnam veterans for their service and welcome them back home.

By the time you read this article, we

will have completed our annual march on Washington, D.C. During this important rally for veterans support, we reminded lawmakers about the many legislative victories that the VFW and its Auxiliary have made possible, and we promoted our current priorities.

While in D.C., we once again congratulated our Department's first place *Voice of Democracy* winner and were proud to escort her during the National VOD awards event.

Always remember in your prayers our men and women who served in the military and those serving today. Keep writing letters to our state and federal lawmakers to remind them that they need to provide our veterans and our troops with the highest possible level of support.

Whether you are a Democrat or Republican, you should always support our veterans and push hard for continued funding for the benefits and services that they have earned. Let's also remind them that there are many veterans suffering from medical conditions caused by their service and that there are many veterans who live with undiagnosed conditions.

Our mission is "Getting Justice for Our Veterans" and I "Believe We Can Do It!" Let's keep up the great work!

Get Your Reports In and Sign Up for VFW Action Corps

By Michael Mason, Legislative Committee Chairman - wrangler8796@gmail.com



As we approach the end of the Auxiliary program year, I want to thank everyone for a great year. I also want to remind everyone to ensure that you complete your year-end reports and get them submitted on time. The reporting period is April 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019.

Auxiliary Presidents are to send two copies to their District President by April 6. Please retain one copy for your Auxiliary Records. District Presidents are to send the reports to the program chairman by April 20. Chairpersons should send the information to the Department president by May 1.

VFW Action Corps: We ask that all Auxiliary members join the VFW Action

Corps, which you can sign up for by visiting the VFW web site, www.vfw.org/actioncorps, and follow the prompts.

Getting your members involved with the VFW Action Corps, and showing them how to use the site, will ensure that they receive emails and notifications about critical legislative and executive branch actions that will impact veterans.

Together, we can provide grassroots support for VFW legislative priorities. You will find the 2019 Legislative Priority Goals on the National VFW website.

It's been a true honor for me to serve as Legislative Chairman for the Department of Pennsylvania Auxiliary. "Believe... We Can Do It!" by "Getting Justice for Our Veterans."

Thank you for all that you do!

Spotlighting Our Auxiliary Activity



Clockwise from top: Department Auxiliary leaders salute the flag during the opening ceremonies of the State VFW Mid-Winter Conference in January. Donning construction hats, Past Department President Sandy Brenner, PDP Kathy Jo Reinsmith and President Charlotte Swogger Lopes lead post and district Auxiliary representatives through a "Building on the Auxiliary Foundation" training session during the conference.

Let's Help Develop Patriotism Among Our Youth

Nancy Kreiner, Youth Activities Chairperson - mrsplk2@aol.com



The members of the Department Auxiliary have been very busy achieving the following:

2018-2019

YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROGRAM GOALS:

- Creating, sponsoring and working with youth groups

- Youth groups supporting our veterans national citations
- Random acts of patriotism (R.A.P.)
- Creating a contest for students in grades K-5 - Our contest for students in grades K-5, "Picture My Veteran," was a great success. There were over 1,000 entries.

The winners are as follows: first place K-2, \$50, Andrew Kilpela, District 25/Aux 7505; and second place K-2, \$25,

David Calugar, District 21/Aux 5265.

Grades 3-5 winners - first place Catalina Carrolus, \$50, District 21/Aux 8896; and second place Braden Mathews, \$25, District 27/Aux 6743.

Awards will be given at the President's Testimonial in New Kensington, PA. GREAT JOB!!!

The VFW Auxiliary continues to help teach our youth the skills they need to become responsible adults through serving our country, communities and our veterans. Youth are not taught patriotism in our schools, in their homes or in any other organization. They need to know from where they receive their freedoms.

Our goal of 100% in reporting in Youth Activities for 2018-2019 will be reached.

We "Believe.... We Can Do It" as we work on "Getting Justice For Our Veterans."

Focus on Mission Success



Brentwood Post 1810 works with GBU Financial Life to collect items for local food banks. The event was held at the post during a Pittsburgh Steelers game. Each year, the amount of food collected increases. Pictured are members of GBU and Post Commander Dave Buechel.



Honor Guard members for Post 8282, Breinigsville, show the colors at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Veterans Memorial Elementary School in Upper Macungie Township. In the photo are (from left) Angel Mendez, Edward Goehring, Post Commander Clark Hamm, Elias Medina, Jim McGinness and Roland Grammes.



New Holland Post 7362 holds a flag dedication ceremony to mark the occasion of installing a new flag pole. Taking part in the event are (from left) Home Association President Larry Usner, HA Treasurer Bob Witmer, Post Jr. Vice Commander Lamar Martin, Sr. Vice Commander Mike Martin, Commander Norman Brower, State Adjutant John Getz and Past District 9 Commander Jim Haller.



At the Delaware Valley Veteran Home in Philadelphia, Levittown Post 6495 Honor Guard poses with the POW/MIA table during a ceremony for National POW/MIA Day. Pictured are (from left) are Post Quartermaster Jim Ritchie, Past State Commander Ben Mastridge, Post Commander David Pearl and Past Department President Brenda Johnson.



Posts across the Department sponsor activities that benefit veterans and military families including White Haven Post 6615, shown participating in a carnival at the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center. Pictured at the event (from left) are Post Commander Jim Quinn, Quartermaster Melissa Dimmitt and Sr. Vice Commander Robert Hayes.

The Department salutes Chalfont Post 3258 Junior Vice Commander John Otte (shown at right) who, while in route to a District 8 meeting with Sr. Vice Commander George Uhl, encountered a multi-vehicle accident. John, a nationally registered EMT and PA certified fire police officer, assessed the occupants.

As John approached the rear vehicle, he found one occupant trapped and a strong odor of gasoline which was leaking at a steady rate. Fearful of a potential explosion and subsequent fire, John required several attempts to bend the door open far enough to remove the passenger.

John administered basic life support emergency medical care to the driver, then turned to a mother and young daughter in another car to assess their medical needs. He and George remained on scene to provide continuous care to the occupants of the vehicles until paramedic and law enforcement units arrived on scene. The first responders and Chalfont Post members commend John and George for their efforts during an emergency situation.



Brentwood Post 1810 and Auxiliary participate in Operation Reach Out, a volunteer effort by the post and community to pack and ship goodie boxes to troops overseas. This year, 2,500 boxes were packed and mailed. Among those participating are Post Commander Dave Buechel and Auxiliary members Michelle, Matthew, Lynsey and Lauren Wiederstein. In previous years, one of the recipients of these packages was Commander Buechel's son, LCMR Richard Buechel.

PERIODICALS



Conshohocken Post 1074 donates \$2,000 to the Conshohocken Neighborhood Council, a local food bank. The food bank supports families, children and veterans with meals all year. The post raised the funds through its annual Crab Fest. Pictured are (from left) Adjutant Gideon Condon, Sr. Vice Commander Walt Hartnett, Food Bank representative Brian Coll, Commander George Burchard and Quartermaster Tom Smith.

Congratulations Post 1597 for Celebrating Your 90th Anniversary!

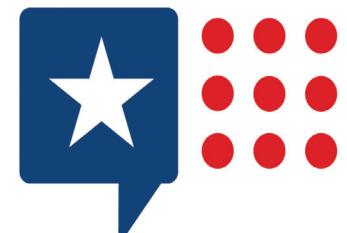


State Commander Thomas Hanzes congratulates members of Croydon Post 1597 for reaching the Post's 90th anniversary. Post members attending the celebration include World War II veteran Hugh Templeton and Korean War veterans Jim Bucci, Joe Dep and Leon Ward.



Clarks Summit Post 7069 launches a recruiting program for new and reinstated members with Quartermaster/Adjutant and State Inspector Michael G. McLane, Membership Chairman John Arre and Commander Donald Jones leading the way.

Veterans Crisis Line



**1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1**



District 11 post and auxiliary members take a break from setting up a picnic event for residents of the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center. The district conducts a variety of activities that enhance the lives of veterans whose health conditions require them to stay at the center.



Saxton Post 4129 Commander Gregory Crooks presents U.S. Army PVT Alex Baker with a Military Award check for \$1,000. Post 4129 gives this award to any Tussey Mountain H.S. student who enlists in the military.



Post 3575 Commander Joe Hatfield and Trustee Jennifer Costigan are ready to speak with veterans in attendance at the Solanco Fair.