



WE NEED TO “REMEMBER OUR MISSION” AND THE IMPORTANCE OF WORKING TOGETHER



Our State Auxiliary President not too long ago, stood in the doorway of a meeting room, witnessing an exchange that deeply troubled her. A comrade and an Auxiliary member were engaged in a heated argument, exchanging unkind words with one another. Each of, after the confrontation, came to her separately to explain their side. The comrade spoke of defending his family, expressing his frustration and need to protect his loved ones. The Auxiliary member, with tears streaming down her face, said, “We’re supposed to be here supporting veterans.”



At that moment, it struck her. Do they not see? The comrade is a veteran, yes, but this Auxiliary member is part of his extended family—the family we vow to protect and serve. And the Auxiliary member, though hurt, is also a part of this veteran’s life. They are bound by a shared mission, one that both of them seem to have lost sight of at that moment.



“One Mission, One Team”

It is easy to forget, in the heat of the moment, that we are all here for the same reason: to serve veterans, their families, and our communities. As members of the VFW and its Auxiliary, we commit ourselves to a mission of support and solidarity, and by doing so, we must recognize that we are a team—a family. We are all connected by this singular purpose.



When tensions arise, we must remind ourselves that we are stronger together. Veterans fought side by side, defending not just their brothers and sisters in arms, but also the freedoms and families they left behind. Auxiliary members work tirelessly

to support veterans and their families, often making sacrifices that go unnoticed. We must never lose sight of the fact that both sides are essential parts of this effort.

“Recognizing Each Other’s Value”

The comrade who spoke to her was right—his family matters. But what he may not have realized in that moment is that the Auxiliary member standing before him is part of that family. Just as the Auxiliary member was right to say that we are here to support veterans, she also needed to recognize that the comrade she was upset with is the very veteran she is fighting for.

This isn’t just about our own personal grievances or individual perspectives. This is about something much larger—the collective mission we all share. Veterans are not just individuals; they are fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, spouses, and friends. And Auxiliary members are not just supporters—they are the family that continues to stand by their side, long after the battles are over.

“Finding Common Ground”

Disagreements are inevitable in any organization, especially one that deals with such emotionally charged topics as service and sacrifice. But in these moments of conflict, we must take a step back and remind ourselves of why we are here. Our mission is not just to protect our families, but to protect each other’s families. Our goal is not just to support veterans, but to support everyone who is part of this extended community.

There is common ground in the shared desire to do good for those who have given so much. We must approach each other with empathy and understanding, recognizing the pain and passion that often fuel these conflicts. The comrade was defending what he holds dear, and the Auxiliary member was expressing her commitment to our mission. Both of these perspectives are valid, but they must come together, not apart, if we are to truly serve those who need us.

“A Call for Unity”

As we move forward, let this be a reminder of the importance of unity. The importance of Togetherness. The VFW members and the Auxiliary members are all pieces of the same puzzle. When we work together, we create a complete picture of support for veterans, military families, and our communities.

We must never forget that our strength comes from our unity, and that our differences should never tear us apart. VFW members and Auxiliary members are not opponents—they are partners in this mission. By recognizing each other’s value and working through our disagreements, we can ensure that we are providing the best possible support to those we serve.

Let’s refocus on what truly matters: our veterans, their families, and the communities we serve. United, we stand strong. Divided, we risk failing those who need us the most. Let’s commit to working together, with kindness and understanding, to achieve more for the ones we are here to serve.

Barbara Loncar

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara K. Loncar".

VFW PA, State Commander

Andrea Meintel

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Meintel".

VFW Auxiliary PA, State President

STATE COMMANDER



BARBARA "BARB" LONCAR
STATE COMMANDER

I would first like to express my sincere appreciation for all your service and support so far this year. I have met a lot of new members and reconnected with some that I haven't seen in a while.

I would like to encourage you to continue your hard work and dedication to our organization. We must continue to work together with our counterparts within District, Department and Auxiliaries. Remember that we all need to recruit new members for our organization to thrive.

One of the ways I have learned to recruit new members is to ask women if they have served in the military. The women will either say "yes" or "no" to the question. Those that say "no" will sometimes follow up with "I didn't but my husband has." This is the best technique to recruit so that you aren't overlooking our female veterans.

Currently there are two items that we really need to work on: "Mental Health and Homelessness." You can't just take a homeless veteran off the street and put them in a home. You need to gain their trust and provide support from other veterans. They need medical assistance, counseling, and training. Our camaraderie is what gets us through challenging times. The shared experience of our time in the military is what sets us apart and talking to other veterans helps us through challenging times. I encourage all of you to continue the fight in taking care of our veterans and the communities. We only become stronger as a country by supporting one another.

Upcoming Events:

November 15-17 we will be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of our Auxiliary in Harrisburg. This is a huge milestone for Pennsylvania. I would encourage all of you to try to come out and support this event. Keep in mind that the Auxiliary members are family members of Veterans that we pledge to take care of within our organization.

Our next event to keep on your calendar is our Mid-winter conference January 24-26, 2025 in Gettysburg. This is an exceptionally good event to attend if you want to learn about the VFW organization. You will get training and the ability to network with others within the state of Pennsylvania. If you have questions or need assistance, please come to this event. All the events that we have are important and the best way to learn from each other. Who knows, you might be able to teach us something that will help others in their posts! We need to remain steadfast in doing all that we can to improve the quality of life for all of today's service members, veterans, and their families.

When this paper is printed, we will be coming upon our holiday season. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Blessed Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year, and any other Holiday that you celebrate within your beliefs. I will be praying for all of you to be happy and safe during this time of the year. Please remember if you are feeling down and should you need help during this time of the year reach out to your family, friends, or battle buddies for assistance. We all need to support one another through our troubled times! I am here for you should you need me; however, if I am unavailable, I will find someone to help you.

Sincerely,

Commander Barb

STATE SR. VICE COMMANDER



WILLIAM "BILL" ROLAND
STATE SR. VICE COMMANDER

Summer is over, I hope everyone had a great summer. We can now focus on supporting Commander Loncar in moving the greatest Veterans organization forward. We are all aware that we have issues and realize that one person cannot fix the issues. The solution will take all of us, but I believe that "we" can do better. During the National Convention, I had the opportunity to sit down with members of other states to hear what they are doing with issues that we also have. In our military careers and in our everyday lives now we did things at some point that we thought could not be done, but we were wrong, we did it. I know we hear this every year, but our membership and recruiting of new members make us strong advocates for our Veterans and their families in Washington D.C. and Harrisburg to fight for the rights you deserve. If we work together, I know we can do this! "Let's do this."

I am honored to be the Senior Vice Commander of this Veterans organization. I would like to thank everyone for their support. As I travel across the State to visit the Post and Districts, I hear we are not valuing our traditions. The VFW has 125 years of tradition, and we need to bring those values back to our VFW Posts.

I know that many members have commitments in their lives with family, work, and community events. However, I would like to see more members attend our State Convention and Mid-Winter Conference - even if only for a few days. The valuable information and training provided at these events will make your Post successful. Your VFW Posts should help with those expenses. I enjoy networking with other members, posts and districts that taught me new ways to get things accomplished.

There are many programs coming up with deadlines. VOD, Patriots Pen, Safety, Healthcare, Coloring, and more. If you need a VOD or Patriots Pen, ask other posts or your district if they have extra. The Department gets so many calls every year that these children don't have a Post that they can turn their essay into because the canteen side doesn't know anything about the Programs. I know members say that getting a White Hat is not a priority to them, but it is a great achievement and a proud moment in your career.

The holiday season is upon us, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years. I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season. See you at the Auxiliary's 100 Anniversary in November.

STATE JR. VICE COMMANDER



JIM BROWN
STATE JR. VICE COMMANDER

Sisters and Brothers,

I hope those of you that were able to attend the various trainings learned some new things and refreshed others. The hope is that you have taken this information back to your Post as learning tools on how to make your Post stronger. The more tools in your toolbox, the more successful your Post will become. Allow others to utilize these tools and be a part of the success of your Post.

Recently, I heard an individual say; "we don't need him". This could not be further from the truth. We all have something to offer our VFW. All of us must ensure we are utilizing our members and not stifling their growth within the VFW, nor stifling the growth and evolution of the VFW!

On a personal note, I received a Buddy Check from a Pennsylvania District Commander recently to see how I was doing, because this person had not heard from me for a few weeks. This was very much appreciated. We need to implement this practice more often. If you have not heard from a fellow Comrade, just reach out and do a Buddy Check. Let them know you are thinking about them, and you are there for them. Often, all is fine. However, there may be that one Buddy Check you do that could save a Veteran!

STATE ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER



JOHN B. GETZ, JR
STATE QUARTERMASTER

Comrades, it has been a short and quick summer. We are three months into our new year and midwinter will be here shortly. We are a Veterans Service Organization, not a bar, this is something we need to focus on and understand. We are allowing non-members dictate and take over our VFWs. Your people in your Posts are allowing this to happen. As Veterans, we need to regroup and ask why we are allowing this to happen. I encourage you all to look at your own VFW and see if you are doing the mission which this organization was founded to do. Are you all helping Veterans and their families? Remember

every day is Veterans' Day and if you do not believe this, then you need to ask your Posts what are we here for? Throughout the state we have VFWs with an Auxiliary; why are your Posts not working together with them to have a good relationship? You would be amazed how working together as a TEAM can be very instrumental to having a successful VFW. Now is the time to come together as a family and do what this organization was formed to do 125 years ago and that is HELPING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES!

CHAPLAIN



REV. PETER R. HOOK
NATIONAL CHAPLAIN

Dear Comrades and Friends,

I am deeply honored and humbled to be elected as your VFW National Chaplain. This role is not just a position but a profound responsibility and a calling to serve each one of you with compassion, dedication, and unwavering support.

As we embark on this journey together, I am committed to continuing our mission of providing essential resources and training for our chaplains. Our chaplains play a critical role in offering spiritual guidance, emotional support, and a sense of community to our veterans and their families. Ensuring they have the tools and training they need is paramount to our success and the well-being of those we serve.

In every action, I pledge to uphold the ideals of Integrity, Commitment, and Service. Integrity will guide us to be honest and transparent in all our endeavors. Commitment will drive us to stay steadfast in our mission, ensuring that no veteran is left behind. Service will remain at the heart of everything we do, reminding us that our purpose is to serve those who have served our nation.

Thank you for entrusting me with this sacred duty. Together, let us continue to make a positive impact, honor our veterans, and uphold the values that define us as an organization.

Blessings as you serve.

DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN



HENRY MANNELLA
DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

As we transition from summer to fall, it is crucial for us to shift our focus toward membership renewal and addressing the unpaid list. We aim to achieve a 102% membership rate, which will empower our Legislative team to effectively advocate for our organization in Washington, D.C. and Harrisburg. Furthermore, this heightened membership will also bolster our influence within our local communities.

In the event that posts and districts require support in managing the unpaid list, they are encouraged to reach out to the District and Department membership chairpersons. These chairpersons will be equipped with a comprehensive list of unpaid and renewing members and will be able to provide necessary assistance to ensure that our membership remains robust and active.

If a Post or District is planning to host a membership event, we encourage you to contact the Department so that we can assist with providing the appropriate supplies. It is advisable to reach out to us at least one week prior to the event. This will allow us to ensure that the necessary supplies are delivered to you in a timely manner and that all your requirements are met. Our aim is to support your event and provide you with everything you need for a successful membership drive.

SAFETY CHAIRMAN



BRIAN DELANEY
SAFETY CHAIRMAN

Fire Prevention Month 2024

October is Fire Prevention Month! The goal of Fire Prevention Month is to raise fire safety awareness and help protect homes and families. In 1922, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) named the second week of October Fire Prevention Week in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire in 1871. We celebrate Fire Prevention Week and Month by spreading fire safety awareness and educating families, students and communities across the United States with help from our partners and local fire departments. Enjoy the moments and memories you create with your loved ones with peace of mind knowing you're protected.

Did You Know?

Installing reliable protection and being proactive is important to help keep your loved ones safe from a fire or carbon monoxide (CO) emergency.

- Almost three of every five home fire deaths resulted from fires with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms (NFPA)
- Carbon monoxide is the #1 cause of accidental poisoning in the US (CDC)
- Unattended cooking is the #1 cause of home fires (NFPA)
- A fire department responds to a fire every 23 seconds in America (NFPA)

Help Protect Life's Moments

We urge you to practice whole home safety, so you and your family are prepared not only during Fire Prevention Month but throughout the entire year. Having functioning smoke and carbon monoxide detectors installed throughout your home is a vital piece of fire safety month and is the first line of defense. They work around the clock to provide your family with an early alert in the event of an emergency, helping to give you time to safely escape. Smoke and CO alarms should be installed on every level of the home, including the basement, as well as inside and outside each bedroom for whole home protection. Maintain alarms by testing them regularly, changing the batteries every six months and replacing alarms at least every 10 years.

Also be prepared with fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers help stop small fires from causing more damage and should be kept easily accessible on every level of the home, especially in the kitchen and garage. Ensure you know how to operate a fire extinguisher before needing to use one. In case you don't here is how to use one:

P.A.S.S. the Fire Extinguisher

Using a fire extinguisher during an emergency can be intimidating, especially if you do not know the proper way to use one. Luckily, there is a useful acronym to help you remember the four easy steps when using a fire extinguisher in the event of an emergency.

Pull:

Pull the pin. There is a small pin that prevents the fire extinguisher from accidentally being discharged, all you have to do is pull it out and continue on to the next step.

Aim:

Aim the nozzle of the fire extinguisher low at the base of the fire.

Squeeze:

Squeeze the trigger you just pulled the pin out of. Remember to squeeze it slowly and evenly, so the extinguisher is as effective as possible.

Sweep:

Sweep the extinguisher from side to side to cover all areas the fire may have spread.

Additional Safety Precautions

Before operating a fire extinguisher, you must take some safety precautions. First, assess the fire; if it is too big or uncontrollable, don't risk your safety by trying to put it out, evacuate the house and call 9-1-1 immediately. If the fire is small enough and can easily be extinguished, continue to use the P.A.S.S. fire extinguisher technique. Make sure to hold the fire extinguisher with the nozzle pointing AWAY from you and keep your back towards a clear exit so you can safely exit if the fire becomes too dangerous.

Fire extinguishers should be stored on every level of the home and in areas like the kitchen and garage. Store them in accessible places or mount the extinguishers on the wall for easy access in the event of an emergency.



SUICIDE PREVENTION CHAIRMAN



DAVE DIBELIUS
SUICIDE PREVENTION CHAIRMAN

The suicide prevention program is up and running here in Pennsylvania. We are trying to raise between \$25k - \$30k before the spring to coordinate the first ever Pennsylvania VFW Mental Wellness Weekend for Veteran Families from around the State! Please forward donations to State Headquarters earmarked for Mental Wellness so our Quartermaster can allocate the donations and funds!

The last month was a busy one for suicide prevention. Veterans from around the country converged on New York City for an Irreverent Warriors Hike that took us from Washington Square Park to the 9/11 Memorial, and back up to Times Square. If you're wondering how this makes a difference, we came

upon a woman on a park bench who asked what we were doing for the day, just to find out she was an 8-Year Army Veteran homeless and living out of a shelter for the last four months. Within 24 hours we had an attorney for her and put her in touch with the Veteran Service Officers in New York and she is getting the help she needs so desperately. No One Does More For Veterans has a new meaning for her!

The next hike for preventing suicide is on September 28th in Wildwood, N.J. Anyone looking to donate to the hike or participate should contact David Dibelius at 267-718-4475 or pavfwrider@comcast.net

Mid-Winter Conference is around the corner. Bring your family! We will have activities for family health set up for a weekend of fun!

If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call 988, and use option 1 for the VA Veterans Crisis Line.

VETERAN'S SERVICE



JESSICA KING
DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICER

Thanks to our amazing legislative team, both at the National and at the State level, our laws are changing rapidly for the benefit of our Veterans and their families. Every Veteran deserves to be medically or monetarily taken care of for their injuries or ailments that were caused by serving their country. If you have an in-service event, illness or injury and a current diagnosis, an accredited service officer or claim consultant can help you connect it to your service. Several pieces of legislation such as the PACT Act have made it easier to file and get it to connect. There are so many disabilities that the VA has said are

presumptive, meaning they were caused by service in Vietnam and Southwest Asia, which are the two most common. If you don't fall into those two locations, please ask an Accredited Service Officer or Claims Consultant and they can advise you. There are so many locations, and more are frequently added. Also, earlier this year, President Biden signed the toxic exposure bill where all Veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving in the military – at home or abroad – are now eligible to enroll directly in VA health care. Additionally, Veterans who never deployed but were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or on active duty in the United States are eligible to enroll. Your Accredited Service Officer and Claims Consultant can help you enroll in health care as well. If you are unsure, please reach out. Attached is our Service Officer and Claims Consultant contact information.

COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORTING WEBSITE INSTRUCTIONS

The Department is changing the way we are doing the reporting. It will all be done through the www.vfwpa.org website.

Follow the instructions below:

1. Click the hyperlink www.vfwpa.org this will take you to our website
2. On the right side you will see login, click on the drop-down box and choose Members Only and this will take you to the login
3. **Member ID:** Your VFW member number
Password: Your last name (all lower case)
4. This will take you to 2 options: Dashboard or Program Reports
5. Click on Program Reports
6. Here you will see your Post and District with your email address of the submitter
 - a. Put in the date of activity
 - b. Select the program you are applying it to and a list of select activities will come up and choose which activity your information applies to
 - c. Then it will go to Hours; Miles, Members and Dollars Spent/Donated, add the information and then you can add a description
7. Click Submit and your Community Service Report will go directly to the Department for John Getz to approve it. Once approved it goes directly to National. Allow 24 Hours to update through National.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Cyndi Lewis by email at clewis@vfwpahq.org or cell **609-865-6579**.

ACROSS PENNSYLVANIA



Media Post 3460 set-up at the annual Rose Tree Park Community Day event in Upper Providence, PA. The Post distribute poppies, flags and pins, hands out information concerning our Post and Auxiliary, and recruits members for the VFW and its Auxiliary.

Standing L to R: Bill Newburg, Auxiliary President, with members Don and Evelyn Puckett, Frank Donnelly, VFW Jr. Vice Cmdr, Marie Brennan and Jennifer Matsinger, Auxiliary.

Seated: Ed Modestowicz, VFW OD, Eddie Hess and Christine Crosby, Auxiliary, Tony Martinelli, VFW Sr. Vice Cmdr.

Standing: Joe Casey, VFW Adjutant.

Media VFW Post 3460 received the All-American Award for the 3rd year in a row. All-American reward was presented by the VFW Department of PA Commander Barbara Loncar during the Delco District 7 meeting.

Left to Right: Ed Modestowicz, Joe Casey, Frank Donnelly, Frank Newburg, District 7 Commander William Dondaro, Post Commander Mike Baker, Department of PA Commander Barbara Loncar, Allen Dick, Dave Pastuszek and Omar Pigford.



Mountain Laurel VFW Post 8612
Gregory Protsko, Commander Post 8612

No one does more for veterans is the Veterans of Foreign Wars' motto. The statement is so true for Mountain Laurel Post 8612 earlier this month.

A few years ago, John E. Conroy, a Marine Corps Veteran who lived in Pike County, PA, lost his home and everything the family owned in a fire. John was severely burned in the fire and had spent the last two years in and out of the hospital for the wounds that he suffered. His family never recovered from the loss of their house. John sadly passed away on July 1st, 2024. With the family not having any money, a local funeral home went to New York to pick up the body at no cost to the family. Our Jr. Vice Commander Tim Benton heard about what was happening and contacted the funeral home. The funeral director said that John's wish was to be buried in a Veteran's Cemetery and be close to his family.

Mountain Laurel Post 8612 has members who sit on the board of a local private veteran's cemetery. Together, the Post Officers decided that the Post would pay for his plot using our poppy funds. The board members paid to dig the grave, and the cemetery owners provided the footing for the headstone.

It did not cost John's family anything for his funeral, and he was given a graveside service with full military honors. Although not a member of the VFW nor any other Veterans Service Organization, John had his final wish come true for his family.

Mountain Laurel Post 8612 was honored to help this family and the Veteran on this occasion.



ACROSS PENNSYLVANIA



VFW Post 6631- Selinsgrove, PA. flying the American Flag for the Gun and Cash raffle.

Flag flown by High Caliber Cranes LLC equipment.



VFW Post 33-Greensburg remembers 9-11 with a program of remembrance on September 11, 2024.

The presidential proclamation was read in addition to the time line of events of 9-11. The closing prayer was read by Auxiliary Chaplain Roysyn Rogachesky.



The Post Honor Guard rendered a 21-gun salute in memory of the victims of 9-11.



David Cackowski Quartermaster and Auxiliary Chaplain Roysyn Rogachesky

ACROSS PENNSYLVANIA



Photo L-R: Constance Snavelly, Russell Boeshore, Erik Naticchia, Donald Stoudt, Sr., William Barshinger, Timothy Gingrich, Roland Miller, Ray Spang, Micheal Stenseth, Gary Wells, and Gen. Maureen Weigl.

On August 2, 2024, members of the Honor Guard, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Post #23, located in Lebanon, PA, as well as the Honor Guard's civilian volunteer armorer, received Pennsylvania Meritorious Service Medals or the PA Veterans Service Awards for their faithful and dedicated service in providing military funeral honors to veterans. Brigadier General (PA) Maureen Weigl, Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans Affairs, presented the awards at the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery.

In 2023, the 10 volunteer members performed 448 funeral military honors at the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery and at local private cemeteries. In addition, the Honor Guard conducted special details and Color Guard duties at nine events, including the Lebanon Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony, Lebanon's Veterans Day Ceremony, and Indiantown Gap National Cemetery's Memorial and Veterans Day Ceremony. These events equated to approximately 3,630 volunteer hours.

The Honor Guard volunteered their services to the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery since the cemetery's inception in 1982. Initially, the Honor Guard served full time, but now performs funeral details every third week, sharing the duty with the Marine Corps League Honor Guard and Vet 21 Honor Guard. Several of our Honor Guard members served at well over 15,000 funerals. The oldest member of the Honor Guard is 92 years old and the youngest is 56 years old, making the average age of most of the members in the high 70s. The number of funerals details the Honor Guard may conduct each day varies from as few as one to the maximum of 12.

The VFW, Post #23 is the third oldest VFW post in Pennsylvania and the ninth oldest in the Nation. The Honor Guard was established in 1921 and currently consists of veterans of every war, conflict, and operation from Korea to Iraqi Freedom; Army, Navy, Air Force; male and female. When the Honor Guard conducts a funeral detail, the duties include a rifle volley, the sounding of Taps and, if conducted at a private cemetery, the folding and presentation of the US flag. The Honor Guard uses World War II and Korean era ceremonial Springfield M1 Garand rifles provided by the US Army's TACOM Life Cycle Management Command's Ceremonial Rifle program and ammunition, which is supplied through the US Army Joint Munitions Command, Rock Island Arsenal, IL. Uniforms and accoutrements are purchased with donations received from the families of those for whom the Honor Guard provided final honors and grant money received from the State. Honor Guard members wear a variation of their branch service uniform, thereby providing a greater representation of the Armed Forces while rendering final honors.

We are loath to ever decline a request to provide final honors to a veteran, but the volume of requests prohibits coverage for all funerals. If there is any veteran in the community who would relish the privilege and honor that comes with bestowing the final honors to a fallen service member, please contact the VFW Post #23 at (717) 273-0331. The appreciation seen on the faces of the veteran's family is truly worthwhile!

Submitted by: CW4 Constance J. Snavelly, USA, (Retired) Secretary
VFW Post #23 Honor Guard

THE VFW AUXILIARY ACROSS PENNSYLVANIA



PA was well represented at National President Brenda's "Celebrating America's Freedom" September 7 at the VFW National Home, Eaton Rapids, MI.

Fifty Comrades and Auxiliary Brothers and Sisters traveled by coach to attend this amazing program and tour of the grounds and facilities.



Above Photo: District 21 Commander Roger Miller, assists a member of Boy Scout Troop 57 in disposing of tattered flags.



Patriots Day: Susquehanna VFW Post #2493, Mt. Wolf, the Auxiliary and Jr. Unit partner with local Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and the Fire Departments to observe and teach the importance of remembering Patriot's Day.

PA VFW ACCREDITED SERVICE OFFICERS & CLAIMS CONSULTANTS

VFW Veteran Services Officers and Claim Consultants are employed by the VFW to assist all veterans – regardless of membership in the VFW. This service is FREE. All of our veterans deserve comprehensive assistance with applying for and understanding their VA disability benefits. Please reach out to any of the Service Officers/Claims Consultants near you. Feel free to refer any veteran in need of assistance to one of us at the VFW.

Jessica King-Department Service Officer

Cell: 724-672-2953

Email: Jessica.King9@va.gov

John B. Getz, Jr.-State Adjutant/Quartermaster

Phone: 717-234-7927

Email: quartermaster@vfwpahq.org

Cynthia Lewis-Operations Manager

Cell: 609-865-6579

Email: clewis@vfwpahq.org

ALTOONA

VAMC

2907 Pleasant Valley Blvd.
Altoona, Pa 16602

Cindy Kinzey

Cell: 814-600-9096

Email: Cindy.Kinzey@va.gov

BUTLER

Butler VAMC

353 N. Duffy Rd.
Room FN 0001
Butler, Pa 16001

Linda Eshenbaugh

Phone: 412-395-6259

Cell: 724-996-4076

Email: linda.eshenbaugh@va.gov

Fax: 878-217-6919

ERIE

VFW ERIE Dept. Service Division

3112 Buffalo Rd.
Suite A

Erie, Pa 16510

Office : 814-835-8494

Fax: 814-835-8493

Shannon Pietrasiewicz

Phone: 814-460-1487

Email: shannon.vfwerie@gmail.com

Jim Brown

Cell: 717-210-1228

Email: vfwjimbrown@gmail.com

Chris (Mick) DiRaimo

Cell: 814-460-1487

Email: Mick.vfwerie@gmail.com

Julie Hutchison (Supervisor)

Cell: 814-520-4971

Email: Julie.Hutchison@va.gov

Rachel Vandyne

Cell: 717-836-4171

Email: Rachel.VanDyne@va.gov

HARRISBURG

4002 Fenton Ave.
Harrisburg, PA. 17109
717-234-7927

Jonathan Hart

Cell: 717-798-0030

Email: jonathan.hart@va.gov

Mechanicsburg Veterans Center

Thurs: 8:30-4:00

Harrisburg: Monday-Friday-8:30-4:00

Nicole Williams

Cell: 215-356-3566

Email: nwilliam@vfwpahq.org

Harrisburg: Monday-Friday 8:30-4:00

LEBANON VAMC

Ronald Smith

Cell: 717-332-1001

Email: rsmith@vfwpahq.org

LOCK HAVEN

115 E Main St.
Lock Haven, PA. 17745

Office: 570-748-5929

Fax: 570-371-5479

Cynthia Bardo (Supervisor)

Cell: 570-502-4822

Email: Cynthia.Bardo@va.gov

Karen Bombria

Cell: 570-660-9158

Email: Karen.Bombria@va.gov

Cora Feathers

Cell: 570-502-0375

Email: Cora.Feathers@va.gov

Karen Hammer -Office Admin.

Email: Karenhammervfw@gmail.com

Nadine Willits

Cell: 570-502-0471

Email: Nadine.Willits@va.gov

PITTSBURGH

1000 Liberty Ave
Room 1601
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Office: 412-395-6259

412-395-6256

Fax: 412-395-6261

Linda Eshenbaugh

Cell: 724-996-4076

Fax: 878-217-6919

Email: linda.eshenbaugh@va.gov

Jessica King

Cell: 724-672-2953

Email: Jessica.King9@va.gov

Anthony Kregiel

Cell: 267-322-1653

Email: AKregiel.vfw@gmail.com

Maura Wahl

Cell: 412-546-6452

Email: maura.wahl@va.gov

Simon Alexander

Cell: 717-614-3319

Email: Simon.Alexander@va.gov

Joshua Croner

Phone: 412-395-6259

Email: Joshua.Croner@va.gov

Tim Owens

Office: 412-395-6259

Email: Timothy.owens6@va.gov

PHILADELPHIA

5000 Wissahickon Ave.

Attn: VFW

Philadelphia, Pa 19144

Office: 215-381-3123

Fax: 215-381-3491

Angie Johnson (Supervisor)

Cell: 215-595-6267

Email: Evangeline.johnson@va.gov

Jack (John) Leaming

Office: 215-381-3123

Email: jacko4343@gmail.com

Ray Morace

Email: raymond.morace@va.gov

Michael Salabsky

Cell: 835-239-3626

Email: Michael.Salabsky@va.gov

PHILADELPHIA (cont.)

Michael Nichol

Cell: 717-884-1705

Email: Michael.Nichol@va.gov

Gilda Reid

Email: Gilda.Reid@va.gov

Trudy Strain

Email: Gertrude.strain@va.gov

Joseph Wartski

Cell: 445-248-7771

Email: jwartski@comcast.net

READING

Liz Graybill

Email: lizgraybill@yahoo.com

Cell: 484-577-6898

WILKES-BARRE

1123 East End Blvd.

Bldg. 35 Suite 1

Wilkes Barre, Pa 18702

Office: 570-821-2535

570-821-2536

Fax: 570-821-2539

Monday-Friday 8:00-4:00

Closed for Lunch-12:00-1:00

Joann Kane (Supervisor)

Office: 570-821-2535

Email: joann.kane@va.gov

Lorie Ybarro

Office: 570-821-2536

Email: lorie.ybarra@va.gov

Judy Zaykoski

Cell: 570-889-9672

Email: Judith.Zaykoski@va.gov



PENNSYLVANIA'S 28TH DIVISION COMMEMORATES 80TH ANNIVERSARIES

By Cory Angell

The Pennsylvania Army National Guard's 28th Infantry Division is commemorating many of its achievements from 80 years ago to include the Liberation of Paris, but most significantly its fighting in the Battle of the Bulge, the last major offensive of the German Army in WW II.

"The 28th... held the longest front in the Ardennes on the day of attack; had the least corps support... was attacked by seven German divisions, which was twice as many as any other division on the front; suffered more dead and wounded in the Bulge than any other division; and inflicted more dead and wounded casualties on the Germans than any other division," according to Raymond Carpenter, past historian of the Society of the 28th Division.

Pennsylvania author and historian Walter S. Zapotoczny Jr. will be chairing conferences on the Battle of the Bulge and participating in ceremonies across Luxembourg as they honor the sacrifices of American soldiers.

"The 28th Infantry Division played a significant role in delaying the German advance at the start of the Battle of the Bulge," said Zapotoczny. "Pennsylvanians can be proud that their National Guard helped to save lives and shorten World War II."

Zapotoczny's book, 28th Infantry Division in the Battle of the Bulge, is being released in November prior to the 80th Anniversary of the battle on Dec. 16.

The book examines the exceptional heroism of the 28th Infantry Division in the Battle of the Bulge and the motivating factors that contributed to the actions of their brave soldiers.



Photo: Bastogne, Belgium-Weary infantrymen of the 110th Regt., 28th Div., following the German breakthrough in that area. The enemy overran their battalion. (L-R) Pvt. Adam H. Davis and T/S Milford A. Sillars. Dec. 19, 1944, photo courtesy of the National Archives.

PENNSYLVANIA VFW TAKES NATIONAL STAGE

By Cory Angell

Pennsylvania Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary arrived on the national stage after being elected as national officers at the 125th VFW National Convention July 27-Aug. 1 in Louisville, Kentucky.

The Rev. Peter Hook serves as the VFW National Chaplain, Donna Mills is the National Junior Vice President of the VFW Auxiliary and Glenn Umberger is the designee for National Jr-Vice Commander-in-Chief (CIC) and should be installed next year.

"Congratulations to all," said Past National VFW Commander 2020-21 Hal Roesch, who is from Hampton, Virginia but was born in Renovo, Pa. "I would remind them that they have been chosen to lead their organization and they need to be relevant, mentor, focus on the mission, do media interviews, visit the military installations and be vocal about what's important for veterans."

Roesch said Pennsylvania is the second largest department in the VFW and the largest in the Eastern Conference. The last CIC was John Biedrzycki in 2015-16 and the one before that was Joseph L. Vicites in 1971-72.

"It's a pretty big deal for Pennsylvania to have another VFW Commander-in-Chief," said Roesch.

"Serving in leadership roles on the national stage speaks volumes for the type of men and women from Pennsylvania who have also served our nation in uniform," Brig. Gen. (PA) Maureen Weigl, deputy adjutant general of Veterans Affairs, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. "I am proud to see that we are represented nationally to help improve the lives of those across our nation who served and sacrificed."

"The VFW unofficially breaks the country up into four conferences, the Eastern, Southern, Big Ten, and Western," said Roesch, explaining the election process. "There is a rotation between the conferences to elect their designee for the national Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief."

Roesch said each conference gets to designate every four years and the designee is almost always elected by the membership of the VFW for the position of Jr-vice Commander-in-Chief.

"Once elected as Junior they pretty much continue the progression to Senior Vice and then commander unopposed," said Roesch. "It usually takes a lot of time and effort at the post, district, department (state) level for the conference to give the person their endorsement and backing."





ANDREA MEINTEL
PRESIDENT
DEPARTMENT OF PA VFW AUXILIARY

Greeting from the President

As I complete my first Quarter as your Department President, I want to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation for all that you have done over the past months. Your dedication and hard work have been vital to our mission of supporting Veterans and their families. I see the impact you're making in our communities as well as the commitment and passion of our members. As we look ahead, it's time to focus on retention and recruitment: One of our key goals moving forward is to concentrate on retaining our current members, while also recruiting new ones. We've built a strong foundation, but to ensure our continued success, we must all work TOGETHER to grow our membership. The more of us there are, the more we can do.

Don't forget to make consistent efforts to reengage current members—let them know about the exciting events and initiatives we have planned and how they can get involved. A simple phone call or email could make all the difference in reminding them of the value of staying active in our organization. If you haven't already, now is the time to send out your second and third dues notices. These reminders are essential for ensuring we retain as many members as possible. Clear communication with members who may have missed their dues payment is a crucial part of keeping our organization strong.

As the holiday season approaches, I want to extend my warmest wishes to you and your families. May your holidays be filled with blessings, peace, and love. Let us also remember the veterans and those serving who cannot be with their loved ones this season and continue to support them in every way we can.

Thank you again for all that you do. Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of our veterans and their families. Let's continue to move forward, united and strong, into the new year.

100TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
PA VFW AUXILIARY

November 15 - 16 - please join us as we all come together at the Red Lion Hotel, Harrisburg to remember and celebrate the first 100 years of the PA VFW Auxiliary. Among the activities will be an Open House at Department Headquarters on both Friday and Saturday (times will be posted). Friday Night will be "Night at the Races" where we are inviting everyone to come in their best Derby attire and be ready to bet on their favorite "horse." It will be a fun night with all funds raised going toward the Joint Special Project of President Meintel and Commander Loncar.

Saturday Night will be a formal Banquet reminiscing about our first 100 years and gaining enthusiasm for our future. National Auxiliary President Brenda Bryant will be making her official visit to Pennsylvania during our celebration. Mike Wilson, Executive Director of the VFW National Home will be attending as well.

For More Information

Full schedule for the weekend can be found on the websites:

- VFW- vfwpa.org
- Auxiliary- vfwauxpa.org

100TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
RESERVATION FORM

PA VFW Auxiliary
Red Lion Hotel
4751 Lindle Road
Harrisburg, PA 17111

Friday Night, November 15 – Night at the Races (Derby Attire)

Potato Bar Taco Bar Hot Dogs Bar Dessert

_____ Friday Buffet tickets @ \$35.00 per person

Saturday Night, November 16 – Formal Banquet (Formal/Black Tie)

Choices of: _____ Sliced London Broil
 _____ Broil Haddock

Both choices include: Salad, Oven Roasted Potatoes, Chefs choice of Vegetable, Rolls, Butter, Coffee, Tea, Iced tea and Dessert.

_____ Saturday Banquet tickets @ \$45.00 per person

Price for purchase of Friday & Saturday - \$75.00 per person

Amount Enclosed _____ Check # _____

Name _____ Post/Auxiliary # _____

Phone # _____

Names of those attending: _____

Deadline for Friday & Saturday Night Reservations:

November 1, 2024

Make checks payable to: **Dept of PA VFW Auxiliary**
 Please mail reservations to: Marsha Fuhrman
 5059 Rislyn Court
 Spring Grove, PA 17362
 717-578-2953

CEMETERY PLOTS AVAILABLE

Cemetery plots have been generously donated throughout Pennsylvania to the PA VFW. These plots are available to our veterans or spouse at no expense. Plots will need to be opened, and that fee must be paid. If you are in need, below is the list of participating cemeteries, their location and number of available plots.

- Bradford County Memorial Gardens,
Towanda – 5 plots
- Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Johnstown – 194 plots
- Mount Rose Cemetery, York – 2 plots
- Jefferson Memorial Cemetery and Funeral Home,
Pittsburgh – 3 plots
- Edgewood Memorial Park, Glen Mills – 7 plots
- Rosedale Memorial Park, Bensalem – 212 plots
- Conestoga Memorial Park, Lancaster – 3 plots
- Philadelphia Memorial Park, Frazer – 10 plots
- Sunset Memorial Park, Huntingdon Valley – 4 plots
- Mechanicsburg Cemetery Association,
Mechanicsburg – 2 plots
- Valley Forge Memorial Gardens - Valley Forge – 13 plots
- Castle View Memorial Gardens, New Castle – 15 plots
- Susquehanna Memorial Gardens, York – 4 plots
- Laurel Hill Memorial Gardens, Columbia – 2 plots
- Cedar Hill Memorial Park, Allentown – 2 plots



PERIODICALS



(ISSN 0745 4031)
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA VETERANS OF
FOREIGN WARS
Act of March 1879

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.

Periodicals postage paid at Harrisburg PA Post Office.
Four issues printed Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter.

Dept. of PA Veterans of Foreign Wars, 4002 Fenton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17109-5943 State HQ -
(717) 234-7927 - Fax: (717) 234-1955 - www.vfwpa.org - Facebook: "VFW Department PA"

Editors: State Commander Barbara Loncar and State Adjutant/Quartermaster John B. Getz, Jr.

Produced by The ENVISION Group, Inc., Camp Hill, PA | www.envisionprint.net

Postmaster: Send address change to PENNSYLVANIA VFW NEWS, 4002 Fenton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17109

SAVE 
THE DATE

**PA AUXILIARY
100TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
NOVEMBER 15-16
HARRISBURG, PA**

**MID-WINTER CONFERENCE
JANUARY 24 - 26
GETTYSBURG, PA**

Please take some time and checkout our website for all up-to-date information and lots of support materials, including the 2023-2024 Program Book
www.vfwauxpa.org