



Pennsylvania VFWnews



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YOUR VFW: NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS!

2020-2021 Pennsylvania VFW Voice of Democracy & Patriots Pen Winners Announced

By Cory Angell PA VFW Public Affairs

Established in 1947, the Voice of Democracy program provides high school students with the opportunity to express themselves via a democratic and patriotic-themed recorded essay.

Each year, nearly 64,500 9-12 grade students from across the country enter to win their share of more than \$2.1 million in educational scholarships and incentives awarded through the program.

The national first-place winner receives a \$30,000 scholarship paid directly to the recipient's American university, college or vocational/



Julia S. Mehl, Douglassville, Pa., District 9, won 1st Place in the Voice of Democracy competition.

technical school. Other national scholarships that are awarded range from \$1,000-\$16,000.

This year's 1st Place recipient, is Julia S. Mehl from Douglassville, Pa. was sponsored by Post 1564, PA VFW District 9. She will go on to compete nationally however the competition will be done virtually due to COVID restrictions.

Each year, more than 165,400 students in grades 6-8 enter the VFW's Patriot's Pen youth essay contest for a chance to win their share of more than \$1.4 million in state and national awards. Each first-place state winner receives a minimum of \$500 at the national level, and the national first-place winner wins \$5,000.

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State VFW Command Backs PTSD Treatment Bill

By Cory Angell PA VFW Public Affairs

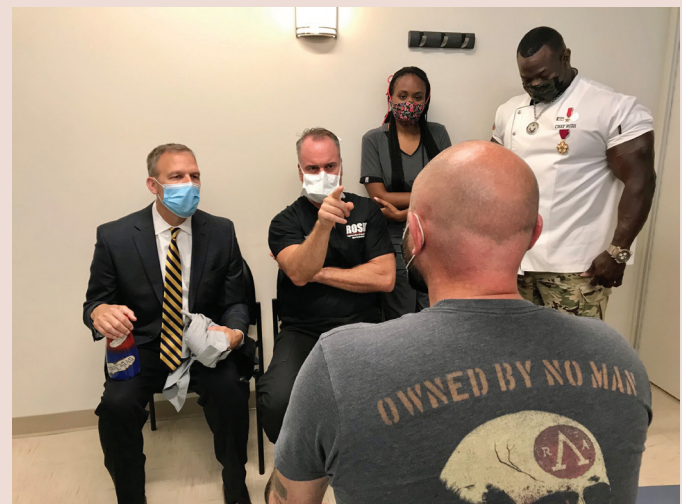
State Commander Ronald Peters and U.S. Congressmen Scott Perry (PA-10), met Feb. 16 in an online meeting to discuss the epidemic of Veteran suicide, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and the latest groundbreaking treatments to help our Nation's Veterans. Perry, a VFW member, asked to meet with the commander prior to reintroducing a federal bill expanding the availability of a treatment called Stellate Ganglion Block.

According to the Cleveland Clinic's treatment website, the

stellate ganglion is part of the sympathetic nervous system located in your neck. A stellate ganglion block is an out-patient treatment using injection into these nerves that can help stop the endless fight or flight loop that many Veterans report in their struggle with PTSD.

"It's currently being used by the Veterans Administration, but only in a handful of locations and only after those struggling with PTSD have failed in a series of other treatments," said Perry, who served more than 38 years in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. "We all know how difficult of a ruck it

Continued on page 2



Congressmen Scott Perry, serving with Pennsylvania's 10th Congressional District (left) attends a treatment with SGB. Dr. Sean Mulvaney (center) a former Navy SEAL, does SGB treatments in his Annapolis clinic. He advocates for expansion of the treatment in the VA. Chef Andre Rush (far right) also observed the treatment and is a SGB patient. Chef Rush is a White House Chef, Veteran and PTSD advocate that does 2,222 pushups a day to raise awareness about the epidemic of veteran suicides.



From the State Commander 2020-2021

Pittsburgh this June...

Ronald J. Peters



Although we have faced many challenges over the past year, we have weathered them as best we could. This June, we will finally get together and hold our annual convention in Pittsburgh. We will still have some restrictions as we ease out of the challenges from COVID-19, but my hope is that better days are on their way.

I understand that collecting dues and getting members has been greatly hindered over the past year. We are at nature a social organization and we have suffered from not being able to do what we normally do.

However, lets continue to maintain our focus on what we are really here for. I am very proud to have traveled across the state and witnessed the great things our organization has done in this crisis. Assisting in blood drives, helping food banks and continued support to our veterans. We even managed to hold a one-day homeless veteran stand-down at the farm show complex in Harrisburg. Special thanks to those that assisted and our long-time partners we have worked with over the years to make that happen.

As we approach the end of my tenure, I wish you all the very best in the future. I think great things are on the horizon.



From the State Quartermaster

Elections are Coming...

John B. Getz Jr.



Comrades:

Here we are getting ready to elect new officers, the year has gone by quickly even though we were shut in.

We are now in March and at our meetings we need to nominate the officers that will take over after our new state commander is installed in June.

Prior to nominations the post must decide which form of election they will use unless the Post Bylaws specify the type of election, you will find instructions in Article II, Section 217 of the Manual of Procedure.

Posts will nominate and elect in April unless the poll system is used, if so, follow section 217 of the Bylaws and Manual of Procedure. Please get your election reports in right after the election do not wait until you install the officers. If you need any help, please call. We are always here to help.

I know it has been a trying year but we will overcome. We did when we served and will again, becoming even stronger.

Thank you for all you do for our Veterans and remember that every day is Veteran's Day

PTSD Treatment, Continued from page 1

is for those Veterans fighting PTSD, there's no use putting 100 more pounds into their pack in order to get treatment. Our goal is to make this more available without having to fail, and to provide easier access to those Veterans who wish to try it."

Perry highlighted the fact that the treatment is nothing new and is promoted by many Veterans who were suffering from PTSD – many who say it literally saved their lives.

Dakota Meyer, Marine Corps Veteran and Medal of Honor recipient, is one Veterans that says it saved his life. In an interview on *60 Minutes* from 2019, he and other Veterans, who were able to access SGB, were interviewed and agreed it worked.

"You can't even think about fixing stuff when you are in the heat of the fire," said Meyer in the interview. "This puts the fire

out and allows you to think about what you need to do to keep the fire from coming back."

Perry said the treatment is over 80 percent effective in patients and helps to alleviate common PTSD symptoms such as hyperarousal, exaggerated startle responses and anxiety.

"This stops the constant fight or flight loop caused by PTSD so that other forms of treatment can be effective," said Perry. "It doesn't cure the Veteran. It just helps to make other treatments work and alleviates what is driving many toward suicide."

Perry said that the VA is still in a two-year trial period before it can become more available.

"That's not acceptable, for all of their sacrifices and suffering, our Veterans and their families have a right to access

and to try," said Perry. "That's why I am reintroducing this legislation.

Pennsylvania VFW Commander Ronald J. Peters was compelled by the information provided by Congressman Perry's office and decided that a formal endorsement was necessary.

"When you have Veterans asking for this treatment and they can't access it, that's wrong," said Peters. "If this can help save the life of one Veteran than it needs to be available. We are in a time where the Veteran suicide rate is disturbingly high and this could be one more tool to help prevent that."

To show it's support of the legislation, state headquarters leadership will issue a proclamation and provide updates to members on the bill's progress.

Pa. VFW honor Bradford police, firefighters for Front Line Workers Day

By Christine Holtz
Story Provided Courtesy of the
Bradford Era

Frontline workers around the nation have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic, sometimes at risk to their own health, to ensure the health and safety of citizens. Acknowledging their hard work and sacrifices, Pennsylvania State VFW Commander Ron Peters signed a proclamation declaring Feb. 20 as "Front Line Workers Day."

In the proclamation, frontline workers mentioned are "911 dispatchers, law enforcement officers, professional and volunteer firefighters, professional and volunteer medical services personnel, emergency management professionals, search and rescue teams, rescue pilots and divers, the



From left are Lt. Greg Lewis, Firefighter Evan Piganelli, Officer Joshua Frederoski, Firefighter Tony Crowley, VFW Commander Ron Peters, Firefighter Chris Salerno, VFW Senior Vice Commander Steven Belleville and Captain Jeffrey Kloss. The Pennsylvania State VFW presented both the Bradford City Police and Bradford City Firefighters awards for their dedication during Front Line Workers Day on Saturday, Feb. 20.

Pennsylvania National Guard, medical services personnel and members of other organizations in the public safety sector."

In recognition of Front Line Workers Day, Peters, along with Senior Vice Commander Steven Belleville [VFW Post 212], presented awards to the Bradford City Police and Bradford City Firefighters at the Bradford Central Fire Station.

Several members of the Bradford police and fire departments accepted the awards, including Lt. Greg Lewis, Firefighters Evan Piganelli, Tony Crowley and Chris Salerno, Officer Joshua Frederoski, and Captain Jeffrey Kloss.

Peters said he would leave it up to the VFWs throughout Pennsylvania on how they present their awards, as each community is different.



From the State Surgeon 2020-2021

Remain Vigilant...

William Roland, Jr.

I write with hope that everyone is doing well amid this pandemic. As the numbers continue to decline, please be vigilant moving forward.



I am disappointed that I have not had the opportunity to visit our VA and our Veterans Centers. I have sent out questionnaires and made phone calls to obtain as much information that I can to assure our Veterans are being taken care of as they so truly deserve. I serve on the Advisory Board of the Southwestern Home in Pittsburgh and have had several Zoom calls and learned most Veterans Homes have done a great job in dealing with Covid. I will continue to be diligent in assuring our Veterans get the quality of life they deserve.

As far as COVID-19 vaccine administration in our VA Hospitals, I have received many compliments from Veterans that they thought the program was running well. My personal experience at the Pittsburgh VA was exceptional. I do understand the hesitation to get your vaccine but after discussing this topic with several physicians, I would highly recommend that you and your family get the vaccine. I will not say there will be no side effects, but those I talked to that received the vaccine, said they were minimal and short in time.

As being a post surgeon the first time, I had no idea what a post surgeon did. I have learned over the years that the post surgeon can play an important role in helping your post in community service and potentially in recruiting. How you ask? Your post can hold blood drives, Covid Vaccine injection sites, first aid/CPR training for local ambulance services, fire departments, police departments, and local citizens. You can get great coverage from local papers and perhaps TV coverage.

THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

VOD & Patriots Pen, Continued from Page 1

The essay contest encourages young minds to examine America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society, by drafting a 300 to 400-word essay that expresses their views on a patriotic theme chosen by the VFW Commander-in-Chief.

VOD Winners

1st Place from District 9, Post 1564 - Phoenixville, Julia S. Mehl of Douglassville - awarded \$5,000

2nd Place from District 26, Post 4963 - Ebensburg, Caelyn R. Kim of Ebensburg – awarded \$4,000

3rd Place from District 15, Post 6221 - Emporium, Olivia Matha of Ridgway – awarded \$3,000

4th Place from District 19, Post 2076 - Punxsutawney, Louise E. M. Bennett of Punxsutawney – awarded \$2,500

5th Place from District 17, Post 882 - Marysville, Adeline B. Ziegler of Enola, – awarded \$2,000

From District 18 – **Pennsylvania VOD Teacher of the Year**, Mark F. McManus of Camp Hill

Winners Per District:

Winners from each district also received a \$1,000 award.

District 1 - Giavanna Stanger - Philadelphia, Post 2819- Philadelphia

District 7 - Carolyn Klopfenstein - Media, Post 3460-Media

District 8 - Connor Mangan - Lansdale, Post 3258- Chalfont

District 10 - Olivia Yoder - Jessup, Post 5544- Jessup

District 11 - No Entries

District 12 - Hannah Towey - Mount Carmel

Post 2110 - Mount Carmel

District 13 - Sarah Kramer - Mohrsville, Post 216- Hamburg

District 14 - Thomas Gibson - Great Bend, Post 6223- Great Bend

District 16 - Alisa Zenchenko - Phoenixville, Post 7155- Trappe

District 18 - John Ferster - Harrisburg, Post 9639- Grantville

District 20 - Sarah Fritz - Walnutport, Post 4714- Northampton

District 21 - Isabella Perez - Mount Wolf, Post 8951- York

District 22 - Jabon Butler - Martinsburg, Post 43- Martinsburg

District 23 - Maggie Vaughn - Salisbury, Post 8826- Salisbury,

District 24 - Katelyn Stokan - Venetia, Post 764- McMurray,

District 25 - Joseph Albanese- New Brighton, Post 8106- New Galilee

District 27 - Anna Leonard - Greensburg, Post 33- Greensburg

District 28 - Abigail Hancox - Albion, Post 2341- Albion

District 29 - Connor Stewart - Beaver, Post 402- Coraopolis

Patriot Pen Winners:

1st Place-District 14 - Eowyn Thompson- Meshoppen

2nd Place-District 12 - Hannah Fourspring- Mount Carmel

3rd Place-District 21 - Emma Hockensmith- Manchester

Getting Behind Legislation

By Thomas "Ace" Hanzes, PA VFW Legislative Chairman



Comrades:

I am writing to ask for your help in contacting your area legislators, both in Harrisburg and Washington D.C. Most certainly,

we all support legislation that helps veterans and their families.

We need to aggressively and actively let them know how we feel,

by a visit or a phone call to their respective legislative offices. Without question, they want to hear from residents of their district, and not just from VFW headquarters, or the legislative team, or VFW officers.

Sometimes we are our own worst enemies by not actively and incessantly letting everyone know what VFW represents and what we, as an organization, all believe.

One piece of upcoming legislation, that Commander Ron Peters has supported, is the bill that will be introduced by U.S. Congressman Scott Perry (PA-10) pertaining to veteran suicide and PTSD. Let's ALL get behind this; and all legislation helping veterans!!

“NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS”



Jessup VFW Post 5544 officers donated \$2000 to the Boy Scouts Pack 34 of Jessup. It took them a little over two months to assemble 100,000 poppies for the post.

Front left Andrew Piasecki, Anthony Kniolek, Evan Kniolek, Chris Meinzer, Issac Walker. Back row John Ritzko - Sergeant of Arms, Manuel Griffen - Sr. Vice Commander, Jason Rodney, Russ Canevari - Commander Ryan Staff and John Jerome - Post Adjutant.

Department Membership Update:

Statewide 92.92% as of March 1, 2021 (4,793 for 100%)

	Post	Dist	Percent	Need for 100%	Location
2	5958	28	72.33%	-241	TITUSVILLE
3	8896	21	101.84%	7	EAST BERLIN
3	2385	18	100.79%	3	LYKENS
3	8951	21	98.37%	-12	WEST YORK
3	7293	8	97.58%	-9	EGYPT
3	3428	15	97.49%	-12	MUNCY
4	813	22	103.18%	9	DU BOIS
4	2493	21	100.71%	2	MOUNT WOLF
4	264	28	98.14%	-6	CORRY
4	1754	17	97.43%	-7	HUNTINGDON
4	6168	18	97.35%	-9	SHIPPENSBURG
5	537	21	103.72%	8	ETTERS
5	4793	24	101.01%	2	WAYNESBURG
5	1620	18	100.94%	2	MIDDLETOWN
5	1785	22	99.47%	-1	CLEARFIELD
5	8803	19	99.04%	-2	TIDIOUTE
6	734	27	122.69%	37	LIGONIER
6	509	20	107.69%	12	TOBYHANNA
6	148	18	106.25%	11	HARRISBURG
6	5642	14	105.22%	8	MONTROSE
6	1213	18	103.18%	5	RUTHERFORD HEIGHTS
7	8008	20	130.89%	38	NESQUEHONING
7	3258	8	117.39%	24	CHALFONT
7	212	19	114.28%	19	BRADFORD
7	1074	16	113.91%	16	CONSHOHOCKEN
7	4584	23	112.50%	14	MASONTOWN
8	2076	19	120.00%	20	PUNXSUTAWNEY
8	7527	17	103.06%	3	BEDFORD
8	8023	18	102.08%	2	ANNVILLE
8	6757	15	100.00%	0	MANSFIELD
8	7919	1	100.00%	0	MONTGOMERY COUNTY

9	7689	22	111.42%	8	ROARING SPRING
9	8427	27	104.59%	4	HERMINIE
9	9575	22	102.59%	2	POTTERS MILLS
9	2341	28	102.38%	2	ALBION
9	8051	1	101.38%	1	PHILADELPHIA
10	314	19	109.43%	5	CLARENDON
10	6303	24	105.76%	3	GREENSBORO
10	3975	12	105.00%	3	AUBURN
10	6497	18	103.27%	2	WILLIAMSTOWN
10	7840	25	101.66%	1	HILLIARDS
11	8353	11	126.08%	6	GLEN LYON
11	9788	16	106.25%	3	HORSHAM
11	8308	24	103.70%	1	LAWRENCE
11	5635	20	103.44%	1	LACKAWAXEN

	DISTRICT	Membership Percentage	CURRENT MEMBERSHIP 2021	MEMBERS NEEDED FOR 100%
1	19	97.56%	2039	-51
2	16	96.00%	1630	-68
3	15	95.90%	1939	-83
4	20	95.69%	1311	-59
5	27	94.37%	2512	-150
6	21	94.34%	5512	-331
7	7	94.32%	996	-60
8	1	94.31%	961	-58
9	18	94.17%	5019	-311
10	13	94.08%	1080	-68
11	23	93.80%	1769	-117
12	26	93.56%	2454	-169
13	14	93.29%	1558	-112
14	17	93.12%	2300	-170
15	8	93.06%	2586	-193
16	12	92.84%	1414	-109
17	24	92.47%	1449	-118
18	9	92.23%	3441	-290
19	11	92.14%	1781	-152
20	22	91.78%	2690	-241
21	29	90.80%	3494	-354
22	25	89.69%	2392	-275
23	10	89.62%	1631	-189
24	28	89.53%	4393	-514



Pennsylvanians Serving



U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Anthony Depalma, an anti-tank missileman with 3d Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, fires a Javelin Man-Portable Anti-Tank Missile at Combined Arms Training Center, Camp Fuji, Japan on Jan. 22, 2021. Marines honed their tactical skills during Joint Exercise Littoral Strike, the culminating event for Fuji Viper 21.2. The exercise strengthened interoperability and challenged infantry formations, demonstrating that marines can facilitate joint force multi-domain maneuver in support of naval operations. 3/8 is forward-deployed in the Indo-Pacific under 4th Marine Regiment, 3d Marine Division. Depalma is a native of **Ruffs Dale, Pennsylvania**. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Savannah Mesimer)



Master Sgt. Matt Dillon, 911th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, poses for a photo after servicing the liquid oxygen of a C-17 Globemaster III at the **Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station, Pennsylvania**, Feb. 23, 2021. Liquid oxygen is routinely serviced to ensure aircrew have breathable oxygen while flying. (U.S. Air Force photo by Joshua J. Seybert)



Feb. 1, 2021- Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Hunter Magaro, from **Middletown, Pennsylvania**, and Damage Controlman 2nd Class Johnnie Vitello, from Cypress, Texas, practice crash and salvage overhaul procedures during a flight deck training drill aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Benfold (DDG 65). Benfold is assigned to Destroyer Squadron Fifteen (DESRON 15), the Navy's largest forward-deployed DESRON and the U.S. 7th Fleet's principal surface force. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Deanna C. Gonzales)



Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick, with Pennsylvania's 1st District, visits with soldiers from the Pennsylvania National Guard, in Washington, D.C., March 1, 2021. The National Guard has been requested to continue supporting federal law enforcement agencies with security, communications, medical, evacuation, logistics, and safety support to state, district, and federal agencies through mid-March. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Zoe M. Wockenfuss)



Pennsylvanians Serving



Feb. 23, 2021- U.S. Army 1st Lt. Ian Lloyd is a UH-60 Black Hawk pilot and recently took command of Alpha Company, 2-104th General Support Aviation Battalion, 28th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade. Although he followed his family's footsteps (his father, two uncles and two cousins also serve in the Pennsylvania National Guard) he says he joined the military because he felt a personal desire to do so.

After deployment, he looks forward to earning a pilot-in-command designation and getting back to his civilian job, where he flies helicopters for the Pennsylvania State Police.



Congresswoman Chrissy Houlahan, with Pennsylvania's 6th Congressional District, visits with female Pennsylvania National Guard members to discuss inclusion and leadership for women in the military, in Washington, D.C., March 2, 2021. The National Guard has been requested to continue supporting federal law enforcement agencies with security, communications, medical, evacuation, logistics, and safety support to state, district, and federal agencies through mid-March. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Zoe M. Wockenfuss)



U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Mark McCormack, left, commanding general of the 28th Infantry Division and U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. James Thornburg Jr, right, commanding officer of Combat Logistics Battalion 22 (CLB-22), discuss vaccination operations during the setup of the state-run, federally-supported COVID-19 Community Vaccination Center at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in **Philadelphia**, March 1, 2021. Marines and Sailors with CLB-22, from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, are deployed in support of the federal vaccine response. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by 1st Lt. Kevin Stapleton / Combat Logistics Battalion 22)



ATLANTIC OCEAN – Retail Specialist Seaman Jamison Hammond, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, shoots a .50-caliber machine gun aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Mahan (DDG 72) Feb. 22, 2021. Mahan is operating in the Atlantic Ocean in support of naval operations to maintain maritime stability and security in order to ensure access, deter aggression and defend U.S., allies and partner interests. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Ryan Childress)

2021 Erie VAMC Launches New ATLAS



VFW Post 7842 members and leaders came together with VA officials to debut the new ATLAS site at the post. It will allow veterans to meet with their provider virtually using VA Video Connect.

*By Sarah Gudgeon, Public Affairs Officer, Erie VA Medical Center
Feb. 16, 2021*

Erie VA Medical Center (VAMC), in collaboration with VFW Post 7842, is pleased to launch a new ATLAS (Accessing Telehealth through Local Area Stations) site in Linesville aimed at bringing VA care closer to home for Veterans living in rural areas.

Conveniently located at VFW Post 7842, the new ATLAS site offers Veterans a private, secure location – in a familiar setting – to meet with their VA provider virtually using VA Video Connect, VA’s secure videoconferencing technology.

“ATLAS is veteran-centered care at its best,” says Erie VAMC Director John A. Gennaro. “The whole experience is designed to ensure Veterans have easy, convenient access to VA care by reducing barriers that many rural Veterans encounter, such as long travel times to appointments or limited internet connectivity at home. This was truly a team effort, in partnership with the VFW Post 7842, and we’re extremely proud to be one of the first in the nation to launch an ATLAS site to improve the overall experience of our Veterans.”

ATLAS sites offer VA clinical services that do not require hands-on exams, which could include routine primary care visits, health education appointments, social work visits, and specialty care services such as visual impairment support services. This site is part of a nationwide effort to help reach rural Veterans by providing convenient locations with private appointment space. Part of VA’s

Anywhere to Anywhere initiative and facilitated by the VA’s Secretary’s Center for Strategic Partnerships, ATLAS is part of a collaborative effort with Philips North America, The American Legion, VFW and Walmart.

On February 5, Lee Dhanenes became the first Erie VAMC patient to use the ATLAS site to connect with his VA health care provider, Laryssa Stolar, Erie VAMC’s Visual Impairment Services Coordinator.

“I live a mile down the road [from the VFW] – not having an hour drive to my appointment was a big benefit for me,” says Dhanenes, Navy Veteran and patient of the Erie VAMC. “I’m not a high-tech sort of guy with computers and cell phones and all that but it was pretty neat to go through. I’ve never had a bad experience with the VA, this just makes it a whole lot easier.”

Like Dhanenes, Veterans do not have to be tech savvy to enjoy the benefits of the ATLAS site. An ATLAS attendant is available at the VFW to help Veterans connect using the VA’s telehealth technology. While the attendant is not in the room during the appointment, they remain available within the VFW to provide any technical assistance needed during the patient’s appointment. This removes the stress of using new technology so Veterans can focus on what matters most - their health care appointment.

VA health care providers, like Laryssa Stolar, are also grateful for the opportunity to connect virtually.

“It’s a fantastic way to connect with Veterans,” says Stolar. “As providers, we’re able to assess so much more – if your patient wants to ask a question but is hesitant – you see it in their body language and facial expressions, even in a virtual care setting. It’s beneficial to both the Veteran and the providers.”

Veterans in the Linesville area are among the first Veterans in the country to have access to an ATLAS site. VFW Post 7842 is the eighth ATLAS site to open nationally and only the second ATLAS site to open within a VFW.

“Words really can’t explain how amazing a project like this is – it opens up channels that weren’t here prior,” says Jim Brown, VFW District 28 Commander and Legislative Chairperson for the Department of Pennsylvania. “The Erie VA has been a phenomenal partner with the national VA and the VFW. That’s the mission, taking care of the Veterans.”

Local Veterans interested in scheduling an appointment can contact the Erie VAMC Call Center at 814-868-8661, press 2 and ask about scheduling a virtual appointment at the new ATLAS site location. To learn more about ATLAS, visit connectedcare.va.gov/partners/atlas.

Pennsylvania Soldier was one of the first African American Veterans to start both a Hospital and Ambulance Corps

by George Whitehair, Executive Director, Boston Legacy Foundation

Dr. Frank Boston (1890-1960) was a World War I veteran who served in France with the 92nd Regiment during the Spanish Flu.

Upon return from serving his country, Dr. Boston is one of the first African Americans to start both a hospital and ambulance corps almost 100 years ago that both are still in business and thriving. . The Hospital is part of Jefferson Health Systems and the ambulance corps is the Volunteer Medical Services Corps (VMSC).

His father was also a veteran and served during the civil war. When blacks were finally allowed to serve in the Union Army, Charles A. Boston, father of Frank Boston, enlisted and served with the 12th regiment of the Pennsylvania volunteers in the Civil War.

Dr. Frank Boston's brother, Samuel Clifford Boston was also a doctor and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1898. Dr. S. Clifford Boston served as associate staff member at the Frederick Douglas Memorial Hospital and Training School, which trained the first black nurses.



Dr. Frank Boston in his military uniform.

Both Dr. Frank Boston and Dr. S. Clifford Boston served in WWI, following the steps of their father before them. Following the war, Dr. Frank Boston corresponded with W.E.B. DuBois about his wartime experiences.

Dr. Frank Boston died in 1960 and a monument was built at 7th & Broad Streets in Lansdale as the hospital refused to allow his supporters to hang his portrait. The monument may be the first monument built for a specific African American individual in Pennsylvania, as most monuments came after the civil rights movement.

Dr. Boston was a beloved community doctor and remained as Commander of the Ambulance Corps as well as Chief of Surgery up until his death.



Pennsylvania Department Winner of Fireman of the Year Award. From left to right: Fireman Allen Morrow, Post 402 Commander Mike Blair, District 29 Commander Jessica King, Post 402 Sr. Vice Commander Chris Smith. Morrow will now compete nationally.



The National Chaplain of the Year for 2019-2020 was presented to Chaplain Gene Arnold (Dist. 18). Because of COVID-19 it had not been presented. Congressmen Scott Perry made the presentation.



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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.

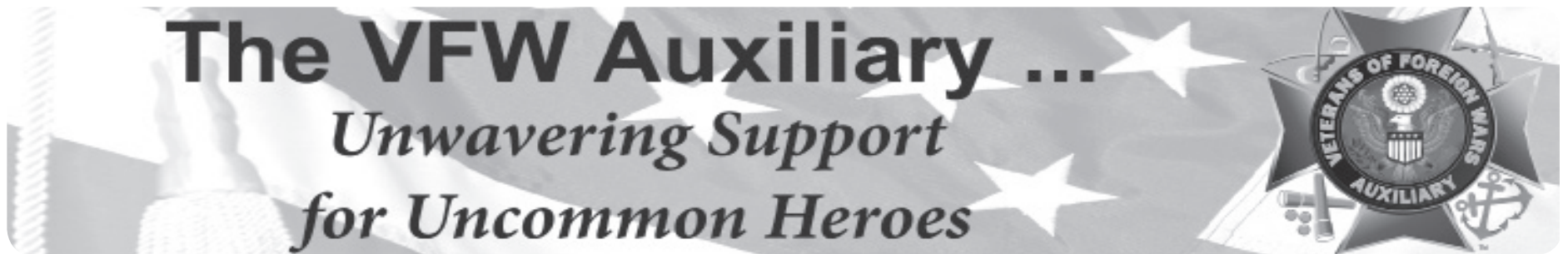
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Forever Indebted to our Veterans and Members

by Wendi S. Hennemann, PA VFW Auxiliary President



It is a little hard to believe that we are already past midway as far as our year goes. I am not sure where the time went. Everyone is working their hardest to think outside the box, even more than usual, and I cannot thank everyone enough for putting your heart and soul into our programs so we may continue to promote and educate our members.

I would like to take this opportunity to say Thank You to every Veteran for your service to our Country. It is the dedication, service and sacrifices that were made by you and your families so we can live in a free country. Along with our freedom, which we sometimes take for granted, it is also possible for the VFW Auxiliary to exist. I am proud to work hard for you and your families to ensure that you receive everything that you are entitled to and then some.

“United We Stand” as we continue our Mission to advocate for Veterans rights. We need to remember that we are our Veteran’s families. I am certain that everyone is doing their part to ensure we can remain healthy as well as keep our families safe.

To my Auxiliary brothers and sisters, I say to you, Thank You from the bottom of my heart for instilling your trust in me to serve our organization in this capacity. It has been such an amazing journey with the Veterans, and Auxiliary members that I have met along the way. There is no way for me to ever thank all of you for your support, encouragement, kind words, hugs, and I could go on for a minute here with every way you have embraced me with amazing hospitality and warm welcomes with every VFW Post I entered. I will never be able to thank everyone for all that has been done this year for me. I am truly, forever indebted to you. God Bless.

Much Love,

Wendi Hennemann

Department PA President

VA Healthcare for our Women Veterans

By Linda Dilling, PA VFW Auxiliary Hospital Chairman –
vfwauxldilling@gmail.com



All women veterans should learn about benefits you may have earned! through VA Health Care.

Did you know the VA has found that women veterans underutilize VA care, largely due to a lack of knowledge about VA benefits, available services and their eligibility for them.

Ask these questions to your Women Veterans! 1. Do you know your Veteran status? 2. Do you have a Veteran ID card? 3. Should you be receiving any benefits from the VA? 4. Do you know what health care benefits you have earned?

Get involved and help spread the word to our women veterans on how to receive the benefits and services they deserve.

VA Health Care for Women Veterans: At each VA Medical Center nationwide, a Women Veterans Program Manager is designated to advise and advocate for women Veterans. She can help coordinate all the services our women veterans may need, from primary care to specialized care for chronic conditions or reproductive health. Women Veterans who are interested in receiving care at the VA should contact the nearest VA Medical Center and ask for the Women Veterans Program Manager.

You may also contact your VFW Veterans Service Officer for assistance.

You can go to Vantage Point, the official blog of the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage> for a VA Women Veterans Quick Start Guide. This guide provides clear and concise information on how to apply for benefits and access VA health care.

Learn more about Women Veterans VA Health Care at:

Womenshealth.va.gov

www.va.gov/womenvet

Women Veterans Call Center: 1. 855.VAWOMEN (1-855-829-6636)

Membership Matters

By Valerie DeCorte, PA VFW Auxiliary Membership Chairman



The big difference between the VFW Auxiliary and other veteran auxiliaries is our eligibility requirements. For an individual, male or female, to be considered for membership his/her eligible veteran: must be a US citizen or US National, must have honorable service in the US Armed Forces; and, must have served in a foreign war, insurrection or expedition.

The VFW eligible veteran and the prospective Auxiliary member must have a familial relationship within two generations; step, half and adopted family members meet the “two generations” IRS standard.



Look at your family - how many are eligible, but not a member? Don't forget to look at our comrades, how many of their family members can we sign up?

Count them, 12 family members for each VFW eligible veteran!

How does the divorce from an eligible veteran, or the spousal death of an eligible veteran, affect a person's membership status? As outlined in Section 107 of the 2020 VFW Auxiliary Bylaws and Ritual:

A member who obtains a divorce shall not have their entitlement to membership questioned as long as that member continues to be a member in good standing.

A member who is separated by divorce from their spouse, under whose eligibility they entered the Auxiliary, and who is subsequently dropped from the rolls of membership for any reason recognized by the Bylaws, cannot re-enter the Auxiliary under said eligibility.

A widower/widow of an eligible veteran who is already a member of an Auxiliary is entitled to retain their membership even though they marry a person not eligible to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

A person who was widowed from an eligible veteran may join the Auxiliary even though they have remarried.

The mantra of the VFW Auxiliary is to see that our veterans are respected, receive the entitlements they fought to preserve, and are recognized for the sacrifices they made on behalf of our country.

Having over 105 years' worth of history and traditions, we need to remain steadfast and continue the work for our veterans and their families because “We Are Family” and we are “Honoring Our Mission to Serve Veterans.”

Valerie DeCorte

Department Membership Chairman

Do You Need Help With Veterans Benefits?

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

Philadelphia: 215-381-3123

Northeastern Region: 570-821-2535/2536

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

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

Altoona/Johnstown Region: 814-943-8164

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

Butler Region: 724-287-4781

Erie /Northwest Region: 814-835-8494

Northcentral/State College Region: 570-748-5929





Pennsylvanians Serving



PERIODICALS

Jan. 28, 2021- Boatswain's Mate Seaman Kara Bowermaster, from **Shippensburg, Pennsylvania**, assigned to USS Gerald R. Ford's (CVN 78) deck department, stands lookout watch on vultures row. Ford is underway conducting carrier qualifications. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Mariano Lopez)



U.S. Marines and U.S. Navy Sailors assigned to Combat Logistics Battalion 22 (CLB-22) wait for a tour of the vaccination site during the setup of the state-run, federally-supported COVID-19 Community Vaccination Center at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, Feb. 28, 2021. Marines and Sailors with CLB-22, from Camp Lejeune, N.C., are deployed in support of the federal vaccine response. U.S. Northern Command, through U.S. Army North, remains committed to providing continued, flexible Department of Defense support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency as part of the whole-of-government response to COVID-19. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by 1st Lt. Kevin Stapleton/ Combat Logistics Battalion 22)



Feb. 19, 2021- Pennsylvania State Representative Valerie Gaydos (second from left) poses for a photo with members of the 911th Logistics Readiness Squadron while touring the fuel depot at the Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station, Pennsylvania, Feb. 19, 2021. The 911th Airlift Wing showed Representative Gaydos the changes to the base that coincided with the C-17 Globemaster III conversion. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman James Fritz)