

# MICHIGAN OVERSEAS VETERAN



• Reporting your positive impact on the Michigan community •

October/November/December 2011

Volume 79 Number 2



## Past Commander-in-Chief



Edward S. Banas, Sr., was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars on August 29, 2003 at the 104th National Convention, held in San Antonio, Texas. He is only the second member from Connecticut to be elected to this position.

Ed served in the Army from 1965-68. In Vietnam, he was assigned to the 18th MP Bde. He was awarded the Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, National Defense Medal and the Army Good Conduct Medal.

In 1967, while still in the military, Ed joined VFW Post 10004 in Jewett City, Connecticut. He served in a variety of positions at the Post level, including Post Commander. At the District level, Ed earned the honor of All-American District

Commander. He served as Department Commander of Connecticut in 1993-94.

On the National level, Ed has served on several committees including Safety, Bylaws, Budget & Finance, and as Chairman for both the Americanism and Legislative Committees. He served a two-year term, 1994-1996, as a member of the National Council of Administration representing the Departments of Massachusetts and Connecticut. In 1998-1999, he served as the Eastern States Conference Chairman.

Ed put his military police experience to good use when he became a member of the Norwich Police Department in 1968. He served with the department for more than 10 years. During this time, he was a member of several law enforcement associations, including Patrolman's Benevolent Association, New London County Detective Association, Connecticut Narcotic Officers Association and the International Narcotic Officers Association.

He attended Northeastern University for the Study of Constitutional Law for Police, Police Organizations and Management. He also attended the Department of the Treasury-Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms School for Criminal Investigations.

Ed is a member of The American Legion, the Voluntown, Connecticut Historical Society and a Life Member of VFW Post 10004. He has five children and resides with his wife, Sandra, in Niantic.

## SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

Comrades, Sisters and Brothers,

The holidays are almost upon us. Please think of those who will not be spending time with their families, the military personnel who are far away defending those ideals we hold so dearly. We can express our gratitude for those who are serving by sending packages to them for the holidays. If you desire to help in this way, contact your Post. All packages would be greatly appreciated by our troops. I would also like to wish to you and your family – Season's Greetings.

2012 is just around the corner and our year as officers is half over. We need to be completing those programs that make or break us in regards to having a successful year. Membership is always the most difficult of these. Remember, there are still many Vietnam eligible veterans who have never joined our ranks. These veterans are retiring in increasing numbers and now are looking for things to do in their leisure time. Let us go after this forgotten group of veterans.

Do veterans always have to live in

**Kirk Kennedy**

**Senior Vice Commander**



fear of losing their benefits? It seems that every time our governments (state and federal) take it upon themselves to cut programs for cost-saving agendas, the first programs they try to cut affects our military and veterans. The legislators know that the military only comprise 1% of our population; a very small percentage in their eyes. Case in point is the 10 for 10 program that legislators are proposing to undermine our military retirement and health system. Who is always on the forefront on issues that affect our military personnel? The Veterans of Foreign Wars. Please read the changes that they are proposing and contact Senator Carl Levin and other legislators and let them know our disappointment with them and their agendas. Go to <http://capwiz.com/vfw> for more information.

## JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

Comrades,

I sit here on the front porch with my laptop writing this article while passing out candy for Halloween. By the time you read this, Thanksgiving will have come and gone and Christmas will be right around the corner. I hope all of you have a happy and safe holiday season.

The first half of your year is over and a lot has been done. Pow-Wow at Shanty Creek, Post inspections should be in, and the Big 10 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota where PSC Richard Lehner was elected Chairman of the Big 10 Conference. Mid-Winter Conference will be January 27-29, 2012; if you can make it to Kalamazoo, come on down and let the VOD and Patriot's Pen winners know how much we care and that we are proud of them.

Membership, comrades, is still a

**Ron Devereaux**

**Junior Vice Commander**



problem for the Veterans of Foreign Wars, as a whole. As of this writing, our Department membership stands at 83.03%. It represents 9518 members short of last year. WE CAN, AND HAVE TO, DO BETTER. If you want them, I have some of the mentoring booklets from National that I can send out to you. These booklets will help you to pass on our desire to see this organization and values continue into future generations. Comrades, there's no one idea that works for membership; try anything and don't give up.

"Little Bo Peep" just showed up at my

*JUNIOR VICE, continued on page 3*



# MICHIGAN OVERSEAS VETERAN



Online Edition Coming Soon

See Editor's column on  
page six for details.

## ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER

We are fast approaching the end of the calendar year with Thanksgiving and Christmas just around the corner and winter setting in. Remember those in the hospital and the Michigan homes this year and send sweaters, gloves, scarves and winter coats (both male and female) to Grand Rapids and Marquette.

If you have not purchased new podium editions of the National Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual – you need to order them now. There are new changes that you will need to know about.

As many of you know, we took a \$30,000.00 reduction in our guarantee program this year, mainly due to the fact that contributions are not going into National. Please remember that National does not make a dime on the member donation requests through the calendars, labels and other items sent to you through the mail. The net revenue comes back to the Department, which is used for the

**Rob Weiss**

**State Adjutant/  
Quartermaster**



programs in which we participate. We need your assistance.

We have at this writing four Posts that are reapplying for their nonprofit status with the IRS. Your Post must file the 990, 990EZ or the 990N to keep your nonprofit status. We also have Posts struggling with late 941 quarterly reports and 940 annual FUTA reports. The trustees of the Post need to make sure that these are filed and subsequently report back to the Post that all tax forms have been completed and mailed.

I hope everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving and we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## Department Service Officer SUCCESS STORY

Every day, we get phone calls from all over Michigan and for that matter around the country regarding multiple topics on multiple issues. In March of 2010 we received such a call from a former Marine who served in Vietnam. He indicated that he had grave concerns about his squad leader that led him into battle on several occasions. They met at Khe-Sanh in 1968; surrounded by enemy forces, subjected to constant artillery, rockets and mortars for 90 days. They experienced a lot together, that only combat Marines can appreciate. Over the years of living life's battles, they lost contact with one another.

In 1994, the caller was reading a *Veterans Magazine* and spotted his old squad leader's name. After numerous attempts to locate the squad leader, he finally made contact. It was like old times, less the bullets streaking over their heads. Jabbering away like a couple of school kids, they got caught up with each other's lives and reminisced, laughed and cried about their Vietnam service. It was like they never parted!

Later in the late 1990s, our caller was having some personal problems, dealing with and getting a lot of grief from the Department of Veterans Affairs. As a leader, his squad leader did what he always did best and that was to help him "keep it together" in times of uncertainty.

Through many conversations they both had with one another over the years, it became very apparent that the leader who

led him into battle on so many occasions was having the very same issues with the VA that our caller had. Unfortunately, for the Squad Leader, his physical health had deteriorated rapidly over the years and this prevented him from actively persuading any corrective action with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Now, the veteran who called us with the concern for his fellow Marine wants to be there for his squad leader as he was for him back in Vietnam and in the 90s.

We secured the identifying information from the caller and our Service Officer contacted the veteran. Over the past several months we have had lengthy conversations with the veteran on several occasions. When all is said and done, we couldn't believe what we were hearing from this former Marine and Squad Leader.

First and foremost, we made a determination that the VA did not evaluate the veteran properly. Secondly, due to his health, our "squad leader" was pretty much abandoned by his family and lived up in the mountains. He pretty much kept to himself – didn't really trust anyone.

The Service Officer asked the VA to transfer the veteran's claims folder to the Detroit Regional Office so he could do a thorough review. After the review, we found out that the veteran was currently rated at a combined 60% evaluation. This confirmed our previous assumption that the veteran was not rated properly.

We asked that the veteran be re-evaluated for his service-connected conditions. In addition, we asked that

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## CHAPLAIN

Comrades, Sisters and Brothers,

We are entering another holiday season in Michigan. Do you already have plans for gifts to buy, meals to make, and/or trips to take? There is certainly a great deal to do this time of year, but I ask that you, once again, please give as you can to our veterans and their families.

Many of you already provide extra help this time of year. Just a handful of these actions include sending packages overseas to our troops; supporting the USMCR's Toys for Tots program; volunteering at the VA hospitals and State Veterans Homes to bring veterans good cheer; laying wreaths in our State Veterans Cemeteries; and still others help homeless veterans. As mentioned, these are but a few of the many activities Veterans of Foreign Wars members and the Ladies and Mens' Auxiliaries undertake during this time. We should be encouraged by the fact that these actions positively affect the lives of others. As *Acts 20:35* aptly explains, "In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

I do not need to tell you that these are tough times in our state. Still, as

**Jennifer Smith**

**State Chaplain**



mentioned in the last *MOV*, we each have our special gifts bestowed by the Lord (1 Peter 4:10). That means that we need not be exceptionally skilled or wealthy to give. Instead, we need only be willing to extend our own talents, gifts and resources as we can.

So, while we carefully navigate the leaf blown and later – snowy roads – let us please remember our many blessings and endeavor to give back. While we stand in line to return that re-gifted appliance, let us remember those veterans that can no longer stand. As we wonder what else on earth can be made with the turkey leftovers, please reflect upon those current servicemembers families and shut-in veterans, perhaps without much food or company. Comrades, sisters and brothers, even in the toughest of times we are so incredibly blessed to live in this great nation and to have the joy-building and faith-strengthening ability to comfort others in need.

Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah; may God bless you.

## STATE SERVICE OFFICER

### Advocating for Others

Since April of 2010, the Michigan Veterans Coalition (MVC) has been providing veterans service throughout the State of Michigan. It has been a very rewarding experience and we continue to make changes as needed. Since January, the MVC has been working diligently to gather and put together grant applications for FY 2011-2012. On Wednesday, September 21, 2011 the following grants were awarded:

Grant (1A) not to exceed \$1,000,000 to provide veteran advice, advocacy and assistance to veterans throughout the State with a special emphasis on the Upper Peninsula and the D. J. Jacobetti Home for Veterans, grant (1B) not to exceed \$1,000,000 to provide veteran advice, advocacy and assistance to veterans throughout the State with a special emphasis on the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans, grant (2A) not to exceed \$600,000 to provide veteran advice, advocacy and assistance to veterans in the eastern portion of Michigan's Lower Peninsula and grant (2B) not to exceed \$300,000 to provide veteran advice, advocacy and assistance to veterans in the western portion of Michigan's Lower Peninsula, all have been awarded to the Michigan Veterans Coalition consisting of The American Legion, Department of Michigan; the Disabled American Veterans, Department of Michigan; the

**Dan Crocker**

**State Service Officer**



Marine Corps League, Department of Michigan; the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Department of Michigan and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Michigan. The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Michigan serves as manager and lead organization of the Michigan Veterans Coalition.

This is great news for the MVC! However, this news comes with an enormous responsibility to our overall veteran community here in the State of Michigan.

Our promise to the State of Michigan is to:

- Establish, reinforce and enhance a public presence throughout the State of Michigan.
- Provide access to initial representation for Michigan veterans and families.
- Provide direct service to the members of Michigan's State Veteran Homes.
- Refer veterans and families to the appropriate local, state, federal and non-governmental agencies for benefits, entitlements and support.
- Provide support for veterans seeking appeals or redress from initial decisions by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

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door, leading a live lamb on a leash... now that's thinking outside the box!

Post Commanders, program and hospital reporting each month takes so little time and it let's people know all the good we do in our communities, along with the millions of dollars that we raise and spend to help our communities. It will also help you if the IRS comes to visit your Post. They will

look at these reports.

Comrades, thank you for everything that you have done, and are going to, and will do in the future. Remember what National Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief John Hamilton likes to say, "The highest rank you can be in the VETERANS OF FOREIGNS WARS is the one you got the day you joined, COMRADE..."

**SUCCESS, continued from page 2**

he be considered service-connected for several previously denied claims that are under the herbicides exposure act.

When the veteran came to us, he was receiving a small monthly award of compensation. Today, he is rated at three separate 100% ratings, two separate 60% evaluations. This equates to an R2 award for Special Monthly Compensations.

He receives a monthly compensation award of \$7,650. The veteran was paid a retroactive check in the amount of \$539,754.

"Semper Fidelis" (the Marine Corps motto) means "Always Faithful". Faithful to God, Country and Corps. To that end, the above story epitomizes that a brotherhood that was made in combat has been sealed for life. The motto's meaning "Always Faithful" was not just a catch phrase, but also a living testament by these two Marines who continue to fight the good fight.

By the way, Happy 236th Birthday to the Marine Corps family.

**SVC. OFFICER, continued from page 2**

- Put an emphasis on contacting and serving severely wounded post-9/11 veterans.
- Finally, establish a presence at public universities and colleges, as well as community colleges.

As one might guess, this is a pretty aggressive agenda, but we feel the MVC is up to the task at hand and will succeed!

In addition, based on this agenda we will be required to shift resources to other localities that are under served or are well below the national average. This is still a work in progress and will be for the foreseeable future.

On another note, there have been some recent changes in our national policy regarding Post Service Officers. The following are those changes that each and every Post Commander should ensure that the Post Service Officers abide by.

The primary task of a Post Service Officer (PSO) is to provide information concerning Federal, state and local benefits for veterans, their families and survivors. In this capacity, PSO's may provide applications or other forms to claimants; when requested, the PSO may help a claimant complete a form by acting as a recorder.

All material submitted in relationship to a claim must be either forwarded to the

Department Service Office or returned to the claimant. Under no circumstances should the PSO retain any personally identifiable information concerning the claimant or the claimants' family.

When acting as a recorder, the PSO is simply transcribing information provided by the claimant. At no time should the PSO make suggestions on how to frame information to make it appear more favorable or less harmful to the claimant.

Under no circumstances should a PSO counsel a claimant on their individual claim. While a PSO provides information concerning various government benefit programs, he/she should not offer any guidance or opinion as to the individual claim itself. General statements about the types of evidence necessary to support a claim can be described; however, a PSO must not discuss the nature or merits of any particular claim.

Should anyone have any questions, please feel free to contact our staff.

Our contact information is as follows:

**VFW Service Office**  
**477 Michigan Avenue, Suite 1215**  
**Detroit, MI 48226-2588**  
**PH: 313/964-6510**  
**FAX: 313/974-6545**  
**E-Mail: vfwmiadvocates@gmail.com**

**Dues Reminder**

On December 31, 2010 we had too many Post officers that had not paid their dues. We are aware that your dues are paid through December 31; however, as an officer of your Post, you should be setting the example for your members. If your dues are not paid by December 31, you will no longer hold an officer's position in your Post. I am asking every Post officer to pay their dues now, so that we do not have to send out letters and remove you from your position.

Starting in 2014, all new continuous members will pay their dues on the anniversary date of their members. So if you paid your dues in June, then your dues reminder will be sent to you before June so that you can be in good standing. You will not have to hold back dues to wait for the new fiscal year to begin. All members that are currently on continuous dues that run from January to December will remain on that calendar year program.

**DISTRICT 4 REPORT**

**Phil Merrow**  
**District 4 Commander**



Comrades, Sisters and Brothers of District 4,

I hope that everyone has a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. WOW! What a busy administrative year so far. It is hard to believe that my year as District Commander is half over. I am very proud of all the Posts and Auxiliary members in our District. By the time this *MOV* comes out, I should only have one or two Posts in the District left to visit. A comrade once told me that above all you should have fun; if you are not having fun then you are doing something wrong. He was right and I have been having a great time. I consider the VFW my family and in my humble opinion, I have the greatest family in the world.

During the summer of 2011, two Posts in our District held fundraisers for two young disabled veterans. Miller-Strawn Post 9363 (Flat Rock) helped raise over \$76,000.00 to help out US Army PV2 Chris Ochs who was injured by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. Also, Benjamin V. Goodell Post 552 (Lincoln Park) held a fundraiser for US Marine Jason Hampton who broke his neck while swimming with his family, after completing two tours in Iraq. During the spaghetti dinner fundraiser, a very generous lady donated her late husband's wheelchair-accessible van to help Jason get around.

A group of us went to Camp Trotter in September for a visit. On the drive out there, it was very cloudy and it looked like it was going to storm. It never did storm on us, but when we arrived at Camp Trotter we were told that the whole city of Newaygo was without power due to a big storm that had rolled through the area that morning. We had reservations to stay in Newaygo, but without power we were unable to stay there. A few of us decided to stay at the camp overnight. We filled up buckets so that we could flush the toilets, and had to use candles to see. In the morning, we went into Newaygo to see if we could find something to eat and ended up at the Fire Hall. They had a pancake breakfast and being that there was no power in the city, they had a captive crowd. We had a great time, and maybe next time Ernie and Jan will

stay at the camp with us. If Raffle Ruthie and Sandi can spend the night at camp without any power, anybody can.

For those of you that are on Facebook, we now have groups or pages for District 4 (VFW DISTRICT 4), Camp Trotter (Dept. of MI VFW Camp Trotter Camp for Children) and the Department of Michigan (Department of Michigan Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States...yes, I know foreign is misspelled). We try to keep these groups or pages up to date with the latest and greatest happenings. Word seems to spread faster on Facebook than it does through e-mail. Anyone can create an event on the Department of Michigan page, but we ask that you only create 4th District events in the District 4 group.

I believe that we may have had a first in the 4th District. The VFW, American Legion, VVA and the Purple Heart held a joint veterans information seminar at the Southgate VFW Post on November 16th. The seminar was geared a little more toward the "caregiver" or family of the veteran. Hopefully, we educated the family members of the veteran on what paperwork they should have in a file (i.e. DD214, Will, life insurance policy, etc.), burial benefits and also answered questions about VA claims. Mr. Anderson from the Great Lakes National Cemetery was also there to answer questions. If something happened to you today, would your family know where all your paperwork is and what your final wishes are? Take a few minutes to put together a file or packet with everything that your family would need.

Before I close this article, I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation to the District 4 and Department of Michigan Honor Guard. You comrades worked well together during the memorial service for Past District 4 Commander Marv Hamann. I believe that everyone that attended the service was impressed with the posting of the "joint" Honor Guard and I know that Marv would have approved. We raise a glass of Polish Kool-Aid and salute our friend and comrade, Marv.

**DISTRICT 6 REPORT**

**Richard Schroeder**  
**District 6 Commander**



Greetings Comrades,

By the time that you receive this communication, our year together will be half over. Completion dates for our activities and accomplishments are fast approaching.

Post visitations have been made. This entailed driving almost 3,000 miles, but it was well worth it. I got to put faces to the names and see what your Posts look like. I also know now what concerns your members are facing, as related to

their individual Posts. Post inspections have also been completed and the results have been sent to the Commanders. Also, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws examples from National have been sent to the Commanders to assist them in revising or writing their own.

Our new District 6 Web site will be up and running soon at [www.vfwmi6.org](http://www.vfwmi6.org). When the Web site is completed, feel free to submit information about upcoming



**DISTRICT 6, continued from page 3**

events or newsworthy items from your Posts. Information will continue to be distributed via e-mail and parcel post, in addition to the Web site.

In visiting the Posts, I learned that one recurrent concern among the post members is the fact that the new Quartermasters and trustees need training in order to perform their duties and fulfill their obligations. To alleviate this concern, there will definitely be training classes scheduled for Quartermasters and trustees.

Our first Texas Hold 'em event will be held at the Dollar King in Temperance, Michigan. Posts signing up for whole days need to determine their volunteer commitments, in order to avoid any confusion. Both Carleton Post and Ann Arbor have offered to take a full day during the events scheduled between January 14-17, 2011. Discussion of volunteer assignments for the events will have been confirmed at the District meeting in December.

Be sure to support Lynn Patterson for Department Quartermaster and to congratulate members of our State Honor Guard for winning the National Championship. I would encourage everyone, especially if you are serving as an officer at your Post, to attend the Mid-Winter Conference in January in

Kalamazoo (January 27-29) This is a time to honor our VOD, Patriot's Pen and Teacher of the Year award winners. There will also be programs instructing you on how to perform your duties as a Commander, Senior Vice Junior Vice, Quartermaster, Adjutant or trustee, along with a joint meeting regarding Camp Trotter. In attending the Fall Conference (Pow-Wow) at Shanty Creek, I was able to take away a lot of information from the various chairmanship reports and from the joint meetings on legislation and National Home. Not only do you learn from the actual programs, but in meeting other veterans from around the state you can take home with you valuable information and many new ideas to implement at your Post.

Right now, membership should be your top priority. Those requiring assistance with the task of recruitment of new members are asked to contact me directly. There are District assets at our disposal to assist in your recruiting efforts.

Your next concern should be your All-State program requirements. Your actions and accomplishments continue to earn my heartfelt pride in you. I sincerely hope that you all celebrated Veterans Day, as it is held in your honor.

Continue to march and see you on the objective.



## DISTRICT 7 REPORT

**Kevin Conklin**  
District 7 Commander



Comrades,

By the time you read this, Pow-Wow will have passed and Mid-Winter will be right around the corner. If you did not have the opportunity to travel to Shanty Creek Resort for Pow-Wow, you really missed a beautiful place to meet some new and old comrades.

I have learned many things already this year and I am looking forward to learning more. I learned more about the Veterans of Foreign Wars after I was encouraged to start attending meetings, working through the chairs at the District level, and getting involved in other programs. There are many comrades in this organization that have the knowledge and abilities to mentor a younger veteran. If I did not have someone to push me a little, I would still be one of the members who was just seen around the Post on occasion. I would like to challenge each of the "old timers"

to take a younger veteran and make them your protégé. Get that younger veteran involved in the chairs, programs at your Post, Honor Guard details, etc. These veterans may need you to push them for a little while. Once the younger veteran feels a sense of ownership, they will be hooked. You may have to call them a few times or stop by, but the result could be a future Post or Department Commander.

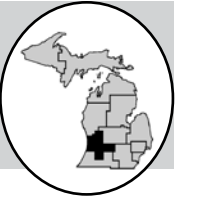
The future of the Veterans of Foreign Wars is in the younger veterans. They need to be recruited, educated and supported. After these veterans are recruited, don't stop the process. We must continue the recruitment process by educating them. This is done by getting them involved at your programs at the Post. Once they are involved, be open minded to the new ideas they will have and support them.

I really look forward to seeing each of you at the Mid-Winter Conference in Kalamazoo.



## DISTRICT 8 REPORT

**Jerry Lee Smith, Jr.**  
District 8 Commander



Comrades,

It's that time once again. I am sure you realize that I was unable to attend the Pow-Wow, due to medical reasons. As it turned out, my wife also ended up in the hospital and is now in assisted living and I am fighting an arterial blockage in my right leg. But enough of my poor excuses – let's get down to business.

As I stated before, membership is the key to making and keeping us strong. If you read your *VFW Magazine*, you may have noticed the article on some of the Posts who have had the younger Iraqi and Afghanistan vets taking leadership positions. These are Posts that have made themselves "User-Friendly" to these younger veterans; you see it even now in our organization. We need to strive to bring these younger comrades into our fold and make them feel welcome. How do we do that you ask? Well, the programs that we have in place are designed to be community-oriented. We need to work those programs, especially those that are family-oriented. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen come to mind right off the bat. As I always say, membership should be considered unfinished business as it is never over.

I was very pleased at the turnout at our last District meeting at the Wayland Post. I want to thank all of you who attended and the ladies from the Wayland Ladies Auxiliary for putting on a wonderful spread, as usual. Well done, ladies. I also want to thank all of you who attended the

luncheon; thank you for your support. Our next District meeting will be the 4th of February at the Creston Post 3023. This will be combined with Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen awards, so please come on out and support our winners and our Post. The final meeting/elections will be at the Comstock Post 6252 on May 5th. Let's keep up the good attendance.

Be sure to get your audits in on time. This is very important not only to your Post, but to the District and Department, as well. By the time you get this, inspections will be over with and you should have received your copies. Our Department Inspector does a great job and noted all the discrepancies on the bottom of your inspection report. Please get them corrected and keep a copy for next year's Inspectors. It will make the process so much less painful for all of us.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Kalamazoo for Mid-Winter. There is a lot of good information passed out, and of course, talking to other Posts and Districts can always give us new ideas on how to improve on our own, so please attend if you are able. We are doing well, but we should always strive to continually improve.

Once again, I am here to serve you. My numbers are: Home, 269-792-1408; Cell, 616-293-7544 and my e-mail is [jerryismith@chartermi.net](mailto:jerryismith@chartermi.net). Please get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns. My staff and I are here to help you; that is our number one priority!



## DISTRICT 9 REPORT

**Phil Patterson**  
District 9 Commander



Greetings, my fellow Comrades:

Since the last *MOV* article we have accomplished a great number of things, one of those being our Post inspections. We were 100% completed and turned in by Pow-Wow. I would like to thank Chief Inspector Jim Huver and his inspectors for a job well done. I have noticed that we still have some work to do on our inspections, but together we will get them corrected.

I hope that you are all looking forward to Mid-Winter Conference on January 27-29, 2012, which will be held in Kalamazoo. I know that we did not have all of our Posts represented for the Pow-Wow, but I do look forward to seeing each and every one of you at Mid-Winter. There is some very good information that is put out that you will be able to take back to your Post. It is also a good time to catch up with some comrades that you may have not seen in a while.

A little on membership; as of the writing of this article, the District stands at 81.19% in the Dept. This puts us right in the middle of the pack. So far in the first quarter, the District has done a great job in recruiting 45 new members. Now it is that time that we must start going

through our membership records; calling the delinquent and unpaid members to pay their dues. I would like to remind all officers and committee members to have their dues paid by December 31st. Failure to pay current dues will result in the forfeit of your eligibility to hold office for this administrative year. See Sec. 515 of the National Bylaws.

I would like to ask your assistance in getting your Hospital and Program Activities reports done. These need to be turned in by the 10th of each month, either electronically or by paper. Comrades, make sure that you report to your Commanders everything that you have done during the month so that it may be reported; this is one way that we continue with our nonprofit status.

The following dates are the District Meetings for the 2011-2012 year:

- February 11, 2012, St. Louis Post 3055 School of Instruction (Election eligibility/requirements)
- May 12, 2012, Belding Post 4406 School of Instruction TBD
- All meetings are at 1:00 p.m. School of Instruction is subject to change

— *DISTRICT 9, continued on page 5*

**SUPPORT  
OUR  
TROOPS**

## DISTRICT 9, continued from page 4

without notice.

With that I would like to remind you all that I work for you. I am here to support you. We are a team...if you have questions or need assistance,

please feel free to contact me. I may be contacted at 616-755-3176 or e-mail at [philvfw12082@rocketmail.com](mailto:philvfw12082@rocketmail.com)

Hope you have safe and happy holidays. Remember: Army Strong.



## DISTRICT 10 REPORT

**Stu Billey**  
District 10 Commander



Comrades, sisters and brothers,

The year is half over and things are still going strong. It was good to see so many friendly faces at Pow-Wow, but it is sad that the number of participants is growing smaller. I hope that we will see an increase of participation in January for the Mid-Winter Conference in Kalamazoo.

I am sad to say that this year hasn't been as smooth as I would have hoped for. I was shocked that Posts in this District have taken an "I don't care" attitude when it comes to the VFW. I was at a Post meeting recently that totally took me by surprise. The meeting took about thirty minutes and there was a lot of it missing. There wasn't one prayer read by the Chaplain, they didn't remember the National Home and everyone wore ball caps in the meeting, just to name a few of the many discrepancies. I was informed after the meeting by a member that this Post does things its own way. I had to really think about what was being said to me as the District Commander. The only logical conclusion that I could come up with is that if this is the attitude of the Post, then I will accommodate the wishes of the members of that Post. I will remove the charter, the Post flags and anything that bears the symbol or name of the VFW. Without the pesky rules and Bylaws getting in the way of these Posts, they can go on being the place that they want. It's always sad to see a Post slip so far that it cannot make its way back, but sometimes you have to remove what is weighing you down to be able to move forward. For all of the other Posts that actually want to continue being a VFW, I would like to say that I will help in any way that I can to get things back to what the VFW exemplifies and what it is supposed to be: a veteran's organization. We are here to help the community and to help veterans and their families, not to be served at the canteen. If you feel that

you are wasting your time by coming to meetings and having to do things the right way, then maybe this organization isn't for you. As veterans, we like to hold ourselves to a higher standard than other people. I have heard veterans say that the country owes us for the time we have served and the sacrifices that we have made. Those "veterans" among us that act in the manner that I have described above, are not the kind of veterans that I want to be associated with. I hope that there are others out there that share my feelings and by removing the members/Posts that are holding us back, we can flourish as an organization.

I want to encourage the Post Commanders to read the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure to better understand what is expected of you and your members. If you have not purchased a copy of the 2012 Bylaws/Manual of Procedure, please do so. There have been changes. I would also like to remind all Post Commanders that District meetings are not optional. Section 208(a)(1)(k) of the Bylaws clearly state that the Post Commander shall assure that he or his representative attend all properly called District Conventions or meetings and County Council meetings (if applicable). Did you know that the Commander votes on all issues at Post meetings? The Commander never breaks a tie. If there is a tie, the motion is defeated. Also, the presence, distribution, and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages during VFW meetings is unacceptable and prohibited. These are just a few of the conflicts I hear all over the state.

Let's remember to focus on membership and get out into the community and support it in any way that we can. With a little work, we can get the 10th District back on track. Let's make our District the one that everyone looks to as the shining example of the VFW.



## DISTRICT 12 REPORT

**Virginia McGowan**  
District 12 Commander



Hello Comrades and Sisters,

Can you believe it is hunting season already? Be sure to turn in those extra Safety reports.

Pow-Wow was very informative; I always learn new things, meet many people, see old friends and share ideas with fellow comrades. Mid-Winter Conference is coming up January 26-29, 2012. Housing forms and the agendas are on the VFW Web site at [www.vfwmi.org](http://www.vfwmi.org)

Post Commanders, please work with your line officers; help prepare them to move up the chairs. With knowledge of VFW procedures, they can excel in the VFW. It would be nice to see your senior, junior, quartermaster, chaplain and

adjutants attend Mid-Winter Conference in Kalamazoo to gain such knowledge.

The 12th District was saddened when our very own Past District Commander (1995/96), Thomas "Skip" Vermilya, passed away October 17, 2011.

A few Posts have not reported in hospital. In home visits or nursing home visits count, as well as going to the hospitals. Be sure to get the reports in, so your Post gets the credit it deserves.

Many Posts are working hard to get new members or reinstate. I personally would like to welcome all those new members to this great organization called the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

## Military Order of the Cootie "Ideas into Reality" "Veteran's First"

By PGC Robert E. Wilson, VFW-Cootie Liaison

Greetings, Comrades! As you read this, the 77rd Trek to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery will have come and gone. This annual ceremony allows Cooties and Sisters to gather at this cherished national shrine to commemorate and remember our comrades-in-arms who have made the supreme sacrifice. The members of the Military Order of the Cooties and its Auxiliary gather annually to pay homage to our fallen comrades. Commander Martindale encourages all Cooties, VFW Members and our sisters to take the time and remember our comrades-in-arms.

"Michigan Nitpickers" for 2011-20012

The Grand of Michigan invites all members of the VFW, Cooties, and Ladies Aux to participate in our fundraiser. The proceeds will help the Grand Programs. Membership is set up as either being an "Annual Member" (Silver Pin) or "Life Member" (Gold Pin). The cost for annual membership is \$10.00 + \$3.00 for shipping (total cost = \$13.00). The life membership is \$30.00 +

\$3.00 for shipping (total cost = \$33.00). If you are interested in participating in this worthy program, you can send your request to PGC Robert Routhier, Jr., P.O. Box 117, Clio, MI 48420. Please remember to send your name, address, city, zip, telephone, Post name/number, membership type (Annual/Life). Make checks or money orders payable to MOC Grand of Michigan.

As of this print date, the Grand of Michigan will be hosting the Christmas Party for the Children of the VFW National Home on December 10, 2011. All are invited to participate (VFW, Auxiliaries, MOC, MOCA, etc.).

Please keep sending your contributions. Make your checks out to: Grand of Michigan MOC. Send donations to: Ernest A. Paulin, Grand Quartermaster, 710 Aldrich Street, Linden, MI 48451-9050. Phone: 810-735-7920.

Commander Martindale and the Grand of Michigan would like to wish all VFW/Cootie Members and their families, the Ladies Aux and the Men's Aux a happy and safe holiday season.

## VOD COMMITTEE

On behalf of the VOD Committee, thank you for all you have done for our Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen and Teacher of the Year programs thus far. There are some reminders and the timeline is also included in this article. It should be noted that this may change a little if the need arises.

The Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen and Teacher of the Year Committee is headed by myself, Director Harry "Les" Croyle, Assistant Director James Galen and Department of Michigan Ladies Auxiliary Chairman Gloria Dobbie. We are here to help you make our programs successful. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call anyone on the committee for the answers.

Here is the Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen and Teacher of the Year checklist:

### Post Level:

1. Insure that all your entries are of the proper length. Count the words and time the speeches. You are the first line of defense against over runs.
2. Make sure all your paperwork is done properly and sent to your District Chairman on time.
3. Please check your recording to be certain that it recorded and is on the tape or CD.
4. The Posts that have the traveling trophies: you must get them to Lansing by December 7th, so they can be engraved for the next year's winners.
5. Hand in your Post report to your



District Chairman on all monies spent on your entire program. This is of **utmost importance** as it must be done at every level of our contest in order to receive credit.

### District Level:

1. Insure that all your entries are of the proper length. Count the words and time the speeches. You are the second line of defense against overruns.
2. Make sure all your paperwork is done properly and you included all the needed information as outlined in the program.
3. Ensure room reservations for your District VOD contestants have been made and that the parents know what name they are under.
4. District Commanders, you are going to be busy doing your jobs at Mid-Winter, so please assign someone from your District to make the parents and teachers feel welcome being with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Michigan.
5. January 15, 2012: District participation reports to Department Chairmen.

### Department Level:

1. Department will secure the rooms for the Patriot's Pen and Teacher of the Year contestants and oversee the program at Kalamazoo.



## Moroz-Pietrowski Post 9973 Sponsors Eagle Scout Scholarship

The Eagle Scout \$500.00 Scholarship is being funded by Moroz-Pietrowski Post 9973. The members of Moroz-Pietrowski Post 9973 voted to allocate \$5,000.00 to start the Eagle Scout Scholarship.

On behalf of the members, staff and officers of the Department of Michigan,

Veterans of Foreign Wars we want to express our thanks to Moroz-Pietrowski Post 9973 for their generous contribution to the scouting program. Moroz-Pietrowski Post 9973 will be recognized as the donor on the certificate received by the Eagle Scout.

## EDITOR'S COLUMN

I am pleased to announce that the *Michigan Overseas Veteran* will be adding a trial online edition. The deadline for submissions will be January 1, 2012. This trial edition will only be four pages and will be available for viewing on the Dept. of Michigan's Web site at [www.vfwmi.org/mov](http://www.vfwmi.org/mov) as are all *MOV* editions.

Because there will only be four pages, any submissions that are not published in the online edition will be published in the next printed edition.

It will also be available by e-mail, sent directly to you. If you wish to receive it

by e-mail, please send your e-mail address to [editormov@yahoo.com](mailto:editormov@yahoo.com). Please give me your first and last name and your Post number. Please note that if you want the *MOV* e-mailed to you, the four printed editions will also still be mailed to you. If the interest in the online edition is good, then we will incorporate the online edition with the regular editions, so that we have six editions a year: four printed and two online.



**Matt David**

**MOV Editor**

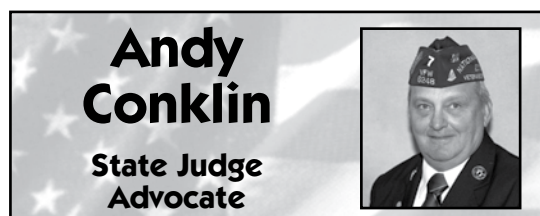
## STATE JUDGE ADVOCATE

Comrades,

I think how we are perceived in life is very important, not only to our own well-being, but also as members of a premier veterans' organization. In this day and age, we can't leave the house without being exposed to a surveillance camera on just about every corner. A lot of people can't wait for an opportunity to film somebody with a cell phone camera. Everywhere we go somebody is watching us; it's like we are living in a fish bowl.

Society seems to give more notoriety and exposure to somebody making a mistake than achieving an outstanding accomplishment. However, the need for us to act appropriately should not be based on who's watching us, but as a matter of our own conscience in conducting ourselves with respect; first to ourselves and then toward others. As members of the service, at times we were exposed to harsh actions and vulgar language. However, we were also trained to honor and respect others and to be disciplined. Let's all make it a point to pass that training down, not only in our family but in our daily contact with others; whether we are on the parade ground, in the canteen or the foyer of a bank.

Young veterans that are eligible to join the



**Andy Conklin**

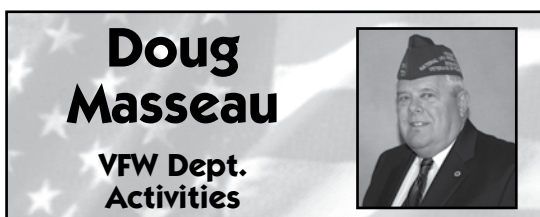
**State Judge Advocate**

Veterans of Foreign Wars are watching us and judging whether they should join our ranks. I feel as veterans, we should go the extra mile in displaying exemplary conduct and behavior in our community and lives. This cannot only benefit us personally, but can get people interested in joining our beloved organization; an organization of veterans serving veterans, our families and communities with dignity and respect toward each other. Show them that the VFW is a group they will be proud to be part of.

Recently, I was at an event where many young veterans were present. Somebody asked one of the young men why he joined the Marine Corps. The young man replied, "When I looked at that poster and saw that cool uniform and their slogan – I just had to be a part of it." I think that's good enough proof for me that we are our own best salesmen. So let's work together and swell up this organization with pride and we will swell up our membership.

## ACTIVITIES EVALUATION

The reporting so far this year has been very good. I have received a few phone calls and e-mails with questions that were answered and credit worked out. If you have a project and are having a problem working it out, give me (paper) or Benny (electronic) a call or e-mail and we will work it out with you.



**Doug Masseau**

**VFW Dept. Activities**

Reporting the activities of your Post members and Post programs are useful in so many ways. It shows the other Posts in your

*ACTIVITIES, continued on page 7*

## Liimatta named U.P. Veteran of the Year

**Chassell Post member to be honored at U.P. State Fair**  
By Kelly Fosness, DMG writer ([kfosness@mininggazette.com](mailto:kfosness@mininggazette.com))  
– The Daily Mining Gazette



August 16, 2011, CHASELL – Rev. Elmer Liimatta of VFW Post 6507 in Chassell has been selected as the 2011 Upper Peninsula Veteran of the Year.

"It's pretty humbling," Liimatta said. "There's 35,000 other veterans (in the Upper Peninsula) that probably deserve it more."

Liimatta, who is National Chaplain of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, will be honored during an 11 a.m. award ceremony Thursday at the U.P. State Fair in Escanaba. In addition to receiving a new cap and jacket, Liimatta will be presented with a plaque from Gov. Rick Snyder.

"It's a pretty prestigious award," U.P. Veteran of the Year Committee Adjutant William LaMarch said, noting he earned the award two years ago. "You're being judged by veterans and leaders of the veteran community. They look at the good that you do for society."

Liimatta said there are nine veterans groups in the U.P. and they include: Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Purple Heart, Vietnam Veterans, AMVETS, Marine Corps League, Forgotten Eagles and Patriot Guard Riders. The selection committee consisted of members from those organizations.

"I've got good friends," Liimatta said. "That's why I got elected."

Liimatta served in the U.S. Army from 1952-54 and received several awards. He was awarded the Korean Service Ribbon with one Bronze Service Star,

the National Defense Service Medal, the Republic of Korea Presidential Citation and a United Nations service medal.

Liimatta earned his doctorate of ministry from Ecumenical Theological Seminary in 1994. He was a pastor for 53 years, police chaplain for 30 years and board member/teacher at Inter-Lutheran Seminary for 40 years, before retiring in 1994.

In 2000, Liimatta served as Post Chaplain and District 15 Chaplain. He was Western Michigan VFW Chaplain in 2007, State Chaplain from 2007 to 2011 and National Chaplain from 2010 to 2011.

Earning U.P. Veteran of the Year, Liimatta said, opens doors to talk and be a veterans' advocate.

"Many times the veterans and families that we've helped, they're the last ones to recognize or know that there's programs available," he said. "For instance, in Michigan, we have a \$50 million veterans' trust fund and any veteran can apply for emergency funds."

Liimatta said there are eight issues they're working on currently through the VFW. They are: VA health care, VA benefits and compensation, seamless transition, military quality of life, education and employment, military affairs, defense and homeland security, and POW/MIA.

"We've got about 600 resolutions right now that we're trying to work on," he said. "I'm on a resolutions committee – we're encouraging keeping the draft and so on. We're not only looking after our veterans, but we're trying to look after our nation."

Liimatta resides in Chassell with his wife, Ruth. He serves 20 churches, makes regular visits with the elderly and veterans, and continues a favorite pastime – working on old cars. Currently, he's restoring a 1928 Model A Ford Roadster convertible pickup and a 1934 Ford Roadster.

*Reprinted courtesy of The Daily Mining Gazette*

## 10 for 10: We Won't Stand for Broken Promises

Recently, when Congress voted to raise the nation's debt ceiling, they specifically targeted National security to absorb many of the cuts, indicating that Department of Defense personnel programs and VA benefits would not be spared.

Leaders in Congress have already discussed cutting or eliminating 10 benefits affecting military members, veterans and their families in recent months, and the VFW believes that these toxic proposals will once again gain momentum as Congress looks for ways to tighten its belt.

America's all-volunteer military has shouldered a multi-theater war all by themselves for almost 10 years. They did so without question, and often with tremendous sacrifice to themselves and their families.

Americans understand the scope of the national debt crisis; a crisis that could have serious repercussions on a military at war and a veterans' population that has already sacrificed much for the nation. However, instead of debating and enacting meaningful fiscal reforms, some in Congress have proposed plans that would leave America's military and her veterans to shoulder more of the national debt.

This "10 for 10" plan – to cut 10 specific benefits to pay for 10 years of war – is a breach of faith with America's military and veteran families, and we are calling upon you, our members, to fight it.

"Our military and veterans have earned each of the 10 benefits Congress is proposing to cut. Our nation broke a similar promise to her World War I veterans. It took the

*10 for 10, continued on page 7*

**ACTIVITIES, continued from page 6**

District and the state what you are doing, plus it gives yourself an opening for advice and questions from other Posts and persons concerned. It's all about communication.

Just a few dos and don'ts. Visits to a nursing home is a Hospital report, visits to a senior retirement or self-help home

(assisted living) is an Activities report. Projects in the Post home such as Post cleaning, mowing, new carpet, and other construction projects are not reportable. There's no value to labor – period. There are no hours for flag flying.

For Posts using electronic reporting, fill

the box with all your entries. Separate them with a number, letter, some spaces or slashes. This will save you and us time with stop and go entries. To all Posts with more than one member gathering information, combine them together to avoid the stop and go and duplication of events.

See the Commander's Roster pages 110, 111, 112 and 113 for review of what is reportable and what is not. Every Post was sent three copies; if not, call Department to get them.

Please say a special prayer for all the servicemen and women who guard the gates of freedom.

**10 for 10, continued from page 6**

VFW to lead thousands of them in a march on Washington until Congress made the responsible choice to support them. The VFW wouldn't stand for broken promises then and we won't stand for it now."

The 10 ways Congress is targeting military and veterans' benefits during today's difficult fiscal times are to:

- Increase healthcare premiums for military retirees on TRICARE
- Increase pharmaceutical fees for troops, families and retirees
- Eliminate presumptive service-connected conditions for disabled and ill veterans
- Lock out or increase fees for Department of Veterans Affairs Priority Groups 7

and 8 veterans

- Reduce cost-of-living allowances
- Freeze military pay
- End government subsidies to military commissaries
- Eliminate Department of Defense elementary schools stateside
- Eliminate the 20-year military retirement plan
- Eliminate DoD tuition reimbursement programs for service members

While Congress publicly debated raising the nation's debt ceiling, the VFW was concerned that many of the proposed cuts were being discussed behind closed doors. The VFW has the same concerns over the new bipartisan "Gang of 12" Super

Congress tasked to develop the nation's debt reduction plan. The VFW recognizes that the nation must make difficult fiscal decisions, but the programs and benefits provided to veterans and military families were prepaid in full through their honorable service and sacrifice.

"Unlike other government-funded entitlement programs, veterans earned their benefits by making a National commitment that 99 percent of other Americans are simply unwilling to make. To ask these same men and women to sacrifice more is simply unconscionable."

The VFW also believes that cutting the 10 benefits could have tremendous impact on military recruiting and readiness,

and threaten the future viability of the all-volunteer force. Healthcare, education, a retirement system and family programs are critical factors in retaining talented personnel in a low-paying and extremely dangerous profession.

While the debate over fiscal responsibility continues to unfold in Washington, the VFW will work to ensure that military and veterans' benefits remain intact.

In the coming weeks, the VFW will continue to put pressure on Congress to ensure proposed fiscal reforms do not negatively affect troops, veterans or their families.

Join the effort and make your voice heard by calling, writing or e-mailing your members of Congress.

## Stars & Stripes OpEd: VFW Blasts Proposed Changes to Retirement, Tricare

*The following is part of an occasional series of guest columns highlighting the work and concerns of veterans groups. Richard L. DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass., is the National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and its Auxiliaries.*

November 11, 2011

By Stars and Stripes

Published: November 10, 2011

Having just returned from a Defense Department-sponsored trip into Afghanistan, I can report that troop morale is as good as anyone can expect from veteran warriors who have spent more time in Afghanistan or Iraq over the past decade than they have at home. But their Number 1 concern is about proposals emanating from the White House and Congress that threaten to eliminate, reduce or tax whatever slim financial benefits

there are to joining – much less staying in – the military.

The 100,000 American troops stationed in Afghanistan and more than 2 million elsewhere are right to be worried.

President Barack Obama wants to assemble a commission to examine the military retirement system, which currently provides a modest income immediately after someone donates 20 or more years of their youth to the nation. He would also impose an initial \$200 enrollment fee on military retirees age 65 and older who use Tricare for Life as their insurance supplemental to Medicare Part B.

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin, D-Mich., would expand the scope of the president's retirement commission to look at all pay and allowances, and possibly remove the non-taxed status of housing, separate rations and clothing allowances, as well as combat pay.

The committee's ranking Republican, Sen.

**STARS & STRIPES, continued on page 8**

## Happy Veterans Day from VFW

*The VFW Salutes all Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen and Coastguardsmen*

November 07, 2011

Veterans Day grants us the opportunity to express our sincerest gratitude to the generations of men and women who've made great sacrifices to protect the American way of life through military service.

Over the years, it has been those who believe in something bigger than themselves, those who proudly wear the uniform of the U.S. military, who've so tenaciously defended our freedom and liberated people all over the world from the dark grip of tyranny and fear.

On this sacred holiday, we celebrate the brave and accomplished Americans who've selflessly and justly earned the title of United States military veteran. We thank them for defending us in our time of need, for their bravery in the face of evil and for all of the sacrifices they've made in the name of the United States of America.

The VFW salutes all Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen and Coastguardsmen. Happy Veterans Day, and thank you for your service.

## First Amendment Will Prevail at Houston VA National Cemetery

*Cemetery will not interfere with prayers, religious expression during burial services.*

October 21, 2011 – The Veterans of Foreign Wars today declared victory in a Federal Lawsuit ( Rainey v VA) filed over allegations of religious hostility and unlawful censorship by the VA and its director of the Houston National Cemetery.

Federal District Judge Lynn N. Hughes signed a consent decree ordering the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) to lift the ban on prayer and the word "God" at national cemeteries, to revoke national policies hostile to religion, and to reopen the Chapel which identity was previously changed to "meeting facility" at the Houston National Cemetery.

Texas-based Liberty Institute filed suit on behalf of the VFW over allegations of religious hostility and unlawful censorship by the VA and its director of the Houston National Cemetery. Officials told the VFW they could not have prayer during the burial services of veterans unless the family requested it specifically in writing and submitted the prayer to VA officials for pre-approval.

"The VFW is grateful that the

government has restored the basic tenets recognized in the U.S. Constitution – which guarantees fundamental rights of religious expression and freedom of speech – to patriotic Americans who sacrifice everything to defend it. This is indeed a victory," said VFW National Commander Richard DeNoyer.

"We are thankful that after almost five months of litigation, the government is finally doing the right thing by entering into a consent decree and ending religious hostility at the Houston National Cemetery," said Jeff Mateer, general counsel for Liberty Institute. "The decree not only impacts religious freedoms in Houston, but at all VA cemeteries nationwide because the government has agreed to modify two national policies hostile to religion."

The order also requires the VA to change its national policies regarding volunteer honor guards. These changes will now allow the reading of "Thirteen Fold" Flag Recitations unless the deceased veteran's family requests otherwise, volunteer honor guards to

**FIRST AMENDMENT, continued on page 8**

### Michigan Overseas Veteran 2011-2012

PLEASE ADHERE TO THESE DEADLINES

#### Please Remember!

Issue	Deadline	Issue	Deadline
July/August/September	August 1	January/February/March	February 1
October/November/December	November 1	April/May/June	April 1

1. Do not type all CAPITAL LETTERS. Use capitals sparingly. When in doubt, do not capitalize a word. Use 12-point font type size.
2. Please no handwritten submissions, as they will not be considered for publication.
3. Do not write on back of pictures. Use a separate sheet of paper. Identify all people in the photograph. Try to limit number of people in photo to five or six, at most.
4. Posts and Auxiliaries are encouraged to submit items of interest from their areas.
5. We reserve the right to edit all submissions due to space constraints.
6. Do not submit newspaper articles and pictures from newspapers UNLESS you provide written authorization from the publication involved.
7. Never submit article or photos clipped from newspapers or magazines.
8. DISTRICT COMMANDERS – Please submit your District Meetings schedule as soon as possible, so it can be published.
9. MAIL ALL ARTICLES TO MOV EDITOR:

MOV Editor  
Matt David, editormov@yahoo.com

Auxiliary Editor  
Diane Ward, legalblaze@aol.com

**FIRST AMENDMENT, continued from page 7**

provide their own texts of recitations to the funeral homes for the funeral homes to offer those options to the deceased veteran's survivor(s) for consideration, and the VFW honor guards to work independently with funeral homes to coordinate provision of volunteer services at the committal services scheduled at the cemetery without interference from the government.

"I am glad to see the VA overturn these policies, which will allow us to perform the entire VFW burial ritual," said Inge Conley, Commander of VFW District 4 in Houston and the VFW entity that initiated the lawsuit. "We should be able to include prayers, mentions of God, and the phrase, 'May God grant you, grace, mercy and peace,' to grieving families laying American soldiers to rest."

**STARS & STRIPES, continued from page 7**

John McCain of Arizona, would prohibit new retirees and possibly all retirees from enrolling in Tricare Prime, which has the least out-of-pocket expenses.

The troops and commanders I spoke with in Afghanistan are of one voice against the proposals to change their pay and allowances, the existing military retirement system and the overall Tricare health program. They see it as a breach of faith and a complete lack of support,

understanding and appreciation for what they do daily for the rest of America. They also cannot comprehend why anyone would even propose such measures while our nation is still engaged in two wars.

I absolutely agree, and will use my current position as the national commander of the nation's oldest and largest combat veterans organization to help defeat any and all measures that would have those who sacrifice the most to sacrifice more.

## VA Encourages Veterans Who Suspect They've Sustained a Brain Injury to Get Screened

**The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) is seeking your help**

October 24, 2011 – Thanks to improvements in battlefield medicine and protective gear, American Service members injured in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere are surviving at higher rates than ever before. However, many of them now face complicated medical conditions, including Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) is seeking your help in getting the word out about why early detection of an injury to the brain is so important.

If detected during a screening, doctors can start treatment quickly to help patients better manage their TBI symptoms. That's why VA wants Veterans, Service members, and their families/caregivers, to know that:

- TBI is a real problem that must be treated and addressed
- VA provides first-rate care and resources for those with TBI
- If a Veteran or Service member needs rehabilitation services, VA's state-of-

the-art system can help.

Chronic symptoms associated with TBI can be subtle or extreme – from mild confusion to anxiety, to speech and memory loss. They could be the result of a battlefield injury or explosion, or even a car crash or fall. TBI wounds are often invisible, but the treatment is complex and the effects far-reaching.

To hear firsthand how VA is highlighting the journey to recovery from TBI, please watch and share their

series of outreach products including a documentary and public service announcements (PSAs) featuring Golden Globe®, Emmy and SAG Award winner and Academy Award® nominee Gary Sinise that recount stories of Veterans with varying degrees of TBI.

To learn more about how VA is meeting the challenges associated with TBI through specialized treatments, and breakthroughs in rehabilitative therapy, please visit [www.polytrauma.va.gov](http://www.polytrauma.va.gov)

# Auxiliary News

## DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT



**Mariann Hamann**

To all the members who attended Schools of Instruction and the Secretary, Treasurer and Trustee Workshops, thank you! A thank you also goes to each of the Department Chairmen and Officers who made those events a successful learning experience.

Now is the time we must apply that knowledge. I trust every Auxiliary is working hard to complete their programs and reach their goals.

If you have not yet paid your 2012 annual dues, please do so as soon as possible. As of January 1, 2012, you are no longer a member in good standing and could lose your eligibility for a cancer grant. We know

money is tight so if you are unable to pay your dues, please contact your Auxiliary. They may be able to help. Auxiliaries, please continue to work towards meeting and exceeding the goal of 100% in Membership.

VFW members, please ask your wives, daughters, mothers, sisters, grandmothers and stepdaughters to join our organization. Even if they live out of state, they can still belong to a Michigan Ladies Auxiliary. If your VFW Post does not currently have a Ladies Auxiliary, please think about how much help we could provide you in serving your fellow veterans and the community.

Many thanks to the Voluntary Services teams, Hospital Representatives and Hospital Deputies for your hospitality during mine and Merridy Lewis' visit to your facilities, you made our visit very enjoyable. The information you shared on the expansion of services and building upgrades was exciting. Your dedication

and compassion for our veterans is truly wonderful. You showed me how rewarding and fun it is to be a volunteer. My application is now in and I will soon be an official, scheduled volunteer at Ann Arbor VA Hospital.

Best wishes to the newly instituted Trenton Ladies Auxiliary 1888 and Northville Jr. Girls Unit 4012. It was so exciting to see the enthusiasm of their officers, chairmen and members. A big "thank you" goes to each of the organizers, Barb Milewski and Connie Kincer.

As your Department President, the last few months have been busy. Besides making my official visits to Districts 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 15, I was proud to represent the Michigan Department Ladies Auxiliary VFW at the National President's Homecoming in Sacramento, California, at the Big 10 Conference in South Dakota and the Statue of Liberty's 125th Birthday Celebration.

I also had the pleasure of participating in the VJ Day Parade in Hillman, the Labor Day Parade in Romeo, Gold Star Mothers Banquet in Southfield, District

11's Operation Help Event in Standish, the Veterans Day Service at Great Lakes National Cemetery, and Women's Tea at Battle Creek VA Hospital. Hats off to all those involved!

September and early October were especially difficult for my family. My husband, Marvin, was in the hospital in Ann Arbor and then a nursing home. I greatly appreciated those VFW and Auxiliary members who made phone calls and special visits to see Marv so I could fulfill my Presidential responsibilities.

On October 4, Marvin got tired and the Lord took him from that arthritic, uncooperative body in which he had been trapped for years. The hundreds of people who attended his services was a great tribute to his life. Thank you for the outpouring of prayer, donations and sympathy cards. My family and I are truly grateful.

**God Bless You and God Bless America!**  
**Mariann Hamann**  
**Department President**

## AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN: ALERT! CUTTING UP THE U.S FLAG



**Nanette K. Spauling**

(This notice was taken from the VFW National Headquarters Bulletin, dated May 2011, and passed on by Big Ten Patriotic Instructor JoLynn Altvatter 2011-2012.)

It has come to our attention that some erroneous

traditions are becoming more commonplace regarding the United States Flag that are no longer usable. Many well-meaning individuals have cut up the soiled and worn flags, sometimes cutting out the stars and sending them to our troops.

Although this is a thoughtful gesture and appears on the Internet in several places it is, in fact, an inappropriate act and should not be conducted by any VFW Post or Ladies Auxiliary.

During the VFW 101st National

Convention August 2000, the delegates passed a resolution establishing a U.S Flag disposal program by fire for the Posts to conduct, privately or publicly, as follows:

1. The flag should be folded in its customary manner. (See VFW Ritual Book)
2. It is important that the fire be sizeable and of sufficient intensity to ensure complete burning of the flag.
3. Place the flag on the fire.
4. The individual (s) can come to attention, salute the flag, recite the

Pledge of Allegiance and have a brief period of silent reflection.

5. After the flag is completely consumed, the fire should be safely extinguished and the ashes buried.

6. Please make sure you are conforming to local/state fire codes or ordinances.

The resolution conforms to the intent and letter of the U.S Code and the Federal Flag Code. This is the only acceptable way of handling U.S. flags that are no longer fit to be flown. No other handling of a retired flag is considered acceptable.



**DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN****Sandy Medos**

We started off great with our membership skit at Fall Conference. Everyone had a great time and hopefully went out and recruited a member. We also did a great job at the Big Ten Conference in South Dakota. I want to thank everyone for all their help and for doing such a great job. Michigan Rocks!

Our Department President's theme is "Every Minute Is Another Opportunity To Serve." With that said, TICK TOCK... time is running out. Remember, November was recruiting month. Did you get out there and recruit at least one member? We want Michigan to be 100% this year so "Step Up – Leave No Veteran Behind." TEAM MICHIGAN you can do it! Remember the key is to Recruit, Reinstate and Retain.

By now, everyone should have sent out a second dues notice. If you haven't, do it now and take the time and put a personnel note inside; everyone likes to get little messages. Remind them that dues are going up on the first of the year. If you are holding a recruiting campaign and would like me to attend, please either send Department a request for the membership

chairman, e-mail me or call me and, if I can make it, I will be there to help. Districts and Auxiliaries, have a contest with your VFW, and whoever recruits the most members in December will have to put on a dinner for the winning team. It will be nice to have the VFW cook us a meal.

December 31st was the deadline to be 91% for the Districts. District Presidents, I hope you were working with each of your Auxiliaries to help your Districts reach 91% in membership, so you can go out for your night on the town. We also want our Department to be at least 91% by December 31, so our Department President can proudly represent Michigan when she earns her Night on the Town at the National Mid-Winter Conference.

District Presidents, please look over the membership report you get from Department each month. For some reason, some Auxiliaries are holding on to dues. If you see that one of your Auxiliaries has not sent in any (or very few) dues, please call them to see if there is a problem. Dues should be sent to Department as soon as they are received.

In closing, remember to always check your Guide Sheets. It is easier to check off your points as you do them. By December 31, 2011, I'm sure all Auxiliaries will have at least five or more points.

I can be reached at sambear29@yahoo.com

**VETS AND FAMILY SUPPORT CHAIRMAN****Kathy Kirby**

Dear Sisters,

This year is flying by fast. It is time to get on board and report all the activities your Auxiliary has accomplished for the 2011-2012 year. I want to thank all the

Auxiliary sisters for all the boxes to our troops. Our Department has sent over 1,000 boxes, according to what has been reported. Continue to report funeral dinners, aid to needy veterans and their families, taking veterans to the doctor, therapy, hospitals and more.

Sisters, there is a book called "Life in the U.S. Military" and the author is Dan Koffman. This book was compiled by the author to help his father, a veteran, with memory loss. It has become a very helpful tool for other families and friends to help their family member to remember things

from their life. I hope that you or your Auxiliary will buy at least one book to help get the information in our veteran homes and VA hospitals. The Web site is [www.lifeinthemilitary.com](http://www.lifeinthemilitary.com)

Lloyd, my VFW counterpart, and I attended the dedication of the new duplex at the VFW National Home for Children on October 22, 2011. It was a wonderful day for the event and the duplex is beautiful. The VFW began this great location, and it is awesome to see how other people are donating to see that the children and families of our American veterans are being cared for. Remember to get new life members signed up for the National Home for Children.

I would like to thank the Auxiliaries that have so freely given to the Department President's Special Project. Your donations have made it possible for the VFW National Home for Children to comply with the special need for the appropriate cribs.

I'm very proud to be a part of such a giving and caring organization.

**DEPARTMENT HOSPITAL CHAIRMAN****Merridy Lewis**

The Veterans Administration Ann Arbor Healthcare System announces the establishment of a free Veterans Transportation Service that will pick up veterans at the Belleville Road

Meijer's Store if they have an appointment at the Ann Arbor VA. The new shuttle service is available immediately and serves a dozen selected areas of Wayne, Oakland and Livingston counties, as well as Toledo.

According to a published schedule,

shuttles leave Meijer's at 9701 Belleville Road at 8:20 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 6 p.m., and they arrive at the Ann Arbor VA about one half hour later. Return trips are scheduled throughout the day. The shuttles are wheelchair accessible.

To make reservations, contact David Issel at Ann Arbor Travel Department at 734-222-7145 or 800-361-8387. The program reaches out to veterans who live in remote areas or those under service or lacking a public transportation service. Battle Creek VA Medical Center also provides transportation to Ann Arbor.

Today and every day "thank a Veteran for our freedom."

**DEPARTMENT YOUTH ACTIVITIES/JUNIOR GIRLS CHAIRMAN****Bonnie Pray**

We are five months into our year and it seems like we are really busy getting things going with all the chairmanships. With each chairman receiving the activity reports and recording them, we get to have a closer look at what the Auxiliaries are doing to earn their points and awards. This is a good way that ideas can be shared when we complete our bulletins and when questions are asked.

By now the Patriotic Art Contest information should be out to the schools, in your local newspaper, newsletter and any ideas for posters should be out there to show the information on the program. If you find out that there is a group of students, scouts, church groups, or even a sports group that are doing any project to support our military troops, get the information to complete the citation request form and mail it to me. I will sign and send it to National and the group will receive a citation from National.

Auxiliary Presidents, be sure to let the chairmen know that they can make copies of the forms that are in the Department roster with the guide sheets.

You can also get more information from the Department Web site [www.lavfwmi.org](http://www.lavfwmi.org). Go to Programs and down to Youth Activities/Junior Girls. There is a list of resources which

include the guide sheets, and the monthly bulletins and most importantly, the Quarterly Report Form. Follow the page down and fill in the information requested on your project and when you are completed you click on "Send Form" and it will come directly to me.

If you need any other forms you can go to the National Web site [www.ladiesauxvfw.org](http://www.ladiesauxvfw.org) and move your mouse to Programs and go down to Youth Activities. The page opens with more information on the following:

Young American Patriotic Art Brochure (which is the information and application)

Patriotic Art Contest Helpful Hints

Junior Girls Scholarship Brochure

Junior Girls Membership Application

We have the holidays coming quickly and after the first of the year, you should go over your guide sheet and see all that you have done and what is left to complete. Set a goal and give yourself enough time to finish your program and annual report and get it to me before April 25, 2012.

Deadline dates: Any donations made need to be recorded before you do your Annual Report.

Young American Patriotic Art – March 31, 2012

Junior Girls Scholarship – March 11, 2012

Youth Activities Annual Report – April 25, 2012

Please contact me if you have any questions. My information is on the guide sheets and the bulletins. Have safe and healthy holidays.

**VOICE OF DEMOCRACY/PATRIOT'S PEN****Gloria Dobbie**

Greetings, Sisters:

Your winning Post entries in both The Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen contests should be forwarded to your District Chairmen.

District Chairmen should send the winning District entries to Department VOD Director Harry "Les" Croyle. Les must have these by December 6, 2011. Every District will have a student represented at our Mid-Winter Conference in the Voice of Democracy contest. Five Districts will have students represented in the Patriot's Pen contest.

All Department Awards will be presented at the Banquet on Saturday

evening, January 28, 2012. We are planning a busy weekend for the students and their siblings. Friday night will include a pizza party, bowling, and arcade games. On Saturday morning, the students will be treated to a trip to the "Air Zoo", a popular local Kalamazoo attraction. The Department Ladies Auxiliary will host a reception for the students on Saturday afternoon.

Please plan your own recognition ceremonies honoring the students who participated in your Post contests. Remember to inform the media of the results of your contests, and invite them to your celebration. Based on reports I have received, we are going to have another successful year in offering this unique opportunity to the young people in our state.

My best wishes for a happy holiday season to all!

**DISTRICT 4 PRESIDENT****Sharon A. Lewinski**

Greetings District 4:

I can't believe how fast the clock is ticking. We have already completed our National Convention, Fall Conference, Big 10 Conference,

Auxiliary Inspections, and the many fundraisers that were held in the past few

months but we have to remember, we do all this for our Veterans. Remember the clock...every Second Is Another Opportunity to Serve...so let us all take advantage of each precious second we have. Our goals are to do whatever we can to help and promote our Veteran Programs.

The snow is coming down, the weather has turned cold, but this is not the time to stop doing our work in helping our

*DISTRICT 4, continued on page 10*

**DISTRICT 4, continued from page 9**

Auxiliaries. How about planning that Memorial Day Service for May?

What a great time of the year to start thinking about sponsoring a child for Camp Trotter. Get the word out to the families about our wonderful Camp Trotter and, as they are looking at the snow falling, we can tell them about the warm summertime fun at the camp. Then, when it is time to register the camper, your camper will be first on the list. Good luck in your planning for 2012.

Reminder: District Meeting is Feb. 12th at the Conroy-Renye-McNeil Post 4422 located at 11590 Pine Street, Taylor. Registration is from 12 Noon to 1:00 p.m. and the meeting begins at 1:00 p.m. This will be the Department President's official visit, so please attend and welcome our Department President Mariann into her home District. Let

us have 100% in Auxiliary representation and show her our support from District 4.

Ladies, we still have lots to do and we must use the valuable time we have left of our year so check your guide sheets to see if there is something more you can do for each of your chairmanships. Remember **BE PROUD OF WHAT YOU DO...** and let others know about the wonderful things you do for your Veterans, your community and your youth.

In closing, I would like to extend my love and support to our Department President Mariann, District 4 Jr. Vice DeeAnn and my Flag Bearer, Kari, on the loss of a great man and a proud Veteran: Marvin Hamann. Rest in peace, Marv.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**DISTRICT 9 PRESIDENT**

**Della Steege**



Greetings and Happy Holidays Sisters of the 9th District,

Our year is well under way, but our work has just begun on membership.

I would like to congratulate Auxiliary 3055 for being the 1st in the District to reach 101.38%. I know the rest of you ladies can do it, too. Let's recruit, reinstate and retain our members, and please get your dues into Department as soon as possible. Inspections are going well and I expect to be finished early in December.

The last few months have been a bit of a blur with inspections, District meetings and banquets, Pow-Wow, National Convention and Big 10. Soon it will be time for our February District meeting. I would love to have our entire District at this meeting. Congratulations to the local and District Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Essay winners. Many thanks go out to the VOD and Patriot's Pen Chairmen of all levels for inspiring our youth, encouraging them, and giving

them an excellent opportunity to express their patriotic views and ideas through the annual contests.

As I visit your Auxiliaries and listen to your meetings, I hear all the wonderful things you do for your veterans and communities. Unfortunately, you're reporting does not reflect all that great work. Please take credit for all you do and be proud to report it. Auxiliary Chairmen, please do your reporting either online or on the new reporting forms. I know we don't like change, but we have an obligation to follow the Bylaws set forth by National.

During this holiday season, remember our hospitalized veterans, those in nursing homes and our shut-ins. Pay a visit to those veterans in your area, bring along a small gift or a special holiday card to give them – anything to lift their spirits and brighten their day and yours, too.

Remember Mid-Winter Conference in Kalamazoo in January. If I haven't done your inspection yet, I will be there in the next few weeks. I am looking forward to meeting all of you.

Have a happy and safe holiday season!

**DISTRICT 7 PRESIDENT**

**Dee Manke**



Greetings to my Auxiliary Sisters of the Great District 7:

WOW, what an exciting year this has been for me so far. I am so happy to have

had the opportunity to meet so many of you this year. My inspections are all done, and what a great group of ladies you are, working for our veterans and your communities. Now for the hard part. Membership is so important to our organization that we need to work very hard to make our goal of 100%. I know we can do this if we all work together; after all, we are the **WORKING 7**.

I wish to thank everyone that went to the Fall Conference and hope you all came home ready to work on all the programs.

I want to remind the Auxiliaries to do

their quarterly reports and send them to the appropriate Department Chairman. This is so important that we do this for our organization. If you need help, please let me know right away and help will be there for you.

I want to thank all my Auxiliaries that attended the November District meeting. Thank you, Department Sr. Vice President Annabelle Furgason, for doing the workshops on Secretary, Treasurer and Trustee for us.

I hope all of you celebrated Veterans Day in some way, if only you thanked a Veteran. I want to wish my VFW and Ladies Auxiliary family a Happy Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas.

Dear Santa, this year for Christmas I'd like...no wait, forget that!! Go get your sleigh and go to Afghanistan, get all the soldiers and bring them home. They deserve presents more than I do!

**DISTRICT 11 PRESIDENT**

**Vickie Bushong**



It's hard to believe that half the year is gone already. I have enjoyed visiting each Auxiliary while doing inspections. The hospitality that everyone extended

was awesome. I learned so much while traveling through our District. Ladies, you are doing a great job in promoting our Auxiliary and its programs.

Please, please remember to report everything you are doing. If you are having difficulty with this, let us know. We have a team that is ready to assist you.

Everyone has done a great job in collecting our 2012 dues. Now the

hard work begins. It's that last small percentage that is hard to get. It's time to put your membership committee to work. Send out letters, make phone calls and personal visits. We all know times are challenging right now. Your relief fund is there for paying dues for those who could use a little help.

Don't forget our District 11 Cancer Step-Up Challenge. We have challenged each Auxiliary to a "Bake Off." Hold one or more bake sales and bring pictures of your event(s) and a copy of your proceeds check that you sent to Department to our February 5th District Meeting.

Ladies keep up the good work, you are doing a super job in serving our veterans.

**DISTRICT 8 PRESIDENT**

**Holly Allison**



Sisters,

We cannot seem to talk about membership enough. With dues going up, we need to get those dues collected and sent in by December 20th to avoid paying the 2012 dues increases.

How about if you consider purchasing a Life Membership? You will never receive another dues notice and it will also help your Auxiliary.

Winter months seem to run into each other and about the end of January, we start looking forward to spring. Why not break up the monotony of snow and ice and attend Mid-Winter at the Radisson in Kalamazoo? It is January 27th and 28th. Kalamazoo is centrally located in our District.

You could make a day of it with a car full of your Auxiliary sisters. Lunch can be really nice at the hotel or at Subway, which is very close to the hotel. The experience would not only give you pointers and ideas for your chairmanships, but you would get a chance to meet other Auxiliary sisters around the state! Hear what they are doing in their Auxiliaries, what is working and not working for them. It is the sharing of information that is the most rewarding. The VOD Banquet will also be at Mid-Winter and it is always a nice event. I would love to see all of you at Mid-Winter!!

I would also like to say that the hospitality that I have experienced during the inspections in District 8 has been way beyond my imagination! The ladies from the 8th District are the best!

**DISTRICT 13 PRESIDENT**

**Arvella Peterson**



Greetings, Sisters of the 13th District:

The Fall Conference at Shanty Creek was very enjoyable. I hope that those of you who attended were able to gain

information about the programs to help promote them in your Auxiliary. I hope everyone had the opportunity to meet our National Rep, Connie Heggstad – what a great lady.

My inspections are done and I want to thank you all for the wonderful hospitality you showed me and Cindy Bennett. It was great visiting with all

of you and meeting those of you I have not had the pleasure of meeting before.

Remember to get your dues sent in, don't hold on to them. We want to be 100% by December. Reporting is very important, please submit your quarterly reports to the Department Chairman.

I hope you remembered Veterans Day, November 11th, by honoring all of our veterans. Step up and leave no veteran behind. Every minute is another opportunity to serve.

The holidays are approaching very fast and I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone Happy Holidays and Happy New Year.

**God Bless Our Troops**



**DISTRICT 14 PRESIDENT**

Kathie DeNise



Dear Auxiliary Sisters,

Pow-Wow is over, Auxiliary inspections are well under way and we have had some beautiful fall weather in the Upper Peninsula.

I want to thank all the sisters who attended the September District Meeting in Manistique, and a big thank you to the officers and chairmen. You are an exceptional team. The School of Instruction went very well, thanks to your knowledge of the programs.

Speaking of our District Meeting...the attendance numbers are way down. There were no new faces in the audience. So, I am challenging each Auxiliary to bring a member who has never attended a District

Meeting or maybe one who has not been to one in several years. Obviously, this would increase our attendance, but it also might inspire a member to become involved on the District level. How about it? Are you up to the challenge? Our next District Meeting will be May 6, 2012 in Escanaba. Watch your bulletins for a complete schedule.

Ladies, please keep informed about legislative issues that will have a terrible impact on our veterans and current military personnel – not a single one of them deserve cuts to their benefits. Contact your legislators and voice your opinions on this 10 for 10 proposal.

Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving and Christmas season.

God bless our troops and God, please bless America!

**DISTRICT 15 PRESIDENT**

Carole Lillar



Sisters of the 15th,

Inspections have now been completed and all I can say is... you all are awesome. Our fall District Meeting was well attended and we learned a lot from our Dept. President Mariann, Membership Chairman Sandy Medos and Hospital Chairman Merridy Lewis. Thank you, ladies.

Membership is our greatest concern now; remember the amount paid to National and Dept. goes up the 1st of

the year. You will have to have the dues submitted to the Dept. office by Dec. 20th in order to make the deadline. I am really looking forward to the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen contests, which will be completed by the time this article comes out. We have so many talented and patriotic young people in our District. I'd like to thank Sunny and Bill Cole for being the Chairmen this year. Plan now to attend the Dept. Mid-Winter Conference in Kalamazoo on January 27th-29th. Our District Mid-Winter will be in Bessemer on February 12th. I hope to see you all there.



*At the 13th District meeting in Rogers City, State Ladies Auxiliary President met Pearl Sehl, age 103. Pearl is still an active member of Ladies Auxiliary VFW 1518 in Gaylord. She has been a member since a National Bylaw change made mothers eligible to join if they had children with foreign wartime service.*

**Recognize the Signs of Suicide Risk**

- Think about hurting or killing yourself.
- Looking for ways to killing yourself.
- Talking about death, dying or suicide.
- Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse, weapons, etc.
- Feeling like there is no reason to live.
- Rage or anger.
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking.
- Increasing alcohol or drug abuse.
- Withdrawing from family and friends.

The presence of these signs requires immediate attention.

Confidential chat at  
**VeteransCrisisLine.net**

- Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out.
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, mood swings.

1-800-273-8255, press 1

Confidential chat at  
**VeteransCrisisLine.net**  
U.S Department of Veterans Affairs

**Ladies Auxiliary 9656  
Donates to Homeless Veterans**

After our Hospital Chairman, Amber Kops, and our Chairman for Veterans and Family Support, Kim Koberstein reported that there are currently over 4,000 homeless female veterans, the Ladies Auxiliary of Post 9656 in Lambertville decided that they need to take action to alleviate some of the problems for these women. Kim contacted Shawn Dowling of the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System and also John Saunders of the Toledo-

based Glendale Veterans Clinic. After hearing Shawn speak to us at one of our Auxiliary meetings, a motion was made by Norma Pulsifer, and seconded by Karen Seguin, to support these programs with a donation of \$5,000.00.

The programs provide readjustment counseling, which includes individual and group counseling, bereavement, marital and family counseling, medical referrals, help with applying for VA benefits, help in finding employment or housing, and with community information and referral and drug and alcohol rehabilitation. The HCHV program for homeless veterans can be reached through the VA Ann Arbor at 734-769-7100 and the Toledo Veterans Center may be reached at 1-888-988-4883 or you can check online at [www.va.gov/rcs](http://www.va.gov/rcs) to find vet centers. Join us at Post 9656, as women helping other women and consider a donation to this very worthy cause!

**Veterans Day at Hale Middle School**

The Hale 8th graders at Hale Middle School surprised and honored the Hale Area Veterans at their Veterans Day ceremony.

Students stated how they were a direct descendant from each war, starting with the Revolutionary War and ending with

the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars. Everyone who was a descendant from that time period was asked to stand, as well.

At the end they held up posters they had made with a joyous "Thank You". We are thankful for our freedom and because of them, we are here today.

**Manistee's Veterans  
Memorial Re-dedicated**

*On Saturday, August 27, 2011 there was a rededication ceremony at the Manistee's Veterans Memorial. Pictured, L-R: SSgt (Ret.) Larry Fortier, Pst 4499; M/Sgt (Ret.) Roger Hilliard, Post 6333; Medal of Honor recipient Duane Dewey, Post 667; Silver Star recipient Harry Conway, Post 4499; Dr. George Wagoner (Commander-Vietnam), Post 4499; and Lt Col (Ret.) Stanley Preidis, Post 4499. Duane and Harry are Korean War veterans.*

## 112th VFW National Convention

San Antonio, Texas, also known as the “Military City” provided the perfect location for yet another successful VFW National Convention, August 26-September 1, 2011! Gov. Rick Perry and San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro greeted attendees at the Joint Opening Session followed by Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas).

On Tuesday, former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney, Republican presidential candidate addressed Convention delegates, as well as Deputy VA Secretary Scott Gould, who has worked extensively on VA’s conversion to electronic medical records.

Following three days of notable guests’ appearances, productive VFW workshops and the renowned “VFW Patriotic Rally,” the Convention concluded Thursday morning with the installation of new VFW officers!



*National Chaplain and Michigan's own Elmer Liimatta leads the opening prayer.*



*On behalf of Burger King's Midwest franchisers, Mike DeRosa presented VFW with a check for \$450,000. Burger King has donated a total of \$1.3 million to the VFW over the past four years.*



*Gordon Logan, a member of Post 8587 in Georgetown, Texas, and founder of SportsClips, presented \$400,000 to Operation Uplink to sponsor one free call day per month for one year for troops overseas. SportsClips has now donated a total of \$850,000 since 2007, and Logan set next year's donation goal at \$500,000.*



*The VFW Foundation received \$45,000 from Buffalo Wild Wings.*



*Kevin Bergner, Executive Vice President of USAA presents a check for \$250,000 to Return the Favor. Bergner, a 30-year Army vet and member of Post 76 in San Antonio, said that 25% of employees at USAA are veterans or a veteran's spouse and that USAA gives preferences in hiring to veterans.*



*Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney addresses the membership.*





## State Honor Guard Wins National Championship

At the 112th VFW National Convention in San Antonio, Texas, the Dept. of Michigan's State Honor Guard won 1st Place in the Senior Men's Color Guard competition. At the end of their routine, they had a surprise in store for the audience. They set up a Battlefield Cross and while the Honor Guard exited the competition floor and Honor Guard member Phil Gannia saluted the Battlefield Cross, "Amazing Grace" played in the background. Congratulations, comrades!



*State Commander Jack Pray with his Honor Guard. Pictured, L-R, Front Row: Ron Allen, LT Gary Gamble, State Commander Jack Pray, CPT William "Butch" Ogden and SGT Don Spalding. L-R, Back Row: Ed Sobolewski, Jerry Asher, Phil Gannia, Dennis Battle and Bob Bardecki.*



*Captain of the Honor Guard William "Butch" Ogden receives the championship plaque from National C in C Richard Eubank and National Ladies Auxiliary President Cortina Barnes.*

*State Commander Jack Pray and State Ladies Auxiliary President Mariann Hamann with the State Honor Guard in front of the Alamo.*



*State Commander Jack Pray and the Honor Guard declaring they're #1 on the balcony of San Antonio VFW Post 76. VFW Post 76 is the oldest Post in Texas.*



**VFW**   
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

## Big Ten Conference

The Big Ten meeting was held in Sioux Falls, South Dakota on October 22, 2011. Adjutant General Gunner Kent reported that Sports Clips has donated \$500,000 to Operation Uplink and Burger King has donated \$500,000.00 to the Unmet Needs Program so far this year. The Big Ten Conference will be sponsoring a School of Instruction on National Bylaws and Resolutions to help the departments stay up to date on what is happening at the national level. Special thanks to National Sergeant-of-Arms Joe Schimers and Jim Galen for their help at our Big Ten Conference.



*Past State Commander Richard Lehner is sworn in as the Chairman of the Big Ten Conference.*



*Pictured, L-R: Dept. Sr. Vice Commander Kirk Kennedy, State Commander Jack Pray, Dept. Jr. Vice Commander Ron Devereaux and Dept. QM/Adjutant Rob Weiss at the Big Ten Conference.*



*Past State Ladies Auxiliary President Sandi Onstwedder and Past State Commander Richard Lehner.*



*State Commander Jack Pray.*

## Fall Conference 2011: Pow-Wow

The Department of Michigan VFW held its annual Fall Conference (Pow-Wow) at Shanty Creek Resort from September 29-October 2, 2011.



*VFW Post 1138 Commander Dan Birchfield with State Commander Jack Pray shows the sign and plaque received for being a 2011 National Outstanding Community Service Post.*



*Old Settlers Post 4659 Commander Phil Gannia is presented with the All-American Post award. Pictured, L-R: Past National C in C John Smart, State Commander Jack Pray and Post 4659 Commander Phil Gannia.*



*Bob Williams (C) of VFW Post 1137 is presented his Posts' Diamond Jubilee Award by Past National C in C John Smart (L) and State Commander Jack Pray (R).*



*David A. Huhn Post 12082 Commander Phil Patterson and Quartermaster Lynn Patterson are presented the All-American Post Award. Pictured, L-R: Past National C in C John Smart, Post Commander Phil Patterson, Post Quartermaster Lynn Patterson and State Commander Jack Pray.*



*FALL CONFERENCE,  
continued on page 15*



FALL CONFERENCE, continued from page 14



State Commander Jack Pray and Past State Commander Arnold "Bud" Huuki presents Past National Chaplain Elmer Liimatta with a Certificate of Recognition award. Pictured, L-R: Past State Commander Arnold "Bud" Huuki, State Commander Jack Pray and Past National Chaplain Elmer Liimatta.



National Rep. Past National C in C John Smart addresses the membership during the Council of Administration meeting.



Past State Ladies Auxiliary President Jan Meyers is presented with a Life Membership to the VFW Camp Trotter for Children. Pictured, L-R: Past State Commander Ernie Meyers, Past State Ladies Auxiliary President Jan Meyers, Past National C in C John Smart and State Commander Jack Pray.

## VFW FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2011 BURGER KING® UNMET NEEDS FUNDRAISER

**Burger King® customers are encouraged to donate \$1 or more at participating locations**

The Veterans of Foreign Wars Foundation is proud to announce that for the fifth consecutive year, participating Burger King® Restaurants will be raising funds for the VFW's Unmet Needs Program throughout the month of November through the annual Burger King® Unmet Needs Fundraiser. Over 1,200 Burger King® Restaurants have participated since 2007 and have raised over \$1.3 million in support of the program. Burger King® customers are encouraged to donate \$1 or more at participating locations across the country as the proceeds will help military families in need pay for essentials such as rent/mortgage, utilities, medical expenses, vehicle repairs and food.

"Burger King® Restaurants are proud to support

America's military families and we appreciate the support of all of our great customers in assisting those who have sacrificed so much for our country," said Burger King® Franchisee Owner and VFW Foundation Board Member Mike DeRosa. "We look forward to this year being the most successful yet."

"Burger King® Franchisees continue to do wonderful work for America's military families," said VFW Foundation Director John Lowe. "The VFW Unmet Needs program helps military families in their greatest times of financial need, and it is through the support of great companies such as Burger King® and their wonderful patriotic customers, that we are able to provide such great assistance."

Since 2007, the VFW Unmet Needs Program has

provided over \$4 million in financial assistance to deserving military families. The program assists with basic life needs such as rent, mortgage, utilities, vehicle repair, medical expenses or food/basic assistance. The program has helped over 3,000 military families and is supported by individual donations and the VFW Foundation's Return the Favor campaign, which honors, celebrates and supports active-duty military, veterans and their families. Funds are available to all five branches of the military, as well as members of the National Guard and Reserves. Assistance is awarded in the form of a grant, not a loan, so recipients aren't required to repay and are paid directly to the creditor and not to the individual.

## VFW Report from Afghanistan

**Threats to military pay and benefits impacting troop morale**

The National Commander of America's oldest and largest major combat veterans' organization is returning from Afghanistan today extremely concerned that White House and congressional proposals to eliminate or reduce military pay and benefits is impacting the morale of 190,000 deployed American troops.

"The troops are of one voice against proposals to change their pay and allowances, the existing military retirement system, and the overall TRICARE health program," said Richard L. DeNoyer, the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., who arrived in Afghanistan on Monday as part of a Defense Department-sponsored trip that also included the leadership of The American Legion, AMVETS, and the Military Officers Association of America.

"They see it as a breach of faith and a complete lack of support, understanding and appreciation for what it is they do daily for the rest of America," said DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass. "They also cannot comprehend why anyone would even propose such measures while our nation is still engaged in two wars."

The VFW national commander promised everyone he met that the VFW will fight any proposal that eliminates or reduces military and veterans' programs just to balance the federal deficit. He also asked the troops to help spread the VFW's message to their families and friends, because "it is critical that our voices not be lost in the ongoing budget debate," he said.

DeNoyer met on several occasions in Kabul with Marine Corps Gen. John R. Allen, who commands all coalition forces, as well as with Army Maj. Gen. Daniel B. Allyn, the 1st Cavalry Division commander, and with Special Forces' commanders who are training Afghan troops.

Based on briefings and meetings, the VFW national commander reports that Afghanistan is difficult, it is complicated, and any definition of success involves the Afghan government assuming total control over their own country. Yet he calls the Afghan army a good fighting force that is respected by fellow Afghans, and said Afghan President Hamid Karzai is very supportive and appreciative of America's commitment to his country.

"Everyone I spoke to believes in the mission and are

proud of their accomplishments," said DeNoyer, who added that future successes could be complicated by the announced troop reduction to below 70,000 next fall. Yet despite the threat to their military pay and benefits, the VFW national commander said troop morale is as good as one can expect from veteran warriors who have spent more time in Afghanistan or Iraq over the past decade than they have at home.

"I am so proud of their continued motivation, dedication, and selfless service not only to America but for Afghanistan as well," he said. "That's why it is so important for both military and veteran communities to join together with one voice to defeat these proposals. Morale wins wars."

In continuing his call to action, the VFW national commander is asking his 2 million VFW and Auxiliary members, along with their friends and families, to contact their congressional members today to urge their support to protect the current military retirement and pay and allowance system, all TRICARE programs for military families and retirees, and all VA healthcare programs for wounded, ill and injured veterans.



## VFW Supports Montford Point Marines

### Senate urged to pass Congressional Gold Medal legislation

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is urging the Senate to pass S. 1527 to authorize the award of the Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines of World War II. Its companion bill passed unanimously in the House earlier this week.

"The Montford Point Marines paved the way for future generations of African Americans to proudly call themselves United States Marines," said VFW National Commander Richard L. DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass. "And just like the Army's Buffalo Soldiers and the Air Force's Tuskegee Airmen, they must be properly recognized for their service, their sacrifice, and most especially for their perseverance to overcome the racial challenges of the time to help our nation fight and win World War II."

The House bill, H.R. 2447, was introduced in July by Rep. Corrine Brown (D-Fla.), and had garnered 308 bipartisan cosponsors before

Tuesday's 422-0 vote. S. 1527 was introduced in September by Sen. Kay Hagan (D-N.C.) and currently has 27 bipartisan cosponsors, but the bill was referred for action to the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. It has yet to exit the committee. DeNoyer wants S. 1527 brought to a vote when the Senate reconvenes next week.

The history of Montford Point is rooted in pride and prejudice, according to the Montford Point Marines Association. President Franklin D. Roosevelt opened up the military services to recruit African Americans in 1941, but it still took a 1942 presidential directive to give them the opportunity to be recruited into the Marine Corps. Instead of going to established training facilities on Parris Island, S.C., or in San Diego, Calif., a segregated boot camp called Montford Point was created next to Camp Lejeune, N.C., where 20,000 African American Marines would eventually be trained between 1942 and 1949.

In a July 30 speech in Atlanta before the Montford Point Marines Association, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James F. Amos said their story and struggle for equality and acceptance in the Corps did not end when they left Montford Point; rather, it had just begun, because they were not allowed to become infantrymen or to serve in other mainstream military occupational specialties.

"It's ironic, but the Marines from Montford Point who saw the most action in World War II were those assigned to segregated ammunition and depot companies," said Amos, who is a strong advocate of the Congressional Gold Medal legislation. "To resupply the front lines, these men often had to fight their way to the front, and then carry back wounded white Marines to the rear for medical care. [They] demonstrated their mettle during vicious and bloody fighting in places like Saipan and Okinawa."

Their courage under fire and fidelity to fellow Marines, regardless of skin color, began to erode the cruel and false

generational stereotype within the Corps that blacks could not, and would not, fight in the face of danger. This led Gen. Alexander Vandegrift, then Commandant of the Marine Corps, who had observed the courage of black Marines in hand-to-hand combat on Saipan, to say "The experiment with the Negro Marines is over. They are Marines...period!"

As the Marine Corps prepares for its 236th birthday on Nov. 10, the VFW national commander said there could be no more fitting tribute than for the Senate to announce beforehand that they, too, agree that the Montford Point Marines should be awarded the Congressional Gold Medal.

"This is about properly honoring a group of patriotic Americans who battled an enemy abroad and racism at home," said DeNoyer, who is now asking his two million VFW and Auxiliary members to urge their U.S. senators to pass S. 1527. "This recognition is long overdue, and with the VFW's support, we hope it soon becomes reality."

## Dish Network and VFW Foundation Join Forces to 'Return the Favor'

*'We could not be more excited to be partnering'*



The Veterans of Foreign Wars Foundation is pleased to announce it will be joining forces with television entertainment provider DISH Network to continue its support of members of the military, veterans and their families. DISH Network's sponsorship supports the VFW Foundation's Return the Favor campaign, which honors, celebrates and supports active-duty military, veterans and their families.

"We could not be more excited to be partnering with such a well-respected corporation who clearly understands the need to support our nation's military," said VFW Foundation Director John Lowe. "If it were not for the support of great corporate sponsors such as DISH Network, we would not be able to continue to assist our country's heroes on a daily basis. This sponsorship reflects DISH Network's commitment to those who have served and continue to serve our great nation."

The VFW Foundation's Return the

Favor campaign supports programs and services that provide emergency financial assistance for military families, free phone calls for deployed troops, VIP treatment for service members and their families at entertainment events, critical services that guide veterans through VA entitlement claims, and morale boosting events for military units.

"DISH Network is proud to support veterans and troops through its contribution to the VFW's Return the Favor campaign," said Trevor McGraw, head of community sponsorships for DISH Network. "This campaign helps meet the needs of the men and women who make significant sacrifices personally and financially to serve our nation."

For more information on the Return the Favor campaign, please visit [www.returnthefavor.org](http://www.returnthefavor.org). Members of the VFW interested in subscribing to DISH Network may receive an exclusive VFW offer by visiting [www.dish.com/vfw](http://www.dish.com/vfw)

## VFW Calls White House Proposals a 'Breach of Faith'

*'The proposals are all about money, not about people'*

WASHINGTON — The national commander of the nation's oldest and largest major combat veterans' organization is sounding the alarm over President Obama's deficit reduction plan because some proposals are clearly designed to balance the budget on the backs of current and future military service members, retirees and their families.

"The proposals are all about money, not about people," said Richard L. DeNoyer, who was elected Sept. 1 as the Commander-in-Chief of the 2 million-member Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and its Auxiliaries.

Released by the White House today was a summary of the president's plan that impacts military retirees as well as those still serving and their families. The plan would impose an initial \$200 annual fee on TRICARE-for-Life recipients, increase TRICARE pharmacy copayments for military dependents and retirees of all ages, and create a commission to examine overhauling the existing military retirement system.

"Our nation's financial situation cannot be solved by breaking faith with those who singlehandedly fight our nations wars — be it today or tomorrow," said DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass. "You cannot pass along our nation's security to future generations just for short-term financial gain. That is an extremely dangerous assumption, and totally disregards the fact that there is an inherent cost that our nation should be more than willing to pay in exchange for asking someone to join, much less donate 20 or more years of their youth to defend

our country."

The VFW national commander said he was surprised by the TRICARE-for-Life fee because "the president has repeatedly said he would not balance the budget on the backs of veterans," said DeNoyer. "We were against TRICARE fee increases when the Defense Department first proposed it for working-age retirees in February, and the VFW is definitely against imposing fees on those 65 and older who reside on fixed incomes and who are already forced to make Medicare Part B payments. Imposing a \$200 annual fee with unknown future increases on this age group is an extreme breach of faith."

DeNoyer said the VFW has also been strongly against changing the military retirement system ever since the Pentagon first decided to float as a trial balloon the recommendation made by the Defense Business Board, a civilian advisory group whose purpose is to bring corporate "best practices" to a military institution it has nothing in common with.

"It disregards decades of upfront service and sacrifice that's required of the less than 10 percent of the force who choose to make the military a career," he said. "It ignores the fact that when the economy rebounds the military services won't be fat with record recruiting and retention rates. Plus it fails to mention that any potential savings won't be realized for at least two decades, while our military could still be engaged in a multi-front war on terrorism."

Those in uniform also pushed back. An online survey published Aug. 29 in all four service issues of The Military Times showed that 88 percent of the force clearly disliked changing the existing





## PROPOSALS, continued from page 16

retirement system. A front-page headline in the Sept. 5 editions screamed "Don't mess with our retirement!"

DOD leadership has since been working hard to calm their fears, to include saying the proposal had not yet been presented formally, and that any such change would only impact future recruits, not those currently serving or those already retired. Military retirees and those in uniform can separate rhetoric from reality, however, especially given today's White House announcement.

"Changing the retirement system will provide an incentive to separate after 10 years, which will decimate the ranks of mid-career officers and noncommissioned officers when they are in their prime working age," said DeNoyer. "It will make potential recruits think twice about joining, because they can receive a 401(k)-type retirement plan anywhere and earn it much more safely. And it could mean future military leaders get promoted not because they are the best, but because no one else is around."

The VFW national commander believes demands for the nation's military to sacrifice more is a perfect recipe for another hollow force, and could threaten the continued success of the All Volunteer Force.

"Instead of consistently trying to bring the military closer to parity with civilian or other federal employee plans, perhaps what we most want to hear is how America is going to bridge the shared sacrifice gap with the less than 1 percent of the population who are in the fight – then we can talk about parity," said DeNoyer, who wants VFW representation on the retirement commission.

Threats to the military retirement system and TRICARE are just two of 10 services and programs that the VFW believes Congress or the Administration want to reduce or eliminate to help pay for 10 years of war. Click here to read more about the "10 for 10" plan, as well as how you can help stop efforts to balance the budget on the backs of veterans, service members and their families.

## VFW Celebrates 112 Years of Service to Veterans

### A message from VFW Commander-in-Chief Richard DeNoyer

On the 29th of September each year, we celebrate the creation of one of America's most iconic organizations – the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. The VFW has a long and proud history of serving and protecting America's veterans, service members and their families, as well as being stalwart defenders of the U.S. Constitution and of a strong national defense. Now, more than any time in our history, a strong VFW is instrumental in keeping our military and our nation strong.

Through every war and conflict in the 20th and 21st centuries, the VFW has led the way to promote strong military and veterans' legislation. As in the past, today, the VFW advocates and supports those deployed to operations in locations around the world while still maintaining vigilance and representation for multiple generations of veterans and for thousands of service members stateside.

VFW and its Auxiliary members are making a remarkable difference at a

critical time in our country's history. Our accomplishments are significant and many, from helping to create the Department of Veterans Affairs, the World War II GI Bill, and Agent Orange and Gulf War Syndrome legislation, to leading the way on traumatic injury disability insurance and a new 21st Century GI Bill.

The VFW has recorded 112 years of unwavering commitment and extraordinary service to our nation. It's an amazing record we are justifiably proud to lay claim to. Our distinguished history of service will always serve as inspiration and as a guide for the future as we remain always steadfast in doing all that we can to improve the quality of life for today's service members, veterans and their families.

God bless our troops and our veterans, and God bless America.

**Richard DeNoyer**  
VFW Commander-in-Chief

## POW/MIAs Recovered

The following are reports from the VFW's Washington Weekly newsletter. Additional information on the POW/MIAs that have been recovered can be found at [http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/news/news\\_releases/](http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/news/news_releases/)

**Korean War MIA Identified:** The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced the identification of remains belong to Army Cpl. Eugene M. Morelli, 21, of Santa Ysabel, CA In February 1951, Morelli and elements of the 2nd Infantry Division were forced to withdraw during the Battle for Hoengsong in South Korea. Morelli was captured but died in captivity due to malnutrition.

**Eleven MIAs Return Home:** The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced the identification of remains belonging to 11 airmen, one from Vietnam and 10 from World War II. Returned are:

\* Army Air Forces 2nd Lts. Robert R. Bishop, 24, of Joliet, Ill., Thomas Digman, Jr., 24, of Pittsburgh, Donald W. Hess, 28, of Sioux City, Iowa, and Arthur W. Luce, 24, of Fort Bragg, Calif.; Staff Sgts. Joseph J. Karaso, 21, of Philadelphia, and Ralph L. McDonald, 22, of East Point, Ga.; and Sgts. John P. Bonnassiolle, 20, of Oakland, Calif., James T. Blong, 19, of Port Washington, Wis., Michael A. Chiodo, 22, of Cleveland, and John J. Harringer, Jr., 20, of South Bend, Ind. On April 29, 1944, their B-24J Liberator crashed near the town of East Meitze, Germany, while on a bombing mission of Berlin.

\* Air Force Col. Gilbert S. Palmer Jr., 37, of Upper Darby, Pa. On Feb. 27, 1968, Palmer and another crewmember were on a photo-reconnaissance mission of enemy targets in Quang Binh, North Vietnam, when their RF-4C aircraft crashed in an unknown location that eventually turned out to be across the border in Laos.

**Two MIAs Return Home:** The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced the identification of remains belonging to an Army soldier missing since the Korean War, and an Air Force pilot missing from the Vietnam War.

\* In late November 1950, Army PFC Henry L. Gustafson, 18, of Cook, Ill., and his 31st Regimental Combat Team were forced to withdraw after coming under attack by communist forces near the Chosin Reservoir. After the 1953 armistice, a surviving POW confirmed that Gustafson had been captured but died from lack of medical care shortly afterwards.

\* On Feb. 8, 1969, Air Force Capt. Thomas E. Clark, 29, of Emporium, Pa., was attacking an anti-aircraft artillery position in Savannakhet Province, Laos, when his F-100D Super Sabre aircraft was struck by enemy fire and crashed. No parachute was seen, and immediate search and rescue missions were unable to locate the crash site or the pilot.

**Korean War MIA Identified:** The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced the identification of remains belonging to Army Pfc. Aaron Pearce, 23, of Johnston, N.C. In late April of 1950, Pearce and the 25th Infantry Division were advancing north when Chinese forces attacked and pushed them back to Seoul. Pearce and many others were reported as missing in action as a result of the engagement. In 1952, military clothing and human remains were recovered near the area but the Army at the time was unable to identify Pearce, who would eventually be buried as an "unknown" at the National Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu.

**Four Korea, Vietnam MIAs Recovered:** The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced

the identification of remains of four soldiers lost during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. They are:

\* Army Cpl. Edward M. Pedregon of El Paso, Texas. In late November 1950, Pedregon and his Heavy Mortar Company of the 31st Regimental Combat Team were overrun by Chinese forces near the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. Pedregon was reported missing in action on Nov. 30, 1950.

\* Army Master Sgt. Charles V. Newton of Canadian, Texas; Sgt. 1st Class Douglas E. Dahill of Lima, Ohio; and Sgt. 1st Class Charles F. Prevedel of St. Louis, Mo.. On April 17, 1969, the men and three Vietnamese soldiers were on a long-range reconnaissance patrol when they were ambushed near the Laotian border. Search and rescue teams reached the site the next day but over the next week found no signs of the men.

**Five MIAs Return Home:** The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced the identification of remains belonging to five American servicemen – one each from World War II and Korea, and three from Vietnam. Returned are:

\* Army Air Forces Capt. Jennings H. Mease, 36, of Greenville, S.C. On April 24, 1943, Mease and four other airmen were flying over the Himalayan Mountains from China to their home base in India. After losing radio communications following takeoff, their C-87 Liberator was not heard from again.

\* Army Cpl. Freeman Lindsey, 20, of Rockport, Ind. On Nov. 29, 1950, Lindsey would be reported missing after his 31st Regimental Combat Team came under attack near the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. After the 1953 armistice, surviving POWs said

Lindsey had been captured but later died of malnutrition while in captivity.

\* Army Specialist 4 Marvin F. Phillips, 20, of Palmer, Tenn. On Sept. 26, 1966, Phillips and three others crashed off the coast of South Vietnam when their UH-1B Huey helicopter was struck by small arms fire. One crewmember survived and the remains of a second were recovered; Phillips and the fourth were not found.

\* Air Force Maj. Bruce E. Lawrence, 25, of Easton Pa. On July 5, 1968, Lawrence and Maj. Edward D. Silver were flying in an F-4C Phantom II aircraft on a night armed-reconnaissance mission of enemy targets in Quang Binh Province, North Vietnam. Anti-aircraft fire struck the aircraft before it crashed. No parachutes were observed.

\* Army Sgt. 1st Class William T. Brown, 24, of Lahabra, Calif. On Nov. 3, 1969, Brown and two other Americans, plus six Vietnamese soldiers, were part of a Special Forces reconnaissance patrol that was ambushed near the Vietnam-Laos border. Search and rescue teams found equipment but no sign of the three missing American soldiers.

**Korean War MIA Identified:** The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced the identification of remains belonging to Army Sgt. Lee D. Henry, Jr., 22, of Tyler, Texas. In August 1950, Henry died and was buried, but available documentation didn't identify the individual or indicate where the remains were originally found. He was subsequently exhumed and reburied as an unknown in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu. In 2010, scientists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command concluded they had evidence to support his identification.

**Two Vietnam MIAs Identified:** The

**POW/MIAs, continued from page 17**

Defense POW/MIA Office announced the identification of remains belonging to an Air Force fighter pilot and an Army Special Forces soldiers who had been missing in action for more than four decades.

\* Air Force Maj. Thomas E. Reitmann, 34, of Red Wing, Minn., was assigned to the 334th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Takhli AB, Thailand, when on Dec 1, 1965; he flew an Operation Rolling Thunder strike mission against a railroad bridge northeast of Hanoi. When his flight of four F-105D Thunderchiefs approached the target area, they encountered extremely heavy anti-aircraft artillery. Reitmann's aircraft took a direct and crashed.

\* Army Master Sgt. Ralph J. Reno, 36, of Chicago, took off from Kham Duc, South Vietnam, on July 3, 1966, aboard an H-34 helicopter with three soldiers from 5th Special Forces Group, three Vietnamese aircrew and nine Vietnamese passengers. The aircraft crashed in Quang Nam Province in steep mountainous terrain and dense foliage after they encountered severe air turbulence.

**WWII and Korean War MIAs Identified:** The Defense POW/MIA Office announced the identification of remains belonging to Army Pvt. Donald D. Owens, 19, of Cleveland, and Army Cpl. James S. Murray, 22, of Shinnston, W.Va.

\* In late September 1944, Private Owens' unit, the 773rd Tank Battalion, was fighting its way to France's eastern border. On Oct. 9, 1944, in the final battle for control of the region, Owens and four other soldiers were attacked by enemy fire in their M-10 Tank Destroyer. Two men survived with serious injuries but three others, including Owens, were reported to have been killed.

\* After the 1953 Korean War armistice, surviving POWs said Corporal Murray had been captured in January 1951 and marched north to a POW camp near Suan County, North Korea, but he died while in captivity during an allied air raid a few months later.

**WWII MIA Identified:** The Defense POW/MIA Office announced the identification of remains belonging to Army Pfc. William F. Stehlin of Dayton, KY; he was buried on August 11 in Arlington National Cemetery. On Nov. 20, 1944, Stehlin, as part of the 333rd Infantry Regiment, 84th Infantry Division, went missing near Suggesterath while his unit conducted a largely successful offensive to capture towns in Western Germany. In 1951, after an extensive search, his remains were determined unrecoverable by U.S. Army Graves Registration personnel. Today, more than 73,000 are unaccounted-for from the conflict.

## North Korea MIA Recoveries to Resume

U.S. and North Korean officials reached an arrangement last week to resume operations to recover the remains of American servicemen missing from the Korean War. The recovery operations are expected to begin in Unsan County, about 60 miles north of Pyongyang, and in the Chosin/Jangjin Reservoir area, where more than 2,000 soldiers and Marines are believed to be missing.

The U.S. had halted its recovery missions in 2005 due to increased tensions on the Korean Peninsula. The new arrangement is a stand-alone humanitarian matter that is not tied to any other issue between the two countries. Almost 8,000 American servicemen are listed as MIA from the Korean War. More than 5,500 of them are believed to be missing in North Korea.

## VFW Asks America to Remember MIA Families

**America's list of missing consists of more than 83,000**

WASHINGTON — As Americans gather this Friday to commemorate National POW/MIA Recognition Day, the country's oldest and largest major combat veterans' organization wants America to also remember the families of more than 83,000 missing since World War II.

"The war continues every day for MIA families, even though almost seven decades have passed for many," said Richard L. DeNoyer, the new national commander of the 2 million-member Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and its Auxiliaries.

"Every day the families relive the moment they were first notified, and every day they continue to hold out hope that new information will be

uncovered that will lead to the recovery and return of their loved one," he said. "The responsibility is on all of us to never forget those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, and to comfort and support those who still grieve in silence."

DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass., said that because the number of missing is so great, the circumstance of loss so vast, that the odds are tremendously against America to recover everyone, but he said that monumental challenge just strengthens the VFW's resolve and support of U.S. military and government organizations involved in the Full Accounting Mission.

America's list of missing consists of

**MIA FAMILIES, continued on page 19**

## VFW Thanks Russia For Renewed POW/MIA Support

**Work to return missing Americans unmatched by any veterans' organization**

The national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. returned this week from a trip to Europe to meet with Russian officials regarding their revitalized support of America's POW/MIA mission, and to meet with U.S. troops stationed in Italy to discuss how VFW can better serve them and their families.

In Moscow, Richard L. DeNoyer met with the leadership of the Committee for Veterans Affairs in the State Duma and the Russian Federation Council Committee for Security and Defense, as well as with Yekaterina Priyetzheva, the new Russian co-chair of the U.S. Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs. Ms. Priyetzheva was appointed in June along with 31 other commissioners after the VFW earlier this year led an effort by seven U.S. veteran and POW/MIA family organizations to write Russian President Dmitry Medvedev to ask him to restore his side of the joint presidential commission, which was created in 1992 by former Presidents George H.W. Bush and Boris Yeltsin.

"Russia's cooperation is vital to gaining access to eyewitnesses and to documents inside their central military archives that could help to determine the fate of possibly thousands of missing Americans dating back to World War II," said DeNoyer, who was the eighth consecutive VFW national commander to journey to Russia on a veteran-to-veteran initiative to help account for missing Americans.

This trip followed one he made to the People's Republic of China in July to help U.S. researchers gain further access into China's military archives, and a February visit to Thailand, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to meet and thank American military and civilians assigned to the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, who do the onsite investigations and recoveries.

"I am proud of the VFW's lead role in helping to account for our missing

servicemen," said DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass. "There is a renewed sense of support in Russia to account not only for missing Americans, but for 270 missing Russians from their war in Afghanistan. I believe the continued involvement of the VFW has played a tremendous role in making this happen, as well as our professional relationships with their veterans' organizations, the Combat Brotherhood and the War Veterans' Committee."


Accompanied by VFW Washington Officer Executive Director Robert E. Wallace, DeNoyer also met with Deputy Chief of Mission Sheila Gwaltney at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, were briefed on political-military issues by the U.S. Defense Attaché, Rear Admiral Douglas Venlet, and were able to meet with the Marine Security Guard Detachment.

In Italy, he received update briefings by U.S. Army Garrison-Vicenza and U.S. Army Africa, as well as installation tours of the medical clinic and warrior transition unit, along with lunch with the troops and dinner with local VFW Post 8862.

Prior to returning to the States, he stopped briefly in France to lay a VFW wreath at the American Cemetery in Normandy to commemorate the 67th anniversary of the D-Day landing.

"Overseas trips are vitally necessary because of VFW's international work on the POW/MIA issue, which is unmatched by any other veterans' organization," said DeNoyer. "Plus it's a great opportunity to personally express our entire organization's appreciation to our military and civilian personnel serving around the world, and to thank our overseas VFW comrades for what they do daily to support the troops and their families."

For more on U.S. full accounting efforts, go to the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office Web site, or the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command Web site.



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MIA FAMILIES, continued from page 18

more than 73,000 from World War II, 8,000 from Korea, 1,680 from Vietnam, 120 from the Cold War, and one each in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Leading the operational search and recovery effort is the Hawaii-based Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command. They are supported by the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office – which provides archival research and analysis and overall policy guidance – as well as the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory, the Air Force Life Science Equipment Laboratory, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the U.S. State Department, individual service

casualty officers, and the military services who augment the JPAC teams with linguists and specialists trained in everything from combat medicine and explosive ordinance disposal to mountain climbing and deep sea diving.

DeNoyer said the VFW and family organizations – such as the National League of POW/MIA Families – assist U.S. government search efforts by opening doors politicians and bureaucrats cannot.

The VFW has traveled to Vietnam annually since 1991 to meet with their military veterans as well as their political leadership to stress the humanitarian aspect of the Full Accounting Mission.

Annual trips to Russia were added in 2004, which will hopefully enhance archival research efforts and finding eyewitnesses who may have information on hundreds if not thousands of Americans who disappeared behind the old Iron Curtain. Visits to the People's Republic of China were also added over the past few years, as well.

"The door the VFW opens is through an open exchange focused entirely on one goal – to help return our fallen to their families. Our relationship with foreign veterans' organizations is based on mutual recognition and acceptance because, politics aside, a vet is a vet, and all who have worn the uniform of their

country understand a soldier's promise to never leave a fallen comrade on the battlefield," he said.

"America's Full Accounting Mission is a nonpolitical, humanitarian mission at its soul," said DeNoyer. "It is a national priority that President Obama and his predecessors have pledged to continue until we have achieved the fullest possible accounting of all our missing Americans. We do this mission to honor our pledge to the fallen; we do this mission to reaffirm to those currently serving that America will bring you home; and ultimately, America conducts this worldwide humanitarian mission to support American families who also served and sacrificed."

## Marvin Hamann Passes



Marvin Eugene Hamann, born June 15, 1947, died October 4, 2011. Survived by his wife Mariann, daughter DeeAnn, grandchildren Taryn, Kari and Scott and brother, Bob.

Marvin served in the Army 1966 to 1968, including 12 months in Korea. He was Quartermaster/Adjutant and a Past Commander of Tutro VFW Post 4644, Past District 4 Commander and Director of Registration for the Department of Michigan Veterans of Foreign Wars.



## Past State President, Audrey J. Dillin, Passes

Audrey J. Dillin, Past Department President, 1988-1989



Audrey Jane Dillin, August 24, 2011

Audrey was elected and installed as Michigan Department President at the 61st Department Convention held in Sault Ste Marie on June 24, 1988. Audrey's theme "Veterans Children – Leaders of Tomorrow" brought forth her love for children, as well as promoting our leaders of tomorrow.

It was a year of celebration; the Department increased in membership reaching 101%, instituted eight new Auxiliaries, and our National Organization

reached 75 years.

Audrey was a Life Member of the Maple City Auxiliary 2406 in Charlotte. You would often find Audrey preparing the Friday night dinners at the Post.

She loved making porcelain dolls, painting their faces and sewing their clothes. She had quite the collection. She also made the Santa suits that Emerson wore for the VFW National Home District 8 Christmas. She was quite the seamstress.

Join the Department of Michigan VFW  
Commander Kirk Kennedy and  
President Annabelle Furgason  
on a trip to the

ARMY/NAVY GAME 2012

December 6, 2012

0800  
1000  
1700

Depart from VFW Post 701 Lansing  
Depart from VFW Post 9568 Romulus  
Arrive Comfort Inn Motel, 53 Industrial Highway,  
Essington, PA. 610-521-9800. Then Casino:  
Harrah's Casino; 3 miles from hotel, free shuttle service;  
Gaming Package: \$25.00 plus \$5.00 towards buffet each day.  
(Subject to change at casino's direction)

December 7, 2012

0900

Leave for tour with guide to the historical area until 1700;  
then to a local VFW Post for dinner (included)

December 8, 2012

Tailgate at motel; then leave for game or shopping.

December 9, 2012

Leave for home, stopping for breaks and lunch (out-of-pocket)

\$450 per person, double occupancy

Without ticket – \$380 – go shopping instead  
Single: \$150 extra.

VFW Contact Person: Doug Masseau at 517-484-3092

Half of payment due by: June 1, 2012  
Final payment due: September 1, 2012

Make reservations through:

TOURS BY RUTH, LLC

P.O. Box 70177

Lansing, MI 48908-0177

517-267-0662 or 800-363-8141

Pay by check, VISA or MasterCard

Checks payable to: TOURS BY RUTH  
Send to: Doug Masseau, 348 Alger Street, Lansing, MI 48917

Tickets to Game: \_\_\_\_\_

Smoking: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Passenger Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Passenger Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_



**Matt David, Editor**

**Editorial Committee:**

Jack Pray, Commander  
Kirk Kennedy, Sr. Vice Commander  
Ron Devereaux, Jr. Vice Commander  
Matt David, Historian/*MOV* Editor  
Diane Ward, Aux. Committee Member

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

The mission of this paper is to strengthen the efficiency of the Veterans of Foreign Wars by providing timely, pertinent and accurate information about the decisions and activities of the VFW at the Post, District and Department level; the relevant affairs of the State and Federal governments, and the decisions and activities of the national organization of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The paper is also the voice of the members. We welcome articles from members. All articles should contribute positively to the welfare of the VFW and its members. We will accept no attacks on any member or leader of the VFW. We will accept a thoughtful discussion of all related issues in the letter column and reserve the right to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the VFW and its policies.

We ask that you keep your articles brief. We reserve the right to edit all articles. We look forward to hearing from you.

The news and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Michigan or the National Organization.

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**Lansing, MI 48906**  
**(517) 485-9456**

*Comrades, please copy this form and use it for the Taps that you send in.*

*Send completed form to: VFW of Michigan, 924 North Washington, Lansing, MI 48906*

(Last Name)

(First Name)

(Age)

(Date of Death)

(Post #)

(City)

**Branch (Circle One):**

USA      USAAC      USN  
USMC      USAF      USCG

**Served In (Circle One):**

WWI      WWII      Korea  
Vietnam      Gulf      Other  
Occupation Forces

# OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING, A VETERAN DIED TODAY



**345-REDFORD**

ZHMENDAK, ALEX S., 86, USA/WWII

**607-ROGERS CITY**

KANIA, EDWARD J., 85, USA/WWII

**822-FLINT**

GANO, CARL K., 87, USA/WWII

**1136-WYANDOTTE**

PRUCKNIC, WILLIAM, 91, USN/WWII

**1138-MONROE,**

BEADLES, ROBERT H., 92, USMC/WWII

CUNNINGHAM, LAURENCE E., 82,

USA/KOREA

OWENS, ARTHUR, 65, USA/VIETNAM

REAUME, JAMES M., 80, USA/KOREA

**1146-ST. CLAIR SHORES**

BEVERLIN, ROBERT R., 71, USA/VIETNAM

FURCI, JOSEPH D., 87, USA/WWII

WROBLEWSKI, RICHARD, 92, USA/WWII

**1278-DETROIT**

BOSTICK, HERSHEL F., 92, USN/WWII

KOLECZKO, MITCHELL D., 64, USAF/

VIETNAM

KOSMOWSKI, THADDEUS G., 85, USA/

WWII

KULIK, THEODORE J., 87, USA/WWII

**1452-CLIO**

ROSENCRANTS, JAMES C., 93, USA/WWII

**1454-ALMA**

TRIPP, JERRY, 80, USA/KOREA

**1566-SAGINAW**

ALBRO, RANDON R., 64, USA/VIETNAM

CRAIG, MYRON M., 88, USA/WWII

DYER, GERALD, 75, USN/KOREA

**1669-ROYAL OAK**

REESE, KENNETH, 62, USN/VIETNAM

**1859-SAGINAW**

LONG, DANIEL J., 87, USA/WWII

NAFFIE, CONRAD A., 91, USA/WWII

**1887-MENOMINEE**

LEMERY, DAVID, 93, USA/WWII

UPTON, ANDREW D., 79, USAF/KOREA

**2144-HOLLAND**

GRAY, DONALD T., 78, USAF/KOREA

LOKKER, FRANK, 90, USAAF/WWII

VAN DYKE, GERALD L., 80, USA/KOREA

**2272-DURAND,**

KLIM, CHESTER, 87, USA/WWII

**2284-EDWARDSBURG**

BUETER, WILLIE, 79, USA/KOREA

**2358-ROSEVILLE**

BARNARD, RONNIE, USA/WWII

KAMEGO, CARL E., 91, USA/WWII

SNOEBERGER, RODERICK H., 88, USA/

WWII

ZOCCOLA, JOHN J., 89, USN/WWII

**2496-ALPENA**

BELL, DALE, 76, USMC/KOREA

HANSON, HARRY, 85, USA/WWII

KRIST, HARRY T., 80, USA/KOREA

SAMP, JOHN T., 62, USA/VIETNAM

**2998-ESCANABA**

KESHICK, PETER H., 71, USA/VIETNAM

KLEIMAN, THEODORE E., 85, USMC/

WWII

ROBITAILLE, RICHARD, 61, USA/

VIETNAM

SIMONS, BETTE, 89, USA/WWII

**3256-MONTAGUE**

LONGNECKER, ALBERT, 90, USN/

WWII/KOREA

**3323-WESTLAND**

CISCO, JAMES, 85, USN/KOREA

**3676-SAULT STE MARIE**

COX, STEPHEN V., 61, USCG/VIETNAM

PARADY, ALBERT D., 81, USN/KOREA

TALMADGE, MICHAEL J. JR., 76, USN/

KOREA/VIETNAM

**3733-FOWLER**

MC CUAIG, VIRL, 85, USN/WWII

NOBACH, MAYNARD, 84, USA/WWII

SCHAFER, GERALD, 87, USA/WWII

**4054-MARCELLUS**

COON, CLIFFORD, 79, USAAF/KOREA

HARVEY, ROBERT, 88, USN/WWII

**4159-ROSCOMMON**

NUTT, DWAIN, 79, USA/KOREA

**4499-MANISTEE**

MATTHEWS, JERRY, 79, USN/KOREA

NOVAK, EDWARD W., 89, USA/WWII

4SCHIMKE, MAX E., 87, USA/WWII

**4573-ISHPEMING**

MATTSON, MYRON W., 60, USA/

VIETNAM

SMITH, FRED D., 67, USN/VIETNAM

**4644-HAMTRAMCK**

HAMANN, MARVIN E., 64, USA/KOREA

POCIASK, WALTER, 94, USA/WWII

**4837-MARLETTE**

DETKOWSKI, GEORGE P., 79, USA/

KOREA

**5065-SHERIDAN**

HUNTER, HOWARD D., 78, USA/KOREA

MOSLEY, WALTER L., 88, USCG/WWII

SHINDORF, BERNARD A., 89, USA/WWII

**5096-CUSTER**

QUILLAN, CARL, 80, USA/KOREA

REEDS, MERLIN, 81, USAF/KOREA

**5114-ST. IGNACE**

PREADMORE, JESSE, 62, USAF/VIETNAM

**5572-ALLEN PARK**

GNAM, ROBERT, 90, USMC/WWII

LAUNIERE, DONALD, 64, USN/VIETNAM

**5600-ONTONAGON**

PERRIN, WILLIAM, 92, USMC/WWII

**5666-FLUSHING**

JACOBS, JAME, 79, USA/WWII

**5670-GWINN**

FILIZETTI, HUGO F., 90, USA/WWII

**5678-TAWAS CITY**

JOHNSON, JOHN, 88, USA/WWII

**5855-PORTAGE**

KEBSTEIN, EDWARD, 75, USA

LAURIAN, DONALD A., 81, USMC/KOREA

**6466-HARRISVILLE**

GOOD, NORMAN, 80, USA/KOREA

**6579-NEW LOTHROP,**

CRAWFORD, WILLIAM R., 87, USA/

WWII

**7303-GLADWIN**

FARR, LLOYD L., WWII

**7542-BIRCH RUN**

ATKINSON, LARRY, 62, USA/VIETNAM

CWIKLINSKI, WILLIAM, 91, USA/WWII

**7546-DEARBORN HEIGHTS**

BOKOTA, JOHN, 82, USA/WWII

ROCK, LOUIS, 87, WWII,

WACHT, VINCENT, 83, USA/WWII

**7581-WAYLAND**

BENDER, RAY, 94, USA/WWII

**7805-ITHACA**

PARKS, DALE E., 81, USA/KOREA

**8236-FLINT**

NELSON, JOHN K., 75, USN/WWII

**8372-ENGADINE**

COUSNEAU, RAYMOND, 90, USN/WWII

**9021-WARREN**

KALFAIAN, JOHN, 89, USN/WWII

STOLARSKI, EUGENE J., 93, USAAF/

WWII

**9084-WAKEFIELD**

DONEY, RICHARD, 76, USN/KOREA

MAKI, EARL, 92, USA/WWII,

TURNER, CLAYTON, 86, USN/WWII

**9377-PLAINWELL**

WEBSTER, NEAL, 90, USA/WWII

**10884-MAYVILLE**

ZITTLE, GERALD, 74, USA

# SUPPORT OUR TROOPS



Auxiliary TAPS

78-DEARBORN HGTS MELNYK, THERESE 423-ANN ARBOR DIMAGGIO, ANGIE MCKENZIE, GRACE 446-MUSKEGON HEKKEMA, BEVERLY JOHNSON, SHIRLEY LITTLE, KAYLEEN SHERWOOD, LUCILLE 701-LANSING BARISH, LINDA BENNETT, BEVERLY GROESBECK, HERLINDA 702-WYOMING, SUTTER, MARY JANE 830-GRAND RAPIDS BIERNAT, JEAN 1071-COLEMAN BARNHART, BETTY MOGG, FRANCES 1136-WYANDOTTE BEGEMAN, HEATHER KUHN, RITA SIEMION, CLARA WILLIAMS, LYNN 1137-BENTON HARBOR BALDWIN, GERTRUDE BEDUNAH, ETHEL 1138-MONROE HILE, ANNE 1146-ST CLAIR SHORES LANDIS, ROSEMARIE 1355-STURGIS VELIE, BETTY 1518-GAYLORD BARKER, EUNICE, 74 FORMAN, EVELYN, 74 1566-SAGINAW PHILLIPS, GRACE SCHRANK, JUNE 1855-DOWAGIAC EIMAN, MOLLIE HUFFMAN, JEAN TYLER, EDITH 1887-MENOMINEE BALDWIN, DOLORES 2144-HOLLAND KOBES, ADELAIDE, 88 WAGER, BERNICE, 90 2326-GRAND HAVEN GIFFORD, ALICE 2335-MECOSTA GILLIS, DOROTHY, 90 SHERMAN, DOROTHY, 92 2358-ROSEVILLE TREMPE, KATHRYN 2406-CHARLOTTE DILLIN, AUDREY GARNER, WALLY	MEDCOFF, M SUE, 69 SOULES, LOLA SWEZEY, EDNA, 100 2492-IMLAY CITY DAHN, NORMA WEINGARTZ, LOIS 2496-ALPENA ALLOR, JUNE, 80 HELZER, LAURA, 73 KIRCHOFF, MARGARET, 83 SZATKOWSKI, MAXINE, 77 2777-BURTON HAGES, FLORENCE 2780-TRAVERSE CITY BRADFORD, DOLORES HAZELHUHN, NORMA KULIBERT, MARIA OLSEN, BESSIE 2891-CRYSTAL FALLS JOHNSON, PAULETTE KEHN, KATHRYN OLSON, FAYE 2964-REED CITY DEVERMAN, MARY 3023-CRESTON BLACKBURN, JEAN, 95 FORMER, HOPE 3030-OTSEGO CARRUTHERS, MARIAN GARNER, MARY LOU GILLIAN, MARGE 3033-MT PLEASANT BAKER, ADELLA SMITH, MARYLOU 3055-ST. LOUIS DAVIDSON, DIANE SEFL, THERESA 3165-NEGAUNEE CRNKOVICH, CELINA, 92 ROUOHOMAKI, MARCY 3243-FENTON ALVESTEFFER, DOROTHY, 89 EANES, HELEN, 84 GEAN, RUBEAN, 91 GIRARD, ELVERA, 85 KOVACS, MARTHA, 88 SELBY, ZETTA, 89 3323-WESTLAND WHITE, CLAIRE 3672-ALBION GILMORE, VIRGINIA LUTZKE, MARJORIE 3676-SAULT STE MARIE GOETZ, ALDA JEAN HANDZIAK, AUDREY SAYER, SHIRLEY 3701-LAKEVIEW LINCOLN, RUBY NUTTLE, RHEA	3720-SWARTZ CREEK AMON, COLLEEN ORTIZ, LADONNA 3724-STANDISH CARRUTHERS, AVIS 3733-FOWLER ANDERSON, ROSEMARY 3727-HOLT STARK, RUTH 3735-OSCODA ASTALA, ADRIENNE, 64 GUASTELLA, SHIRLEY LONDON, RUTH, 74 PELON, ETHEL, 90 3925-ERIE HEADY, RACHEL STARK, MAXINE, 92 4034-HOUGHTON LAKE BAKER, RUTH GIBBONS, YVONNE MAZUREK, ROSEMARY 4087-DAVISON HARTMAN, ELWANDA ROSS, JULIA 4093-CARLETON BAKER, GEORGIA 4139-LAPEER DAILEY, KAY HOLLAND, ALICIA MAXINE, CARROLL MORELL, AGNES 4156-WHITE LAKE LUMSDEN, SANDRA MORRISON, BARBARA 4187-TECUMSEH WISE, CLAIRE, 85 4249-NEWAYGO FITZPATRICK, ALTA HAYNES, EMMA MUSE, MARLENE WEIDNER, EVELYN 4357-BRIGHTON HRIGORA, EVELYN JOHNSON, SUSAN 4422-TAYLOR CONROY, JACQUELYN LINES, IRENE SENART, DOLORES SMITH, EMMA 4461-LAKE ODESSA DUKES, JULIA, HOPPOUGH, GENEVIEVE YOUNG, JACQUELYN 4499-MANISTEE SNYDER, ALICE 4573-ISHPEMING CORON, DOROTHY 4624-HUBBELL THERRIAN, BERNICE 5096-CUSTER	GALBRAITH, ELIZABETH STEVENS, LEATRICE 5315-BALDWIN FUHR, RUTH 5600-ONTONAGON BAKER, JUANITA CURSKI, DOROTHY PETERSON, FERN SECRIST, MARTHA 5670-GWINN COLOMBO, GERTRUDE, 87 RUSSELL, LEONA, 89 YELLAND, JAYNE, 84 5738-CLARE HARING, EVELYN SOCIA, SHARON 5855-PORTAGE PECK, OPAL WRIGHT, TWILLA 5857-ONAWAY BALL, ADA LAW, LYNNE NORTHCOTT, CLARA 6015-MARIAN LABERTS, LELA 6248-DECATUR JACKSON, NORMA 6252-COMSTOCK BORDENET, SHIRLEY MYERS, AMELIA PEARSON, JOYCE 6464-FOWLerville WILLHITE, MICHELLE 6507-CHASSELL LEYDEN, JANIS SWED, MARIAN WUEBBEN, HELEN 6754-SPRUCE CORNELIUS, IVA, 89 6782-EASTPOINTE CAWLEY, CHERYL MORRISON, LINDA 6896-WESTLAND ANTAL, ANNA DZIADZIOLA, ANNA DZIURGOT, MARY ANN GOOD, ALICE HETHERINGTON, RITA KAJDER, ROSE MAZUR, HEDWIG OVERTON, JOANNA TOCHMAN, CECILIA WAZEAK, CECILIA 6898-FREMONT CRAIN, BURNETTE 6950-KAWKAWLIN DONAKOWSKI, PAULINE 7302-HEMLOCK KRUSKE, BETTY MORNINGSTAR, BETTY	WALTON, LAURA 7303-GLADWIN GARY, BETTY 7309-MASON CARUSS, CAROL 7435-HALE LAUNSTEIN, NANCY EMILIE 7439-INDIAN RIVER LAY, GWYN 7542-BIRCH RUN LANGWORTHY, DELORES 7575-GARDEN CITY THEOBALD, DORIS, 89 WACHT, LOUIS, 88 7912-SAND LAKE BERGMAN, MAXINE 8215-SHEPHERD CONROY, THERESA NORTHRUP, LAURA 8236-FLINT BUTLER, ROGENE HYDE, DOROTHY MIMS, PAM MOTT, BEATRICE VERNON, DELORES 8260-NASHVILLE ASHLEY, JACQUELINE 8372-ENGADINE SCHROEDER, EFFIE SULCER, EFFIE 8846-MUSKEGON ANKENY, JEANETTE BUIKEMA, VIRGINIA 8945-COVINGTON MARNICH, JEANETTE, 92 9023-BRIMLEY BENNIE, C. BERTINA BERTRAM, MOLLIE HIETIKKO, SHEILA LYND, PRICILLA 9084-WAKEFIELD HAMPSTON, MAYME SEMONSKY, URSULA 9345-BRUCE CROSSING TEIKARI, MIRIAM 9411-HOMER MEACELL, KAROL MILLER, MARJORIE 9455-OWOSSO MERRILL, DIANA L. 9507-MADISON HEIGHTS WARRINGTON, CHRISTINE 9809-SAGINAW BROWN, EDNA HAMILTON, ROSE MARIE 10704-CASSAPOLIS GREEN, RUBY 15023-AT-LARGE CLAFFEY, MARGARET
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MICHIGAN OVERSEAS VETERAN

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Veterans of Foreign Wars  
33rd Annual Mid-Winter Conference  
January 27-January 29, 2012

### RADISSON PLAZA HOTEL & SUITES

#### AGENDA

#### Friday, January 27, 2012

7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.	Registration	Exhibit Hall
8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.	Cancer Table Program Display Tables <b>BANQUET TICKETS</b>	Exhibit Hall Exhibit Hall Exhibit Hall
<b>Closed for lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.</b>		
8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Service Office Committee Budget & Finance All Directors	Plaza Prairies Rooms
11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.	<b>LUNCH ON YOUR OWN</b>	TBA
1:00 p.m.- 2:30 p.m.	Judge Advocate	Plaza Prairies Rooms
2:30 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.	Commanders, Seniors and Juniors	Plaza Prairies Rooms
2:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Quartermaster, Adjutant and Trustees	Stone Theater

#### DINNER ON YOUR OWN

4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.	District Commanders/ Presidents Reception	Hospitality Suite 837
5:30 p.m.	Night on the Town	TBA
6:00 p.m.	VOD Event (Winning Students only)	TBA
7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.	Joint Department Welcome Room	Hospitality Suite 837

#### Saturday, January 28, 2012

7:30 a.m.-12 Noon	Registration <b>BANQUET TICKETS</b>	Exhibit Hall Exhibit Hall
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#### ALL BANQUET TICKETS MUST BE PICKED UP BY 12 NOON

8:00 a.m.-12 Noon	Cancer Table Program Display Tables	Exhibit Hall Exhibit Hall
9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Men's Auxiliary Meeting	Fields
8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION	Plaza Prairies Rooms
11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.	<b>LUNCH ON YOUR OWN</b>	

#### AFTERNOON PRESENTATIONS ARE OPEN TO ALL

1:00 p.m.-1:45 p.m.	Joint Camp Trotter Meeting	Plaza Prairies Rooms
2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Voice of Democracy;	Patriot's Pen and Plaza Glens Rooms
5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.	Teacher of the Year Presentation VOD Students, District Commander/President	Great Lakes I Plaza Flats
5:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m.	Head table meet for line up	Arcadia I & II (Main Floor-Street Level)
6:00 p.m.	Voice of Democracy Banquet	
9:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.	Joint Department Welcome Room	Hospitality Suite 837

#### Sunday, January 29, 2012

#### HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME

God Bless Our Troops

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<b>RONALD DEVEREAUX, STATE CH. VICE COMMANDER</b>		<b>1115 W. GLIS BIRMINGHAM, MI 48107</b>	
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b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	56,188	56,188
	(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)		
	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®		
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail®)		
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		56,188	56,188
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541		
	(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541		
	(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail)		
	(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)	335	335
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		335	335
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		56,523	56,523
g. Copies not Distributed (See instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		125	125
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		56,648	56,648
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		99.41	99.41

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the <b>OCT/NOV/DEC.</b> issue of this publication. <input type="checkbox"/> Publication not required.	
17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner <b>Robert D. Weiss</b>	Date <b>10/18/2011</b>

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

PS Form 3526, September 2007 (Page 2 of 3)



Larry Coleman  
Candidate for  
Department of Michigan  
Department Surgeon  
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:  
District 4  
City of Trenton VFW Post 1888  
His wife and family

Leonard "Lenny" Milewski  
Candidate for  
Department of Michigan  
Department Jr. Vice Commander  
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:  
District 4  
City of Wyandotte VFW Post 1136  
His wife and family

## Michigan Department Ladies Auxiliary 2012 Calendar

Orders are now being accepted for the 2012 calendar!

Drawings will be held at the Department office, 924 N. Washington Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906 at 10:00 a.m. each Friday and for the six preceding days. You need not be present to win. After the seven tickets have been drawn and winners are recorded, they will be returned to the drawing drum for the next week's drawing. There will be 52 drawings with a total of 366 prizes awarded.

### 2012 Calendar Raffle Rules

Prize Distribution of \$13,575.00

**\$500 x 6, Honoring:** New Years Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, July 4th, 911, Veterans Day

**\$250 x 7, Honoring:** Ladies Auxiliary Birthday, Statue of Liberty Birthday, Army Day, Navy Day, Marine Day, Air Force Day, Coast Guard Day

**\$25 x 353:** All other days

**52 drawing dates:** 1 each Friday for the period Saturday through Friday

Calendars are \$25.00 – complete the order form and return with your check.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cit, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

No. ordered: \_\_\_\_\_ Total due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Send orders with check to:  
**Michigan Department Ladies Auxiliary**  
924 N. Washington Avenue  
Lansing, MI 48906

517-487-3715

Orders due by October 17; all orders mailed by November 30th

Harry "Les" Croyle  
Candidate for  
Department of Michigan  
Department Jr. Vice Commander  
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:  
District 5  
Cpl Richard W. Menge  
VFW Post 6756  
His wife and family

Bonnie Pray  
Candidate for Department Guard  
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:  
District 10  
Ladies Auxiliary 3243  
Her husband and family

Sandy Medos  
Candidate for Department Guard  
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:  
District 4  
Ladies Auxiliary 4422  
Her husband and family

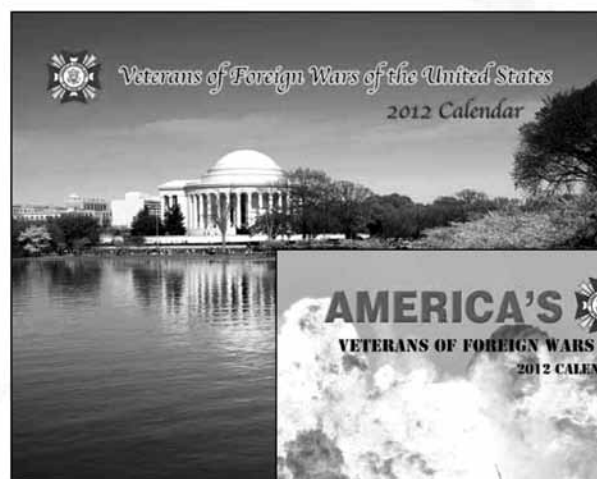
Billy G. Stancroff  
Candidate for Department of  
Michigan  
Department Jr. Vice Commander  
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:  
District 12  
Lt. Clement F. Derezinski VFW Post 7729  
His family

## America's Heroes

Presenting the new 2012 VFW Calendar,  
arriving soon in your mailbox!



Welcome in  
the new year  
and support  
your Department  
programs!



Watch the mail for your 2012 VFW Calendar. The dramatic, eye-catching photography makes it the 2012 calendar you will want to proudly display in your home or office this year!

# MICHIGAN OVERSEAS VETERAN



• *Reporting your positive impact on the Michigan community* •

October/November/December 2011

Volume 79 Number 2

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## Coming Events

VFW Department of Michigan & Auxiliaries 33rd Mid-Winter Conference	January 26 thru 29, 2012
Department Commander/President Testimonial	Doubletree Hotel - Bay City April 13 thru 15, 2012
Buddy Poppy Days Sale Dates:	May 10 thru 12, 2012
2012-2013 Department Planning Meeting	Department Headquarters - Lansing June 2, 2012
Department Convention	Troy Marriott June 7 thru 9, 2012

# Every Hero Needs a Hero

The VFW knows that when many of our defenders return from battle they'll still have to fight. Fight for quality medical care. Fight for fair and timely benefits. Fight to ensure their spouses and children will be cared for, always.

Thankfully, they're never alone. They have VFW service officers on their side.

Please support the National Veterans Service. Your generosity helps so many veterans right here in our state.

You never know when you—or your closest comrades—might need a hero on your side.



**Helping  
our  
Heroes**

## STATE COMMANDER

Comrades, Sisters and Brothers,

As we start November 2011, there are many things going on around the state that we, as the largest combat veterans' group, need to be aware of and keep an eye on.

Some of the most disturbing actions coming from our government include a program called 10 for 10. This program would cut 10 crucial programs from active duty service personnel; from military pay to all the benefits, including family allowances and retirement. The worst part is the cuts come from one of our own senators, Senator Carl Levin. We need to contact Senator Levin and request that the congress not try to balance the budget on the backs of our armed forces personnel who have sacrificed so much already.

Burger King is a major contributor to the VFW's Unmet Needs program for the 5th year, providing more than 4.2 million in grant money to help 3,000 families. So, if you are going to get fast food, make it Burger King.

On the POW/MIA program, the U.S. and North Korean officials have reached an arrangement to resume recovery operations in North Korea. There are 8,000 soldiers and marines believed to still be missing. Recently 11 airmen were recovered; one from Vietnam and 10 from WWII. The remains will be returned to their families for burial.

The membership program, as always, is the lifeblood of our organization. As of this writing, the Department of Michigan is at 83.1% and, of course, the current years' dues are good until December 31, 2011. Annual members, take a look at becoming a Life Member. The National organization has a number of deferred payment plans that will suit your situation and you will never pay dues again. Contact your Post Quartermaster for more information.



**Jack Pray**  
**State Commander**

I recently had a new water softener installed at my house and one of the young men doing the work asked if I had anything to do with the VFW, (could have been the State Commander sign on my car that tipped him off). I told him yes and asked if he had served and yes he had. He is an Iraq veteran and had belonged to my own home Post. It happens that when he got out, he got married and rented our hall for their reception. I asked if he had paid his dues and the answer was no, so I asked why not and we have all heard his answer many times: "I don't drink and when I went in the Post, no one even knew I was there. I sat at the bar and other than the bartender, nobody said anything to me." Comrades, we need to fix these problems. We do not have a recruiting problem, we have a retention problem. Too many of the veterans we bring in go out the back door – never to be seen again. I don't have an answer to the problem, but maybe you do. Let us know if you have something that works.

I do know that our organization is not as visible as we should be in our communities. Our Posts need to be involved in our community and we need to blow our own horn and take credit for the good things we do.

Congratulations to PSC Richard Lehner on his election to the Big Ten Conference Chairmanship. We wish him well and know he will do a great job.

In closing, I wish everyone a safe and healthy Christmas and Happy New Year. I would like to thank all veterans for their service to our great country, the United States of America.