



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS MASON DIXON POST 7234

APRIL 2017

COMMANDERS COMMENTS

March was a busy winter month, our VFW activities were in many cases as busy as our fall and summer months, thank all of you who continue to support our meal programs and our many activities. Now spring is upon us and it won't be long before we will be starting our Breakfast crew and chicken shack crews, so please volunteer for both of these along with the other weekly projects we do, such as cheese steak night, Crab and Steak night, Flip Five, which we can



use some help in our kitchen as well as on our floor giving out cards and taking money. We are presently going through the process of filling our officer positions, nice to see some new faces joining our team, anyone who would like to be part of this team, please talk to our present officers!

We have lost a lot of our property in the last few years, so much that it is becoming increasingly noticeable on our east and west sides of the Indian River Bay. We have had a study done and a plan has been drawn that will save and refurbish our property, while encouraging marine life, but as with anything there is a price to pay. With that being said we are forming a committee to have some fun raisers, to offset the cost. We are also looking for grants, personal donations etc... We are working with the inland bays organization that has developed the restoration project and will be assisting us with some Grants as well as the bid process to install two reefs along the north side of our property. We are trying to set up a date for a presentation so that those who are interested in getting involved can see the challenges, as well as the cost associated with this project, we hope to be sending out a date and time for this presentation in the next few weeks. Please keep our sick members in your thoughts and prayers and

remember those who are less fortunate in our community by dropping food donations at the entry. Go Bless Our Veterans, God Bless the Auxiliary who support them, and God Bless America.

John Hickman
Commander
302-448-0723

AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

VFW Post and Auxiliary Members,



**APRIL SHOWERS
BRING MAY FLOWERS!** Let it rain; we have much, too much, VFW Auxiliary challenges this month to let a little rain stop our progress! **ELECTIONS** are scheduled for April 3rd. Hopefully, some of you have seriously considered

volunteering to serve YOUR Auxiliary by serving as an officer, program chairman, or committing to help in some way. The State Voice of Democracy and Patriot Pen scholarship awards will be presented to the winners on April 8th, 1:00 pm, at the Carlisle Fire Co, Milford, DE. Everyone is invited to share in this event. The state VOD winner is from District IV, Rehoboth VFW. Support our YOUTH! Our annual Children's Easter Egg Hunt & Party is scheduled for April 9th, 2-4 pm. This is traditionally well attended by community children and their parents. Connie Weber, our program chairman, will need your assistance to help on that afternoon. Take your pick: hide eggs, stuff party favor bags, etc. Please let Connie know if she can count on you to help! Our National VFW Auxiliary President Colette Bishop will be visiting Delaware on April 18-19th. I am disappointed to report that she will not be visiting

our Post due to her time constraints. President Bishop will not be arriving in Delaware until late in the day, thus only allowing time for one upstate visit. However, you are invited to join the Rehoboth VFW Auxiliary at a dinner on April 19th to meet President Bishop and share some comradery and good food. See me for details if interested in attending. The Testimonial Dinner for State President Buttercup Baker and State Commander Sherri Leslie will be held at Dover Downs Hotel on April 30th. See our Secretary or me for ticket details. Gentlemen & Ladies, we have been presented with a challenge! Our VFW members will soon launch their 2017 Sunday Breakfast Buffet program and are in need of volunteers to work on Sunday mornings. Some of our Auxiliary members already volunteer on Sunday mornings; do we have enough volunteers to make up a complete team? Please join us at the April meeting when we will discuss the possibilities and our options to help our VFW. We will attempt to finalize some fundraising projects this month; I encourage you to attend our meeting so that you can help us make good decisions going forward. Please remember to RECRUIT, REJOIN, & RETAIN Auxiliary Members! Mark your calendar to attend our April 3rd meeting (even if you have to bring an umbrella!).

THOUGHT for the Month:
The happiest people in the world are the GIVERS, not the GETTERS! Join me in giving back to our veterans and their families!

Loyally yours,
 Roberta Walter
 Auxiliary President

CHAPLAINS' CORNER

Our deepest sympathy goes out to the families who have lost loved ones. Eternal rest grant unto them O' Lord, may the perpetual light shine upon them, and may they rest in peace. Amen.



*John A. "Brownie" Absalom
 Leonard E. "Lennie" Egnor
 Thomas L. Beight
 Angello J. Massino
 Tom M. Hannan
 William J. Wisniewski
 Mauro Leuci*

Please call John Mitchell at 302-381-9934 for the VFW or Theo Loppatto at 302-537-5661 for the Auxiliary, if a member is sick or has passed away.

SERVICE OFFICER OUTREACH

All VFW members & AUX

VA Fixes Veterans Crisis Line

On March 21, the VA released the following statement in response to the recently released VA Office of Inspector General report that reviewed processes from June 6 through December 15, 2016, of the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL): The VA is proud to announce that the challenges with the VCL have been resolved. Prior to the opening of our new Atlanta call center, our call roll-over rate often exceeded 30 percent. Our current call roll over rate is less than 1 percent, with over 99percent of all calls being answered by the VCL.



To reach a trained VA professional who is specially trained to attend to emotional crises for Veterans and Service members:

- Dial the National Suicide Prevention Hotline number, 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Veterans should choose option 1 to reach a VCL Responder;
- Text 838255 and a VCL responder will text back.

Please remember in the Corsa Household (Veterans are our only business).

Please if I can assist in any way let me know
 302 933 0119

Respectfully Robert P Corsa, Service Officer

CANTEEN CORNER

As we get ready for Spring, lets look back at what a great March we had.

We began the month with 72 of us from the Post on a 14 Day cruise with a partial transit in the Panama Canal. To say we had a good time is an understatement and we all made new VFW friends. There is some people worried that I was going to tell some stories, but what happens on the cruise stays on the cruise. We have another trip scheduled for 11/18 so come on the ship and have some fun. St. Patrick's day was the most attended event we have ever held. Steve & Rodger served 275 plates cooking 180lbs of Corned Beef. Green was everywhere and people danced the night away. Thanks to everyone who helped to make the night go smoothly. On the 19th we held the first VFW Bar Olympics, under the

directions of Commissioner John Frye , 16 teams competed well into the evening until the team of Devon and Jerry were named the winner. The food was unbelievable and everyone enjoyed the day. A big Thank You to John for putting this whole event together. Now moving into April we have some great events planned. We will start the Month with the Bull Roast on 4/1. As of this printing it is sold out as everyone wanted to come in tribute to Brownie who we loss in March. He has organized the Bull and Oyster Roast for as long as anyone can remember. He will be missed by all. On Sunday 4/9 we will be having a Bus Trip from the Post to the Old Mill Crab House in Delmar. The Bus leaves the Post at 3pm, and space is still available. See the bartenders to sign up. The cost is \$16pp. Easter Sunday we will be having a covered dish dinner. There are members of our Post that are alone and have no one to Share Easter Dinner with. If you know someone who will be alone bring them and a covered dish to share with the whole Group. Dinner will be at 3pm. Put 4/23 on your calendars as we all having a VFW Dart tournament. All the details are being worked out so stay tuned for details. Depending on the weather we hope to start Crabs on Thursday Nights and Burgers on the Deck on Sundays. We are ready for Summer are You? As always if you have any suggestions please let me know.

See you at the Post Mark

VFW GOLF ASSOCIATION



VFW Golf Association members play golf each Tuesday at the Salt Pond Golf Course. Starting at 9:00 a.m. Weather permitting. Remember all are welcome!!!

Ed (Albert) Pike

Post Property Erosion

Our property has been eroding especially in the last few years. We have received a proposal from the Inlands Bays to slow down this erosion and restore our Post Property. They will be presenting this proposal at the Post on April 25 at 6 pm. Please attend to hear this proposal and ask questions. We are also looking for volunteers to help us with all phases of this project, from fund raising to building the barriers. We will be forming a team to work with the Inland Bays; please consider joining us on this important project.

Panama Canal Cruise

We're back—back from the R&R cruise to the Panama Canal and warm Caribbean islands. In the word of the poet A.E.



Houseman: "Home is the sailor. Home from the sea. . . the ship pours shining on the quay the plunder of the world." At the end of our cruise the plunder that poured on the dock in Baltimore was tons of luggage, bags and boxes of island clothing, jewelry, souvenirs, duty-free tequila. . .and laundry.

Collectively, we saw it all; we did it all; and now, I can't remember most of it. So I have to refer to the T-shirt Mark had designed with our itinerary printed on the back and my notes. Here are some random notations and observations. Sunday, February 26 (Day 1). Sailing away from Tampa on the Carnival Pride. With Mark's arrangements and coordination, our group is safely on board—after a lot of laughs on Gerald Hyland's bus from the Post to BWI on Saturday; and a few luggage mishaps at the airport sorted out in Tampa. I thought I heard someone singing that old James Brown hit "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag." But we're starting off with the sad news that John "Brownie" Absalom had passed away. A WWII veteran and long-time member and volunteer at the Post, Brownie will be missed by his many friends. I can't list them all, but a few I talked to had a lot of fond memories of him, including Mark and Bonnie, Ruth Ann, Shirley, Fulton and Jim Atkins. A memorial service is scheduled for March 31. Tuesday, February 28 (Day 3). Cozumel, Mexico. Walking through the streets of the port city of San Miguel, block after block of jewelry stores, boutiques, and souvenir and local merchandise shops and market stalls. . .most with teams of sales people urging you to come in and buy. I said to Rosemary this must be what hell is like—an endless gauntlet of stores and screaming merchants pulling at you for all eternity. With that frightening premonition in mind, I decided to mend my ways. And then we came upon the quiet local museum displaying the interesting Mayan and Spanish history of the island; and the peaceful solitude of the church of San Miguel, founded by the American Maryknoll missionaries in 1947. Good reports from others in our group on the snorkeling and catamaran excursions. Someone asked if you could get mono from kissing a dolphin. No comment from those on the zip lining outing. Just blank stares.

Wednesday, March 1 (Day 4) At sea. The highlight was the Military Appreciation Gathering. Good crowd and comments from some of the veterans present, including Jim Atkins and Boogie Criswell. Jim invited everyone to visit the Post if they're ever in our area. The buses and campers may be arriving soon.

Thursday, March 2 (Day 5). Limon, Costa Rica. For chocolate lovers, the Cocoa Trail Excursion was the only place to be. One lesson learned. They love their mosquitoes. The male pollinates; the female bites. That's nature for you. Best story. On a rain forest excursion the guide said that there are 123 varieties of poisonous snakes in Costa Rica, some of which can drop on you from trees, PLUS three species of poisonous frogs. Ken Weber asked how big Costa Rica is in comparison to the United States. The guide thought it was about the size of Virginia. Ken remarked that he was pretty sure none of our states had that many varieties of poisonous snakes, never mind the frogs. But another tourist chimed in and said: "Yes, but what about Washington, DC?" Brilliant!

Friday, March 3 (Day 6). Panama Canal. The main purpose of the trip—to see this marvel of American engineering ingenuity completed in 1914, in a partial transit of the Canal through the original Gatun Locks to Lake Gatun. To read about it or even see a video, while impressive, does not do it justice. To actually experience our ship rising up from sea level through the water elevator system of the three locks and separate chambers to Lake Gatun 85 feet above sea level, with a huge container ship one lock ahead of us, and watching the choreography of the operation, was a dramatic and unforgettable experience.

A couple of footnotes. With all the advanced engineering aspects involved, it still takes two guys in a row boat to bring the tow lines from the mechanical mules on the canal sides out to a ship. And the guys in the little boat clearly knew what they were doing. The second note is that reportedly this is the only place where the local pilot actually takes control of a ship. What a great day! It made the whole trip worthwhile.

Saturday, March 4 (Day 7) At Sea. The highlight was a very informative Q&A session with Captain Mario Nicolini, Chief Engineer Camillo Russo, the First Officer, Safety Officer and others. Two memorable questions. One woman asked how much of the ship was below water. "23 feet" the Captain replied. Well then, she asked what happens if you sail into a port only 13 feet deep? There was a long pause from the Captain to be sure she was serious. "Well, he politely replied, we'd be in big trouble." The best question came from a man who wanted to know if they ever conducted live evacuation drills at sea to make sure that they could get all passengers and crew off (about 3000 people) and back on board in high seas. Longer pause from the Captain. "Well, no," he replied

"we never have. Maybe we'll try it on the way back to Baltimore." Theo said if they did, she was going to hide under her bed.

Sunday, March 5 (Day 8). Aruba; Monday, March 6 (Day 9). Bonaire; and Wednesday, March 8, St. Maarten (Day 11). Island hopping days. There was a wide variety of excursions to choose from including: lazy beach time; dolphin swims; small boat sailing; snorkeling; scuba diving; and wild jeep and ATV rides. Several of us opted for sight seeing tours to learn something about the islands. Here are a few notes. Aruba. Connie Weber said the snorkeling on this Dutch West Indies island was extraordinary, with the turquoise blue water so clear you could easily see hundreds of fish. Bonaire. Seemed to be the most picturesque of the islands and not as busy. St. Maarten. Most interesting, divided between Dutch and French jurisdictions—with an open international border. Philipsburg, our port and the capital of the Dutch side, harbored the secret treasure of the Belgian Chocolate Factory; and the church dedicated to St. Martin of Tours, the island's name sake. The ruins of Fort Amsterdam, built in 1631, still stand guard over the town. Once commanded by Peter Stuyvesant, who lost a leg in a battle with the Spanish. He was subsequently appointed Governor of New Amsterdam, later renamed New York. Fun Days At Sea. The Wall Street Journal reported recently that more than 25 million people will take a cruise in 2017. Some of the newer ships are floating cities carrying more than 5000 passengers, plus crew. The article noted that for many cruise fans the ship is the destination and where it's going matters less. I don't know about that but from observation I think that for some of the passengers on the Carnival Pride the Buffet was the destination.

As Mark told us beforehand, there was a lot to do on board, plenty of events to choose from, including shows, classes, games, contests and movies, in addition to the swimming pools, casino and spa. You could keep busy from early morning to late at night if you wanted. Or you could just find a quiet spot to read a book or watch the waves roll by. I went for a balance of quiet time and a few events. Some, like Ken, enjoyed intense early morning walks!

We passed up: The Puffy Eye Seminar; Fab Abs classes; the Green Eggs and Ham breakfasts; the Try and Buy Fragrance event; the Wrinkle Remedies Seminar; and the Knobby Knees contest.

Best class attended: Celestial Navigation. As someone who sometimes finds it difficult to find the way in and out of Bethany West, I thought this would be helpful. Of course, you have to be able to drive at night to get the full benefit of the class.

Lesson learned. DO NOT EVER volunteer to be a subject in a hypnotist's comedy act. You may be the star of the show, but you'll never hear the end of embarrassing stories.

Most enjoyable times. Time with friends on board,

sharing meals and laughs, especially before and during dinner. Dinner arrangements were stress-free because of Mark's connections in the restaurant. The big plus here was making new friends and getting to know folks from the Post better. Now I just hope I'll remember everyone's name.

At the close of our adventure, grateful as always to be back in the USA, a welcome rest. As Houseman closed his poem: "The starlit wave is still. Home is the sailor from the sea." Mark is planning another cruise adventure for next year. See him for details. It's sure to be fun. Thanks again to Mark and Bonnie and all who helped them on our Panama Canal cruise.

Happy Easter or Passover and April to everyone.

Jerry Hardiman

CARNIVAL PRIDE
14 Day Cruise Round Trip Baltimore
Departing November 4th 2018
Sunday-Baltimore, MD Monday-Fun Day at Sea
Tuesday-Fun Day at Sea Wednesday-Grand Turk
Thursday- Fun Day at Sea Friday-Aruba
Saturday- Curacao Sunday-Fun Day at Sea
Monday-Barbados.....Tuesday-St. LuciaWednesday....St. Maarten....Thursday....Fun Day at Sea....Friday....Fun Day at Sea....Saturday....Fun Day at Sea....Sunday....Baltimore

Prices below are based on double occupancy and are per person. Price includes cruise, port charges, Gov. Taxes,

Inside Cabin (4K)	\$1335.25
Balcony Cabin (8B)	\$1940.25
Balcony Cabin (8C)	\$1960.25
Balcony Cabin (8D)	\$1975.25
Balcony Cabin (8E)	\$1995.25
Balcony Cabin (8F)	\$2015.25
Extended Balcony (8J)	\$2045.25
Extended Balcony (8K)	\$2065.25

3rd & 4th guest cabins and Ocean View available upon request.*A limited number of each category above is available and subject to change based on availability. Hold yours today!

\$400 per person deposit due when booked
Final payment is due by July 21st 2018

\$50.00/ person cancellation fee if booking is cancelled after deposit made
PASSPORTS ARE REQUIRED
Arranged by **Bethany Travel/Dream Vacations**
28436 DuPont Blvd., Millsboro, DE 19966
(800) 806-8747 or (302) 933-0955
www.bethanytravel.net

Insurance, Gratuities & Transportation are not included in above rates
If at least 8 cabins sail with your group you will receive \$100 per cabin onboard credit

VFW
FRIDAY FAMILY
BUFFET

APRIL 14th, 2017
5:00 pm 'til 7:00 pm

ROAST BEEF & GRAVY
ROASTED RED POTATOES
CARROTS
FRIED FISH
TOSSED SALAD
ROLLS & BUTTER
Donation: \$10 AYCE

MUSIC by THE JONES BOYS
6-10 pm

Sponsored by: Mason Dixon
VFW Post #7234
Ocean View, DE

COMMUNITY WELCOME

VFW
FRIDAY FAMILY
BUFFET

APRIL 21st, 2017
5:00 pm 'til 7:00 pm

BAKED HAM
MASHED POTATOES
STEWED TOMATOES
BUTTERED CORN
FRIED FISH
TOSSED SALAD
ROLLS & BUTTER
Donation: \$10 AYCE

MUSIC by
DJ RAY DISNEY
6-10 pm

Sponsored by: Mason Dixon VFW Post #7234
Ocean View, DE

COMMUNITY WELCOME

VFW
FRIDAY FAMILY
BUFFET

APRIL 7th, 2017
5:00 pm 'til 7:00 pm

ROASTED PORK
SAUERKRAUT
MASHED POTATOES
GREEN BEANS
FRIED FISH
TOSSED SALAD
ROLLS & BUTTER
Donation: \$10 AYCE

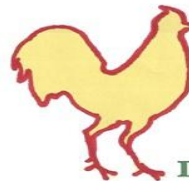
MUSIC: DJ RAY DISNEY

Sponsored by: Mason Dixon
VFW Post #7234
Ocean View, DE

COMMUNITY WELCOME

VFW
FRIDAY FAMILY
BUFFET

APRIL 28th, 2017
5:00 pm 'til 7:00 pm



CHICKEN CACCIATORE
MACARONI & CHEESE
BROCCOLI
FRIED FISH
TOSSED SALAD
ROLLS & BUTTER

Donation: \$10 AYCE

MUSIC by DJ RAY DISNEY
6:00 - 10:00 pm

Sponsored by:
MASON DIXON
VFW POST #7234
Marshy Hope Road
Ocean View, DE

COME JOIN
THE FOOD,
FUN, &
FRIENDSHIP

COMMUNITY WELCOME

VFW LEADERSHIP TEAM

Commander	John Hickman (302-448-0723)
Sr Vice Cmdr	Dean Levering
Jr Vice Cmdr	Robert Criswell Jr
Quartermaster	Bill Hensley
Adjutant	Fulton Loppatto
Chaplain	John Mitchell
Judge Advocate	John Mitchell
Surgeon	George Hickman
Officer of the Day	Rick Delaney
Guard	Rick Smith
Service Officer	Bob Corsa
Honor Guard Capt	Paul Burbank
Trustee	Mike Grabowski
Trustee	Danny Steele
Trustee	George Smith

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	John Hickman
Vice President	Fulton Loppatto
Treasurer	Bill Hensley
Secretary	Ken Weber
Chairman	Dean Levering
Board Member	Rick Smith
Board Member	Robert Criswell Jr
Board Member	Hal Barber
Board Member	John Mitchell
Board Member	Rick Delaney
Board Member	Mike Grabowski

AUXILIARY TEAM

President	Roberta Walter
Sr Vice Pres	Carol Weber
Jr Vice Pres	Connie Weber
Secretary	Susan Wallace
Treasurer	Rene McDorman
Chaplain	Theo Loppatto
Guard	Shirley Stong
Conductress	Ellen Reilly
Patriotic Ins	Jackie Umstetter
Trustee	Ruth Ann Sagers
Trustee	Donna Paddock
Trustee	Debbie Morlock-Wood

Our Quartermaster, Bill Hensley is a notary. He will provide notary services to members at no cost. Donations to the VFW will be accepted. Please call the post at 302-539-9981 to schedule.

FOOD BANK

Please continue to drop off food items at the entry way. We continue to support our local families in need. Thank you for your donations.

VFW POST 7234 HONOR GUARD
TO BECOME A MEMBER, PLEASE
CONTACT PAUL BURBANK
757-288-6248

**Member in Need of Assistance
Please call:
John Hickman 302-448-0723**

**Member Sick or Deceased
Please call:
For VFW – John Mitchell 302-381-9934
For Aux – Theo Loppatto 302-537-5661**

**Assistance with VA claims or benefits
Please call:
Bob Corsa 302-745-1668**

**For the Latest Updates and News
Please send your email to
vfwpost7234@vfw7234.com**