



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS MASON DIXON POST 7234

JANUARY 2020

COMMANDERS COMMENT

Happy New Year everyone! 2019 has been a great year for the post and also for me. It continues to amaze me how our members, volunteers and community support our post and programs associated with it. It is truly a blessing to be a part of it and the fine people



associated with it. As we move forward into the New Year, let us remember the things we have accomplished together and what other things we can do to help others and keep our post active and great. We had quite a few parties and gatherings at the post in

December. The children's Christmas party with a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus (thank you Ty and his wife.) also the post party and the staff party. Our post also is a great venue for various holiday parties for organizations in our area. I certainly enjoyed the festivities! We have some blue plastic 50 gallon barrels if you have any use for them, let me know. Thanks to all who donated gift cards or other items to go to the Home of the Brave and Milford Veterans Home. Ted and Carol Flood, Ellen and I delivered these items on Thursday December 12th. We were treated to a tour of both facilities and were impressed what great facilities they both were. Carol Flood and Shirley Stong also made the trip to the VA hospital with afghans for the patients and Ellen and I delivered books and Christmas cards to the hospital. It is the gift of giving back to our veterans who have given so much for our freedom that makes it all worthwhile. Our post is known for a great social place to gather and have some fun, but we have to remember what and why the VFW exists. Our fund raisers and activities help raise money to help our veterans in New Year. Have a happy healthy New

Year and remember those who may not be as fortunate.

**God bless all veterans.
Those who served
Those who are now serving
& Those who didn't return.
God bless America**

Dean Levering
Commander
443-553-1167

AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Hello Members, as we move into 2020, a new decade, I wish all of you a Happy and Healthy New Year. Our



Auxiliary did a fabulous job in 2019, supporting the Post and serving and honoring our Veterans. We all celebrated Christmas with our family and friends, but we did not forget to serve our Veterans. Thank you to Roberta Walter



for organizing and leading Operation Cookie Drop Off. Through Roberta's efforts of collecting, packing and delivering, 993 dozen cookies were sent to our troops. The Auxiliary adopted

3 families for Christmas, including the children of woman Veterans residing at the Home of the Brave. Thank you to Carol Flood and Cindy Weese for

shopping and wrapping the gifts. Afghans and stocking stuffers were presented to the Veterans at the VA hospital, stockings were stuffed for the troops,



slightly worn coats were collected, and along with gift cards, an effort led by Ellen Reilly and Commander Dean were given to the Veterans at the Home of the Brave. The children of the community joined us for a Christmas party, and



in addition to giving them a gift we promoted patriotism with flags and Pledge of Allegiance book marks. We honored our deceased Veterans by purchasing \$300.00 in Wreaths for Wreaths Across America, which were laid at the Veterans Cemetery. We gave our annual contributions to National and community organizations, which included the Salvation Army, Alzheimer's Association, St. Jude's Children's Hospital, Meals on Wheels, Ronald McDonald House, Alfred I DuPont Hospital, American Diabetes Association, Muscular Dystrophy Association, DE Special Olympics, and DE USO. I am proud and thankful for all we have done serving our Veterans, Active Military and the community. All of these great things are not possible without our continuous fundraising. Our next big fundraiser will be our Spring Fling on Sunday, April 26th with Bryan Clark. We need your help in organizing, planning, and soliciting items for the Chinese Auction along with purchasing tickets for the event. Last year this event, raised just over \$7000.00, let's make it great

again. We currently have 1212 in the Auxiliary and to date we have added 155 new members. As we continue to grow, we can achieve more, but only if members remember, with membership comes privileges but it also comes with responsibilities. Please join us to learn what opportunities exist to volunteer. 2019 was a great year, and let's make 2020 even better by reaching out and meeting the needs of more Veterans and Active Military. Please share with us if you are aware of any Veterans or Active Military in need of financial help. Hope to see many of you at our next meeting on January 6th.

Let us always remember those who served and always try harder to serve them better.

Loyally yours,
Carol Weber
Auxiliary President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOTES

The purchase of two new stoves for the kitchen was finalized and will be installed when the Post Upstairs is shut down for its annual cleaning the last two weeks of February. We may also at that time be looking to upgrade our floors in the Post. We are debating on fixing and/or replacing our van. More will be discussed at our next meeting. Any Older Member who may remember what company worked on the roof membrane years ago, please contact Frank Mathers. A reminder....We check ID's at the door for your protection and ours. **ALL MEMBERS MUST SHOW THEIR ID.....NO EXCEPTIONS.** It doesn't matter if you're at the Post everyday...If you know who the door monitors are...**YOU MUST SHOW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ID.** If you refuse you will NOT be allowed in. Don't forget that the Auxiliary will hold the Ryan Clark Spring Fling and Chinese Auction on April 26th. Our next Board of Directors Meeting will be on Tuesday, January 28th at 6pm.

VFW Ritual: General Rules: page 3 section 13(a)(c)
Official Caps will not be worn during any meals.

Chairman Hal Dietrich

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.



Thomas S. Brown

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

The following is a news release from the National Veterans Legal Services Program.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 10, 2019

WASHINGTON – Yesterday, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC) ruled in a case styled *Wolfe v. Wilkie*, that VA's 2018 reimbursement regulation violates the Emergency Care Fairness Act of 2010 (ECFA) that requires VA to reimburse veterans for the emergency medical expenses they incur at non-VA facilities that are not covered by the veteran's private insurance. The CAVC certified the case as a class action and ordered the VA to remedy its unlawful regulation by reimbursing veterans for all of their past and future out-of-pocket emergency medical expenses not covered by the veteran's private insurance other than copayments. The class action petition was filed on behalf of veterans Amanda Wolfe and Peter Boerschinger by the National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP) and Sidley Austin LLP on a pro bono basis. This ruling is the second time the CAVC struck down the VA regulation governing reimbursement of emergency medical expenses. Five years ago, NVLSP appealed to the CAVC on behalf of veteran Richard Staab after the VA declined to reimburse him for any of the \$48,000, he incurred for emergency open heart surgery purely because Medicare covered part of the emergency care bill. In the CAVC's 2016 landmark precedential decision in *Staab v. Shulkin*, it invalidated the VA regulation that prohibited reimbursement for any of the veteran's emergency medical expenses merely because some, but not all of those expenses, were covered by the veteran's insurance. The Court held in the Staab case that Congress intended in the

ECFA for VA to step in as a "secondary payer" where other health care insurers cover only a portion of the cost of the veteran's emergency treatment and the regulation violated this statute. Yesterday's ruling struck down the regulation that VA promulgated in 2018 to replace the regulation struck down by the CAVC in Staab.

Based on the VA's past estimates, compliance with yesterday's decision will require VA to pay from \$1.8 billion to \$6.5 billion in reimbursements to hundreds of thousands of veterans with reimbursement claims filed or pending during the period from 2016-2025. "The Court's decision rights a terrible injustice and its order ensures that veterans who were unjustly denied reimbursement for critical emergency treatment at non-VA facilities will finally be reimbursed," said NVLSP Executive Director Bart Stichman. "It is a hard-won victory for hundreds of thousands of veterans, especially those like Mr. Staab, Ms. Wolfe and Mr. Boerschinger for whom reimbursement is long overdue." The Court was unequivocal in yesterday's decision. "After Staab, VA adopted a new regulation . . . exclude[ing] from reimbursement nearly every type of expense a veteran could have incurred if he or she had insurance covering [a portion of] the . . . medical service at issue. So, after Staab, VA adopted a regulation that functionally creates a world indistinguishable from the world Staab authoritatively held impermissible under the statute. . . It's difficult to conceive how an agency could believe that adopting a regulation that mimics the result a Federal court held to be unlawful is somehow appropriate when the statute at issue has not changed. But there is more. Even after we decided Staab, . . . VA was affirmatively informing veterans that they were not entitled to reimbursement for non-VA emergency medical care if they had any insurance covering the service at issue. In other words, the Agency was telling veterans that the law was exactly opposite to what a Federal court had held the law to be." In its ruling, the CAVC explained why it granted the petition in the same order that it certified the class action: "given the unique circumstances surrounding this case, particularly the nature of the alleged injury and the need for prompt remedial action... resolving both matters in a single order is appropriate here." This is only the second time in the CAVC's 30-year history that it has granted a class action. In June 2019, CAVC certified its first-class action in *Godsey v. Wilkie*, also brought by NVLSP. A Veteran should not have to file a claim again if the claim had been denied. However, it doesn't hurt to contact the VA to follow up on your claim at <https://www.va.gov/claim-or-appeal-status/> If a claim for emergency or urgent care was never filed,

it should be filed in a timely manner. The ruling covers from 2016-2025.

Blue Water Vietnam Vets

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) begins deciding Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019 claims, Jan. 1, 2020, extending the presumption of herbicide exposure that include toxins such as Agent Orange, to Veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

Veterans need VHIC for in-person Commissary, Military Exchange, MWR access

The Defense Department has announced expanded Commissary, Military Service Exchange and MWR access January 1st and established a standard for physical access to military installations. Veterans who are eligible and want to take advantage of in-person benefits must have a Veterans Health Identification Card, or VHIC. Primary Family Caregivers must have an eligibility letter from VA's Office of Community Care. Veterans use VHICs for identification and check-in at VA appointments, but will also use them for base access under the new program. Veterans eligible solely under this act who are eligible to obtain a Veteran Health Identification Card must use this credential for in-person installation and privilege access. The card must display the Veteran's eligibility status (i.e., PURPLE HEART, FORMER POW or SERVICE CONNECTED). Veterans eligible solely under this act who are not enrolled in or are not eligible to enroll in VA health care, or who are enrolled in VA health care, but do not possess a Veteran Health Identification Card will not have access to DoD and Coast Guard installations for in-person commissary, exchange, and MWR retail privileges, but will have full access to online exchanges and American Forces Travel.

Medal of Honor recipients and Veterans with 100% service-connected disability ratings are eligible for DoD credentials under DoD policy.

Anyone needing Service Officer Assistance can contact me at (301)325-3813 or email me at Smokey1st@netzero.net

Rich Fales, Acting Service Officer

CANTEEN CORNER

Welcome to 2020. After a great 2019 it is time to turn the page and start the New Year with our daily activities. We will continue our daily evening menus and lunch will be served Monday-Saturday from 12-3pm. We will be looking to add some activities in 2020, so if you have something you would like to see us do please let me know. There are no special activities planned for January, but February is going to be very busy. We start off February on the 2nd with Super Bowl Sunday. We will start the day with Super Flip 5 at 3pm. There will be more winner take all games and the fee is \$30 to play all the games. We will follow Flip 5 with our covered dish meal before the game. So practice your best recipes, so you can perfect it for the group. If cooking is not your thing, a store bought dessert will do just fine. As of this writing both the Ravens & Eagles are in the playoffs and have a chance to play in the Super Bowl. On Sunday 2/9 we will be hosting our Annual Chili Cook-off at 3pm. Like last year Cornbread will be added to the contest. If you think you have what it takes to be the Chili or Cornbread Champion then bring in your dish and put it to the test. For those of you who want to taste all the entries and choose the winner it will cost \$3 to enjoy all the entries. Let's see who will be this year's Champions. Saturday 2/15 we will be having our Valentines Dinner Dance. The evening will feature a buffet dinner and the music of Overtime. A charge of \$15 pp will be collected at the door and seats are first come first serve. A great menu is being planned so come and dance the night away. 32 of us are leaving from the VFW to go to Hawaii on our 6th VFW cruise. Sorry you are not joining. The information for our next cruise is out so you can join the group on the next one. It will be an 11 day cruise from San Francisco to Alaska. If you have not visited Alaska you are truly missing this beautiful area.

Please remember all our soldiers currently serving our country and pray for their safe return.

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. Please show-up at 8:30 a.m. for 9:00 a.m. Tee time. Remember all are welcome!!! If you are thinking about joining the Golf Association Please contact our President, Ken Smith, 267-228-7285 or madriverken1946@gmail.com for more information. Ed Pike

A QUICK TRIP TO THE WHITE HOUSE

In December, Rosemary and I, together with Theo and Fulton and Judi and Jerry Morris, had an opportunity to visit the White House to see how “the People’s House” was decorated for Christmas. Rosemary and I had worked in Washington, DC for over twenty-five years and walked or driven past that beautiful historic building many times, often without really thinking about it. We had been inside or on the grounds a few times, but never during the Christmas season. So this was a first. I was mildly interested, just curious really, and didn’t have any great expectations. It turned out to be a very memorable visit. Here are some highlights from my notes.



Silver Alert. On our way to Washington, overhead message signs were flashing: “Silver Alert” with a vehicle description, license tag number, and a phone number to call if the vehicle was spotted. I was told this was an alert that a senior citizen was out driving without permission from his or her children. Am I the only person who didn’t know about this system? Then I thought: Wait! Is that our vehicle tag number? Thankfully, it wasn’t. So we were OK driving to DC without anyone’s permission. Is this system coming to our area? If so, we’re going to need bigger signs.

Security. There were major changes and security enhancements, with serious preclearance procedures, multiple security check points, and Secret Service officers in every room. And those were just the observable measures. This is unfortunate in some ways, but fully understandable given the world we

live in today. You don’t just drop visitors off at the gate 15 minutes before a tour anymore.

A Patriotic Theme. First Lady Melania Trump said that celebrating the “Spirit of America” was the theme for the White House decorations this year, tracing White House and national traditions, customs and history. There certainly is a rich history to draw from. The White House has been the official residence of every President and family since John and Abigail Adams in 1800. There was a brief absence when the residence was burned by an invading British army during the War of 1812. Reconstruction began almost immediately and President James Monroe was able to move into the home in 1817.

The Gold Star Family Tree. This is the first Christmas tree you see when you enter the East Wing. It is described as “one of the White House’s most cherished holiday traditions.” With its golden stars and other decorations, it honors families who have lost loved ones who sacrificed their lives for our freedom. It is also meant to serve as a reminder to visitors that “[t]here is no better example of the American spirit than our military members and their families.”

The Vermeil Room. I didn’t get a chance to see this room because of the crowd in the doorway taking pictures. I understand it featured a number of portraits of former First Ladies. I only mention it here because I learned that “vermeil” is a French word meaning “gilded silver.” You may want to use it next time you’re in a Sherwin Williams or other paint store. Watch the sales person’s expression when you ask: “Can you mix that in a vermeil shade?”

The Library. This was my favorite room because it seemed to be the most informal and comfortable. Dedicated to past Presidents, the Christmas trees were decorated with Presidential theme ornaments. You could spend a lot of time at ease in this room with its collection of over 2700 books. But we have to move on.

The East Room. This is the one you see on the TV, the room where bill signing ceremonies, medal presentations and other events take place. You get a better sense of its historic significance with the prominent portraits of George and Martha Washington.

The Blue Room. This is the only room I wanted to see starting out. Actually, I wanted to see the official White House Christmas tree because of news reports

about the annual competition and selection. It was a beautiful 18-foot Douglas fir donated by Mahantongo Valley Farms in Pitman, Pennsylvania. It was decorated with handmade paper flowers distinctive for every state. In some way it seemed a shame to have it cut down.

The State Dining Room. Now we're thinking about food. They said you could seat 140 guests here for



dinner, although the room didn't seem large enough to me to handle that. Maybe Mark could see how they might do it. The main thing here, and the focus of all the visitors, was the ginger bread White House and models of landmarks from around the country, including Mount Rushmore, the Statue of Liberty, the Alamo and the Liberty Bell. They said that White House pastry chefs used 200 pounds of ginger bread, 125 pounds of white sugar paste, 35 pounds of chocolate and 25 pounds of icing and even more creatively, pasta to make the stairs and railings. It was impressive. My question is: what happens to this delicious looking pastry now? I'll bet the White House staff won't start their New Year's weight loss resolutions right away. So that pretty much brought us to the end of our tour through the East Wing. If anyone wondered how they managed to do all this, the answer is something familiar to all of you.

Volunteers. More than 200 volunteers came from around the country to help decorate the 58 trees and all the rooms and hallways during the Thanksgiving weekend. The Office of the First Lady noted that the holiday display would not have been possible without the efforts of the volunteers. Where have we heard that before?

Final Thoughts. True to the holiday theme, there was a real sense of the "Spirit of America" in the tour. Not only in the decorations, traditions and historical settling, but in the crowd of visitors. People seemed to be in a holiday mood, friendly, courteous and helpful. It reminded me of our 4th of July celebrations here. United, not divided by politics or anything else. There's a carving of the Great Seal of the United States over the entrance door of the Blue Room. Emblazoned on the scroll in the eagle's beak are the words "E Pluribus Unum," Latin for "Out of Many, One." That perfectly describes the public mood. Call it patriotism or something else. It's a reassuring feeling. That's what made our visit so memorable.

Rosemary and I hope everyone enjoys a healthy and very happy New Year 2020.

Jerry Hardiman

ALASKA CRUISE 2021

I have been asked by many people to consider going to Alaska on our annual VFW Cruise. I have done a lot of research and was waiting for the best available Cruise to become available. Well the wait is over; I have booked and secured 35 cabins on the Carnival Miracle for an 11 day Cruise round trip from San Francisco. We will stop at the Ports of Ketchikan, Icy Strait, Skagway, Juneau, Cruise the Tracy Arm Fjord, and Victoria BC Canada. We will depart San Francisco on 6/20/2021 and return 7/1/2021. Our plan is to go to San Francisco on the 18th so we can enjoy this beautiful city before we depart. A copy of the Cruise Flier with pricing is included in this newsletter. Cruising with the VFW Group is very easy. If you decide on this trip call Becky at Bethany Travel 302-933-0955 and she will help you in securing a cabin. Once we determine the amount of people going I will secure Transportation, Airfare and Hotels for the Group. The price on the flier is for the cruise only. Please secure your Cabin early as this deal is good thru 2/22/2020 at this rate with a \$400 pp deposit. This will be our 5th annual VFW Cruise and on each Cruise we make more friends from the Post. Do not be left on the Dock. If you have any questions I will be happy to help you.

Mark

CARNIVAL MIRACLE

11 Day Alaska Cruise from San Francisco, CA

Departing June 20th 2021

Sunday-San Fran CA Monday-Fun Day at Sea
 Tuesday-Fun Day at Sea Wednesday-Ketchikan AK
 Thursday-Icy Strait Point AK Friday-Skagway AK
 Saturday-Juneau AK Sunday-cruise Tracy Arm Fjord
 Monday-Fun Day at Sea Tuesday-Victoria BC Canada
 Wednesday- Fun Day at Sea Thursday-San Fran CA

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

Inside Cabin(4K).....	\$1433.64
Oceanview(6A).....	\$1608.64
Balcony Cabin (8C).....	\$2108.64
Balcony Cabin (8D).....	\$2118.64
Balcony Cabin 8E).....	\$2128.64
Balcony Cabin (8F).....	\$2138.64

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

\$400.00 per person
 on or before February 22nd 2020 and final on or before March 12th 2021
 cabin number assignment and dining confirmed when you have paid \$400.00 per person

\$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

VFW FRIDAY NIGHT BUFFET

JANUARY 17th, 2020

5:00 – 7:00 pm

SLICED ROAST BEEF
 MASHED POTATOES & GRAVY
 VEGETABLE OF THE DAY
 FRIED FISH TOSSED SALAD
 ROLLS & BUTTER

Donation: \$12 AYCE

MUSIC 6-10 pm
 DJ JT CRUISE

VFW FRIDAY NIGHT BUFFET

JANUARY 24th, 2020

5:00 – 7:00 pm

SHRIMP SCAMPI
 SAUSAGE CACCIATORIE
 VEGETABLE OF THE DAY
 FRIED FISH CAESAR SALAD
 GARLIC BREAD & BUTTER

Donation: \$12 AYCE

MUSIC 6-10 pm
 DJ: JT CRUISE

VFW FRIDAY NIGHT BUFFET

JANUARY 3rd, 2020

5:00 – 7:00 pm

HAM & CABBAGE
 BOILED POTATOES
 VEGETABLE OF THE DAY
 FRIED FISH TOSSED SALAD
 ROLLS & BUTTER

Donation: \$12 AYCE

MUSIC 6-10 pm
 DJ ROCKIN RAY

VFW FRIDAY NIGHT BUFFET

JANUARY 10th, 2020

5:00 – 7:00 pm

CHICKEN MARSALA
 RED ROASTED POTATOES
 VEGETABLE OF THE DAY
 FRIED FISH TOSSED SALAD
 ROLLS & BUTTER

Donation: \$12 AYCE

MUSIC 6-10 pm
 DJ ROCKIN RAY

VFW FRIDAY NIGHT BUFFET

JANUARY 31st, 2020

5:00 – 7:00 pm

ROAST PORK TENDERLOIN
 SAUERKRAUT - STUFFING
 VEGETABLE OF THE DAY
 FRIED FISH CAESAR SALAD
 GARLIC BREAD & BUTTER

Donation: \$12 AYCE

DJ: JT CRUISE
 MUSIC 6-10 pm

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Commander	Dean Levering
Sr. Vice Cmdr	Hal Dietrich
Jr. Vice Cmdr	Rich Fales
Quartermaster	Bill Hensley
Adjutant	Fulton Loppatto
Chaplain	John Mitchell
Judge Advocate	John Gossart Jr.
Surgeon	George Hickman
Officer of the Day	Rob Gill
Guard	James Jensen
Service Officer	Bob Corsa
Honor Guard Capt	Paul Burbank
Trustee	Danny Steele
Trustee	George Smith
Trustee	Ed Wolfe

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman	Hal Dietrich
President	Dean Levering
Vice President	Fulton Loppatto
Treasurer	Bill Hensley
Secretary	Ken Weber
Board Member	Frank Mathers
Board Member	Rich Fales
Board Member	Hal Barber
Board Member	John Mitchell
Board Member	Rick Delaney
Board Member	Mike Grabowski

AUXILIARY TEAM

President	Carol Weber
Sr Vice Pres	Ellen Reilly
Jr Vice Pres	Dale Weese
Secretary	Ty Magliola
Treasurer	Roberta Walter
Chaplain	Theo Loppatto
Guard	Shirley Stong
Conductress	Karen Vitsorek
Patriotic Ins	Jackie Umstetter
Trustee	Connie Weber
Trustee	Debbie Vischer-Jensen
Trustee	Larry Hamby

Our Sr Vice Commander, Hal Dietrich 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:
Dean Levering 443-553-1167**

**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:
Rich Fales (301)325-3813 or email me at
Smokey1st@netzero.net**

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