



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS MASON DIXON POST 7234

SEPTEMBER 2020

COMMANDERS COMMENTS

We started the month with a presentation at our monthly meeting from the "Quilts of Valor" Organization to Past Commander Dean Levering. Some of us have known about this presentation for over a year. We were just waiting until better safety protocols were in place. Then on Friday August 21st



they made a presentation of a Quilt to a member of the Greatest Generation, World War II and 2 time Bronze Star Recipient Ernest Marvel, a 96 year young Life Member of Our Post. The organization will return on Veterans Day for more presentations. On

August 5th we started Flip Five. However due to Covid 19 restrictions we are limited on the amount of tables allowed. Canteen Manager Mark Daughaday and Quartermaster Bill Hensley did a tremendous job figuring out how to accommodate everyone allowed due to the Covid-19 restrictions and all of our attendees have been doing their part in following the Post Guidelines and our Social Distancing requirements. Thank You All for your cooperation. Some may have noticed that when approaching our Post via Marshy Hope Way, that under our sign someone chose to place a political sign underneath it. The sign said "Veterans for....." with a candidate's name. That sign gave some the impression that we were endorsing a certain candidate. I also received numerous calls regarding that sign. Mason Dixon VFW Post 7234, VFW Department of Delaware and VFW National is NOT allowed to endorse any candidate for political office. I want to thank Our

Auxiliary President Ellen Reilly for her assistance in helping getting that sign removed.

There is still time to get your Department of Delaware VFW Gun Raffle tickets. The 1st drawing is for an S&W-M&P-9mm Range Kit Hand Gun. The 2nd drawing is for a Remington 12 gauge semi-automatic shotgun. The 3rd drawing is for a Rugar AR556 American Flag Cerakote. Tickets are 1 for \$10.00 or 3 for \$25.00. You can see me or Dean Levering for tickets. If you win, you must pass a background check, all FFL Laws apply or you may take the cash cost buyout. The drawing will be held on November 8th at the Council of Administration meeting.

As we try and embrace the restrictions of this new normal (hopefully the old Normal will return soon), our Post is a Great Place to come down to relax, have something to eat. Enjoy a drink and visit with old friends and comrades. Our bartenders, kitchen staff and volunteers are all looking forward to seeing everybody. So if you feel comfortable, bring your mask and join us, we would love to see you.

**May God bless all our Veterans.
All Those who served
Those who are now serving
&All those who didn't return.
May God bless America**

Hal Dietrich
Commander
732-371-2564

AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Well I don't know about anyone else but I am looking forward to some cooler temperatures. Welcome fall! It's great to see we are gradually easing back to some activities at the post. Everyone is eager to get out and enjoy the things we were used to. Welcome back cheese steaks, Flip Five, and crab night and of course



ice cream. The auxiliary is selling ice cream on these special nights. So get out and support our post but don't forget to adhere to the guidelines so we don't lose these activities once again. Although the COVID 19 rules can change at any moment, we are at least planning on some events. The auxiliary is planning a small 9/11

tribute to honor the memory of the victims, volunteers, officers and firemen who were affected by that horrific day. Try to join us for a moment of silence. September 11th is a Friday so come out and support our post. There will be the usual Friday night buffet. We are also planning on having our cancelled fundraiser with Bryan Clark in October. There is additional information in the newsletter.

Our county has been under so much stress this year so fly your American flag proudly and support our veterans any way you can.

I'm very excited to let everyone know the auxiliary has its own face book page. You can search for "vfwauxiliary 7234" and stay informed as to what we are all about and what new things we'll be doing. Thanks to Beth Douglas for getting this up and running. Let her know if there is anything you would like to see on the page.

Our next auxiliary meeting is September 7th at 7:00. If you are an auxiliary member please try to join us and see the inner workings of our auxiliary. We will also have a special presentation before the post and auxiliary meeting at about 6:45 in conjunction with the post.

Just a reminder to let someone know if there is an auxiliary member that is ill or in need of some help and we will do the best we can to offer assistance.

Respectfully

Mary (Ellen) Reilly

President

908-451-0624 TRIPLETMOM1@GMAIL.COM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOTES

From the Board of Directors – August 28, 2020

The Board met on August 25, 2020 with all members in attendance, along with the President of the VFW Auxiliary.

Items reviewed:

Guidelines for the bartenders with minor changes for review at the bartenders meeting scheduled in September. A committee has been formed to review the Post rental agreement on the current Covid 19 guidelines along with surrounding rentals. The bridge over the rocks will be rebuilt in September. The awnings will come down and stored after Labor Day. Basket of Cheer tickets will be available shortly for End of Summer raffle. A new entrance sign coming on our property, will be in place near the end of September or early October. This is a deterrence for the increasing number of non-members coming to the Post grounds to include the beach to hang out.



Next Board meeting will be September 29, 2020 at 1800 hrs. Members are welcomed.

Stay safe.

Chairman Tony Adams



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.



*Gerald F. Layton
Thomas W. Zborel
Paul E. "Buddy" Neill, Sr.*

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

Wrongful VA Denial of Benefits to Vets with Bad Paper Discharges

Last month I wrote about the type of discharges a veteran may receive. Why is this so important? Because approximately 125,000 post-9/11 veterans with bad paper discharges are being wrongfully excluded from basic veteran services by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The culprit is VA's own regulations, which do not match eligibility standards set up by Congress in 1944 in the original GI Bill of Rights.

What Are Bad Paper Discharges? Why Are They So Bad?

Bad paper discharges occur when service members leave the military under circumstances the military deems "less than honorable." These can be discharges labeled "other than honorable conditions"



or "bad conduct" or "dishonorable." The "bad conduct" and "dishonorable discharge" can only be issued as a sentence of a court-martial. Congress provided that those issued discharges under "other than honorable conditions" can only be barred from basic VA services if the

veteran's misconduct would have led to a "dishonorable discharge" in a court-martial proceeding.

Post 9/11 veterans are being excluded from basic veteran services at unprecedented rates. The VA is excluding 125,000 veterans who served since 2001 without ever reviewing their service – including at

least 33,000 who deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. That amounts to 6.5% of all men and women who served in the military since 2001 (only 2.8% of Vietnam era veterans and 1.7% of World War II era veterans were excluded by VA).

VA's regulations exclude veterans unfairly. Only 1% of service members discharged in 2011 would be barred from VA services if the criteria set up by Congress were followed by VA. Regulations used by VA result in the exclusion of an additional 5.5% of all service members.

The VA is not consistently applying its regulations. In 2013, VA Regional Offices denied eligibility to 90% of veterans with bad paper discharges, but there is wide variation between offices. While the Boston Regional Office denied 69% of veterans, the Indianapolis Regional Office denied 100%.

Veterans who need VA services (and should be eligible) are not gaining access even if they appeal. Three out of four veterans with bad paper discharges who served in combat and have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are denied eligibility by the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

The VA excludes more veterans from some service branches than others. Marine Corps veterans are nearly 10 times more likely to be ineligible for VA services than Air Force veterans.

What is the VA Not Doing?

Under the "GI Bill of Rights" passed by Congress in 1944, the VA is obligated to evaluate the "character of the discharge" in determining if a veteran can access basic VA services, such as healthcare, housing, disability benefits and burial benefits. If a veteran has not committed a felony or other serious crime that would have led to a "dishonorable discharge" in a court-martial proceeding, the statute says he or she should be deemed eligible for VA services. Congress also instructed the VA to consider positive or mitigating factors of military service, such as combat service, hardship, or a mental health condition related to military service.

But in reality, VA's existing regulations do not match the statute Congress passed in 1944. "Because VA's regulations wrongly allow it, the VA has been excluding veterans discharged with bad paper for minor offenses. Even disabled veterans with honorable combat service or those whose mental disorders led to their discharges have been blocked by the VA from receiving any help. This is plainly not what Congress intended.

There are several ways to get a discharge upgraded. Some are easier than others. If you or someone you know needs to get their discharge upgraded or are being unreasonably denied VA benefits, contact me and I will attempt to get the problem solved. I have done it for several other veterans.

In Comradeship,

H. Rich Fales, Post Service Officer
(301) 325-3813
Smokey1st@netzero.net

HONOR GUARD NEWS

The Honor Guard received sad news this month. Cliff Beiermeister, an 18 year member of our Honor Guard passed away at age 84. Cliff was a US Army Korean veteran and lifetime member of our Post. Rest in Peace, Cliff.

In addition, we received news that our long term Honor Guard Captain, Paul Burbank has stepped down. Paul has sold his home in Ocean View and is moving. He and Pat will be greatly missed! Paul joined Post 7234 in 2011 when he moved here from Virginia Beach. Almost immediately, he joined the Honor Guard and became involved with the Post. A year later, he was appointed Captain of the Honor Guard and has served with distinction for nearly 9 years. During his tenure, Paul recruited 12 of the 16 current members. And he trained each of us! He presided over 100 services and raises over \$12,000 for the Honor Guard which helped purchase and



maintain our uniforms, supplies and rifle maintenance. He conducted 3 successful raffles for a scooter, electric bikes and cash prizes to benefit our Honor Guard. And Paul took care of the Honor Guard! He held an annual Thank You Dinner for our members and their spouses and made sure we knew that he was grateful for our service

to the Post. He told me that he joined the Honor Guard and became Captain because it was extremely important to him that our Post veterans receive a proper burial and salute for their service to our country. Paul also convinced the command that after each service performed, the Honor Guard participants receive a drink ticket so that we could join together at the bar to toast and salute our deceased comrade. Thank you for that Paul!

Paul first joined the Army National Guard in 1976 at age 17 and served for 3 years. He then enlisted in the Navy in 1979 and served for 20 years (1979 – 1999). He served in Desert Shield, Desert Storm, and the

Kuwait Liberation. Paul is a decorated veteran with 3 Navy Expeditionary Medals, 1 Expeditionary Armed Forces Medal, the Distinguished Service Medal and numerous other decorations.

We thank Paul for his outstanding service to the Honor Guard and Post 7234. “Fair Winds and Following Seas” to our friend and comrade in arms! Finally, this month the Honor Guard conducted services for 3 veterans.

Charles Marvel, a WWII veteran and member of the Honor Guard at the Millsboro VFW Post.

Richard Webster, a Korean Veteran and a life member of our Post.

William Black, a Korean Veteran and life member of our Post.

If you are interested in becoming a member of Post 7234 Honor Guard, please contact me, John Gossart at 240-304-8183.

CANTEEN CORNER

Summer is over and the Post is slowly getting back to our normal activities. While we are still limited, we monitor the Governors orders weekly to determine the rules we must adhere to. Please be assured that the safety of our members is the Number 1 priority.

We started Flip 5 in August and it has been very successful. Thank you to our members for calling in for reservations and abiding by the procedures in place. We will continue to use the procedures in place in September. Any changes will be communicated.

We will have our Crab Feast on September 13th from 3-7pm. Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased on Friday night between 5&7pm. At the current time tables are limited so we are asking that you get your groups together before purchasing your tickets. Tables are limited to 6 people. If guidelines change we will add more tables. At the current time we are planning on our Bull & Oyster Roast on October 10th. Ticket information will come out later and be communicated by an email. I will like to give a very special shout out to 3 of our Bartenders. Since we have opened Bob, Debbie and Bev were the only 3 bartenders and they made sure that every shift was covered 7 days a week. They are the reason we have been able to get back to the activities and be successful. Please take some time on your next visit to Thank Them!! We are hoping after Labor Day to be able to open our bar seating, and are currently awaiting the Governors directive. Please continue to use the bar tables when visiting.

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 7:30 a.m. for an 8:00 a.m. tee time. Sign up for play by sending an email to vwfgolf7234@gmail.com NLT noon on the Monday before the date of play. Remember all are welcome!!!

If you are thinking about joining the Golf Association, please contact our President, Ken Smith, at 267-228-7285 or madriviken1946@gmail.com for more information.

Ed Pike

BRYAN CLARK IS COMING BACK



The Auxiliary fundraiser, featuring Bryan Clark, scheduled for April, was cancelled due to the corona virus. With the partial reopening of the Post, we are planning a rescheduled date of October 11th. Since we are currently restricted to building occupancy of 60 percent capacity, tickets will be limited. Ticket cost will be \$25.00 and will be sold on Monday, September 14th and 21st from 5-7pm and sold by tables of 6. (In Person Sales Only.) The ticket price will include entertainment by Bryan, a buffet served by volunteers and a Chinese Auction. Unfortunately, at this time, dancing will not be allowed. If the current restrictions are lessened over the next several weeks, we will open it up for the sale of additional tickets, and maybe we can even dance. Since the Post has suffered financial loss over the past several months, proceeds will be shared equally between the Post and Auxiliary to be used for our Veterans Relief Fund. Get your group together and join us for a fun filled evening.

Loyally yours,
Carol Weber, Past Auxiliary President

SECRETS IN THE AIR, WINE AND BEER

I know that some members, who must remain unnamed, served in military intelligence assignments, including communications or signals intelligence work. One close



friend [redacted] spent years in an undisclosed intelligence career. Whenever we talk about experiences, it always a one-sided conversation. If you'd like to learn [very little] more about this subject, and about a winery and brewery to visit, you might enjoy this story.

Recently, I came across a couple of articles about a former Army intelligence facility in Virginia, Vint Hill Farms Station (VHFS), that is now home to a winery and brewery.

Early Days. The story begins in the 1930s when a farmer in the area near Warrenton, Virginia, who was also an amateur radio operator, found that he was able to pick up transmissions from Europe and other far away locations. Theory has it that the amazing reception was because of the geology of the area, which is about 30 miles south of Washington, DC. The bedrock is close to the surface and the rich soil has a high iron oxide content. Whether or not that theory can withstand scientific examination, the area reportedly was one of the four best places in the world to listen to radio signals. That fact did not go unnoticed when the United States entered World War II.

World War II. In 1942, the Army Signals Intelligence Service acquired about 700 acres in the area and established VHFS as Monitoring Station No. 1 for the collection, decoding and translation of high frequency Morse code and teleprinter communications. The crop grown on most of the farm land acreage was a huge field of antennas.

According to declassified information released by the National Security Agency (NSA), the station provided crucial intelligence throughout World War II. One example: The station intercepted a message from the Japanese ambassador in Berlin to Tokyo that described German fortifications, troop strength and plans in Normandy that General Eisenhower credited as extremely valuable in planning for D-Day. Other interesting examples provided, include [redacted], [redacted] and [redacted].

Cold War Years. After World War II until the 1970s, VHFS was one of the principal intercept stations of the Army Security Agency. Under direction of the NSA, its

main mission focus was on collecting Soviet military and diplomatic communications intelligence. Once again, the page of VHFS accomplishments provided by NSA is mostly blank. One example that slipped through because of disclosures was that the station played a crucial role in resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis providing extensive intelligence on Soviet and Cuban communications.

1970s to Closure. In the 1970s, a shift away from use of high frequency radio communication to reliance on microwave, satellite and computer technology diminished the role of VHFS. Its mission changed to research and development, training and support of NSA, CIA and FBI requirements. In the 1990s, the station wound up on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission chopping block and was officially decommissioned in 1997. The property was sold to Virginia for civilian redevelopment and today most of the land is occupied by technology companies and FAA air traffic control facilities. However, the main building area is now the Vint Hill Craft Winery, which opened in 2009.

In one interview, the managing partner of the winery said it's amazing how many visitors say they worked here years ago. But when he asks what they did here, they'll usually answer: "Did I say I worked here?" You can buy a T-shirt at the winery that reads: "You were never here."

Beer Too. Thankfully, for those of us who only know wine is either red or white, there's also a brewery on the site: The Old Bust Head Brewery. I didn't agree with a lot of the base closures, but to me this is better than beating "swords into plowshares," as Isaiah predicted. There's also a Cold War museum in one of the buildings, so if you're driving in the Warrenton, Virginia area, the site of Monitoring Station No. 1 would be an interesting and refreshing place to stop.

There are members of our Post who know far more about the secret intelligence world than I do. You just have to find them. Of course, they probably won't tell you anything.

Looking forward to September, here are some dates to keep in mind:

- 9/3 Japan signed formal surrender in WWII (1945)
- 9/7 Labor Day
- 9/11 Patriots Day
- 9/14 "The Star Spangled Banner" written by Francis Scott Key (1814)
- 9/17 U.S. Constitution approved (1787)
- 9/18 U.S. Air Force established (1947)
- POW/MIA Recognition Day

- Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown
- 9/22 Autumn begins
- 9/27 Gold Star Mothers Day
- Yom Kippur begins at sundown
- 9/29 VFW established (1899)

I hope everyone stays well and enjoys every day in September.

Jerry Hardiman



VFW Crab Feast
9/13/20
3-7pm
\$40 AYCE



Steamed Crabs
Steamed Shrimp
Fried Chicken
Hot Dogs
Md. Crab Soup
Corn on the Cob
Baked Beans
Cole Slaw
Potato Salad

Tickets are limited and will sold by Tables of 6
Ticket will be sold on Friday 8/28, 9/4, and 9/11 or until sold out
Ticket sales from 5-7pm
In Person Sales Only

Get your group together and get your tickets before it sells out

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNERS

9/4 STUFFED PORK LOIN

9/11 BAKED CHICKEN

9/18 MEATLOAF

9/25 CHICKEN MARSALA

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Commander	Hal Dietrich
Sr. Vice Cmdr	Tony Adams
Jr. Vice Cmdr	John Gossart Jr.
Quartermaster	Bill Hensley
Adjutant	Fulton Loppatto
Chaplain	John Mitchell
Judge Advocate	John Gossart Jr.
Surgeon	James Jensen
Officer of the Day	Rob Gill
Guard	James Jensen
Service Officer	Rich Fales
Honor Guard Capt	John Gossart Jr.
Trustee	Danny Steele
Trustee	George Smith
Trustee	Robert Criswell

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman	Tony Adams
President	Hal Dietrich
Vice President	John Gossart Jr.
Treasurer	Bill Hensley
Secretary	Ken Weber
Board Member	Frank Mathers
Board Member	Fulton Loppatto
Board Member	Ed Wolfe
Board Member	John Mitchell
Board Member	James Jensen
Board Member	Dean Levering

AUXILIARY TEAM

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

Our 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 JOHN GOSSART 240-304-8183

Member in Need of Assistance

Please call:

Hal Dietrich 732-371-2564

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