



NEW YORK STATE OVERSEAS VETERAN

Official Publication
Dept. of New York,
Veterans of Foreign Wars
of the United States

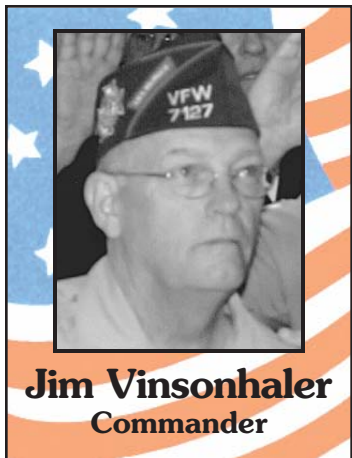


“Service and Representation”

June/July 2005

Jim Vinsonhaler, New York State Commander

Volume 25, Issue 2



Jim Vinsonhaler
Commander

In just a few short weeks, the 2004-2005 year will be coming to an end. I wish to thank all of you for having provided me the opportunity to serve as your Department Commander this year. Traveling throughout the Department this year has given me the chance to see the many great things that the membership



does, not only for the VFW but their communities, schools, service members and much ... much more.

I want to thank all of you for your support with the Department special project this year “cell phones for soldiers” which was a tremendous success. I can assure that all your help with this project has given many service men and women serving abroad many happy moments with their families and friends at home.

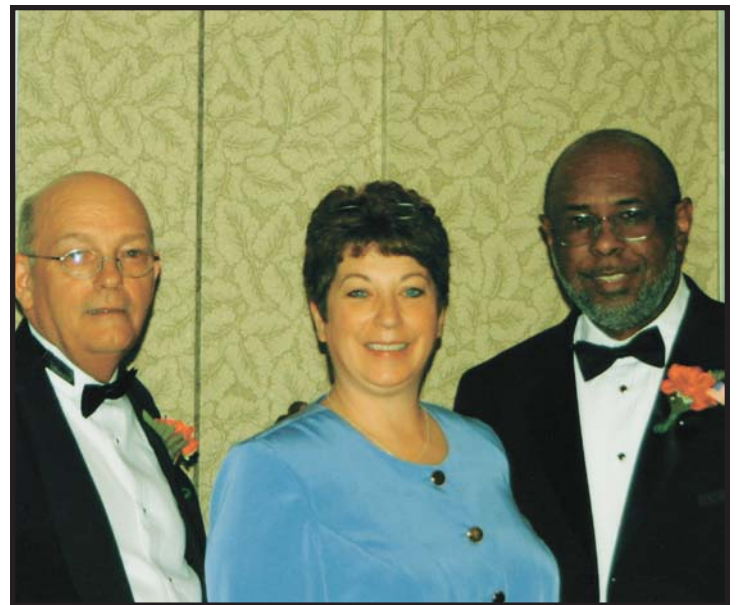
I want to thank the Ladies Auxiliary for having elected Terry McGarr as Department President this year. It has not only been a pleasure to have served with Terry but also a lot

of fun. (We do a little of that now and then).

Shortly, you will be electing new officers for the ensuing year; and I wish them the most success in all their endeavors as well as offer any support that may be asked of me. Please keep in mind that when you raise your right hand and take the oath of office, it is more than just a few lines from our ritual, it is a commitment to the organization and yourselves as leaders.

We look forward to seeing all of our comrades at the upcoming convention in Buffalo this June. Get involved ... be part of this great organization.

Yours in Comradeship,
Jim Vinsonhaler, Commander



L-R: Department Commander James H. Vinsonhaler, Department Auxiliary President Terry McGarr and Bill Bradshaw, the head of Veterans Services officers in D.C.

Conference Schedule

Dates	Conference	Location
22-26 Jun. 05	State Convention	Buffalo, NY
29-31 Jul. 05	OTI	Binghamton
20-25 Aug. 05	National Convention	Salt Lake City, UT
14-16 Oct. 05	Fall Conference	Liverpool
28 Oct. 05	Statue of liberty birthday Celebration	Liberty Island, NY
21-23 Jan. 06	Legislative Conference	Albany
5-8 Mar. 06	Natl. Community Service Conference	Washington, DC
6-9 Mar. 06	Natl. Legislative Conference	Washington, DC
21-23 Apr. 06	Spring Conference	Syracuse
21-24 Jun. 06	State Convention	Binghamton
26-31 Aug. 06	National Convention	Reno, NV
18-23 Aug. 07	National Convention	Kansas City, MO
16-21 Aug. 08	National Convention	Orlando, FL
15-20 Aug. 09	National Convention	Phoenix, AZ

Contact Department for info at 1-518-463-7927 or <http://www.vfwny.com/conferences/conf.sched.htm>



Post #524-Corning – The largest flag pole in the city is located at Post #524. When it was broken, the city of Corning and its Fire Department came to the rescue. Thanks to City Manager Mark Ryckman and Al Lewis. A personal thanks, from “Doc.”



Photographer:
William Juteau



State Editor:
William “Doc” Schmitz

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2004-2005 State Officers

Commander:
James Vinsonhaler
Sr. Vice Commander:
James McNally
Jr. Vice Commander:
Donald Doell
Judge Advocate:
Philip C. Schiffman, PSC
Surgeon:
Robert Barnhart
Quartermaster:
Jim Longendyke
Adjutant:
Art Koch III, PSC
Chaplain:
Rev. Edward R. P. Kane
State Chief-of-Staff:
Robert Stinger
Inspector:
Jack Haight
Patriotic Instructor:
James Wilson

POLICY
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The views expressed herein are those of the writers and, unless otherwise stated, do not reflect the positions of NYSOV or its staff.

All members and other interested parties are encouraged to submit articles, opinions, letters to the Editor, or any other copy of pictures for publication on subjects relevant to veterans' issues and concerns. *New York State Overseas Veteran* reserves the right to edit material for length or grammar and to reject any material that is deemed not to meet current editorial needs.

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Donald Doell Junior Vice Commander



**Donald Doell
Jr. Vice Commander**

What do you do with all your spare time? Nationally, the VFW and Ladies Auxiliary donated close to twenty million volunteer hours in areas such as veterans' service, community service, legislation, and Americanism.

Is May 1, 2005 to July 4, 2005 a busy time? Our members participate in activities such as: Loyalty Day, Post elections, County Convention, District Convention, State Convention, Armed Forces Day, the moving Vietnam Wall Memorial, POW/MIA services, Testimonial dinners, Post installation of officers, distribute Buddy Poppies, visit a vet at the VA, talk to an elected official, Memorial Day parade, Memorial Day services, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Flag Day, weddings, birthdays, graduations, the Fourth of July. What makes the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Ladies Auxiliary the best of all organizations? Its members make it the best. Thanks to all who have taken time to volunteer to make our communities better places to live.

Before we close out this year, we still have time for this year's programs and, of course, membership. Commander Jim Vinsonhaler has worked long and hard for the Department of New York; and, again, he has led by example. He should be an inspiration to us all. With some effort, all our goals can be met. A few more white hats wouldn't hurt.

A new VFW year begins in July with two dates worth noting (besides the Commander and President's homecoming celebrations). First is July 21, 2005, which is scheduled to be New York Day at the National Home for Children. Contact National Home For Children trustee PSC Melvin Garrett (Post 6396) or State National Home for Children Chairman Robert Walton (Post 1602).

Next date is July 29-31, 2005, for OTI (Officers Training Institute) at SUNY, Binghamton. This is a must for newly elected officers and new members. Some of you old salts and old dogs might even learn a few new tricks. Anyway, we always manage to have a good time. What evil lurks at the next mock meeting?

Congratulations to all the officers both elected and appointed for the 2005-2006 VFW year. I wish you a great deal of success and the very best of luck for your year. Although, as Thomas Jefferson said: "I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it."

Loyally,
JVC Don Doell



Taking a break from meetings, meetings, meetings – L-R: PDC Harold Burke, Jr., Department Junior Vice Commander Don Doell and Department Commander James Vinsonhaler.

James McNally Senior Vice Commander



**James McNally
Sr. Vice Commander**

and they are well represented at VFW Post 7325 in Constantia, NY. During my attendance at the Oswego County Council testimonial, there I notices several flags mounted on the walls. There were 13 star, 38 star, 35 star American flags in their meeting hall along with a Spanish naval banner captured by American forces during a battle in the Philippines on May 1st, 1898. There is a lot of history in our state.

Along the lines of showing patriotism and supporting our troops. The national organization has started a program called America Bands Together. They are going to sell red elastic wristbands and encourage as many persons as possible to wear one as a way of reminding everyone that every day should be Veterans Day. Their goal is to have one million Americans wearing one by Veterans Day this year. The cost is \$3.50 each and are available online at americabandstogether.org. Seventy percent of the profit will go to emergency assistance to our troops, 20% will strengthen existing programs, and 10% will be reinvested in the program.

Congratulations to all outgoing Commanders and Presidents for the hard work in our organization. Our incoming officers will face new challenges this year; but with a can-do attitude, I am confident the work will be done.

See you at the Convention.

For 33 years, the Queensbury VFW Post 6196 has been celebrating Loyalty Day on May 1st. This year, it was no different. They start out hosting a dinner at the Post on April 30th with attendees from all over the District. Local officials were invited and participated. The next day they held a flag raising and ceremonies outside the Post assisted by color guards from various Veterans' organizations and the local fire department. The day was capped off by a parade from Glens Falls to the Queensbury Post with the Mayor of Glens Falls attending. At the end of the parade, about 250 persons were treated to an outdoor hot dog, hamburger, sausage buffet. Prizes were then awarded to Units in the parade. What a fine effort by this Post to raise patriotic awareness in the community.

Flags and banners are an important part of our heritage,



VFW hats – L-R: William Bradshaw, National Veterans Service Director; Senior Vice James McNally, and Commander James Vinsonhaler posing with Fort Drum active duty personnel. "Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers" does community service to help others.

Teacher of the Year 2004-2005

List of Participants:

Helen Bolen, Cleveland Elementary School,
140 Bridge Street, Cleveland, NY 13042
Lori Koopman, Acadia middle School,
970 Route 146, Clifton Park, NY 12065
Judith Fiske, Hartford Central School,
4704 Sate Road, Route 149, Hartford, NY 12838

Sandy Debus, Tesago Elementary School,
970 Route 146, Clifton Park, NY 12065
Linda Shaver, J M McKinney Middle School,
99 Start Street, Canton, NY 13617
Thomas Nally, Kings Park High School,
200 Route 25A, Kings Park, NY 11754

Community Service Chairman
Richard L. Ventkowski

Post 9263 Elwood Commack

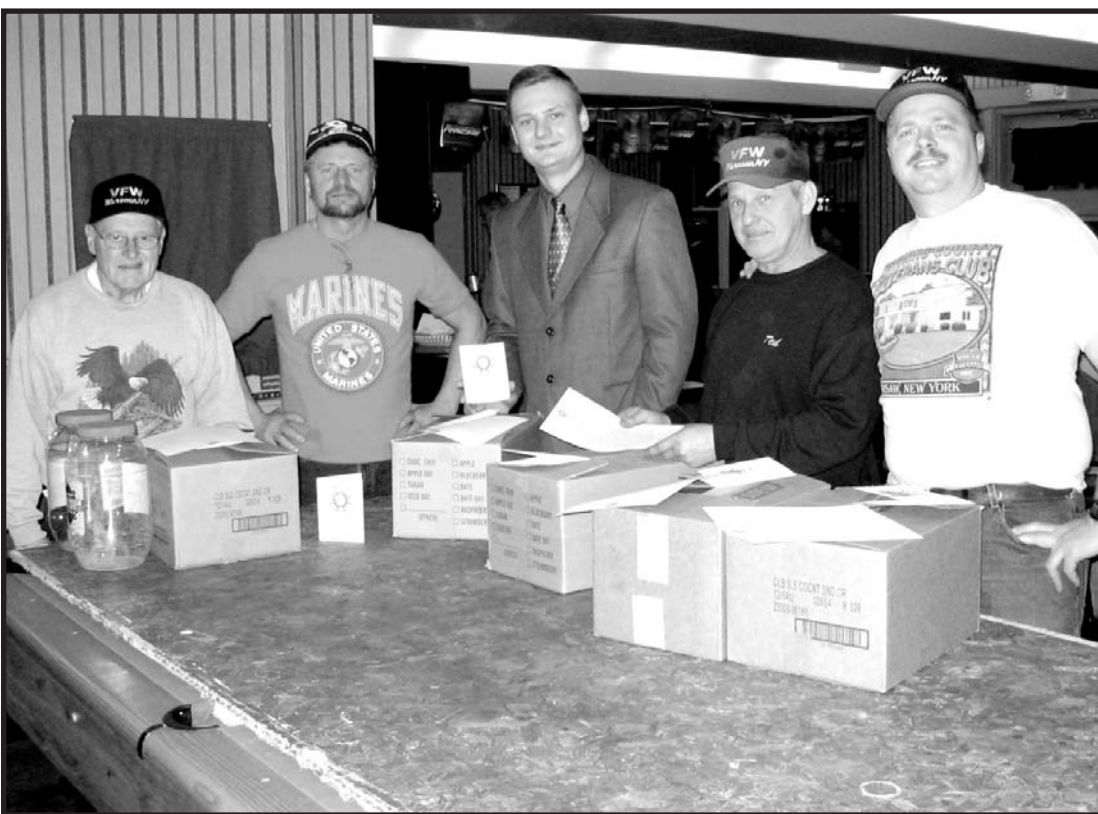


Officers and members of VFW Post 9263 Elwood Commack

During the past year, my wife, Pat Amore, Ladies Auxiliary member #4928, answered an email from a soldier in Iraq. This soldier sent his email address to Suffolk County Ladies Auxiliary, and my wife replied. After a time of emailing back and forth, the holidays were upon us. We wanted to do something special, so my wife and I, Post Commander Fred Amore, decided to send a few packages for Christmas. We asked this soldier what he and the others really needed, and we sent it to him. To show his thanks and appreciation, he sent an American Flag that flew in Iraq air space. That's the one in the picture. He also sent a flag to my wife and myself. This soldier is home now and is ready to retire after 21 years of service in the U.S. Army. We still email to keep in touch.

Yours in Commandership,
Fred Amore, Commander
 VFW Post 9263

Warsaw VFW Post 4823 Prepares Packages for Overseas Troops



Pictured L-R: Roger McGrath, Daniel Murtha, Brian Kaczmarak, Ted Wilkinson and Gary Gardner

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States National Veterans Service DSO Monthly Activity Report

Report as of April 1st, 2005

1. Office Interviews.....	2,155
2. Communications:	
a. Correspondence Received (on the average)..	150
3. Claims Filed.....	1,739
4. Powers of Attorney Filed.....	1,710
5. Case Files Reviewed.....	1,924
6. Ratings Cleared.....	405
7. Rating Inquiries.....	637
8. Appeal Actions:	
a. Notice of Disagreement.....	144
b. VA Form 9 Filed.....	39
c. Decision Review officer	
1. Conferences.....	31
2. Favorable Decisions.....	228
3. Unfavorable Decisions.....	122
d. VA Form 646 Filed.....	50
9. Health Care Assistance:	
a. Enroll 10-10EZ Compl.....	6
b. Health Care Ref. Asst.	190
c. Hospitalized Vets Visit.....	44
10. Number of Outreach Visits.....	45
11. New VFW Members.....	20
12. DISABILITY BENEFITS	Total Amount
a. Compensation.....	\$8,622,444
b. Pension.....	\$662,685
13. DEATH BENEFITS	
a. DIC.....	\$299,925
b. Pension.....	\$106,168
c. Burial.....	\$32,825
14. OTHER BENEFITS	
a. VR&E Vocational Rehabilitation.....	\$147,306
15. C & C Awards	
Continual Compensation.....	\$3,683,878

Mick Leavor
 Chairman

Buddy Poppy Report for Spring 2005 Conference

Our total as of April 1st was 470,000, which although more than 60% of goal is only 500 poppies above 2004 Spring Conference totals.

The goal for this year was lowered in order to provide a better opportunity to reach goal of 700,000. Unfortunately, the numbers between Spring Conferences remain relatively similar.

Memorial Day is just six weeks away. If every Post purchased just five hundred Buddy Poppies we would easily surpass goal. We appreciate the work thus far, but a lot of work remains before the Department Convention in June.

Department of New York VFW maintains exclusive distribution authorization. Current cost of

Buddy Poppies is \$130.00 per 1,000. If your Post has not ordered Buddy Poppies to date, now is the time to order for delivery before Memorial Day.

Welfare Fund receives all proceeds accumulated from Buddy Poppy receipts. With proper Buddy Poppy distribution planning, your Post Welfare Fund will become self sufficient while

helping members who are temporarily in need of assistance.

Remember Buddy Poppies are constructed by disabled veterans in hospitals throughout New York State. Post Buddy Poppy purchases assist your Post Welfare Fund while helping disabled veterans in veteran hospitals become a little self-sufficient. Buddy Poppies help

the distributor and producer. Every Post should include an annual budget item to purchase Buddy Poppies. This usually produces substantial increase to Post Welfare Fund.

Buddy Poppy orders will be delivered by Memorial Day. With your help, the goal of 700,000 could be achieved. Place your orders now.

Membership Director

All Post Quartermasters,

By now you should have received an election report from National. Section 217 of the Manual of Procedure states that Posts will hold elections during April. IT is important that you submit an election report as soon as possible after elections. The Election report is used by National, Department, District and County Council to prepare mailing lists.

Please remember that National will not send you a quartermaster's kit unless they have a properly completed election report on file. In addition, National will not list the quartermasters' name on the dues notices without an election report. Failure to submit a properly completed election report will result in our post's charter being cancelled by National.

The election report you received from National is a two part form, the original goes to National and the copy remains in the post. Please make a copy of the election report and send it here to Department Headquarters. It is important that we have a copy early so that we can prepare our mailing lists and state director. In addition, if National misplaces your report, we will have a copy to send them when we receive the listing of missing reports.

If you did not receive an election report, you can print a copy from the Department website at www.vfwny.com. If you don't have internet access, call the office and we will mail you a form.

Yours in comradeship,
Joseph Bernstein
 Membership Director

State Service Officers Raffle 2005

Prize Winners

1st Prize	\$500.00	Ladies Auxiliary Post No. 1374 Carmel, New York
2nd Prize	\$300.00	Rip Van Winkle Counties Council VFW
3rd Prize	\$200.00	Jesse Buchanan (We need your address, Jesse)
4th Prize	\$100.00	Ladies Auxiliary No. 2475 Glens Falls, New York
5th Prize	\$100.00	Robert Walton Batavia, New York
6th Prize	\$50.00	V.F.W. Post No. 7393 New York Mills, New York
7th Prize	\$50.00	Shirley Rockenstire Albany, New York

The State Service Officers Raffle Committee would like to thank everyone for your support on this year's raffle in which we made over \$8,000. Thank you, one and all.

Jim and Mary Longendyke
Bob Barnhart, George Clarke
Eddie Hedin, Chris Flieger, Jr.

A Farewell Message from State Quartermaster Jim Longendyke

At the Spring Conference Meeting held at Syracuse, New York, I announced that I would be seeking the National Council Member Area "C" position representing New York State on the National Council of Administration at our State Convention to be held at Buffalo, New York.

I also informed the C of A that I would not be seeking re-election as State Quartermaster for the ensuing year 2005-2006. I feel that I should not be holding the State Quartermaster job should I be elected as National Council Member.

I want to thank everyone, especially the Post Quartermasters for your support for the seven years that I have served our Department as your State Quartermaster. I tried to do my very best in serving you.

I want to also thank District No. 2, Hudson Valley County Council and Joyce - Schirick Post No. 1386 VFW for your



L-R: Department Quartermaster Jim Longendyke and Department Budget and Finance Chairman Harold Burke, Jr., discuss Department finances.

endorsement for the past seven years and PSC Mel Garrett who nominated me for the office each time I ran.

And last but not least, I

want to thank the Budget Chairmen I served under, Jack Simons, George Smith and Hal Burke, who managed our Department funds.

Local Post and Auxiliary Haspel Staab Post 551, VFW, Wins National Award

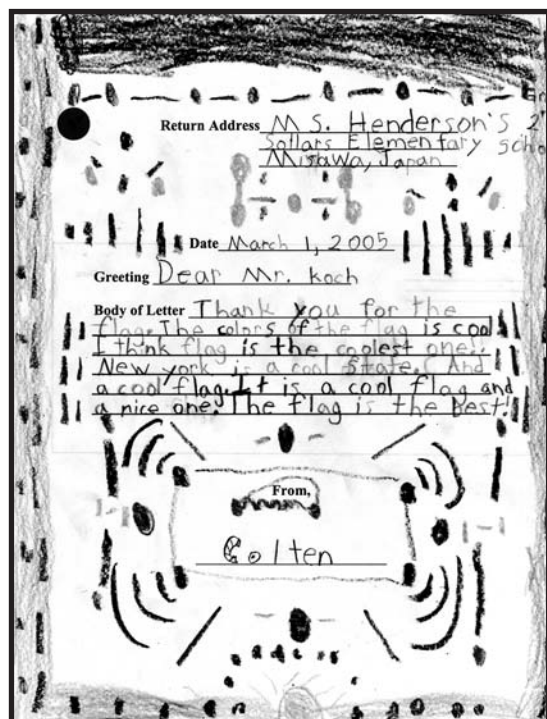
Criteria to receive this award is set by the VFW State Headquarters and the National organization for the community service work they do in the local area.

A reflective street sign was sent to the Post Headquarter for its place to be put so it could be seen as recognizing the work they did for the year 2004. This award also is in recognition of the Ladies Auxiliary for their part of the program.

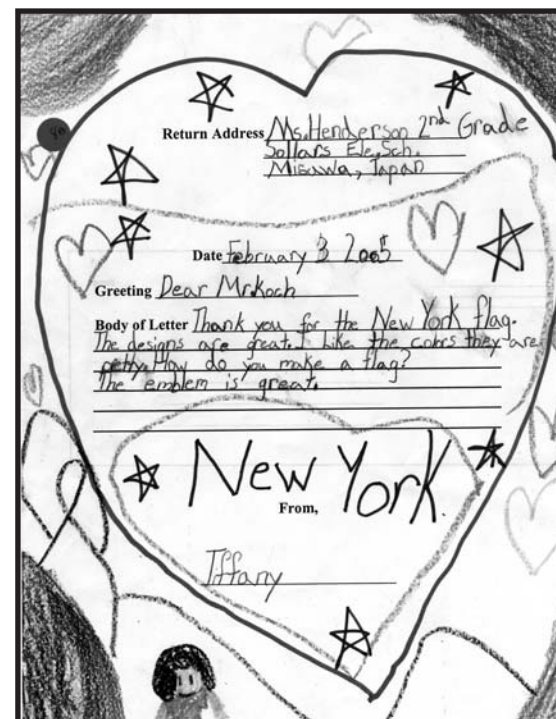
In announcing the award, VFW commander-in-Chief Edward S. Banas, Sr., said, "Through our community service program, we help in the building of a better and stronger America and we fulfill our commitment to serve America's veterans and their families



Ernie Thompson, Anthony Ferrarese and Frank Genco



L-R: Colten and Tiffany display a N.Y.S. flag at Sollars Elementary School, Misawa Air Force Base in Misawa, Japan. The flag was donated by the Department of New York VFW





Commander's special project is still ongoing and a great success. L-R: Department Surgeon Robert Barnhart, Special Project Chairman Henry Sanchez, and Rick Gales, Sr. Vice Nassau C.C. – 1,400 cell phones were turned in at the Spring Conference; 670 were turned in by Rick and the 2nd District.

Post 8495, Fairport – A Recognize Vietnam Veterans open house was held at the Post's home and the adjacent Freedom Hill. Approximately 200 Vietnam Veterans, friends, and family attended. The Ladies Auxiliary provided refreshments and snacks. Veterans' memorabilia from the Vietnam War era were displayed in the hall. Movie footages were shown of that era. Fairport Mayor Clark King read the Proclamation that designated the first day of May as Loyalty Day and the start of the Veterans of Foreign Wars "Vietnam Veterans Recognition Week". Left: Vietnam Veterans and former Post Commanders Jim Schenkel (President of the Periton Overseas Veterans) and (right) Pete "Doc" Swanson (Committee Chairman).



Post #54 Niagara Falls – L-R: Carol Box, Auxiliary President; Terry McGarr, Department Auxiliary President; Jo Anne Ott, National Auxiliary President; and Post Commander Mike Delgado; City Mayor Vince Anello presented a proclamation from the city at the gathering.



L-R: Eugene "Bud" Lembke, Past Convention Director and Elton "Al" Klein current Convention Director discuss particulars of the upcoming Department Convention.

All under One Roof Just park your car and enjoy

Department of NY State Convention

June 22-26, 2005

Adams Mark Hotel, Buffalo, NY

COMMANDER AND PRESIDENTS

DINNER

THURSDAY - 7 PM

DINNER AND DANCING TO "EDDIE O"

Business Sessions \$32.00 PER PERSON
Hospitality
Elections

Auxiliary Presidents Awards Luncheon Friday - 12 Noon

Joint opening ceremonies
Color guard competition
Thursday - 1:00 PM

Delegates Reception
Wednesday Evening
Following the C of A meeting

Naval Park Tour "USS Little Rock" Wednesday - 9:45 AM, picnic buffet



Post 8444, Albany, NY, Richard Battibulli (L) and Henry Rosenweig (R) – items shown were sent to an adopted unit of the 3rd Infantry Division in Iraq, a monthly "Support Our Troops" breakfast is held by the Post and Ladies Auxiliary to raise money on an ongoing basis.



Sergeant-at-Arms Robert Wasiczko is kept under control by (left) Department Quartermaster James Longendyke and (right) Bill McGarr, County Service Officer.



\$8,465.00 is raised at the Spring Convention, monies to go to the National Home For Children.



PSC Harry Wurth and Quartermaster of Post #5253 presents a check for \$501.00 for Operation Uplink to Jim Sheets, Military Assistant Chairman and Department Commander Jim Vinsonhaler.



Kelley Arnold receives a National Certificate of Appreciation for her work with veterans' families. L-R: Dan McCarthy, Senior Vice Commander James McNally, and Jim Sheets, Military Assistant Chairman.



And you thought the VFW meetings can get rough. Auxiliary President Terry McGarr prepares for a rough meeting.



PSC Harry Wurth accepts a Life Membership Award for his Post #5253; additional awards were given to Posts 420, 1469, 426, 375, 524, 5513, 7336 and 5253.



Department Commander James Vinsonhaler accepts his charter declaring him Department Commander presented by Bill Bradshaw, Director, National Veterans Service.



Spring Conference Membership meeting - Can you find Dan Meholczo in this photo?



Patriot's Pen Department winner placed 7th in National Competition. Bethany Rawleigh received \$500.00 from the Department and \$3,000.00 from National. Mike Spellmen, Department Chairman (center) aids Department Commander Jim Vinsonhaler in the presentation.



First Place Department Patriot's Pen winner Bethany Rawleigh and First Place Department VOD winner Matthew Warren enjoy their visit to the Spring Conference.



Robert Wasiczko receives recognition from Commander Vinsonhaler for life membership. Bob was also involved with the POW/MIA ceremony at West Point where over 250 people attended, and over \$1,500.00 was raised.



New Post #12033 is formed in N.Y.C. Fire Department - L-R: Past District Commander Szewozyk; Charles Miller, National Chief of Staff; Eugene Bryant, District 2 Commander and Department Commander James Vinsonhaler.



Post #6427-Barryville – St. Patrick's Day Parade – World War II Float – Looks cold to me, "Doc."



Post #7462-Piermont – L-R: Department Sergeant-at-Arms Bob Wasiczko and POW-MIA Vice Chairman Steve Brundage salute those remains that have been returned at the U.S. Military Academy's Old Cadet Chapel. Not in photo: John Krankus of Yonkers also was in attendance with many others.

Removal of Post Quartermaster of Post

The following will constitute the Department Judge Advocate's opinion with respect to declaring vacant the office of Post Quartermaster of Post for his alleged failure to properly carry out the duties of his office.

An inspection of the Post, by the County Council Commander as set forth in his correspondence to you, lists a litany of various and sundry alleged acts of nonfeasance, misfeasance and malfeasance of the Quartermaster of Post, none of which appear to be of a grave nature.

The County Council Commander has recommended that the Post Quartermaster of Post be relieved of his duties and the office declared vacant, and relies on Section 220, the third paragraph thereunder for his authority to take such drastic action.

The pertinent language of Section 220 of the National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure provides for declaring vacant the position of any elective officer is as follows:

"A Post, at a regular meeting, if notice of intent to do so has been given at a prior regular meeting, may be two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present declare vacant the position of any elective officer ... who has failed to fulfill the duties of office specified in Section 218 of the By-Laws and Manual of Procedure. No Post member may bring a motion before any Post meeting to vacate any elective Post office unless written notice of the proposed action has been given to the officer holding such office, the Post Adjutant and the Department Commander at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. The notice shall be mailed to such officer by certified or registered mail addressed to such officer's last known address and shall clearly state the reasons for the proposed action. The Post Adjutant shall give notice to the Post membership prior to the meeting that the matter of declaring the vacancy will be taken up. AT the meeting, the officer shall be advised of the facts underlying the proposed action and afforded an opportunity to present evidence in his own behalf."

Our National By-Laws and Manual of Procedure have no provision authorizing a County Council Commander to direct a Post Commander to declare vacant any elective Post office. This is best left to the Post Membership, or pursuant to the following paragraph of Section 220:

"The Department Commander may, with respect to any Post, within the Department, and with the concurrence of the District Commander, declare vacant the position of any Post officer who fails to fulfill the duties of his office as required by section 218. Such action, and reasons therefore, shall be reduced to writing, in the form of a Special Order, and delivered personally or by certified United States mail at the removed officer's last known address."

Another alternative would be to use the procedure set forth in Article IX – Discipline, of the National By-Law and Manual of procedure

Yours in comradeship,
Philip C. Schiffman, PSC
Judge Advocate
Department of New York
Veterans of Foreign Wars

Boy Scout Report

What makes this day different from all other days.

Sunday, April 3rd, 2005, we had a Court of Honor for two new Eagle Scouts. The beautiful Church of the Sacred Heart has the charter for Troop #49. The Sacred Heart church is located on 215 Place and 38th Avenue. The ceremony for Patrick J. Cazilas and Christopher M. Lombardo was just great. They each received the following gifts:

Certificate and U.S. Capital American Flag – Hon. Gary Ackerman

Certificate and Medal – Hon. Frank Padavan

Framed Certificate and speech – Hon. Tony Avella

Beautiful Citation and speech – Hon. John Liu

Savings Bond and Certificate – P.C. Jerry Knapp, Catholic War Veterans

Certificate Scout Bade and medal – Benjamin Singer, Queens County Chair, Whitestone Post 4787 Veterans of Foreign War

Certificate and History of the Eagle – Tom Maher, Adjutant, Marine Corps League

All of the other congratulations came from Boy Scout Officials, his church, N.Y. Post Page One, front-page news on both of the scouts. The Commander of Whitestone Post 4787 sent each Scout a very beautiful letter on Post stationery.

"As you go through life, you are an overachiever. If in your power to prevent, do not tolerate a bully. You are judged by the company you keep. You have free will. Use your talents to make your parents proud. Our Post VFW #4787 all wish you only success in your endeavors. Sincerely, Ernie Malvicini."

Best in Scouting
Benjamin Singer

VA Budget Heading in Wrong Direction

WASHINGTON (May 5, 2005) – By a narrow vote in the House (214-211) and Senate (52-47), Congress passed a budget proposal last week that recommended a \$990 million increase to next year's Department of Veterans Affairs health care system.

"This is a budget that's headed in the wrong direction," said the commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S., who's worried that Congress' recommendation could give appropriators a blueprint to focus more on reducing the federal deficit than helping disabled military veterans.

"There are costs to war that continue long after the last shots are fired," said John Furgess. "This proposal will have virtually no impact in the VA health care being provided to those returning from the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan, where modern medical care and body-armor advances are saving more lives, but often at the cost of limbs and other traumatic injuries."

The VA estimates it needs annual increases of 12 to 14 percent just to keep pace with inflation and other uncontrollable expenses. The \$990 million recommendation passed in the House and Senate is only an increase of 3.6 percent over FY 2005.

Furgess acknowledged that money isn't the only solution to the VA's problems, but the lack of proper funding creates far more problems throughout the entire system. That's why the VFW has volunteered its services to help Congress and the VA to create a plan for the out-years, a roadmap addresses funding, accountability, oversight, collections, benefits, infrastructure, personnel, and equipment acquisitions and upgrades.

"The VA operates the largest integrated health care system in the country," said Furgess. "And similar to other service industries, it must have a plan for the future that focuses on the lifelong health care needs of a new generation of veterans without compromising the care being provided to previous generations," he said.

"This new generation of American soldiers has the support of America. What these soldiers need is for their government to care for their minds and bodies if broken or for their families should they die," he explained. "What they might get, however, is a VA budget that fails to address their needs, one that defers VA's problems to the next Congress."

The VFW commander is now asking all veterans to contact their elected officials and urge them to increase VA funding before it is too late. The budget recommendation is now in the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to provide actual dollars.

"On behalf of our nation's 25 million veterans and those serving in uniform today, I urge this Congress to remember that the phrase, 'From a grateful nation,' means more than just a few words spoken at military funerals."

The Corpsman

On hearing that Vietnam corpsman
Donald Converso had died.

*Moving from place to place, sleeping in
A bombed-out school, Buddhist pagoda, Catholic church.
Parry and thrust, search and destroy.
Looking, searching, running, hiding.*

*U.S. Marine combined action platoon. Vietnamization.
Training Vietnamese Popular Forces and
Giving hope to terrorized villagers.
Ambushes, ambushed. Death in the heat and rain.
Forgotten and hated by those at home.*

*Boredom, anger, frustration, hate –
The friends of soldiers everywhere.
The trick: how to keep from slipping into an animal.*

*In the midst of the destroyers,
You were a man of hope and caring.
A corpsman.*

*Calming voice, reflective thoughts,
Bag of medicine ... a healer.
You helped keep our standards high.
A light and a reminder that the*

*World is not all weapons, killing and destruction.
Encouragement, loyalty, patching the wounded.
Doing what's needed to be done without fear.*

*Thirty-four years later, I hear you have died, old friend.
Trembling voice of your wife, Ann,
Sharing that you died on the porch
After working in the garden.
Do your neighbors know you are a hero?*

*As a corpsman and after the war,
You lived a life worth living.
A true companion.
A true companion.*

Kurt P. Dudt

POST TO POST

- POST #1371 – OWEGO – Commander George Carrigas and Post sponsoring a Vietnam Veterans Recognition party.
- POST #7172 – STATEN ISLAND – Voted to go non-smoking; Senior Vice George Congo did a great job on the New Year's party.
- POST #5298 – JAMAICA – Initiating a collection of items to be sent to our troops overseas.
- POST #4927 – CENTEREACH – Bob Soukup made a clock on display in the Post lounge. Friday night dinners, and Sunday breakfast.
- POST #1371 – OWEGO – hosting a formation meeting for the Marine Corps. Special Bingo to benefit support the troops done by Junior Girls Unit and the Sons of the VFW.
- POST #478 – BINGHAMTON – Chicken and biscuits, C.P.R. course, Karaoke, very busy Post.
- POST #524 – CORNING – Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Lions Club, Red Cross dinners and breakfasts all being hosted at the Post. Don Cromwell "little Doc" passed away; he was a Navy Corpsman with the Marines in Vietnam, over 300 attended a ceremony at the Post. He will be missed by this "Doc". God Bless.
- POST #398 – SALT CITY – Annual Golabki Cook Off, how "Doc" loves that food. Cash prizes, let's have a photo of that event – Please! Editors Ginny and Bob Maholick, nice job on the paper.
- POST #1666 – YONKERS – Paul and Barbara O'Brien complimented on a great job on the Super Bowl Party. Happy Birthday, John Jennings and David Kenney.
- POST #2478 – GLENS FALLS – Post received a \$30,000.00 check in a grant to help with Post upgrades. Patti did all the paper work (?Patti Slavin, Ladies Auxiliary President?)
- POST #1419 – HAMBURG – David Chambers, Commander, gun raffle, Men's Auxiliary up and running, busy schedule with a Corn Beef Dinner.
- POST #2913 – PATCHOGUE – Tony Petrovich is retiring from running the 200 Club after 10 years of a good job, Jim Ward will pick up the ball..
- POST #307 – ROCHESTER – George Shatzel paints pictures, and has decorated one-per month to raise money for the Post Building Fund. Now that's a good guy, how about a photo of George and his pictures. "Doc". Commander Dan Collins.
- POST #7279 – LINDENHURST – Happy Birthday, Alphonse Contino, Harry Stolberg, Jr., Walter Joseph. Now online, www.vfw7279.org.
- POST #2476 – RIVERHEAD – Kids Scholarship Program, golf outing to aid in the finances. Auxiliary President Christine Murphy is organizing the ladies for a few jobs about the Post.
- POST #7291 – GLENS FALLS – Brian Gillis, life member, is welcomed home by his Post members and community. Gillis served in Iraq with Headquarters Company of the 2nd Battalion of the 108th Infantry.
- POST #5253 – ALBERTSON – Quartermaster Harry Wurth is driving towards 100% membership for the Post. Editor Maurice "Moe" Steinberg, has an interesting historical article.
- POST #7462 – PIERMONT – The Post is starting a "G.I. Joe" statue project; it is in Phase I. Donations, contact Commander George Lynch.
- POST #516 – FARMINGDALE – Commander Bob Fullam and Post has gotten 100% in membership for five years in a row. Post bus trip to the monuments in D.C., planned trip to Atlantic City. "Doc" wishes he had a good photo of the 2004 Veterans Day Services.
- POST #8692 – ALBANY – Welcome to new members Alfondo Barbieri, Harold DeFreest, and David Traynor.
- POST #6196 – QUEENSBURY – Commander Robert Gilman is behind a major clean up around the Post. George "Check" Dailey was presented an award for his many years of service to the Post.
- POST #123 – RIDGEWOOD – Instead of flowers for deceased members' families, they are giving Flag Display Cases.
- POST #1498 – HALFMOON – Building Fund up and running. Easter ham raffle, 200 Club, Commander Tom Pollock.
- POST #416 – WILLIAMSVILLE – Kenny Fentner doing a good job painting. Ronald McDonald House thanked the Post for a donation. Lou Diakos setting up a trip to Washington, D.C..
- POST #7172 – STATEN ISLAND – House Chairman Bob Lane: "If you see a problem in the maintenance of the Post, i.e. cleaning, replacing towels or toilet paper, feel free to undertake that chore without formal approval." Great job, Bob – "Doc".
- POST #982 – REMSEN – Heart Walk raised \$1,500.00. Auxiliary President Joan Barnhart.
- POST #6394 – SYOSSET – Happy Birthday, Frank Kotowski, Gus Cutari, Theresa Owczar, and George Boult.
- POST #7765 – RED HOOK – New work on the parking lot, many thanks to Bob Frisenda for many years of work on the 200 Club? Are you doing a new monument? "Doc".
- POST #2813 – WOODSIDE – Published the names of members who have not paid their dues. 30th Engineers Army Reserve moved the Post equipment to the new facility. Any pictures? "Doc".
- POST #8691 – WASHINGTONVILLE – POW/MIA ceremony at West Point (photos would be nice – "Doc").
- POST #9249 – GRAND ISLAND – Mike Cutini, Dan McMahan, Bill Shickluna, Mark Gollwitzer, Steve DeMarco, and Danny Sexton got a big thanks for their work from Tom Roberts, Commander. Very active Men's Auxiliary. Nice job, President Dan Sexton.
- POST #5540 PHOENIX – Commander Lewis J. Steinbrecher has a very busy schedule with elections through Clambake, O.C.C. dinners and breakfasts.
- POST #2332 – JOHNSON CITY – Ladies Auxiliary President Sharon Goodman proudly announces 100% in membership since 2001. Men's Auxiliary President Robert Scheffer is extremely active with Post functions.