

NEW YORK STATE OVERSEAS VETERAN

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



August/September 2006

"We honor our warriors because they are brave and because by seeing death on the battlefield they come to respect the greatness of life."
-Winnebago Elder

Volume 26, Issue 3

Donald Doell Commander

Comrades,

The Fall Conference is now behind us. I feel that the Conference was a success in that the comrades and sisters left with a renewed and refreshed sense of purpose.

Many of our programs received a boost at the Conference. Membership will get a lift as we are planning membership workshops for each District. Joe Bernstein from Headquarters will coordinate between the Districts, Councils, and the Posts. The membership team and our nationally trained recruiters will be on hand to pass along information they have available to them. These workshops are in lieu of a dues roundup now that we are on direct dues to National.

The Department Special Project is for Combat-Related Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for all veterans and the Women's Sexual Trauma Unit at the Batavia VAMC. It is a joint effort for the VFW and the Ladies Auxiliary. Dr. T. Julian is the head of the program at the VAMC. She was scheduled to speak at the Conference; but due to the snowstorm in Buffalo, she called and said she was stuck at home. Chairman William (Doc) Schmitz,

of course, would not hear of it; so he got into his truck and drove to Buffalo and retrieved Dr. Julian. That's a dedicated comrade for a good cause.

Surgeon Allan Davenport accepted donations for the disaster relief fund. The disaster relief fund needs to be ready to help veterans when disaster strikes not after the fact.

PSC Hal Burke and Inspector Ed Bassett are putting on a big push for the Service Officers' Raffle and journal respectively. Veteran Service is the business we are in, and it needs our support. There will be more on this in this issue.

The holiday season is upon us. I hope everyone enjoys this special time of year with friends and family. Please do not forget our hospitalized veterans, and the children and families at the National Home for Children.

Yours in comradeship,
Don Doell
Commander



All-American Commander Thomas Ronayne, Post # 1469, receives National Recognition – L-R: Department Commander Don Doell, Commander Thomas Ronayne, Junior Vice Commander-In-Chief Glen M. Gardner, Jr., and Past State Commander James McNally.

Robert Barnhart Senior Vice Commander

The Fall Conference in Syracuse was a successful one. There seemed to be better participation in the committee meetings that were on the agenda. It is important that your Post Representatives attend as many of these committee meetings as possible. They provide you with very valuable information to report back to your Post. If you have more than one member from your Post attending the Conference, you should see to it that each of you attend a different meeting to get the most information possible to bring back to your Post members.

We need to look forward now to the newly combined Spring Conference, Legislative Conference and the Gold Chevron Ball for our Service Officers, which will be held in Albany at the Marriott Hotel on Wolf Road on February 24th, 25th, and 26th. Please make sure that you vote for your legislators, Congress members and Senators in the upcoming election. Then make sure that you make note of those elected and make appointments to visit them during this conference to present the Department of New York's Veterans' Programs and discuss veterans' issues. Your participation in this program is a key part in making your Representatives aware of the fact that you are a veteran and that he/she is aware of what veterans' needs are.

Regarding the budget, we are presently reviewing the medical and liability insurance rates, which have gone up.

As this goes to press, we are short 5,000 members to make 100%. This is much higher than previous years. Are you aware that effective January 1st, 2007, each mem-


ber's dues will now be sent to National who will take out \$20 of that money for per capita and send the remainder to the Post. Therefore, if your dues are below or at \$20, you will not receive any part of your members' dues. You need to make arrangements to increase your dues and to notify National of that change by December 15th. Please notify and encourage our continuous members who haven't paid their dues to do so because of the increase in January. Also, it is important that we make every effort to approach our troops as they return home, advise them of what this organization has to offer, and encourage them to join the VFW. Please make every effort to strongly support the Service Officers' Raffle and Journal, which is available now. If you need tickets, call me or Department Headquarters.

I send you my best wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving.


Robert Barnhart
Senior Vice Commander

A casual moment before the banquet – L-R: Junior Vice Commander-In-Chief Glen M. Gardner, Jr., Senior Vice Robert E. Barnhart and his wife, Karen.



Photographer:

John Brunato



State Editor:

William "Doc" Schmitz

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2006-2007 State Officers

- Commander:**
Donald Doell
- Sr. Vice Commander:**
Robert Barnhart
- Jr. Vice Commander:**
Jack Haight
- Judge Advocate:**
Phillip Schiffman, PSC
- Surgeon:**
Allan Davenport
- Quartermaster:**
Harold Burke, Jr.
- Adjutant:**
Art Koch, III, PSC
- Chaplain:**
Rev. Edward R. P. Kane
- State Chief of Staff:**
Jack Veazy
- Inspector:**
Ed Bassett
- Patriotic Instructor:**
Harold "Mick" Learor

POLICY

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Harold "Hal" Burke, Jr.
PSC, Quartermaster

Season's Greetings, I hope that you are all well as we transition from fall to another Great Northeast Winter.

The Department Audit by Casey and Lubbe for 2005-06 is complete. The result of hard work by Bob Barnhart on the Department Insurance Policies, the increased income from the State Convention and a fluxuation in our staffing resulted in a positive year-end balance. At the Fall Conference, the Council of Administration was addressed by our investment counselor, William Swapbacher of Morgan Stanley. The investments yield for 2005-06 was approximately 4.75%. We continue to work on our investment strategy and should see an improvement this year. Ray Schultheis, Department Finance Overview Committee gave a positive report on the state of the Department Finances. It appears that all of the critical decisions made by the 2005-06 Department Council of Administration were correct as proven by the audit results. I would like to thank them for all of their efforts.

As approved by the Council of Administration in June 2006, the Department has purchased a new dark blue 2006 Dodge Caravan. I am sure that many saw it at the Fall Conference. State Adjutant Art Koch III is very pleased with the new van. It is extremely versatile as it can be used as a cargo van or passenger van (the rear seats fold into the floor).

To our annual dues paying members, would you like to save money on this year's dues? Here is how: Write a check today for your 2006-07 dues and send it to National VFW. WHY? At the 87th VFW Department of New York Convention held in Binghamton, New York, in June 2006, the delegates assembled passed a resolution that changed Article VI Per Capita Tax, Sec. 1.00 of the Department of New York Bylaws. The change resulted in the Department Per Capita Tax for annual members being increased by \$3.00, from \$5.50 to **\$8.50**. This change is effective January 1, 2007. Also at the 107th VFW National Convention held in Reno, Nevada, August 2006, the delegates assembled passed a resolution that changed Article VI National Convention, Sec. 605 National Dues, of the National Bylaws. The change resulted in National Dues for annual members to be increased by \$4.00, from \$8.50 to **\$11.50**. This change is effective January 1, 2007. By now all of the Post should have adjusted their annual dues to a minimum of \$20.

Commander Doell asked that I chair the Service Officers' Raffle this year; and with your help, we can make this the most successful Raffle to date. I am so very proud of the Comrades and Ladies Auxiliary members for donating the \$1,950 in prizes and would like to thank them for their generosity. Commander Don donated the tickets for the Raffle. With these donations, all of the proceeds will go directly to the Service Officers' fund. **DONATIONS: \$1.00 PER TICKET OR SIX FOR \$5.00, or 120 TICKETS FOR \$100.00.** The Drawing will be held at the Gold Chevron Ball, Sunday, February 25, 2007. If you would like to make a donation to the Service Officers' fund, please send your donation to the Department of NY VFW, Attn: Quartermaster, 1004 Broadway, Albany, NY 12204.

By the time you receive this newsletter, each Department officer, Past State Commander, District Commander, County Council Commander, Post Commander and Department Chairperson will have received Service Officer Raffle Tickets and Journal Ad forms. We need each comrade to purchase or sell the tickets they have received for this Raffle and get at least one Ad (any size). The funds from the Journal Ads and Raffle are to be used for our Service Officer program exclusively. Thank you for supporting this important program.

I appreciate your support during the past 14 months. If I can ever be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. Be well and stay safe.

Sincerely,
Harold "Hal" Burke, Jr., PSC, State Quartermaster



Department Quartermaster Harold "Hal" Burke, Jr. discusses his National Appointment duties with Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief Glen M Gardner, Jr.

2006-07 Raffle for the Benefit of NYS VFW Service Officers

To make this year's program successful, we need your help. As you can see, we have had all of the prizes donated; and Commander Doell provided the tickets. All of the income from this program will go directly to our Veterans Service Officer Program. Please clip out the coupons below and send them into the Department NY VFW, Attn: Quartermaster, 1004 Broadway, Albany, NY 12204, prior to February 1, 2007, with your \$5.00 donation.

On behalf of the Department Service Officers, the Committee thanks you in advance.

**2006-07 Raffle for the Benefit of NYS VFW Service Officers
\$1,750 in Prized Donated by:**

- (1st) \$500 – Louis W. Oppenheim Post 1019
- (2nd) \$250 – In Memory of Neil "Cuddles" Connolly – The Connolly Family

- (3rd) \$100 – In Memory of Warren Barnhart – Robert and Karen Barnhart
- (4th) \$100 – Jack and Charlotte Haight
- (5th) \$100 – In Memory of Jack Longendyke – PSC Jim and Mary Longendyke
- (5th) \$100 – In Memory of Harold M. Burke, Sr. – PSC Hal and Carol Burke
- (6th) \$100 – In Memory of Art Koch, Jr. – PSC Art and Brenda Koch
- (7th) \$100 – In Memory of Roberta Higgs – Martha and Jim Ferens
- (8th) \$100 – In Memory of Ralph A. Fields, KIA, WWII – E. James Fields
- (9th) \$100 – In Memory of Robert G. Choquette, KIA, Vietnam – William "Doc" Schmitz
- (10th) \$100 – In Memory of Lyle Yonge, MIA, Korea – Cindy and Skip Campbell
- (11th) \$100 – In Memory of James A. Bassett – Edward Bassett

DONATIONS: \$1.00 PER TICKET OR 6 FOR \$5.00

Clip these coupons and send them into the Department of NY VFW, Attn: Quartermaster, 1004 Broadway, Albany, NY 12204, prior to February 1, 2007, with your \$5.00 donation

Name _____
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Jack L. Haight, Jr.
Junior Vice Commander

The National Veterans of Foreign Wars has cut programs that had low participation on the Post level. One of the programs that was cut was the annual Boy Scout "Eagle Scout of the Year" award. National stated that only 50 some Posts participated last year.

At the Department of New York Fall Conference in Liverpool, it was decided that we would still run the program at the Department level. When I was in my teens, I did achieve the rank; and I remember the difficulty in achieving the Eagle. We should be sure to honor these young people for their hard work for their fellow Scouts and their community. Boy Scouts also have many of the same principals as we do. "Onward for God and Country" is one of their mottos.

If you have a candidate, send the name and required paperwork to the State Chairman, Ron Mironchik (his address is in the State Directory) or to the Department Headquarters in Albany.

And if you are upset with the National VFW for cutting the program, let them know. E-mail them, write them or call them. (The National VFW Web site address is vfw.org).

Important – To save money on your dues and life membership fees, they must be paid so that they can be processed by the last of this year.



L-R: Commander Don Doell, Junior Vice Jack L. Haight, and Senior Vice Robert Barnhart – the big three, in passing, between multiple duties – "I'm on the way to meet with ..."

William "Doc" Schmits
Department Special Projects Report

The special projects this year are the two Combat PTSD units at the Batavia VA. One of which is also a sexual trauma unit for our female vets; it's the only one in NY state and one of a few in the country.

Here's some stats to chew on: September 2003 to September 2006, the VFW and Auxiliary has donated \$16,163.27 in cash and \$15,843.42 in product. What products? TVs, VCRs, DVDs, phone cards, supplies for projects, and lounge furniture. Oh yes, the VA supplies chairs; ever sit in one? It's like a school bus seat.

We, as a VSO, have helped to put these clinics on top in the nation. It's rated by veteran patients as the second most satisfied with patient care in the nation. It draws veterans from all over the country; the staff and program are on the cutting edge. The men's program is on the verge of doubling its patient capacity, partially due to your support and the need for its excellent care. When it does expand, they will need more to keep up the home-like atmosphere. So far, several of you have stepped up to the plate; and I'm confident the rest of you will do the same.

We, as a veterans' organization, sometimes find ourselves frustrated because what we do has little to no effect on what is going on. Well, guess what? We have gotten the attention of the National VFW, other VSOs and the VA. We are seen as a moving, take care of business, Department serious organization.

So, my friends, let's invest in a winning cause, ourselves – vets taking care of vets; and guess what? We have the opportunity to help out our female veterans who have long been left to the side of the road. YOU IN? Please send your checks to the VFW Dept. of NY, Special Projects.

Thanks, "DOC"



Comrades that delivered donations at the Fall Conference – they, as well as the Posts, Councils, and Districts should be proud of their dedication to a worthy cause.

Allan Davenport
Surgeon

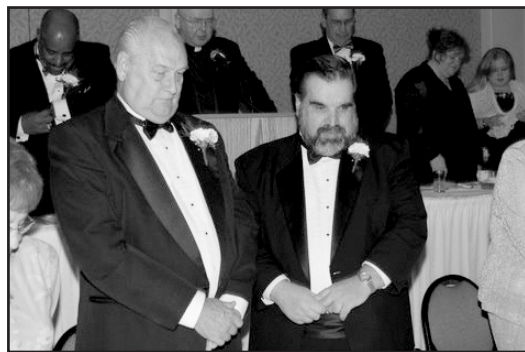
Disaster Relief

We gave \$7,600 to 30+ flood relief victims. We collected \$3,650 from this year's donations. Thanks to all that gave – \$6,756 was in the fund from past years that means \$3,950 was given out to flood victims over the donations given.

Bottom line – we need to have more donations to get ready to help victims with some expediency.

Ruth Bauer Fund for Organ Transplants

Veterans or families, contact Department Office for application. We gave \$6,000 out this year.



A prayer before a celebration – L-R: Chief-of-Staff Jack Veazy and Department Surgeon Allen Davenport.

The Syracuse Polytrauma Network Site

Providing Specialized Care to Those Recently Injured in Combat

Almost daily, there are news stories about wounded soldiers in various combat zones; what we do not hear about is what happens to these men and women once they return home to their families. The Polytrauma Team was developed to provide rehabilitation services to these injured in recent combat theatres that require treatment once they return to their families. The VA had identified the Polytrauma Team as the point of contact for these soldiers.

What is Polytrauma? Polytrauma is two or more injuries to a person's body that occurred during deployment. The injuries may be from a fragment, bullet, vehicle, a fall, blast, or the injuries could have occurred in other ways.

How do you know if you should contact the Polytrauma Team? If you were recently in a combat zone and were knocked out, dazed, "saw stars," or were involved in or near a blast incident, and now have recurring headaches, memory problems, ringing in the ears, sleep problems, dizziness, balance problems, irritability, or other changes. It is possible that when you first returned home you did not notice any problems; but if you have noticed any headaches, vision problems, irritability, nightmares, or other changes, you can be evaluated by the Polytrauma Team.

The RN Polytrauma Case Manager at the Syracuse VAMC can set up appointments for services to see a doctor, psychologist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, recreation therapist, eye doctor, orthotist/prosthetist, vocational specialist, and many other specialty medical services. The current members of the Syracuse VAMC Polytrauma Team include: Dr. Stephen Lebduska, Physiatrist; Heidi Kinnally, RN Polytrauma Case Manager; Kate Balduzzi, Physical Therapist; Kathy Bufano, Occupational Therapist; Dr. Judy Hayman, Psychologist; Joshua Mullen, Certified Prosthetist/Orthotist. The Polytrauma Team believes that support from all Departments within the Syracuse VAMC will provide the best care for the Polytrauma patients in need of services. In addition, the Syracuse VAMC has recognized the need to improve services at the medical center and has purchased new equipment to better accommodate the needs and expectations of returning soldiers and their families.

How can you learn more about the Polytrauma Team at the Syracuse VAMC? Contact the Telcare phone number at 888-838-7890 or Heidi Kinnally, RN, Polytrauma Case Manager at 315-425-6567.

Dues Increase

Comrades,

This is a synopsis of the dues increased passed at the National Convention. A more in depth letter will be sent to all of the Posts by the end of this month. Feel free to pass this on.

The Department Per Capita Tax for annual members being increased by \$3.00, from \$5.50 to **\$8.50**. This change is effective January 1, 2007.

The National Dues for annual members to be increased by \$3.00, from \$8.50 to **\$11.50**. This change is effective January 1, 2007.

The Life Membership being increased is listed at the right. This change is effective January 1, 2007.

With all of the dues increasing, please work with your Post members to have them pay their Annual Dues by December 31, 2006 or try to get them to purchase a Life Membership by the same date.

If you have any questions relative to the dues increase, please do not hesitate to call me – 518-598-3923 cell phone.

Regards,
Hal Burke, Jr.
State Quartermaster

Current Fees	
Through 30	\$245
31 to 40	\$235
41 to 50	\$215
51 to 60	\$195
61 to 70	\$165
71 to 80	\$125
81 and over	\$85

Fees Effective January 1, 2007	
Through 30	\$425
31 to 40	\$410
41 to 50	\$375
51 to 60	\$335
61 to 70	\$290
71 to 80	\$225
81 and over	\$170

Direct Dues

The Direct Dues process seems to be working well. For the most part, members are receiving their dues cards within two weeks of the day they send them in.

Please send your dues directly to VFW National Headquarters, 406 West 94th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64111; this will expedite the return of your membership card.

Thank you
Hal Burke, Jr.
State Quartermaster

It is with great regret that I have to report the passing of past State Adjutant and Past State Service Officer Ray Nowak. Cards may be sent to:

Alice Nowak
4651 Rock Oak Parkway
Clarence, New York 14031

William "Doc" Schmitz,
Editor

Post #551

The Hospel Staab Post #551 of Middle Village held a fundraiser for the Marine Corp Detachment they adopted that is serving over in Iraq. All the food that was there was donated by the wives of the Post and Men's Auxiliary as well as the Ladies Auxiliary. The entertainment was two Bagpipers from the New York Fire Department. A raffle was held, and the Post had three prizes; and they were \$5,000, \$3,000 and \$1,000. Many dignitaries stopped and paid their respects – State Senator Serf Maltese and City Councilman Dennis Gallagher. Monies made went for packages to be mailed to the Marine Detachment as well as to the men who are back in the states that were wounded while serving overseas. Also phone cards were purchased for their use.



Commander Michael Brown and Committee members with Senator Serf Maltese.

Post 55 of Veterans of Foreign Wars helps AMVETS Post 32

The purchase of a new pole was always discussed at the AMVETS 32 Post meetings; but because of the lack of funds, we were never able to purchase one. The Veterans of Foreign Wars received a \$3,000 grant from Wal-Mart. Being a veterans' group, the Post decided to apply the \$3,000 grant toward any needed projects at any veterans' park. VFW Commander Carl Zanella spearheaded the first donation to be applied toward a new flagpole at the Sirchia Park since it was the dream of AMVETS Post 32 who donated the park to the city to put up the flagpole. Joe Calella was appointed from Post 32 to work with Carl Zanella to obtain the new pole. A new fiberglass pole was ordered. All expenses of the pole were paid for by the VFW Post 55 grant.



L-R: Joe Calella, AMVET Treasurer; Tom Deluca, VFW Treasurer; Carl Zanella, VFW Commander; Art Mangineli, AMVETS Commander; and Walt Sparks, VFW Senior Vice.

VFW Post 2782



As done in past years, seen here is Lt. Douglas Schult of the Chenango County Sheriff's Department accepting checks, in the amount of \$1,000, being donated by Quartermaster Ron Palmer on behalf of VFW Post 2782 in Norwich for the Sheriff's Summer Camp Program for the local kids in the area.

Patchogue-Medford High School Air Force

On Friday, May 5th, 2006, The Patchogue-Medford High School Air Force JRROTC Awards Dinner was held at the Mediterranean Manor. Past Commanders Michael Amodio and Robert Parente of the Jayne-Lattin Post 2913, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States presented this year's VFW Awards to Cadet Simone Brown and Cadet Anita Mareno. The pride, discipline and courtesy that all the cadets shared with the guests are a reflection of the professionalism of the Patchogue-Medford AFJRROTC Program. Major Atkins and M/SGT Herbert are to be commended. Submitted by Robert Parente, PR Chairman, VFW Post 2913.



Cadet Simone Brown and P.C. Michael Amodio. Cadet Anita Mareno and P.C. Robert Parente

Yours in Service

The VFW Satellite Service Office is located in the Buffalo VAMC (Bailey Avenue) Room 103-1 (phone 862-8743).

This office is open to all veterans on each and every Friday for the hours of 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Please feel free to visit Tom Todaro, DSO, or Connie Williams, Claims Consultant for any and all veterans' service assistance that you may need.

Reminder that our main office is located at:
130 S. Elmwood Avenue, Suite 626
Buffalo, New York 14202
Phone (716) 857-3348 or 3349
Open Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
for your assistance.



Service Officer Tom Todaro after marching, "Yes, I shot that bird." How proud he looks!

5th District Clam Bake 90th Birthday Party



5th District Clam Bake – (L-R, front): Linda Flanagan, Betty Alfonso, Lois Evans, Kathy Valerie; (back): Cindy Creeley, Joanne Matheives, Bonnie Dolsan and Wanda Steinbrecker.



Herb Bedette's 90th Birthday party (R) holding a recognition award given by Commander Richard Kraus, Post #2883 Newark.

Post #8647



Post #8647 Lake Chautauqua, Commander Donald Skellie presents a check for \$3,000 to Jean Kelsey, Board of Directors of the Mayville Food Pantry. Money was raised at a Woodcrest Golf Course Tournament.

Castle Point Medical Center



Castle Point Medical Center – L-R: Clarence Rundle, Anthony Polidore, Tim Dempsey, Donna Barletta (teacher), Anthony Buccieri, P.C., VAVS Rep. – A salute to Veterans Week – cookies, cards by students and gifts were collected for 500 patients.

Post #16



Post #16 Rochester 90th Birthday – Commander Ned “Semper Fi” Northrup with New York’s only living Medal of Honor recipient Gary Beikirch who is a Life Member of the Post.



Well this Editor didn’t quite know what was going on, and I wasn’t going in there for an interview. I hope he made it out alive.

Post #420



Gurtler Brothers VFW Post 420 Gets New Sign Thanks to Racing City AM Rotary

L to R: Otto Appel, Jr. Vice Commander; Jim Coyne, Adjutant; Linda Rush Curley, Racing City AM Rotary; Bruce Morrow, President, Racing City AM Rotary; and Gene Ratigliano, Post Commander.

Post #2077

District 3, Old Tryon County Council, VFW Post 2077 and its Ladies Auxiliary continues their Community Service. The members of VFW Post 2077 spearheaded a project to install a handicap ramp for Karisa and Peter Young of Gloversville, NY, who are confined to wheelchairs. VFW Post 2077, with the assistance of DAV and American Legion members, purchased the material and under the guidance and with the assistance of the Steve Lyon Construction Company built the ramp on June 27, 2006. In the picture from back to front: VFW Post 2077 Commander Ralph VanAlstyne, Sr. with Karisa Young, Steve Lyons with Peter Young (on the ramp) and members of the DAV and American Legion.



Post #729



Post #729 Watervliet – (L-R, front): Commander Paul Brooks and P.C. Hap McTague; (back) Peter DiPofi, County Legislator Bob Boston and Watervliet Mayor Bob Carlson. Veterans are meeting at the VFW Post to lobby against higher Veterans Administration health care costs.

Carthage Post



Carthage Post hosts Past President and Commander’s dinner. In attendance was Department Senior Vice Commander Bob Barnhart (center back row).

National Home for Children



PSC Melvin Garrett will be going in as VFW National Home for Children President of the Board of Trustees. L-R: National Council Member James Longendyke, PSC; Jr. Commander-in-Chief Glen M. Gardner, Jr.; Melvin Garrett, PSC; and Rev. Edward R.P. Kane, Department Chaplain.

Post #770



Commander Tony Petrucci, VFW Post 770 Catskill, NY, has been on a quest since July 2005 to rename a portion of Rt. 23 in Greene County. After 14 months, his quest has become a reality. On September 30, 2006, the stretch of highway was dedicated. The signs now read GREENE COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY.

Karl Rohde, PSC
Legislative Chairman

This is the proposed Legislative Agenda. It has not been approved by the Commander.

**Proposed Legislative Goals
2006-2007**

New York State National Guard and Reserve Units:

The events of 9/11 changed the way almost everything is being done in our country. The increased reliance on the National Guard and Reserve units must be addressed. These brave service members must receive entitlements that are commensurate with their service to our county. That means the level of and access to health care must increase, as well as educational entitlements. We would like to see our great Empire State taking the lead in this issue.

Expansion of Health Care:

Expansion of Health Care such as nursing home facilities, assisted living facilities in supportive housing not now served, along with in-home care.

Homeless Veterans:

While the trend is to include Homeless Veterans with the countless homeless that are under the umbrella of Social Services the fact is that Homeless veterans are unique. State agencies that have the responsibility to provide care for the homeless must be required to track and monitor homeless veterans in the state and refer them to the VA.

Veterans Cemetery:

There must be an increase in the number of veterans' cemeteries in New York. While we have long advocated that one be created near Sampson State Park, there is a need for other cemeteries throughout the state.

Veterans' Real Estate Property Tax Exemption:

New York State should eliminate the Attachment of the Equalization Rate to the Veterans' Real Estate Property Tax Exemption, so Veterans can realize the full extent of their entitlement.

Service Officers Training:

Part and parcel of our nation being at war is an increase in the number of returning service members who must be processed through the VA and the Division of Veterans Affairs. As a Veterans Service Organization, our services officers aid in this process. The state needs to provide monetary assistance to the VFW. Help is needed to train service officers and to help keep our Officers Training School open.

The Flag Amendment:

Once more our United States Senate callously voted not to protect the symbol of our great nation. The very foundation of all we, as veterans, fought and died for is represented by our flag. Once more, we urge our elected leaders in New York to help us protect the American Flag by supporting the efforts to pass a Flag Amendment. Coupled with this is a plea to keep God in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Post #4787



Post #4787 Whitestone – Boy Scout leader Mrs. Lorri McGregor and Troop #473 Venture Scouts put Flags on veterans' graves. Submitted by Benjamin Singer (center).

**VFW Concerned Women Veterans
at Greater Risk for Breast Cancer**

Calls for VA/DOD to Study for a Military Environment Link

Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 19, 2006 – With an estimated 211,000 women in the United States diagnosed with breast cancer annually, the Veterans of Foreign Wars is concerned that environmental factors unique to the military may place military women at greater risk of developing breast cancer and is calling for government agencies to evaluate the risks.

Resolution 651, which the VFW passed during its annual convention this past August, urges the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Department of Defense (DOD) and other adjunct federal agencies to develop a comprehensive study to determine if breast cancer is increasing at a faster rate for current or retired military personnel than the population at large. A similar resolution was approved during the VFW's 2004 convention.

"With one out of every nine women being diagnosed with breast cancer, and 40,000 women unfortunately dying every year, the VFW worries that military personnel may be subjected to higher risks because of their exposure to possibly 'toxic' environments the military must operate in as part of being a proficient fighting force," said John McNeill, VFW assistant adjutant general and a former veterans service officer.

"Our servicemembers are exposed daily to environmental situations where there is no civilian equivalent," he said. "Are these unique situations contributing to breast cancer? That's what we want to determine."

The VFW has long advocated for better healthcare services for women veterans and continually dialogues with Congress to fund improvements for services available to women at VA hospitals. One of the veteran service organization's first achievement for women veterans came in 1994 when Congress mandated VA create a Center for Women Veterans to ensure women had the same access to quality health

care as their male counterparts. Previously, there were limited medical facilities for women veterans, including gender-specific hospital wards.

Additionally, several years ago, the VFW quietly led the fight for a benefit entitlement for women veterans who had undergone tissue loss in one or both breasts as a result of breast cancer. With encouragement by the Center, the VFW, along with several other veterans service agencies, sought a benefit entitlement at least equal to male veterans who were receiving compensation for the loss of a reproductive organ and also to reflect current disability criteria.

"Men were receiving special compensation for the loss of a creative organ, including losing a testicle," said Rick Hirst, VFW manager, training and quality assurance. "But there was no equivalent benefit for women, because the VA at that time didn't consider mammary glands as pertinent to the reproductive function."

Instead, he said, women were being rated only if there was a 50 percent loss of a breast.

"Once we were able to change the language to include breasts as a reproductive function, we were able to negotiate for stronger language that specified a benefit entitlement based on tissue loss," he said. "We were very proud of our accomplishment because this wasn't just a victory for the VFW; it was a victory for all of our women veterans."

"Women are a vital part of the armed forces with ever increasing roles, and we, the VFW, are proud of our efforts in persuading Congress to ensure the VA offers the same health benefits for our women, as they do for men," McNeill said, adding that since October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the VFW wants to encourage all women over the age of 40 to have a thorough mammogram as part of their overall health regimen.

**Proctor-Hopson Post #1896,
Veterans of Foreign Wars**

'VFW Military Family Support Center'
DHL Express (JFK)/Dee's Nursery & Florist
American Citizens for Soldiers in Service
NY & NJ Port Authority Police Department (JFK)

On behalf of our military men and women serving in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait, we are once again asking for contributions in order to purchase lights and ornaments for donated Christmas Trees that will be sent to the above-mentioned locations.

Based on last year's reaction from our troops overseas, we would like to increase the number of trees along with the lights and decorations that we send to the war zone. The cost of each tree with the appropriate lights and decorations is \$25.00. You may fund as many trees as you would like. Working together, we can make the holidays a little more enjoyable for our deployed troops.

Please be generous in your donations. **All donations must be received by November 30, 2006.**

Checks or money orders should be made payable to:

**Proctor-Hopson Post #1896, VFW
(Mark in Memo: Xmas Trees)**

Mail to: Ben Thompson, PSC
119-26 204th Street
St. Albans, NY 11412
(718) 527-6532
Thompsonbl@state.gov



To all Posts and Auxiliaries,

At this time, Dotty and I would like to express our thanks and deep appreciation for those who provided cards and donations to help the family out during this past year. We had intended to send out individual letters, but things have been happening so fast that we were not able to. The help that you provided us, again, shows just how great our organization is. Again, we thank you for everything.

Allan and Dorothy Fox and Family

Department of Veterans Affairs

MIRECC

Post Deployment Mental Health • Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center

Quick Guide – Patient/ Family:
Traumatic Brain Injury

Brain injuries are the “signature wounds” of our Global War on Terrorism. Returning combat veterans may not know they have suffered such a wound. That is why VA doctors want these “new warriors” and their families to have this information.

If the head is hit or shaken, a “concussion” or “closed head injury” can result. Concussion is seldom life-threatening, so doctors often use the term “mild” when the person is only dazed or confused or loses consciousness for a short time. However, concussion can result in serious symptoms. People who survive multiple concussions may have more severe problems.

Common Symptoms of Brain Injury

- “I just don’t feel like myself”
- Feeling light-headed or dizzy

- Difficulty organizing daily tasks
- Blurred vision or eyes tire easily
- Headaches or ringing in the ears
- Feeling sad, anxious or listless
- Easily irritated or angered
- Feeling tired all the time
- Trouble with memory, attention, or concentration
- More sensitive to sounds, lights or distractions
- Impaired decision making or problem solving
- Difficulty inhibiting behavior – impulsive
- Slowed thinking, moving, speaking or reading
- Easily confused, feeling easily overwhelmed
- Change in sleep - much more or much less
- Change in sexual interest or behavior

People who have had a concussion may say that they are “fine” although their behavior or personality has changed. If you notice such changes in a family member or

friend, suggest they get medical help.

Recovery Following Brain Injury

Some symptoms may be present immediately. Others may appear much later. People experience brain injuries differently. Speed of recovery varies from person to person. Most people with mild injuries recover fully, but it can take time. In general, recovery is slower in older persons. People with a previous brain injury may find that it takes longer to recover from their current injury. Some symptoms can last for days, weeks, or longer.

Talk to your health care provider about any troubling symptoms or problems.

To Promote Healing & Manage Symptoms
Things That Can Help

- Get plenty of rest & sleep
- Increase activity slowly
- Carry a notebook – write things down if you have trouble remembering
- Establish a regular daily routine to structure activities
- Do only one thing at a time if you are easily distracted – turn off the TV or radio

while you work

- Check with someone you trust when making decisions

Things That Can Hurt

- Avoid activities that could lead to another brain injury – examples include contact sports, motorcycles, skiing
- Avoid alcohol as it may slow healing of the injury
- Avoid caffeine or “energy-enhancing” products as they may increase symptoms
- Avoid pseudoephedrine-containing products as they may increase symptoms – check the labels on cough, cold, and allergy medicines
- Avoid excessive use of over-the-counter sleeping aids – they can slow thinking and memory

Resources for More Information & Help:

- Centers for Disease Control – <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi>
- Defense & Veterans Brain Injury Center – <http://www.dvbic.org>
- Brain Injury Association – <http://www.biausa.org>

Fall Conference



Department Special Projects Table was a great informational spot at the Fall Conference, staffed by PSC Ron Bush, Dr. Terri F. Julian, and Department Service Officer Tom Todaro.



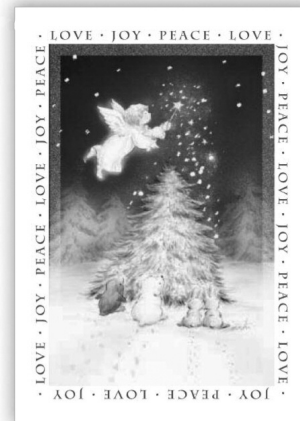
Department Chaplain Rev. Edward R. P. Kane about to give some needed counseling to Department Sgt.-At-Arms Robert Wasiczko at the Fall Conference.



Fall Conf meetings well attended.



Dinner at the Fall Conference, who said you couldn't even get a cup of coffee with your decorations?



Spread
Christmas
Cheer!

Watch the
mail for your 2006
VFW Christmas Greeting
Cards coming soon.

These fun and whimsical cards and cheerful holiday notepads are great for sending holiday cheer to all your friends and family.

A great way to support your
Department programs!



POST TO POST

POST #9587 – STATEN ISLAND – Men's Auxiliary President, Frank Frascati, thanks those who helped paint the Post; the Ladies Auxiliary for a well done breakfast, and has scheduled a Horseshoe Tournament.

POST #4783 – WHITESTONE – Submitted by Benjamin Singer, Trustee. Commander Ernest C. Malvicini elected for the fifth year. They have a "Doc" Marvin Spurling who keeps them informed on medical issues. The Post is involved in the support of the Korean War Memorial.

POST #9587 – STATEN ISLAND – Father's Day Breakfast hosted by the Men's Auxiliary. John Wetmore and Harvey Geary were recognized for all their work on the Post home.

POST #478 – BINGHAMTON – Newly remodeled kitchen; breast cancer Beth Slater will attend the Ladies Auxiliary meeting.

POST #8692 – ALBANY – Bob Santalucia provided the music for the Barbeque. Tony Audi gave a new flag stand.

POST #5253 – ALBERTSON – Commander Frank Maltese – 46 members at a meeting, Wow! Art Adair and the Commander delivered food to the "Outreach" Center in St. Aidans and Corpus Christi. Quartermaster Harry Wurth, PSC, posting the new life membership dues.

POST #6196 – QUEENSBURY – Commander Chick Daley announces the construction of a new pavilion, and the parking lot is getting a facelift.

POST #600 – CANASTOTA – Commander Thomas J. Hughes welcomes new member Sam Settice. Danny Klahs has some new ideas on renting the building; A new concrete floor for the pavilion.

POST #2476 – RIVERHEAD – Post recognized for its donations to the YMCA Camp for Kids. Gene McSherry organizing the Chicken Barbeque. Joe Klodaski in charge of helping veterans who need assistance.

POST #1498 – HALFMOON – Bob Piper headed up the Honor Guard at the Babe Ruth World Series. Tom Kuhn, John Dahode, Rocky Graziano, Art DeVoe, and John Herbert also were on board with the Color Guard.

POST #348 – SALT CITY – The Post and Ladies Auxiliary put on a letter-writing campaign, "Letters to the Front." Doc wishes he had last names to give recognition to! Nice touch on the Department Special Project.

POST #420 – SARATOGA SPRINGS – Very nice paper! Ed Freiburger, Jim Coyne, Jim Barnes, Don Heaton, and Mike Bilinski – all worked very hard for their Chicken Barbeque.

H.M.C.C. – Editor Laura Darkec, Co-editor Tom Darkec, Art DeVoe Commander – Very informative – "Doc."

POST #2670 – GENEVA – A new Men's Auxiliary, Pete Dinsmore, President. Commander Allan Fox did the installation; Many announcements of many functions.

POST #6394 – SYOSSETT – Mike Grande put on a dinner and raised \$130.00. Employees of the night crew at Home Depot donated \$250.00 towards phone cards for troops. Gus Scatari and Commander Arthur Celuzza attended a "Salute to Veterans."

POST #6534 – HIGHLAND – Roast Beef dinner – 200 people showed up. Large donation was made to the St. Jude Memphis, Tennessee, Children's Cancer Hospital. Local merchants donated items for prizes.

POST #951 – LIVERPOOL – CLAY – Major kitchen renovation, handicap toilets; Dave Arnold is assisting. Polo Barn is being considered. Commander Jerry Hepinske.

POST #1666 – YONKERS – New air conditioner, new upstairs floor; Commander Joe Battista. Happy Birthday Ed Potanovic, Arthur Neff, Jim Beckett, Robert Butler and Charles Hertel.

POST #932 – MARATHON – Commander Mike Brown presented a check to both

Heather Stephens and Jacob Hall for a scholarship award of \$200.00.

POST #7462 – PIERMONT – Jack Donnelly, Ted Jessup, Phil Montesano and Tony Streppone are mentioned in the Commander's report. Best wishes, "Doc."

POST #2307 – LYNBROOK – Packages for the Troops, Post members Dean Ledwith, Navy Corpsman Jim Tucker, and Tim Ledwith are serving with the 1st Mar Div. 25th, USMC. This is a good thing, take care of your "Doc."

POST #5298 – SPRING FIELD GARDENS – Commander Leroy A. Barnes announcing the beginning of all the VFW special projects. Quartermaster David L. Eddie announces new dues increases.

POST #5491 – MAHOPAC – Anthony Del Duco is doing a DVD of photos and movies of Post functions. Men's Auxiliary President Rick Sochor is planning a pig roast. The Ladies are doing an Octoberfest – BIG Minne!

POST #1419 – HAMBURG – Commander Tim Leary announces a Euchre Tournament. Ladies Auxiliary President Donna Miller is having a pork dinner, Soup-A-Thon. Dave Phillips is putting a Military Display together.

POST #982 – REMSEN – Big push in life membership increases, and a Roast Pork Dinner and beef raffle!

POST #2813 – WOODSIDE – VOD Chairman Marvin Jeffcoat has the program up and running. Commander Bill Kennedy and Auxiliary President Patricia Hast have been working together on various projects.

POST #516 – FARMINDALE – Commander Doug Makosky went on a Boy Scout outing in Michigan and then visited the National Home. This is one of the best Post newspapers in the Department – my opinion, "Doc!" Why don't I have a picture of "Helpers at Pineland National Cemetery 5/27/06" page 7, with an article for the Department paper? "Doc"

POST #2348 – LONG ISLAND CITY – held a candlelight procession from the Post to the local fire hall to honor those lost in the 9/11 tragedy. Submitted by Quartermaster Charles Pappas.

POST #2736 – EAST MEADOW – Chaplain Fred Schuetler is back and healthy. Clifford R. Way – 15-year pin; Harold A. Rohde – 10-year pin. Junior Vice Al Lasardi and Surgeon Steve Gismondi engineered another Post picnic.

POST #3927 – CENTERECH – Terry Sullivan cooked ribs till 2 A.M. Thanks, from Commander Andy Chapman.

POST #1371 – OWEGO – New members Joseph Kozlowski, Floyd Jayne, Francis Shields, James Bliss and Ed Herzog.

POST #375 – YONKERS – Trustees Joe Porcelli, Bob Wasiczkeo, Jim Nolan and Tom DeRosa.

POST #416 – WILLIAMSVILLE – Bring on board a Men's Auxiliary, Commander Donald Sipes – Color Guard Captain Carl Janish – one busy man.

POST #8160 – BROOKLYN – David W. Pitou sent a letter to this Editor about his feelings after observing a ceremony at the Post. Good job, Post #8160.

POST #7955 – COPAKE – Arnold Anderson and his wife, Helen, are District #3 Sr. Vices together, nice. Multiple functions announced by Commander Vince Grimaldi.

POST #557 – BEMAS POINT – Wow! A survey of the Post's membership – average age: 59, 50% Army, 23.2% Navy, 17.3% Air Force, 9.5% Marines. No Coast Guard?

POST #9247 – GRAND ISLAND – Commander Dan McMahan thanks Joe Synakowski for doing the newsletter. He's still stepping down as Editor. President Mark Gollwitzer – MANY EVENTS are in the schedule.

POST #202 – HOLLEY – Only 61 members short of 100%. Navy Bean Soup after the Remembrance Service – that bring back membership. Consider putting names in the newsletter – thanks, "Doc."

Life Member Costs will double January 1

Yes, it passed at the National Convention. That means that we have two months to get all of the Life Memberships that we can. Send out letters to all who have not paid their dues. Tell them about the increase, tell them not to delay and offer to pay a share of their present Life Member cost if you can. Use some bell-jar money (it is legal), the Life Per Capita check, which you just received or any other money that you can. It is our last chance to increase Life Members. "THE MORE YOU GET, THE LESS YOU HAVE TO GET."

Now, here is how to tell which members have not yet paid their 2007 membership. Use any computer, which has online access. Only the Quartermaster can do this! Go to your search engine (Explorer works fine) and type in vfwny.com. Click Go. Click on Enter. Scroll down to Membership and click on Post Roster. Enter your membership number (only the Quartermaster will be accepted) and your password. Click Submit. This is the list of unpaid members at National and the list to send a Life letter to. Bear in mind that someone could have paid, and it hasn't yet appeared on the list. Put a statement in your letter that says, "If you have already paid your 2007 dues, you may disregard this letter," unless, you are prepared to credit his dues.

Good luck and don't wait. We are out of time!

Your Life Membership Committee
George Osborne

Free Enrollment in the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor

From:

John DeSpirito III, Commander, Military Order of Purple Heart Chapter 406

We are counting on your help to register all Purple Heart Recipients in the Roll of Honor, an interactive computer databank of all the recipients of Purple Hearts. In addition, you may have objects that help tell the personal stories of each recipient which would be appropriate for exhibit in the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor. To begin your registration, please mail us the following information:

1. The name, address, and contact information of the person who will be providing information on a recipient or recipients
2. The name of the Purple Heart recipient and as much information as you can provide: the time of service, rank(s), military unit, date and location of birth, the date(s), location(s) and circumstances of being wounded, and any additional information that will help tell the story to visitors, perhaps including future generations of your own family. If you are a Purple Heart recipient submitting your own information, please include information so that we can contact you.
3. Documentation of receipt of the Purple Heart: Copies of the DD-214, WD or equivalent discharge paperwork, Certificates or other proof of receipt of the Purple Heart.
4. Copies of photographs, telegrams, newspaper, magazine or online articles about the recipient or other materials that help tell the story.

Materials can be mailed to:

ATT: Karen Pena,
National Purple Heart Hall of Honor
PO Box 207
Vails Gate, NY 12584