

NEW YORK STATE OVERSEAS VETERAN

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



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"If everybody is thinking alike, then somebody isn't thinking."
—George S. Patton, Jr.

Volume 29,
Issue 4



Pictured, L-R: State Jr. Vice Commander James Durkin, State Commander Jack G. Veazy and State Sr. Vice Commander Harold "Mick" Leavor.

At the 91st Department of New York Convention, Jack G. Veazy, was elected to the high office of State Commander. He is from Rome Post 2246 in District 4. Jack follows in the footsteps of the Past State Commanders from District 4: Herbert C. Brian, 1953-54; Dan S. Brady, 1956-57; Thomas J Fallon, 1959-60; Ross R. Henry, 1979-80; and Jack T. Smith, 1992-93.

Jack graduated from North Miami High School prior to entering the U.S. Army in July 1964. He completed his basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. In 1966, he received his orders to report to Vietnam where he served as a Helicopter Crew Chief. After his tour of duty, he returned home in 1968. Upon his return, he joined the VFW Post in Miami. After serving many various positions in the VFW, he was elected as Post Commander in 1974 and served as the Dade County Council Commander from 1974 to 1976.

In 1980 he then transferred to the Rome Post 2246. He was elected to the office of Quartermaster and served in that capacity until 2001. Currently, he is a member of the Rome Color Guard.

Jack has held many of the elected and appointed chairs in the 4th District and achieved All-American District Commander status in 2003.

He has two lovely daughters and a son who served with the Seabees in Kuwaiti and Afghanistan. His beautiful wife, Terri, supports all of his efforts. Jack's family was at Convention to celebrate his great achievement.

As Jack stated in his address to the delegates of the 91st Convention, his goals are to move the Department forward by strengthening its membership, programs and furthering the use of technology. Jack's motto is "Let's Get 'er Done." We wish Jack much success as our State Commander.

Jack G. Veazy Department Commander



Comrades:

I wish to thank you for allowing me to serve as your New York State Commander. I will try to validate your faith in my leadership. Nevertheless, every State Commander knows it cannot be done alone, and I will need all of you to support and contribute to all of our programs. I hope to make

all of our Conferences and Conventions productive and efficient.

Membership is the backbone of this organization, so my motto is: RECRUIT – REINSTATE – AND RETAIN. Life Membership is an option – paying on a one-time basis is always a plus. We have a great Membership Team that will help you with any issue that you may encounter. Their names and phone numbers are in the Guide Book, so let's try to keep them busy. Let's put some emphasis on reaching our 100% Membership early this year.

President Sharlene and I are working on the NEADS Project for Veterans, which is specially-

trained dogs for wounded Veterans. The cost is \$20,000 to train a dog with his partner. Donations will be accepted by sending them to my Special Project Chairman Dan Meholczo, 97 Ridge Road, Wellsburg, NY 14894.

As a reminder, our National Convention will be in Indianapolis, Indiana from August 21, 2010 to August 26, 2010.

As a matter of information, I will also follow PSC Allan Davenport's Legislation Program. I have made a few changes, so plan on attending.

Loyally,
Jack G. Veazy
Department Commander



Harold "Mick" Leavor Sr. Vice Commander



"Congratulations" to all the newly elected 2010-2011 Post, County, District and State officers across our great Department of New York. The beginning of a new year has begun and we all have to work together in comradeship. Comradeship is what we need to bring everyone back together. Let's all work together, forget petty jealousies and have a great year.

Membership is the backbone of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. The higher the membership we have, the more chance we have of getting legislation passed on veteran's issues and benefits. Not too many years ago, the Department of New York had over 100,000 members. Starting the fiscal year as of July 1, 2010, our Department membership has dropped to under 70,000 members.

We all have to work on membership together. Let's **Recruit** new members, let's **Reinstate** former members, and let's **Retain** the members we now have. Let's all work to bring New York back up in membership where it belongs.

As many of you know, the cost of postage keeps going up every couple of years due to more and more people using the Internet in this electronic age. Starting this year, and increasing a little more in the next couple of years, the Department will start using more e-mails and publications along the way.

Yours in Comradeship,
Mick

Photographer:

John Brunato



Editor:

Don Mackey

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** POLICY

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** RECEIVING THE OVERSEAS VETERAN

We need your e-mail address if you wish to receive the Overseas Veteran in the future. Please send your e-mail address as soon as possible to CITadmin@vfwny.com.

** **EDITOR** is looking for VFW-oriented news-worthy articles from all levels of our VFW Organization which would be of interest to our members. Examples include: VFW sponsored functions, VFW individuals receiving or presenting awards, VFW community service projects, VFW youth activity awards, etc.

** **PLEASE e-mail your short news articles in MS Word and attach a picture to the e-mail as a separate attachment (if available) in .jpg picture format.** The picture you send can be fully captioned with names and description of event, at the top of your MS Word article. **Please include with the article: The name and phone number of the person sending the news article, in case there are questions.**

** **EDITOR reserves the right to edit any article for length or grammar and to reject any article which may be deemed not to meet current editorial needs.**

** DEADLINE

Articles must be submitted by the 15th of each month: July, October, January and April. Send all articles to CITadmin@VFWNY.com

If you are using regular mail send the items to CITadmin, P.O. Box 116, Carlisle, NY 12031.

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** **POSTMASTER:** If undeliverable, send form 3579 to: New York Overseas Veteran, 1044 Broadway, Albany, NY 12204.

Jim Durkin Jr. Vice Commander



First, let me thank you all for electing me as your Jr. Vice State Commander at the 91st State Convention in Rochester, New York. I had a great time this past year visiting the many Posts, County Councils and Districts as time would allow. I look forward to working with Commander Jack Veazy and Sr. Vice Mick Leavor, along with all the other officers in

the Department. The best part of the next few years will be working for YOU, so I need to continue to understand the issues you face on a daily basis at your Posts and Councils. We need to understand we have a chain of command within the Department, but when we see things that just don't work or areas where people don't understand what the VFW is about, please contact me by e-mail.

I just returned from the Department OTI in Binghamton, New York. I had the opportunity to read the feedback from the OTI students before I returned home. We are already in the process of making some of the requested improvements for future OTI's. We have one of the largest groups of OTI first-timers I have seen in a long time. This is what OTI is all about: training the future leaders of our Posts in the correct manner. These future leaders can return to their Posts with the knowledge they receive at OTI, and lead their Posts to become a better symbol of Veterans within their communities.

I look forward to working with all of you this coming year and in the future. Thank you for letting me serve you and thank you for your service to this great nation.

My God bless the VFW and this nation.

Jim Durkin
State Jr. Vice Commander
e-mail: jamesdurkin@frontiernet.net

Dennis Sullivan State Inspector



Comrades, the 2010-2011 year has begun and now is the time to start making appointments with your County and District Inspectors to get your Post inspected.

The most important thing to know this year is all Posts must file a 990 form in its entirety, no matter how big or small

your Post is. If the 990 form is not completed and filed, the IRS can pull your tax-exempt status.

Important for the Post to know is Quartermasters must be bonded in the proper amount, which should be enough to include all banking funds and investments.

A Post inspection is one of the requirements to qualify for a white hat.

After completion of the Post Inspection Form, mail the form to: State Inspector Dennis Sullivan, 9 Cherry Street, Selden, NY 11784. If you have any questions, please e-mail me at dmsullivan9@optimum.net or call 631-736-7722.

Vietnam War casualties listed by Home of Record.

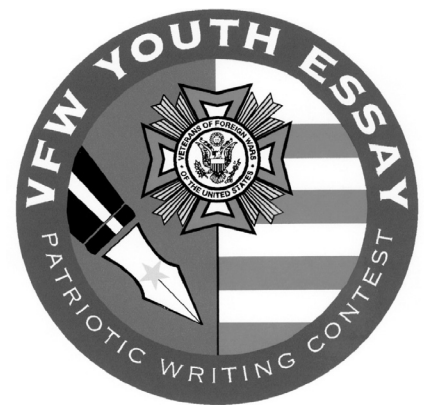
www.virtualwall.org/iStates.htm

Melvin Garrett State Judge Advocate

Another administrative year has begun with some leadership changes but the mandates of our organization are still the same. The forthcoming National Convention proceedings will result in amendments to the congressional charter. Be sure to order a copy as soon as it is ready in October of this year from the VFW Store at National Headquarters.

The most recently held OTI at Binghamton University was attended by many first timers. Each attendee received a CD with valuable information on it. I recommend all officers and members review the congressional charter and the Department Bylaws available to you as often as needed. Your year in office will go a lot smoother and more successful.

Micheal Spellman Patriot's Pen Contest Chairman



I want to thank Department Commander Veazy for the re-assignment as this year's Department Chairman of the Patriot's Pen Youth Essay Contest. I encourage ALL Post and District chairmen to please coordinate your efforts with your Ladies Auxiliary counterpart.

All scholarship information is available online at www.VFW.org. Type in Patriot's Pen in the SEARCH box and you will be directed to the "Programs" section of the Scholarship Programs.

Post Chairmen need to copy and provide each student with a Patriot's Pen brochures/entry form directly, or through the teacher or youth leader. To participate in the Patriot's Pen contest, a student needs to submit a completed entry form, their essay and a clear head and shoulder photograph. **This year's 2010-2011 Patriot's Pen theme is: "Does Patriotism Still Matter?"**

All student entries are due at the Post level by November 1, 2010. Your Post judging should be done by November 15, 2010 and you need to pass your winners to your District Chairman. The District judging should be completed by December 3, 2010, after which time the winning District entry will be submitted to the Department chairman. The Department judging will be held at the Malsan-Jones VFW Post 7393 during the week of December 14, 2010.

District Chairmen: The District winner's materials that should be forwarded to the Department chairman are:

- District winner's completed official entry form
- District winner's typed essay
- District winner's photograph (clear, close up head and shoulders picture)

Please send your District winner's information and the District report form to: **Michael Spellman, 18 Seventh Street, Yorkville, NY 13495.**

If you have any questions in regards to this contest, please feel free to call me or leave a message at 315-736-2456. Thank you for your support and your participation in the contest. Good luck to all Posts and Auxiliaries. To all the chairmen, please make your deadlines on time, especially at the Department level.

District Commanders: Please send me the names, addresses and telephone numbers of your District chairmen. Thank you!

Dr. Julian Takes New Position

Dear NYS VFW Members and Auxiliary Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to let you know about my work in an exciting new program at the VA. I have accepted the Health Behavior Coordinator position at the Buffalo VA. My decision to leave the Program Manager position at the Batavia VA, Jack Wisby, Jr. PTSD Treatment Center, was made after serious and heartfelt thought. I have been deeply moved by the 10 years of service in our Batavia PTSD Program. It has been a remarkable experience to be part of the growth of the clinic and to have the privilege of working with such a dedicated team, special Veterans, their families and Veterans' Service Organizations. Partnering with the NYS VFW and Auxiliaries has been especially rewarding, and your generosity and efforts continue to support Veterans in their recovery from trauma. I have every confidence that we will continue to hear wonderful and moving stories about Veterans healing at the PTSD Program in Batavia. The PTSD Team and the community support are strong and dedicated to providing excellent care.

I decided to accept the Health Behavior Coordinator (HBC) Psychologist position because of my passion to help Veterans develop healthy behaviors, prevent chronic

illness and manage medical conditions. Over the years, I have seen so many of our Veterans struggle with illnesses that might have been prevented if they had taken better care of themselves, and so many Veterans suffering with conditions that could be more effectively managed with self-care education and practice. In my Batavia office, I had a sign with a quote from Mickey Mantle that reads: "If I knew I was going to live this long, I'd have taken better care of myself." Veterans deserve healthcare that offers them the information and support to take better care of themselves, and live as good a quality of life as they can and wish to have. In my new role, I have the great honor of assisting Veterans in doing just that!

One of my major responsibilities is to help Veterans, their families and Primary Care teams better understand how mental health issues, including PTSD, might interfere with healthy lifestyles and increase risk for certain illnesses. The HBC position is part of the new national Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) program that is being established at each and every VA in our country. PCMH is a reorganization of Primary Care clinics that is based on the premise that the WHOLE person, not just the Veteran's medical condition, is crucial in determining healthcare plans, and that there must be

partnership between Veterans and their families and healthcare professionals in efforts to promote healthy behaviors. As the Health Behavior Coordinator in PCMH, I will be able to assist Veterans, families and Primary Care providers in helping Veterans make changes that they would like to make for their overall health and well-being. This includes helping Veterans and their Primary Care Team promote general health and to address health risk behaviors as part of disease prevention and chronic disease management. For example, I will be helping Veterans with weight loss and maintenance, tobacco use cessation, and mastering self-care techniques, such as increasing participation in regular exercise, healthy eating, sleep hygiene, stress management skills and relaxation techniques.

I feel privileged to be in a position that allows me to partner with many more Veterans and their families in the pursuit of Veterans' overall health and well being.

Thank you to the NYS VFW Leadership for this opportunity to share with you the news of this exciting new VA Program, and my role in the mission. I look forward to opportunities to partner with you in my new role.

Dr. Terri Julian, Ph.D.

OTI at Binghamton



State Commander Jack Veazy, State President Sharlene Allen and the OTI Deans Helen Weeks, PDP and Mel Garrett, PSC, take a few moments from the busy 2010 OTI Schedule to pose for a picture.

State Commander Jack Veazy, State President Sharlene Allen and the OTI Deans Helen Weeks, PDP and Mel Garrett, PSC, take a few moments from the busy 2010 OTI Schedule to pose for a picture.

The recent OTI held at SUNY Binghamton was very productive and informative. The VFW and Auxiliary once again presented an informative program to their respective members. A special presentation from the New York State Racing and Wagering Division was made. The presentation was on Charitable Gaming in New York State. They reviewed some of the pitfalls encountered by the VFW and Auxiliary.

This year's students enjoyed the programs and had a great opportunity to discuss their various issues with the staff and each other.

Digital Directory for District 3

The District 3 C of A was off to a great start at Stuyvesant Falls Post 9593. District Commander Wally Zincio outlined his agenda and described his 'Commander's Project'. In addition he displayed the membership award, a one of a kind Cooperstown Baseball Bat for the County Council attaining the highest number of new members for the year.

Commander Zincio announced that for the first time the District Directory would be a digital record on CD. The Commander outlined the financial considerations for his decision stating that saving money for veterans and community services was crucial, especially in today's economy. Distributing the Directory on CD, along with an abundance of other essential Post manuals, forms and other operational tools, was far more efficient and effective than dozens of printed booklets with limited use and information. The Commander explained that Past District Commander Don Mackey assembled the data and created the CDs for distribution for about \$50, saving *over four times that sum* by not printing and mailing the usual directory.

The news did not pass without some concerns. One member explained that many older members didn't have PCs and wouldn't get news and meeting information. Another member asked how we were supposed to be informed if we don't have a PC and if they were expected to go out and buy one.

Commander Zincio responded that National had started down the digital road a year or so ago and intensified the effort just this year by announcing the VFW Bylaws would no longer be mailed, but be made available online through the Internet.

"National isn't done, that is just the first step, and we are in for much more technology down the road." He also reiterated the cost effectiveness and reminded everyone that most members showed up today because of computer technology.

The Commander went on to state that "...we cannot afford to keep doing business the same old way, technology is here and we have to grow if we expect to attract new younger veterans." He exclaimed that, "...e-mail is almost instant, snail mail takes days and if we don't take advantage of the new tools of technology we will be left behind. Our concerns for older veterans are justified, but if we don't attract and keep younger men and women who will take care of the older ones, there won't be anyone left."

The Commander continued to explain that these growing pains are temporary but will pay off in the end. "The young veterans of today grew up with computers – it's a way of life to them. We must adapt, we must learn, we must move forward and not get stuck in yesterday. We cannot afford the alternative. I've made the decision and it stands."

After the meeting, everyone enjoyed a hearty lunch and vigorous conversation about the new direction we seem to be headed. Overhearing many positive statements makes one wonder if the fears are real or perceived as many were more excited than worried, plus most were ready to get started. Plans could be heard for sharing CDs and printing necessary documents for those in need and deciding how best to get the word out. All in all, it appears the future has arrived for District 3.

Reminder...National Bylaws

As was mentioned in the July 2010 National Headquarters Bulletin and in accordance with section 1401 of the National Bylaws, copies of the National Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual amendments will not be mailed to each Post as in years past, but will be available online in eMembership beginning the first week in August.

In addition to providing these online through eMembership, we will e-mail all Departments and V-mail all Posts copies of the PDF that will also include the Index and "Be It Resolved" for all proposed 200, 300, 400 and 600 series resolutions to be presented.

Our target date is Wednesday, August 4th.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Kevin Jones
Director, Administrative Operations

Medal of Honor Recipients

As President of the MOH Society, I wanted to pass on thoughts about John Finn. On the 27th day of May, 2010, the nation and the Medal of Honor Society lost a giant. Centurion John was living history. And said with a smile and respect for John, he enjoyed telling it.

Anytime anyone dies there is sadness, but also reason to celebrate.

Certainly John's life deserves celebration. Our lives have been enriched knowing John, listening to his stories and being infected with his good-natured and chiseled smile. Rest in peace, John Finn – you earned it.

With great respect for a Sailor's Sailor.

John Finn was the oldest living MOH recipient. He received his MOH for action during Pearl Harbor. Having known Mr. John Finn, he will be missed. God Rest his Soul.

Chris Mattiace
Commander, VFW Post 1545

A Victory for Women Veterans

New Veterans of Foreign Wars Post is well-deserved tribute and recognition

August 10, 2010 – For the most part, women veterans who served overseas or in a war zone have been given short shrift by the military and public. Some reportedly even have felt discouraged from seeking services to which they are entitled.

So it is pleasing to see that the new Dorothy Kubik/Katherine Galloway Post 12097, Veterans of Foreign Wars, has officially opened within West Seneca Post 8113. There are the requisite 41 eligible veterans to constitute a new Post; seven of them are men, some of them military spouses of the women building up the Post.

The point worth celebrating here is the recognition of the service and the sacrifices of women from this region who carried this nation's colors to such places as World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

In the current war in Afghanistan and the one in Iraq, women have been on the front lines, elbow-to-elbow with men. It can be seen as a nod to political correctness that women serving overseas or in a war zone aren't necessarily visualized in the same manner, or in as rough situations as their male counterparts. But any parent with a daughter serving in Afghanistan understands full well that she is not in a safe area.

Current wars have few set battlefields. American troops face insurgents, guerrilla warfare and door-to-door searches and fighting. A woman's job may be driving a supply truck in support of military efforts, but with roadside improvised explosive devices, that task can be just as dangerous – as attacks on convoys in the early days of the Iraq war proved.

Yet women were underrepresented at veterans' Posts and were missing out on mutual support and help with services and health benefits such as mammograms, gynecological and other basic care needs and prescriptions.

Marlene Roll, an adviser to the new Post, wanted to bring the women together to give them a shared-experiences social outlet and a place to talk. She discovered an overall desire to celebrate women veterans, especially considering that the word "veteran" often is viewed as an accolade for men.

VFW Post 12097 has been in the forefront of changing the approach to women veterans. It's a credit to that organization that its members have chosen to welcome home female veterans with a new Post designed to serve them.

Department of Florida Goes Digital

Using technology to be better informed

The Department Convention approved a digital version of the *SunVet*. There will not be a printed version anymore. It is our plan to publish at least four issues. Each issue will be on the Department Web site, but each member will be able to receive one via their e-mail address.

It is important for each Post to have an address book of e-mails of your members. The Department needs these e-mail addresses, too. We will be able to communicate directly with our members, keep them better informed and keep them aware of things happening in the VFW. The Department is requesting that you share your e-mail list with us or undertake a campaign to secure a list. I can assure you that they will only be used for official VFW purposes.

W. Benny Bachand
Adjutant/Quartermaster
Department of Florida

A Hero Leads the Field



James Gabriel Jr., a Hawaiian memorialized in the song "The Ballad of the Green Berets," was executed in 1962 by Viet Cong sympathizers while on a training mission seven miles from Da Nang, South Vietnam.

Billie Gabriel, one of James Gabriel's eight siblings, said, "The family is truly humbled by this honor to our brother. This will indeed be a bittersweet moment as I represent my parents at the ceremony. They would be ever so proud to see this day."

Gabriel added that because her brother was "the first native Hawaiian casualty of the Vietnam conflict, this event holds even greater significance for the state of Hawaii and every kanaka maoli. This field holds special meaning to every 5th Special Forces Group soldier at Fort Campbell, and to have my brother's name forever memorialized with such a sacred place for other families of fallen warriors is even more humbling."

Gabriel said her mother, Juliette, who has died, kept all of her brother's letters that he wrote from 1959 to '62. Rereading them recently, Gabriel was moved to tears. "I felt the youth in his words when he would tell my mom that he missed the coconut cookies that she made for him when he was a little boy. Then in the next paragraph, I could feel his strength and pride of being a soldier fighting for freedom."

Gabriel will meet with 120 Hawaii-born soldiers stationed at Fort Campbell and present them with a koa fishhook pendant, a gift from the Kamehameha School's class of 1969 and others. Also, the Royal Order of

James Gabriel, Jr. (March 22, 1938-April 08, 1962), has been part of the lexicon of the Green Berets, the Army's Special Forces best known for their clandestine operations from the jungles of Vietnam in the 1960s to the mountains of Afghanistan today.

However, it has taken 48 years and the tireless effort of a Green Beret soldier to garner official recognition for Gabriel, a Hawaiian memorialized in the song "The Ballad of the Green Berets." He was the first Special Forces soldier and the first Hawaiian to be killed in the Vietnam War. On May 22, 2010, the 5th Special Forces Group officially dedicated Gabriel Memorial Field at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, honoring the 1956 Farrington High School graduate.

Kamehameha and retired Navy Capt. Gerald Coffee, a *MidWeek* columnist who was a prisoner of war in North Vietnam from 1966 to 1973, will donate leis that Gabriel will place on the memorial stones at the parade field. A maroon-and-white lei, a gift from his high school alma mater, will adorn his memorial stone.

Staff Sgt. Barry Sadler, a Special Forces medic in the Vietnam War, penned the lyrics that refer to Gabriel's wife, "back at home, a young wife waits" and their son, James Gabriel III, who was born five months after his death.

Billie Gabriel noted that Sadler, in his book, "I'm a Lucky One," said her brother's death was the inspiration for the 1966 hit song.

The Gabriel demonstration area and the Special Forces demonstration teams were established at Fort Bragg, N.C., in 1962. The area was featured at the beginning of the 1968 movie "The Green Berets," starring John Wayne.

However, Chief Warrant Officer 5 Bruce Watts, a second-generation Green Beret, said it has since been overgrown with weeds and abandoned.

The Fort Campbell parade ground has served for 22 years as a memorial site for 47 Special Forces soldiers and one Navy SEAL and was unofficially known as Gabriel Field. However, it and rows of sugar maple trees were to be demolished along with many of the post's World War II and Korean War barracks and buildings.

"They were just planning to bulldoze it," Watts, who has been a Green Beret 22 of his 27 years in the Army, told the *Star-Bulletin*. Watts said that soldiers have since 1988 planted sugar maple trees near stone monuments that were erected to honor fallen Special Forces soldiers.

"Since 9/11," Watts added, "there have been annual formations held on the parade ground dedicated to the memories of all our fallen." About two years ago Watts started writing letters and collecting information to bolster his campaign to keep the parade field and have it officially named after Gabriel.

"It just fell into my lap," Watts said. "He (Gabriel) was very heroic and inspirational in his last actions. It was a travesty to allow it to evaporate," he said of Gabriel's story. Gabriel, 24, a Specialist 5, and Sgt. Wayne Marchand were executed by Viet Cong sympathizers on April 8, 1962, during a training mission in a remote village seven miles from Da Nang. A 1962 *Time* magazine report said Gabriel and Marchand were in the third night of a two-week field exercise near the village of An Chau, 360 miles north of Saigon, when they were killed. His group was attacked at daybreak. Gabriel was shot three times in the chest and stomach while calling vainly for reinforcements.

Before he fell, Gabriel radioed a final message to the base at Da Nang: "Ammunition is running short and we are being overrun." He was captured and later killed.

VFW Change of Address Form

(Please Print)

Member Number: _____

Name: _____

Old Address: _____

New Address: _____

Mail to: **Veterans of Foreign Wars**
Data Entry
406 West 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111



Department Jr. Vice Commander Jim Durkin meets with one of the last two surviving USMC Navajo Code Talkers at the Ganandagon Indian Music Fair. Jim spent about 30 minutes talking with William Toledo. William served with the 3rd Marine Division during WWII. The Code Talker's Code was never broken during WWII and was not declassified until 1968.

Let's Keep Informed! Do We Have Your E-mail?

The trend is upon us, the future is clear, and we need to be ready.



The VFW is evolving and National has set the pace and the standard. For years, the business world has forged ahead using the latest in technology and advancements in communications to compete and succeed and the die has been cast.

National began its evolution some time ago with small, almost inconsequential, changes in operations and communications but soon those changes and the current ones have forced our own re-evaluation of procedures and operations.

We have to ask ourselves how to keep pace, how to adapt and when and how will we change operations and communications procedures. The time is now as there is no time to waste because tomorrow is upon us.

Let's start by using the Internet and begin communicating via e-mail. When changes are received from National, our CIT Department will keep you informed if we have your e-mail address. We have started the process of updating and reconstructing our Department of New York Web site and soon will have a complete new look and more efficient and modern approach. This is with thanks to Past Commander Davenport and Commander Veazy. To stay informed and current, please send your e-mail addresses to CITadmin@VFWNY.com as soon as possible. Let's not fall behind; but rather, lead the way.

A final note: the Department of New York is looking at transferring more and more to digital communications in following the national format and those changes will happen this year.

Technology Controls the Future –
We Control Technology!



VETERANS CNY PARADE

We're planning for the 2010 CNY Veterans Parade. It will be held at 12 Noon, Saturday, November 6, 2010 along Salina Street.

We would be honored if your organization would participate.

The 2009 CNY Veterans Parade was quite a tribute to local veterans. More than 60 veterans organizations, including VFWs, American Legions and Disabled American Veteran Chapters from throughout the Central New York area, marched in the parade. Active and reserve military members were represented by members of the 174th Fighter Wing, the 274th Air Support Operations Squadron, 27th Brigade Combat Team and U.S. Coast Guard Station Oswego. The 174th Fighter Wing provided a flyover with the F-16s – their last before converting to the unmanned aircrafts.

The 2009 lineup included eight high school marching bands: Baldwinsville, Central Square, CNS, ESM, Henninger, Jordan Elbridge, Phoenix and Thousand Islands. The Pride of the Orange, the Brigadiers and the Syracuse Scottish Pipe Band also performed.

We are hoping to expand on this success and make this year's event even bigger and better.

To sign up, or for more information, please contact Diana Abdella in my office at 315-428-9651 or e-mail her at abdellid@assembly.state.ny.us

Together we can honor and give tribute to all Central New York Veterans!

Sincerely,
William B. Magnarelli
NYS Assembly, 120th District

VETERANS CNY PARADE

November 6, 2010 at 12 Noon
Salina Street, Syracuse

Sign Up Information

Name of Organization: _____

Address of Organization: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Parade Involvement:

Number of people marching? _____

Number of Vehicles? _____

Do you have a sign identifying your group? _____

Contact Assemblyman William B. Magnarelli's Office for more information or with questions.

Call: 315-428-9651 Fax: 428-1279

E-mail: abdellid@assembly.state.ny.us

VA Eases Claims Process for PTSD Treatment

For many U.S. troops now serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, coming home from war with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is hard enough. Once home, it can then take weeks, months, even years to qualify for federal disability benefits and receive treatment.

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced a new rule on Monday that aims to change that by making it easier for veterans suffering from PTSD to get the support they need. Veterans will no longer have to prove that a certain attack, bomb explosion or event in a combat zone triggered Post-Traumatic Stress.

It's a change that most agree has been a long time coming.

"The new regulation will potentially benefit all veterans, regardless of their period of service, and it is not limited to veterans with direct combat experience," VA Undersecretary for Benefits Michael Walcoff said Monday during a news conference.

A 'Monumental' Change

Tom Tarantino, of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America and himself a veteran of the war in Iraq, says the decision is "absolutely monumental." He says the new regulation reflects the new realities of modern warfare where the lines between combat duty and noncombat duty are often blurred.

"You have a lot of people – you have truck drivers who drive the streets of Baghdad every day, and they get hit with IEDs," Tarantino says. "You have women who, you know, there's still the myth that women don't serve in combat. Well, if I'm a female soldier and I went on a hundred combat patrols as a medic or as an intelligence analyst, I shouldn't have to fight the VA to prove that I was in combat."

The new rule is designed to prevent what happened to veterans like Richard Sanchez. He served almost a decade in the U.S. Navy with tours in Afghanistan and Kuwait. In 2006, he was diagnosed with PTSD. But when he went to file his claim with the VA, he was denied benefits because he didn't have the right documentation.

All the while his condition was getting worse.

"I got very discouraged, and I locked myself in my room for about six months, and I didn't go out or speak to anybody. I sort of estranged myself from friends and family," Sanchez says.

After years of fighting – both his disorder and the VA – Sanchez's claim was finally approved. Along with the benefits, he says, came a letter of apology from the government.

"And they apologized for it in the letter, and they told me they were working on it and that it was a No. 1 priority for them," he says.

Looming Concerns

Sanchez says he's pleased with the changes the VA is making to care for vets with PTSD. But despite the praise coming from veterans groups, there are some concerns about the new benefits rule.

Fraud is one. Will making it easier to get PTSD benefits mean it will be easier for people to work the system? VA officials say that's unlikely since veterans looking for benefits still have to be diagnosed by a VA doctor. And if they are showing progress, benefits can be reduced.

Cost is another concern. The VA won't say how much the new rule will cost, but officials do expect new claims from people who up until now have felt deterred by the process. Walcoff says he and others inside the agency are trying to fix what he describes as the VA's image problem.

"I think a lot of veterans perceive us as more adversaries than advocates, so I think that there's a real culture change that is taking place with our employees. But maybe we didn't do everything we could do to be advocates for veterans," Walcoff says. "And I think that what this does is just another step in our attempts to become advocates, to say to a veteran: 'Look, when you apply for benefits, we're going to do everything we can to try to help.'"

Because the new PTSD rule is retroactive, that could mean treatment and financial support for hundreds of thousands of veterans who have been shut out for decades.

Rachel Martin, NPR

Texas Attorney General Investigates Fallen Heroes Foundation

Organizer Resigns; News 8 Investigates

KENNEDALE – Just two days after a *News 8* investigation was broadcast, the organizer of the United States Fallen Heroes Foundation has resigned.

The foundation has no idea how much money may be missing, but it still hopes to build a monument in Kennedale to servicemen and women who have died in combat since 9/11.

Walter Coleman said the United States Fallen Heroes Foundation was a nonprofit agency – but it wasn't.

Coleman used two names, and he represented himself as a veteran when he is not.

"I think it's sick that someone would essentially try to fraudulently raise money in the name of men and women who have given their lives for their country," said State Rep. Chris Turner (D-Kennedale).

The Fallen Heroes Memorial would have been located in Turner's district. He said the organization will have to change to move forward.

"There would have to be utter transparency, and they would have to comply with the best practices of nonprofits," Turner said.

As of Wednesday night, Larry Summers is the foundation's new chairman. A former Marine, he pledges changes in the Fallen Heroes board and practices.

"The foundation will be restructured as it should have been day one," Summers said. "This is how it's going."

One of the first tasks will be to revamp the foundation's Web site, which is still asking for money sent to Walter Coleman's home.

Talks must be held with sponsors, such as Schlotzsky's, which have collected money for the memorial.

Walter Coleman told some people he collected millions of dollars; he told others that just thousands came in.

The Texas Attorney General is investigating.

"I hope the Attorney General is able to determine how much money was raised from how many people, and maybe we can get a true account of what has taken place," Turner said.

The Fallen Heroes Foundation has a contract for about 15 acres of land to construct the monument. City Manager Bob Hart will put the matter before the Kennedale City Council next month, so they can decide whether to continue the contract or possibly revoke it.

The City of Kennedale already has a modest monument to its own fallen heroes. It's now up to the attorney general, the new organizers and the City Council whether the Fallen Heroes Foundation will fly again.

Editor's Note: Several e-mails and letters have been received concerning this article and there are more than a few Internet postings about this developing issue. It seemed logical to put our members on alert to a possible scam and would encourage everyone to be very cautious when making donation decisions, especially to the organization mentioned here until we are advised otherwise. Updates will be posted as this issue progresses.

Posted by Michael Leon

Post 1545 2nd Annual Golf Outing a Success

On June 4, 2010, under a sunny sky, 19 foursomes teed off in a shotgun start to begin the 2nd Annual VFW Post 1545 Golf Outing held at the Windham Country Club. The day was full of "good" golf, great food and fabulous friends.

The proceeds of the outing benefited the Sgt. James F. Carty, D.S.C. and VFW Post 1545 Building Fund. A good time was had by all. Our thanks are extended to Brian Lowe, Golf Pro at the Windham Country Club for his organizational assistance and Stephanie Lowe for maintaining a welcoming atmosphere in the Pro Shop.

Special appreciation is directed to Windham Mountain and the Alpine Garden Convenience Store on Route 296 for their donation of food and beverages, which were most welcome. Superintendent Randy Tuttle and his staff did an outstanding job in the preparation of the course for the outing. Appreciation is also extended to Don Murray and his staff at The Club at Windham Country Club for the excellent buffet dinner.

This event would not have been a success without the patronage of the many veterans and area residents who played in the outing and especially those individuals and businesses which sponsored tees to add to our fundraising efforts.

VFW members and their families are urged to support and acknowledge those individuals, organizations and businesses that generously support our Post: Alpine Garden Convenience Store; Ann & Co.; Ashland Fire Department; Bistro Brie & Bordeaux; Carol Stevens Brewer; Matt & Kathy Boyle; Bunce Realty; Hugh & Ann Casey; Cave Mountain Brewing Company; Brian Christman & Christman's Windham House; Club Vesuvio at Windham Country Club; Creekside Market Place; Dan Davern & Nancy Orr; Sean Doolan, Attorney at Law; Marc & Lynn Farmilette; Larry Gardner, Attorney at Law; Chuck & Barbara Graap; The Goettsche Family; Hensonville Frozen Food Lockers; Hitchcock Builders; Dick & Gill Hughes; IPS – Integrated Packaging Systems, Inc.; KCK Paving, Inc.; Kern's Nursery; Thomas & Joan McGoldrick; Michael's Diner; Chris & Cheryl Mattiace; NAPA – Tannersville Auto Parts; Neapolis Pizzeria & Grill; Jimmy O'Connors

Windham Mountain Inn; The Patchworkers; Skyland Automotive; Ken & Marie Smith; The Thompson House; Thorpe's GMC, Inc.; Todaro's Salumeria; Ulster Savings Bank; The UPS Store; Vesuvio Restaurant; Wee Willie's Window Washing; Windham Hardware; Windham Police Department, PBA; Windham Wine & Liquor; Zarega's Pizzeria Restaurant.

Last but not least, I want to extend a special thank you to the VFW members who worked on the golf outing committee, and especially our ladies Auxiliary who are always there to support VFW activities.

Planning has already started on next year's golf outing which we hope will be bigger and better.

Sincerely,

Chris Mattiace, Commander
VFW Post 1545



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Post 1545

VFW Post 1545 is nearing completion of its Post rebuilding project and hopefully will have a rededication ceremony this fall. Our intentions are to invite everyone who contributed to this project to attend a free "Thank You Breakfast" at the Post.

Our members are truly grateful for the community support we have received over the years and this small gesture will be our way of saying "Thank You."

The Post marched in the Windham July 4th Parade and received "The Best Organizational Float Award" for our POW/MIA exhibit. This is the second year in a row that we have been honored to receive this award presented by the Windham Fire Department. Special thanks go to member Bob Stefanko, our parade chairman, Nancy Orr who actually built the bamboo POW cage, Marc Farmillette, Post Quartermaster and Lynn Verrengia, Ladies Auxiliary President and owners of the UPS store in Coxsackie who created the artwork.

On August 7th, our Jr. Vice Commander, Robert Stefanko, was honored with the Community Service Award by the Community of Windham Foundation at the Civil War Gathering, Grand Concert. Bob is a Vietnam veteran and owner of Skyland Motors in East Windham.

Contributions to the VFW Post 1545 building fund may be sent to P.O. Box 598, Windham, NY 12496. Thanks to all for your support.

Chris Mattiace, Commander
734-5011

Post 7969

*Alden Memorial Post 7967
VFW Voice of Democracy Winner*



Hannah Norris with Marvin Hamlisch at the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Idol competition.

Our Post VOD winner is Hannah Norris of Alden High School in Western New York. Her entry also won the Erie County VFW Competition.

Hannah is a senior and ranked third in her class with an average of 97.80. She is an artist, musician and actress. Hannah plays in her own band, *Silhouette*, and has played with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra.

For her winning entry in the VOD contest, Hannah will receive from the Alden VFW Post the first-ever \$1,000 annual scholarship for seniors who will attend college. She will attend the State University of New York at Purchase and major in music.

Bob Johnson
Post Surgeon and Adjutant

Post 7305

On Saturday, August 7, at 2:00 p.m., the Lima Veteran of Foreign Wars Post 26 honored several local people for their contributions to our community.

The recipients honored were New York State Trooper Karl Bloom, Law Enforcement; Norm Caccamise, Volunteer Ambulance; Zach Roberts, Boy Scouts; and Christine Preston for the Teachers Award.

Dignitaries reading proclamations were: State VFW Jr. Vice Commander James Durkin; Past District 7 Commander (2009-2010), Edward Bergmann; and Lima Veteran of Foreign Wars Charter Member Tom Moon, who served as Master of Ceremonies.

Local Lima WWII Veteran Nick Andrews was also on hand to participate in the day's activities.

Members of the Lima Veterans of Foreign Wars are grateful for the family and community members who attended the awards ceremony and filled the VFW Post on East Main Street near the four corners in Lima.



Post 1545

Post 1545 of Windham, New York was awarded the 1st Place trophy for Best Organizational Float in the July 4th parade held in Windham.

The float, honoring POW/MIAs was a bamboo cage with a mannequin inside dressed in a flight suit and wearing a conical hat. It was decorated with POW remembrance flags and banners by Post Jr. Vice Commander Robert Stefanko who donated his 6' x 6' flatbed truck to carry the cage. Nancy Orr, wife of Post Officer of the Day, Daniel Davern, Sr., was responsible for the construction of the cage and the artwork rendition of the POW/MIA flag.

The Post also had two vehicles carrying our WWII members, as well as a truck loaded with Post and Auxiliary members, along with their families.

This is the second year in a row that Post 1545 has won the 1st Place trophy. Next year, we will do it again!

Christopher Mattiace
Commander
Post 1545, Windham, NY

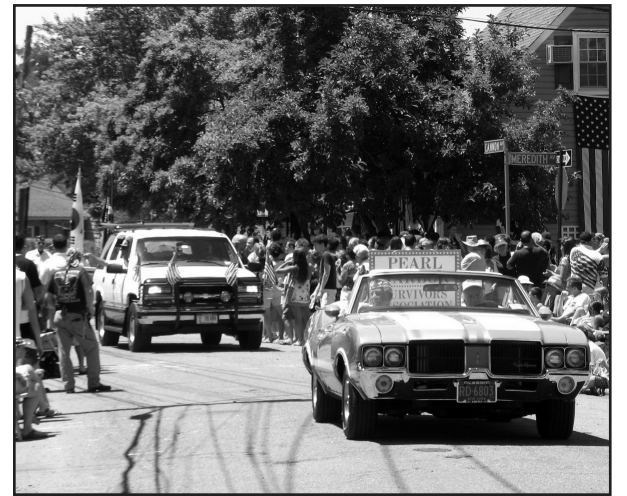
Post 7172 – Staten Island

Staten Island's North Shore Post 7172 participated in the 100th anniversary of the Travis July 4th parade, one of the oldest Independence Day parades in the United States. The temperature in the upper 90s stopped neither the parade goers nor the parade marchers from displaying their patriotism.

As contingents of various veteran organizations passed the quaint homes decorated in red, white and blue, the residents lining the street cheered and gave thanks. Within the crowds along the parade route were other veterans rendering salutes to their marching veteran brothers and sisters.

As I marched with my Post 7172 comrades, I imagined images and sounds of our forefathers: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."

Frank Russo, Communications Officer
VFW Post 7172



Crowds line the streets for the Travis July 4th parade in Staten Island.



Frank Russo (with Stars and Stripes), Joe Konczynski (Post 7172 colors) and Commander Bob Lane.



Post 7172 member Joe Macaluso proudly rendering a salute.

TAPS

June 2010 – Sept. 2010



June 21, 2010

Dear Members and Comrades,

As the 1986-87 New York State VFW Commander, I was very saddened by the loss of Past State Commander George Smith.

He was a great Commander and a very considerate, patriotic, gracious man. As his Jr. Vice Commander, I considered him a man from the "Old School of Dignity and Respect."

I sincerely hope that his family will be more at peace by this letter of condolence, and will know he was a man who was a rarity in today's world.

To all of you, I say respectfully, "take care and stay safe." God bless all and you are in my prayers.

Yours in Comradeship,
Christopher J. Mulkahy

**Post 7763
Massapequa Park
Charles Pace
Angelo Roncallo**



Pictured above from left to right, **Richard L. DeNoyer, Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief, Richard L. Eubank, Commander-in-Chief, William "Doc" Schmitz, Surgeon General and John E. Hamilton, Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief**



At the 111th National Veterans of Foreign Wars Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, our own William "Doc" Schmitz Sr. was elected to the high office of National Surgeon General for 2010-2011. Past National

Commander-in-Chief George Lisicki made Doc's nomination speech, which was seconded by John A. Biedryzcki, Pennsylvania's Candidate for Jr. Vice Commander-in-Chief. Hal Burke, Jr., PSC/PSQM also seconded Doc's nomination. Following Doc's election to the office of Surgeon General Richard DeNoyer, Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief Elect made the presentation of his hat. What a great honor for Doc and the Department of New York.

Initiation Ceremony for New Post



Pictured, L-R: **State Sr. Vice Commander Harold "Mick" Leavor, Post Sr. Vice Commander Margaret Ring, State Commander Jack Veazy, Post Commander Renee DeRouch, State Jr. Vice Commander James Durkin and Post Jr. Vice Commander Deborah Post.**

An initiation ceremony of a new VFW Post was held on July 25th in West Seneca, New York. Over 60 people were in attendance for the initiation ceremony of the Dorothy Kubik/Katherine Galloway VFW 12097, including Department of New York Officers, Post members, VFW Members from the area, family members, friends and dignitary. This Post was named in honor of two local women who served during World War II as combat nurses.

The majority of the Post's membership is women. The focus of Post activities will be on women veteran issues, family assistance,

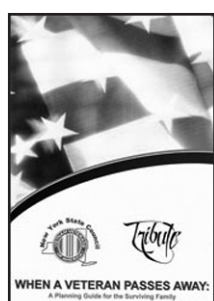
helping our returning veterans re-integrate back to civilian life and celebrating achievements of women veterans. The current Post membership is at 41 members. The membership consists of veterans spanning many wars and generations. The Post membership demographics include one World War II veteran, two Korean War veterans, eight Desert Storm veterans, eleven Global War on Terrorism veterans and nineteen OEF/OIF veterans. Most of the Post members reside in Western New York. West Seneca Post 8113 invited the new Post members to share their building and now they have a place to call home. Both are sure this relationship will be long and amicable.

In attendance at the ceremony from the Veterans of Foreign Wars were State Commander Jack Veazy who had the honor of pinning the Cross of Malta on all the new Post members, State Sr. Vice Commander Harold "Mick" Leavor, State Jr. Vice Commander James Durkin, State Chief of Staff and National Women Veteran Chairperson Marlene Roll, State Surgeon William "Doc" Schmitz, State Patriotic Instructor Dan McMahan, 6th District Commander David Czarnecki, Past State Commander Hal Burke, Erie County Council President Deb Fucina. Many representatives of the local VFW Post were also in attendance, along with local dignitaries including Erie County Executive, Chris Collins, who read a proclamation declaring July 25, 2010 "VFW Post 12097 Day" and Senator William Stachowski, as well as local business owners.

Renee DeRouche, Post Commander, stated the Post members are eager to become active serving their fellow veterans. The Post will be holding a fundraiser to help with their programs. This will not be the last we have heard from this Post or its members.

When a Veteran Passes Away!

A Planning Guide for the Surviving Family



This is an important pamphlet that every Veteran should read and keep available in their important records. This is brought to you by the VVA New York State Council and the New York State Funeral Directors Association.

One of the more difficult tasks a survivor may face after the death of their beloved veteran is identifying, securing and completing the numerous claim forms to obtain VA survivors' benefits. The anxiety and fear of the unknown – who to call, what to do or where to go for help – can become a daunting experience.

For a copy of this pamphlet in pdf format, go to:
<http://nyvietnamvets.org/mainfiles/pdf/w-a-v-p-a.pdf>

State Senator Visits Post

On a bright Saturday morning in July, we held the County VFW meeting, with our usual good attendance of officers and members. Of course, we made sure everything was extra spic-and-span, as we were being paid a visit by State Senator Catherine Young, a proven friend to all veterans.

On this occasion, she inspected the auxiliary generator for which a state grant was received to further our Post's ability to provide services locally in emergency situations. She was given a tour by the Post Commander, Andrew Pacos. We enjoyed her visit and had a good time.

**Harold Almquist, Post 557
Bemus Point, New York**