

NEW YORK STATE OVERSEAS VETERAN



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



2011

July/August/September

"Lead me, follow me or get out of the way."

—George S. Patton, Jr.

Volume 30

Issue 4

Harold "Mick" Leavor Department Commander



Comrades,

At this time I would like to thank you all for the faith and trust you have placed in me as your State Commander for the 2011-2012 term. I promise to do my best to make the VFW Department of New York an organization that we will all be proud to belong to. Remember my Commander's motto for the year, *"Together" We Can Achieve*. We all have to have faith and trust and work together like comrades in arms.

Again, at the start of this year, National has begun to remove another 200 to 300 members from the membership rolls of the Department of New York that were found to be deceased through the Internal Revenue Service. We all have to work to bring members into the ranks of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. We have to *Recruit* new members, and *Reinstate* past members that went out the back door, and *Retain* the members we have in our organization at the present time. If you see someone with a military tattoo on his arm, or with a baseball cap with a branch of service on it, welcome them home and thank them for serving our great country. You can

also ask them if they belong to the Veterans of Foreign Wars and if not, would they like to become a member.

If every member went out and signed up at least one member during the year, membership would be great. Try getting some comrades from your Post together at least once a month, and make some phone calls or stops at various comrades' houses to see why they have not paid their dues. You have a relief fund in your Post for the sick and needy that might have fallen on hard times. We still need to welcome many young men and women veterans' home from Iraq, Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf and into our ranks of the VFW. It's time for a change and we all know that it's going to happen sooner or later. Let's not let it happen like it happened to the veterans returning from Vietnam.

If you need help with your membership program, get in touch with someone from the membership team across the department, and they will gratefully be there to help. Past State Commander Ron Bush is the State Membership Chairman this year. Let's have a great year!

Yours in Comradeship,
Harold "Mick" Leavor
Commander

James Durkin Sr. Vice Commander



With the State Convention behind us now, let me take the time to thank everyone for your support in electing me as your State Sr. Vice Commander for 2011-2012. Again, this year, I will give you 100% in making this Department one of the best in the VFW. I will be out traveling the state, as well. Please let me hear the issues that are holding us back from having the best Posts, Councils and Districts. It is my job to make your job easier.

I look forward to working with the Great Team you elected this year. There were many comrades who did not get the votes needed to win election, as well as comrades who supported them. We still need you comrades to work with us this year, so that all the ideas needed to improve the Department come to the surface for debate. This way we can all be winners.

We will continue to make improvements in your CIT Department this year. One way you can help is to get on the Department e-mail list. Please send your e-mail address to CITAdmin@vfwny.com. All District, County Council and Post Commanders should be on the e-mail mailing list. This will help to cut costs on postage and labor for the Department mailings. My Department e-mail address is JDurkin@vfwny.com and my phone number is 518-925-2469 if you need to contact me.

The National Convention will be taking place the end of August. Many new Bylaws are up for change. One of the most important is the change to the National Council of Administration. Now that our membership has dropped below 70,000 members, we have lost our seat on the council. With no changes to the current Bylaws, we will now share a seat with New Jersey. If the Bylaw passes, each Department will have their own seat going forward. Let your delegates attending National Convention know that New York is for the change; let's keep our seat.

The Fall Conference is just around the corner, so please plan on attending or have at least one member from your Post attend. There is a lot of important information passed at these conferences, and it's better when you get it firsthand.

Serving for you,
James Durkin
State Sr. Vice Commander

Michael Pascal Jr. Vice Commander



I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all my supporters throughout the state and the delegates at the Department of New York Convention in Liverpool this past June for electing me to the high office of Junior Vice Commander.

We are truly blessed this year with a strong administration; not only with our new line officers, but also with a very experienced office staff in our new Headquarters building. Commander Leavor has put together some very strong committees with membership, legislative and followed by other energetic Chairmen and committee members.

The Commander's theme of *"Together, We Can Achieve"* will hopefully be an inspiration to all of us. If we can take these words of encouragement to heart, our possibilities will be endless.

I look forward to working with Commander Leavor and Sr. Vice Commander Durkin, along with all our comrades throughout the Department of New York in the coming year.

If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to call me, 631-758-9498, or e-mail me at Mpascal@vfwny.com.

In Comradeship,
Michael Pascal
Jr. Vice Commander

★★★★★

Photographer:



John Brunato



Editor:



Don Mackey

INSIDE
this
NYSOV



Page 1-3: Officer's Messages
Page 3: NEXT ISSUE
Page 4: Veterans' Hall of Fame
Page 6: One of Our Own!
Page 7-8: Post News
Page 8: Patriot's Pen

New York State Overseas Veteran

USPS 507-710
ISSN# 0199 2724

The official publication of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of New York, 69 Sand Creek Road, Albany, NY 12205. Periodicals Postage Paid at Albany NY, 12204-2527 and additional mailing Office Phone: 1-518-463-7427

** PUBLICATIONS:

Overseas Veteran is published four times annually by the Department of New York in July/August/Sept., Oct./Nov./Dec., Jan./Feb./Mar. and April/May/June. One dollar of each member's annual dues, paid to a VFW Post in New York State, is used for a year's subscription to the *Overseas Veteran*. Cost to non-members and widows of VFW members: \$10.00; payable in advance to Department of New York, 69 Sand Creek Road, Albany, NY 12205.

** ARTICLES:

Articles: Any and all articles involving and/or including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, its members, member communities, awards and activities are welcome.

** SUBMISSION & FORMAT:

Please prepare all articles in Microsoft Word (version 2003 or newer) or plain text. JPG/JPEG is the only picture format accepted and captions are appropriate. E-mail all articles and pictures as attachments with the sender's name, address and phone number in the base of the e-mail. Submissions from other sources must have complete credits such as publication name, address and dates published.

** EDITORIAL POLICY:

Inappropriate, demeaning, unduly critical articles and/or statements will not be published. Article length, inaccuracies, composition and other miscellaneous errors and/or mistakes may be edited.

Although every effort is made to maintain an honorable and accurate publication, the Department of New York and/or its staff, editor and other publication participants are not responsible for the content, views and/or positions of any article(s)/submissions.

**** ALL ARTICLES AND PICTURES MUST BE E-MAILED TO: CITadmin@VFWNY.com. They become the sole property of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of New York.**

** DEADLINE:

Deadline: Articles must be submitted by the 15th of each month...July, October, January and April.

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

** GRAPHIC DESIGN & LAYOUT:

American Graphics & Design, Inc.
3380 S. 108th Street, Greenfield, WI 53227
Jenny Deback, President
Sarah Scherrman, Graphic Designer
www.agad.com

© VFW Dept. of New York 2011.
All Rights Reserved.

** POSTMASTER:

If undeliverable, send form 3579 to:
New York Overseas Veteran,
69 Sand Creek Road, Albany, NY 12205

Dennis Sullivan State Inspector



Comrades, we are about to start our new year; inspection forms will be sent to your District Commanders and they will distribute them to you.

Inspections are a very important part of our Department reporting system. Some of the information on the inspection

form is used to demonstrate that we are a Not-for-Profit organization. With the recent changes in the Internal Revenue rules, the Department needs to maintain information of the District, County Council and Posts.

All inspection reports will continue to be received at Department Headquarters and will be date stamped. They will not be placed on the completed list or checked off in the Mem-Stats program until they have been reviewed and approved by me. An incomplete inspection report will be returned to the respective District Commander for action. Failure to provide a completed inspection report will result in no credit being given for the Membership Award Program.

OTI School

Unfortunately, OTI classes were cancelled due to low enrollment. OTI and Schools of Instruction will be held in each District as required by the National Bylaws. Districts will be holding OTI classes at a time and place to be announced by your District Commanders.

Looking ahead to next year, it is very important for you to get your applications in early. It is also important for Officers, Quartermasters, Service Officers and members of the Post to attend the classes.

Looking forward to seeing you next year in class.

I am available to answer any of your questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me by calling 631-736-7722 or by e-mail at dmsullivan9@optimum.net

Ron Bush Membership Chairman

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Commander for the appointment of Membership Chairperson for the ensuing year.

The prediction that we would lose our seat on the National Council of Administration or share it with another state, has almost come to pass. There will be a vote at the National Convention to decide the fate of our seat. If you are planning to go to the National Convention, stay in touch with your Department officers for further updates.

Why am I bringing this up under membership? The right to National representation is directly correlated with our membership. Last year we lost another 4,600 members. Comrades, we must stop the bleeding of our membership. I realize that some of these losses are due to deaths, but most of these are due to our inability to retain our members from year to year. The younger Vets are signing up (or we are paying their dues for one year) and then they are walking out the back door. We are also not doing a very good job in signing up new members. Statistics show that we have thousands of eligible members in the State of New York just waiting to join.

Are these Veterans of today going to come knocking at our door to sign up? Probably not! We have got to start thinking out of the box. The younger Veteran of today is looking for something different. They want to be wanted, just like we did when we came home. We must change our image from a military Post Exchange, into a family fun center and meeting area, where a family can come and enjoy a couple of hours' food and recreation. Whether that is shooting some baskets, playing bocce ball or volleyball, or just some time on a computer talking with a loved one who is deployed. These things may be hard for some of us to absorb; but if we want to sur-

Harold "Hal" Burke, Jr. State Judge Advocate



Comrades, I would like to thank the members of the Department for your support and confidence you have placed in me by electing me to the office of State Judge Advocate. I extend my best wishes and congratulations to our State Commander Harold "Mick" Leavor, State Sr.

Vice Commander James Durkin, State Jr. Vice Commander Michael Pascal, State Quartermaster Robert Barnhart, State Surgeon William Doc Schmitz and State Chaplain Father Kane and all the newly-elected and appointed Department, District, County Council and Post Officers. I will do my best to support all of you this year.

Congratulations to PSC Jack Veazy and the officers who served with him on an outstanding year.

Next year's State Convention will be June 13-17, 2012. The State Convention is earlier due to a change in the National Bylaws, which resulted in the National Convention being held July 21-25, 2012. When scheduling your District and County Council Conventions, please review the National and State Bylaws to ensure that your Conventions meet timeframe requirements.

This past year New York State Racing and Wagering has audited many Posts and found significant issues. If your Post has Bingo, Bell Jar or other activities under the control of the Racing and Wagering Division, please make sure that you visit their Web site and obtain the most current requirements for the activity conducted at your Post. That Web site is <http://www.racing.state.ny.us/>

Each year, the State Commander receives letters of concern or complaints regarding issues within various Posts throughout the State. While we are sure all of the concern or complaints are sincere and valid, there is a chain of command that must be followed before letters of concern reach Department Headquarters. The National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure Article IX provides instruction for those issues that result in disciplinary action. Post level concerns or complaints begin by presenting the problem at a Post meeting. If after presenting the issue to the Post membership there is no resolution, the County Council Commander should be contacted. Failing at the County Council level, the District Commander should be contacted with the specific details of the issue. If the District Commander cannot resolve the matter, he should forward the issues and subsequent investigation/action to the Department Commander.

It is impossible for the Department to handle the influx of letters received at Department Headquarters if the correct procedures are not followed. If you have followed the outlined steps and are still not satisfied with the results, a signed letter should be sent to Department Headquarters so the matter can be addressed as soon as possible.

Please Note: A letter of concern or complaint sent directly to National Headquarters will not speed up the process...it actually slows it down. National forwards all complaints back to the Department for review and appropriate action, thus delaying the process even more. National observes the chain of command and expects all VFW entities to do the same.

I pledge my support to the Officers and members of the Department of New York. Once again, thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving as the State Judge Advocate.

If I can ever be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at 518-598-3923.

Sincerely,

Harold "Hal" Burke, Jr., PSC
State Judge Advocate

Department of New York Communications Initiative

New e-mails are the next step to advancing and improving communications within the VFW in New York State. By order of Commander Leavor, all Department Officers will use the Department e-mail standard Microsoft Outlook/Remote Outlook.

As the e-mail IDs are set up, each officer will be informed and instructed in the use of the software and members will be advised of the addresses.

The following IDs have been created and are in use.

Commander Mick Leavor	MLeavor@VFWNY.COM
Sr. Vice Commander James Durkin	JDurkin@VFWNY.COM
Jr. Vice Commander Mike Pascal	MPascal@VFWNY.COM
Department Adjutant	NYSAdjutant@VFWNY.COM
Administrative Assistant	NYSVFWAA@VFWNY.COM
Administrative Clerk	NYSVFWAC@VFWNY.COM
Department Quartermaster	NYQuartermaster@VFWNY.COM

CIT Admin

NEXT ISSUE...December 2011

The next issue of *Overseas Veteran* will be a digital version on the Department Web site...**VFWNY.COM**. All members that have submitted their e-mail addresses to the CIT Department will be notified via e-mail when the issue is published.

When the next issue is published, everyone can open the Department of New York Web site and select **Dept_NY** and then **Newsletter** (near the bottom of that list). When the Newsletter page opens, click on the appropriate date and the newsletter will open.

Letters to the Editor

I was kind of taken aback when I read the flag display article in the latest *OS Vet*.

You said the military flags are to be displayed in order of their establishment, then went on to list them incorrectly. As far as the order of establishment of the services goes, all this can be found on *Wikipedia* for those who like to discuss their views on the field, although there shouldn't be any room for argument.

Also, as there is no clear direction for civilian display, the following is the military order of precedence.

Army – 14 June, 1775; Navy – 27 March, 1794; Marine Corps. – 11 July, 1798; Coast Guard – 20 January, 1915; Air Force – 18 September, 1947. These are dates when these services were actually established as what they are. The Navy and Marines can be argued that they are older. We had no Navy, nor any money to build ships for one, but on October 13, 1775, George Washington commissioned seven ships to capture British ships. On November 10, 1775 two battalions were commissioned to serve as landing forces for this fleet. After the war, these forces were disbanded. On 4 Aug, 1790 the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service was established, which was essentially a Coast Guard. They protected the coast and captured pirates, but didn't engage at sea. On March 27, 1794, six ships were commissioned, re-establishing the Navy (the first three going into operation in 1797). The Marine Corps was formally re-established on 11 July, 1798. The U.S. Coast Guard was established on 20 Jan., 1915 with the merger of the old Revenue Cutter Service and the U.S. Lifesaving Service. The U.S. Air Force was formally established on 18 Sept., 1947 being separated from the Army.

Probably none of this means a hill of beans to a lot of people and may sound a little trite, but there are a lot of people who know enough to question, and I figured a publication such as this should have its ducks in a row for credibility, so that's why I put this out there.

Thanks,
Dave Nichols
871 County Road 4
Geneva, New York

Dear Editor,

Read your issue in my doctor's office. Your article on POW/MIA flag display reads like it comes out of the National League of Families.

We see the vets in our area using the old protocol rule that PUBLIC FLAGS outrank organizational flags, which means state, county, town and village flags outrank the MIA/POW flag. In the protocol world, the MIA/POW flag has little ranking. We see it all the time – the VFW flag outranking the MIA/POW flag.

Editor, perhaps your National VFW has the latest on flag protocol display. On holidays, we display three flags: USA, NYS and MIA/POW; it's been in that order for the past 25 years.

Thank you for the fine paper.

Sincerely,
Clara Rucker, 85
Ladies Garden Club

Editor's Note: Debate about flag order and correctness will not likely come to an agreeable solution any time soon and the editor takes no position on this issue, but provides data from credible sources. The Flag Article in the Oct/Nov/Dec 2010 issue was a series of quotes and statements made in the Department of Defense Directive 1005.8...as stated in the article.

Another quote credited in the article is as follows: According to the Institute of Heraldry, and in keeping with the order in which troops are listed in Department of Defense Directive 1005.8, during peacetime the Coast Guard falls under the Department of Homeland Security. During wartime, if the Coast Guard comes under the control of the Department of Defense, then the Coast Guard flag would come before the Air Force flag in order of precedence.

There was also a link to obtain more information if desired: <http://www.usa-flag-site.org/etiquette-display.shtml>

MEMBERSHIP, continued from page 2

vive, if we want to increase our membership, if we want to continue to provide representation in Washington to keep the GI Bill intact – then we must change!

Are the above ideas going to work in every Post? The answer to that is no. You must look at your own area to see what the Veteran is looking for. Hold an open forum and invite the Veterans and public in to find out what they would like. I know it is hard to continue, year after year, fighting the battle at the Post level, but we must continue the battle. Who knows? Tomorrow you might be training your replacement.

To the District Commanders and County Commanders: Stay on the phones!!!! If possible, meet with the Post Commanders and the Membership Chairpersons to make sure that they know what you expect of them in their positions. Most importantly, make sure that they know what your goals are for the membership year. You must also let them know that you are there to help them meet these goals. Remember: FOLLOW UP...FOLLOW UP...and even more – FOLLOW UP!!!!!!! If you need my help, don't be afraid to give me a call (look in membership book/directory for number).

Semper Fi,
Ron Bush

Service Officer Raffle

“Honor the Dead by Serving the Living” – One of the ways in which we, the comrades who comprise the VFW Department of New York, do this is to fund State Service Offices in New York City and Buffalo. Part of the funding comes from the proceeds of our annual raffle which is held at our Spring Conference, the “Gold Chevron Ball”.

For a raffle to be successful, we need prizes and we need ticket sales. This is the time of year where we ask the Districts, Councils, Posts, Auxiliaries and members to donate cash prizes for the raffle. We are asking for donations of \$100 or more. Each donation will be used as a single prize and can be used to honor someone, either living or deceased.

All donations must be received by September 1, 2011 so that we have time to get the tickets printed in a timely manner, allowing us to start selling them during the Fall Conference.

Please make your checks payable to VFW Department of NY and send them to:

**Veterans of Foreign Wars
Department of New York
Service Officer's Raffle
69 Sand Creek Road
Albany, NY 12205**

If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail me at ahanley@vfwpost672.org or call 914-261-4721. Thank you for your support of this important project.

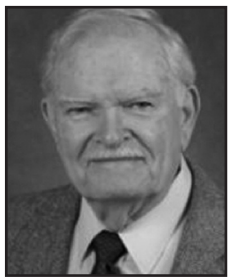
Art Hanley, PDC
Gold Chevron Ball Raffle Chairman

“Tomb of the Unknown”



“Tomb of the Unknown” float was brought to the Windham 4th of July parade by the Sgt. James F. Carty VFW Post 1545 veterans and Ladies Auxiliary members. On hand for the occasion were (L-R) Post Commander Christopher Mattiace, Ladies Auxiliary President Lynn Verrengia, float builder Bob Stefanko and float artist Nancy Orr. (See story on page 7)

New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame



Mr. William Beatty of Centereach served in the United States Army during the Korean War and is the honoree of Senator John J. Flanagan. His selection is based on the nomination from the administration of the Long Island State Veteran's Home (LISVH) in Stony Brook.

Mr. Beatty served as a Corporal in the 40th Infantry Division, 160th Infantry Regiment as part of the Regimental Combat Team and saw action in the Iron Triangle – the area in Korea bounded by Ch'orwon, Kumhwa and Pyonggang.

Following his honorable service, Mr. Beatty dedicated himself to helping other veterans, with an emphasis on those who call the Long Island State Veteran's Home in Stony Brook their home. He has been a member of the LISVH's Veterans Advisory Board since 1999 and has been its chairman for the past eight years.

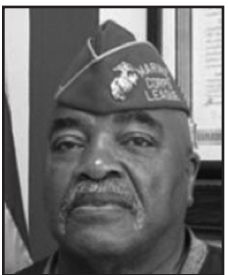
For over fifteen years, Mr. Beatty has been serving as the 2nd Vice President for Korean War Veterans, Central Long Island Chapter, and he has been an active member of the Advisory Board of the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency for the past 20 years.

Mr. Beatty's most enduring legacy to the veterans of Long Island was in the creation, development and design of the Suffolk County Gold Star Memorial in Armed Forces Plaza in Hauppauge. This memorial serves as a lasting tribute to the families that have lost a loved one in service to our country.

In addition to his work on behalf of fellow veterans, Mr. Beatty was a twenty-five year employee of the Long Island Railroad and is a dedicated volunteer to St. Margaret's of Scotland Church in Selden.

Mr. Beatty is proud to share this honor with his wife of 56 years, Veronica.

★★★★★★



Eugene Bryant has earned a place of distinction among the State of New York's Veterans in recognition of his meritorious military service and his tireless advocacy on behalf of his fellow veterans. Mr. Bryant served his nation admirably in two separate branches of the United States military during the Vietnam War. He

served the United States Army from 1959-1960 in Vietnam, where he attained the rank of Corporal; and then again, in the United States Marine Corp from 1961-1964 in Vietnam, attaining the rank of Sergeant and serving two tours.

During his military service to our country, he received the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal with 2 O/S Bars and a Good Conduct Medal.

Mr. Bryant, an active advocate for veteran's issues, has diligently served veteran's causes in many VFW capacities and committees, including: National Deputy Chief of Staff, National Aide-De-Camp, Chairman of N.Y. State Homeless Vet, Vice Chairman of N.Y. State Membership, All-State Post Commander, Commander of District Two, All-State County Commander, Westchester County Chaplain and Quartermaster, Advisory Committee Chairman of Westchester County, a Member of the Legislative Committee and Chairman of the Agent Orange Committee.

Currently, he is the Post Commander of the Aaron A.

Lewis VFW Post 6396 in Mount Vernon.

In addition to his VFW interests, Mr. Bryant also serves as the President of the Huguenot Lions Club of New Rochelle, is a member of the New Rochelle Waterfront Advisory Committee and coaches for the New Rochelle Youth Tackle League.

In addition to his many civic and VFW interests, Eugene enjoys many hobbies and spending time with his wife of 50 years, Nannie Bryant, his children and grandchildren. Commander Bryant is so dedicated to serving his fellow veterans, that he is lovingly known to his family as the "veteran's veteran."

★★★★★★



Michael Burke was born on September 4, 1949. After graduating from Wyandanch Memorial High School in 1968, he worked for Chase Manhattan Bank in New York City, until he was drafted into the United States Army in April 1969.

During his time with the Army, Michael was sent to Vietnam in

October of 1969. While on tour, he was wounded twice. His first injury occurred in Vietnam and he returned to duty, being injured again in Cambodia on May 8, 1970, which ended his tour. After sustaining significant injuries in Cambodia, Michael spent one week in a hospital in Vietnam and was transferred to a hospital in Japan for a month. His final recuperative stay was a six month period at the Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C. He received two Purple Hearts, a Bronze Star with 'v' device, an Army Commendation Medal with 'v' device for heroism, a Vietnamese Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Conspicuous Service Star, Combat Infantry Badge and the National Defense Service Medal.

Upon his retirement from the Army, Michael returned to Wyandanch and married his lovely wife, Juana, on October 13, 1973. While attending Marist College, he and his wife raised their five children: Jayne, Michelle, Melissa, Michael, Jr., and Marland Burke. Michael went on to have a successful career at IBM, and retired after 24 years.

Michael Burke has held numerous prestigious positions for the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He currently serves as Post Commander for the VFW Valil Wolff/McKenna Frye Post 170 in Poughkeepsie, New York and is also District Commander for District 2.

Michael and his wife reside in Poughkeepsie, New York.

★★★★★★



Karl R. Rohde is a highly-decorated Vietnam combat veteran of the United States Army, a dedicated servant of his community and a resident of Carmel, New York. He and his wife of 37 years, Irene, have two children, Dori and Karl W.; twin grandsons, Andrew and Robert Rohde; and a granddaughter, Olivia Venezia. Karl holds two Masters degrees in American History and Secondary Education, is a Town Councilman for Kent and is the Putnam County Historian. After 28 years, he retired from Local 1103 Communications Workers of America, where he worked as Union Job Steward.

For his service to our nation, Karl has received the

Silver Star, Combat Infantry Badge, M-16 Expert Rifleman Award, Army Commendation Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry and the New York State Conspicuous Service Cross.

As a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), The American Legion, AMVETS, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Military Order of the Cootie, American Division Veterans Association, The 40 & 8, Vietnam Veterans of America and Marine Corps League, Karl is among the most prominent and active veterans of the Hudson Valley. He is also the founding Chairman and present Vice Chairman of the Putnam County Joint Veterans Council, as well as the Chairman of the Putnam County Veterans Memorial Park Advisory Committee.

In his capacity for the VFW, Karl currently serves as State Quartermaster. He has previously served as the New York State Commander, the Carmel VFW Commander, the Putnam County VFW Commander, the District 2 Commander, the State Legislative Chairman, and as a member of the National Legislative Committee. Karl has twice been honored by the VFW as All-State Post Commander, twice as All-State County Commander, and as All-American State Commander. He is the publisher of the VFW Legislative e-newsletter. Additionally, Karl is the first recipient of the American Gold Star Mothers Distinguished Service Medal, and a recipient of the 2006 Norman Vincent Peale Outstanding Service Award.

★★★★★★



James A. Wilson, of Schenectady, enlisted in the U.S. Navy in December 1944. Four of his brothers served in the U.S. Army. He achieved the rank of Yeoman Second Class, was honorably discharged on July 14, 1949, and received the Good Conduct Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal and Navy Occupation Medal.

Jim has dedicated himself to assisting fellow veterans, including serving for many years as Director of the Schenectady County Veterans Service Agency before his retirement.

Jim has contributed his time to countless veteran organizations and causes. Since 1995, he has been Chairman of the VA National Cemetery Saratoga Support Committee. He has been a 35-year volunteer at the Samuel S. Stratton Medical Center and, for the past 30 years, has coordinated the decoration of veterans' graves at 31 cemeteries in Schenectady County.

Jim served seven terms as President of the Schenectady County Council of Veterans Organizations, and has been honored as an All-American VFW District Commander. He has been a member of numerous organizations, such as the New York State Veterans Advisory Committee, AMVETS, 369th Veterans Association, Non-Commissioned Officers Association, The American Legion, Navy Memorial, USS *Little Rock* Association, Sampson Navy World War II Association and Polish-American Vets.

Jim has also been active in many other civic organizations, including the United Way, Red Cross blood donor, Ingersoll Home and the Rotterdam Elks, where he was the longtime Flag Day Chairman.

Jim and his loving wife, Antoinette, are the proud parents of five children, and have been blessed with 13 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

Liberal Arts: The Cornerstone of Any Career

By Maribeth Gunner Pulliam, MS Ed

Liberal arts, business, technology, nursing, health sciences: Each offers a different educational opportunity and career path. But what are the similarities? Each is an exceptional educational investment, and each includes a strong underpinning in the liberal arts, and this foundation is more valuable today than ever before: Not only

does a liberal arts education offer boundless opportunities, but your future employment may depend on this essential cornerstone.

For active duty members of the military and veterans who have experienced the world and honed some valuable skills through military service, the seeds of a liberal arts education are already planted, providing a solid head start toward this versatile and practical degree program.

The liberal arts student gains knowledge through the study of literature, history, philosophy, government, sociology, psychology, criminal justice, music, biology, mathematics and many other rich subject areas.

Liberal arts study promotes personal and intellectual growth, produces practical and transferable skills for the workplace, and prepares students to be informed,

LIBERAL ARTS, continued on page 5

LIBERAL ARTS, continued from page 4 — socially responsible citizens.

Even if your passion is computer science or nursing, you will need to fortify your degree with liberal arts coursework. Why? In a world of rapidly changing technology, the technical skills you acquire today – although important – may become obsolete within a few years and might require retraining or more education. But the transferable skills you master through the liberal arts will hold fast as assets that will enhance your employability.

Research by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) shows that the skills employers seek today reflect study in the liberal arts: interpersonal communication, writing skills, cross-cultural experience, analytical and critical thinking, teamwork, integrity, flexibility, and a strong work ethic. Each of these coveted skills is highly transferable and valuable in any new career.

Cross-connection among the liberal arts and other disciplines is another valuable resource. You may ask: Why take biology when I am really interested in business? Do I really need a history class when my main interest is computer programming? The answer lies in the interdisciplinary nature of life itself. For example, a doctor does not just treat the disease, but rather, the whole person.

How will he or she address the patient without knowledge in biology, sociology, or even theology? An architect must consider the human element when designing a structure. What amenities do people value in their dwellings? A background in the arts, history, sociology or psychology will surely assist with the architect's vision. Excelsior College, a nonprofit distance learning college, is among the colleges that encourage this interdisciplinary approach to liberal arts learning, at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

Changing demographics, technology and a global economy will continue to impact the worker in the 21st century. If you prepare yourself too narrowly for a certain career, your qualifications may not meet future job requirements. With the eclectic preparation offered by a liberal arts degree, your skills will be a solid mainstay.

Think about it: most professions require communication, writing, problem-solving, embracing change and interacting with a variety of people. In a liberal arts curriculum, you study everything from research and writing to philosophy. You read extensively, draw conclusions and share perspectives. This is what employers want: people who can read, synthesize and summarize lengthy reports, listen to varied opinions, and communicate results. Employers are seeking new hires with this intel-

lectual flexibility. Acquiring an array of skills and experiences will place you at a competitive advantage in both private and public sector work environments.

A liberal arts degree does offer many possibilities for successful career paths. For instance, history and psychology majors can work in the areas of government, journalism or law, public relations, counseling or advertising. Liberal arts grads can be found in business administration, banking, systems analysis, health care, marketing, financial analysis, media, retail and sales. Should you choose to pursue a post-graduate degree, you will discover that a liberal arts background has effectively set the stage.

Whether you aspire to be a journalist, counselor, computer analyst or CEO, a well-rounded liberal arts education can prove to be a most practical kind of education in today's society, empowering individuals to be autonomous, critical thinkers who can address important issues in the workplace and in their communities. These abilities, coupled with your military experience and a strong desire for lifelong learning, may well be the best preparation for life and a rewarding career.

Maribeth Gunner Pulliam, MS Ed, is the Career Services Coordinator at Excelsior College, Albany, New York.

Department of New York VFW National Team of Scouters

FROM: Boy Scout Chairman
DATE: 28 June 2002
SUBJECT: Department Eagle Scout Program

This Program was conducted in accordance with the National Eagle Scout Scholarship and its guidelines. A total of 21 entries from Posts were received from seven of the eight Districts. Most were excellent, making the Judges' decision difficult. All entrants will receive a certificate signed by the Commander and myself to be presented by the sponsoring Post at an appropriate ceremony.

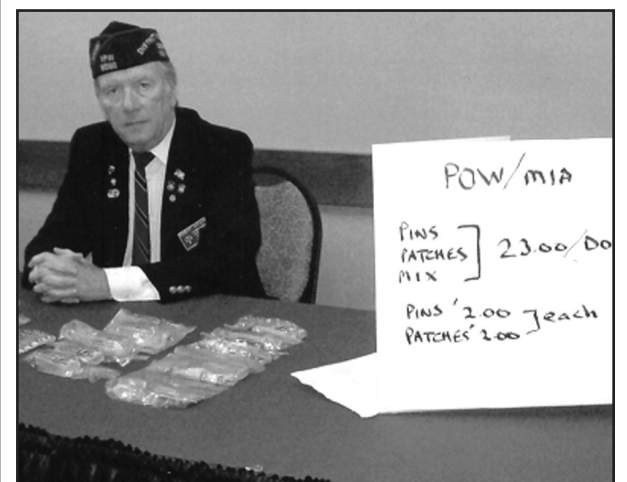
Jason D. Mayback from Bowmansville, New York, Troop 85, submitted by Post 6251-Cheektowaga, was selected as our EAGLE SCOUT for 2011. His resumé was submitted to National on the 17th of April for the Eagle Scout Scholarship Competition. Jason received his Department awards from Commander Veazy and Senior

Vice Commander-in-Chief DeNoyer, after addressing the Convention and describing his Eagle Project, which was the construction of a Gold Star Mothers Memorial at the sponsoring Post. Jason researched, planned, acquired donations and supervised construction of the entire project from start to dedication.

The 2012-13 Program will again follow the guidelines for the National Scholarship Program, as laid out on National's Web site. Several changes have been proposed and will be discussed at the National Convention on Tuesday, August 30th, at 2 p.m. Comrades are urged to attend this session if possible, and be sure to visit the BSA Booth on the exhibition floor. More details on any possible changes will be available by our Fall Conference.

**Verl Ringgenberg PDC
Department of New York National Scouter**

POW/MIA



A dedicated comrade selling POW/MIA patches and pins, Robert T. Spicer of Levittown/Island Trees Post 9592 at the 2011 State Convention in Liverpool, New York.

A New Course for College and Career Success

By Judith Jacobson Reed, M.Ed

Recently, the *Success Strategies for Military and Veterans* (CCS 112) course was launched at Excelsior College. This new online course provides active duty service members, transitioning military members, service members in reserve or guard components and veterans the tools for college and career success. Judy Reed, Director of Veteran Services and Outreach, and Maribeth Gunner, Career Services Coordinator, combined efforts to create a course specifically for Excelsior students with a military background as an introduction to college and a springboard to career transitioning from the military environment to the civilian workforce.

Students benefit in many ways during this eight-week course and earn three college credits. Students learn about the numerous support services that Excelsior College has available to assist them in being successful students. There is a review and full assessment of their military education and training used to reach degree goals most efficiently.

Students participate in self-assessment activities and learn where to access valuable career and education planning resources. The results of assessment activities aid students researching career fields of interest and corresponding education requirements, which culminates into

building their personal education plan. Next, students become familiar with additional tools to explore how employment trends, job outlooks and other factors can influence their career paths. After reviewing decision-making models and goal setting techniques, students build their own personal career action plans that will guide future goals. Military and veteran students also gain knowledge on various job search strategies, including those specific to the military and veteran populations.

There is a *Success Strategies for Military and Veterans* online course convening every other month. Many of the military and veteran students have found higher level degrees and certificates they are planning to pursue, once they meet their current education goals. Both Maribeth Gunner and Judy Reed agree that the course will assist students in adequately preparing for academic success and career planning for both military and civilian careers. The current students are actively engaged in this course, learning to use the tools for the achievement of college degrees and the investigation of their future career paths.

If you would like more information on the CCS 112, *Success Strategies for Military and Veterans* course, please contact 888-647-2388, Ext. 1352 or if you are a veteran, e-mail veterans@excelsior.edu or if you are military, military@excelsior.edu. More information is available

on Excelsior College on the Web at www.excelsior.edu
Comments from previous students after taking CCS 112 *Success Strategies for Military and Veterans* are below:

"The assessments have helped me to both identify and confirm my skills and abilities. The assessment tools also helped me to feel more confident about the decisions that I am making as I work toward my career goals."
– Meredith, Army National Guard

"I found the career action plan to be very helpful. It lays out a nice foundation of the steps and tasks needed to keep me on the right track."
– Daniel, U. S. Army

"This class has made a significant impact on my education and life goals. I have learned how to set specific short- and long-term goals that are attainable and I know what I need to do to complete those goals."
– Joseph, U.S. Navy

Judith Jacobson Reed, M.Ed, is the Director of Veteran Services and Outreach at Excelsior College, Albany, New York.

Surplus Equipment Online Auction

The Department of New York State Commander has authorized the State Quartermaster to dispose of equipment listed below. The State Quartermaster has assigned the disposal to the CIT Director as per the State Commander's suggestion. All equipment is auctioned by bidding 'as is' with no implied or actual warranty, service or support.

All equipment listed has been tested at Headquarters and found to be operational and serviceable. VFWNY is not responsible for damage incurred during transport, malfunctioning software or applications, virus programs, any possible virus contamination or virus removal.

All bids should be sent by e-mail to: CITadmin@VFWNY.com with "EQUIP BID" in the subject area. The Bid e-mail must include the bidder's full name, mailing address, phone number and item desired with the bid price. Suggested starting bids have been listed, but any "best offer" will be considered. The decision of the CIT Director is final on all bids.

1	Dell Inspiron 3800 laptop with Windows 2000	Suggested minimum bid: \$50
2	ACER Travelmate 3260 laptops, Windows XP, Office 2007	Suggested minimum bid: \$125
1	Compaq Presario 1200 Laptop with Windows, Office 2000 & MS Works	Suggested minimum bid: \$50
1	SHARP XR-10X Projector	Suggested minimum bid: \$200
2	Built-to-Order Computers, used at HQ (CPUs Only...no monitors, mice or keyboards) Windows XP, Office 2007, 4GB RAM, 150GB Hard Drives	Suggested minimum bid: \$175 each
1	Dell Optiplex GX 270, Windows XP, 2.7GH, 40GB Hard Drive; no applications installed.	Suggested minimum bid: \$75
1	FAX Machine, Fax Phone L80	Suggested minimum bid: \$40

Bidding Deadline: September 26, 2011

Bids that encompass the entire list are at a suggested minimum bid of \$800 or best offer will be considered. All bids will be reviewed and selected by October 1st and the winning bidders will be notified.



Here I am, climbing into an F-80 Shooting Star jet aircraft for a training flight; notice the old-style backpack parachute (taken at Greenville Air Force Base, Mississippi in late July 1958). Temperature and humidity were about equal; both close to 100. The photo is blurry since it was done with a digital camera taking a picture of the original.

In SAC, I was initially in 16th Air Force in southern Spain with B-47 medium Bombers. That was 1959-1962. Then I was sent to Pease Air Force Base, New Hampshire, again in B-47's from 1962-1964. The 8th Air Force unit at Pease was the 509th Bomb Wing...noteworthy as the only group permitted to wear the "mushroom cloud" patch. It had been the Wing that dropped the nuclear bombs on Japan in 1945.

The most memorable experience at Pease was the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962, which was very terrifying. We had nuclear weapons on board and were sitting on the runway for almost 24 hours, ready to go. We were a backup unit to the SAC B-52 fleet, and would only have been ordered to fly had there been problems with any primary B-52 units. Thankfully, we finally were ordered to stand down. I often think about the consequences had we completed our mission to bomb Cuba. We might not even be here to talk about it.

In 1964, I decided to get out and resigned my Regular Commission as a Captain. I went into the NY Air National Guard in 1969, but that's another story. Upon release from USAF active duty in 1964, I worked in management for the *New York Daily News* for 5 years. In 1969, I accepted a marketing position with Avon Products World Headquarters in New York City. In 1994, I retired as Manager of International Marketing and traveled extensively throughout Europe, Latin America and Asia. I'm also fluent in Spanish.

In 1973, I earned an MBA degree from Fordham University Graduate School of Business.

From 1969-1975, I served with New York Air National Guard, 106th Combat Support Group, initially stationed at Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, New York and later at Suffolk County Airport, Westhampton Beach, New York. My retirement activities include financial consulting, politics, antique collecting and fishing."

One of Our Own!

Sometimes it's nice to read about one of our own. The following is about Ted Cohen, a member of Staten Island's Anderson-Lagno VFW Post 5090. Ted is active assisting Post efforts outreaching to local Veterans, in support of active-duty troops, as well as youth and school programs. He's also a member of Staten Island's Watkins-Kellett American Legion Post 277.

Ted resides in Eltingville on Staten Island's south shore along with his wife of 51 years, Janice. They have a daughter and two grandsons (15 and 11) who live in Georgia. Their oldest grandson is very interested in attending a service academy and both boys are Georgia State-Level competitive swimmers.

As Ted states: "The scenario was Air Force ROTC cadet training, which was required in order to be commissioned. I received my Second Lieutenant's bar in June 1959 through the Brooklyn College AFROTC program.

Greenville AFB, Mississippi, was an old WWII single engine aircraft training base for pilots and aircrews. We lived in open bay wooden barracks, and were put through rigorous physical/mental abuse, which was par for the course. The scariest part was the "jump school", where you had to plummet from the 60 foot tower in the parachute harness, and then roll on the landing. I made it okay, and was lucky not to break anything. But, at 19 years of age, I was indestructible, as were we all. In my 5 years of active duty with USAF, I never had to bail out. Thank God.

The aircraft shown in the photo was the T-33 single engine jet trainer which was a modified F-80 Lockheed Shooting Star. It went into service around 1948, and was one of the earliest fighters used in Korea, prior to the better known F-86 Sabrejet. The T-33/F-80 was a great airplane, and was quite forgiving of mistakes by rookies.

With my typical lousy luck, I was assigned to Strategic Air Command (SAC) for the entire five years (1959-1964). I never again got into single engine planes, except for some time in the L-20 DeHavilland Beaver observation plane, which was lots of fun.

New Member

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3275 and American Legion Post 554 in Ft. Plain presented membership cards to their newest member, Air Force Captain Rita Neill O'Brian, who served in Afghanistan.

From all the members of both Veterans' organizations...welcome aboard and thank you for your service!



Presenting membership cards to new member Rita Neill O'Brian are Past Post and Council Members Bradley Schrell and Stephen Yuhasz.

Outstanding Americanism Award

The Key to the Town of Guilderland was presented to Darlene Stanton (pictured below) by Town Supervisor Ken Runion at the May 22, 2011 Altamont Memorial Day parade, sponsored by the Boyd Hilton Post 7062 and the Helderberg American Legion Post 977.

Supervisor Runion stated: "Darlene is a dedicated member of Post 7062 Auxiliary and Past VFW District 3 President, as well as the VFW Department of New York Ladies Auxiliary Americanism Chairman. She is awarded this honor for her outstanding Americanism, patriotism, dedication to our Veterans and community and her many hours of volunteering to help those in need."



Help a Hero Call Home

Support VFW's



VA Expands Outreach to Women Veterans Department Hosts 5th National Summit in D.C.

WASHINGTON (July 15, 2011) – Over 700 participants plan to attend the Fifth National Summit on Women Veterans' Issues scheduled July 16-17 at the Hyatt Regency-Washington on Capitol Hill. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki will give remarks to open the summit, which will focus on expanding outreach to women Veterans and increasing awareness of the enhanced VA benefits and services available to them.

"With more women serving in our armed forces than ever before, this summit is an opportunity to exchange ideas and focus attention on the issues and concerns unique to women Veterans," Shinseki said. "Today, there are over 1.8 million women Veterans of all eras and one of VA's highest priorities is to continue to expand our services and outreach to ensure they receive the care and benefits they have earned."

This is the first time VA will provide targeted training, education, and collaborative cross training for its staff responsible for providing services and benefits, specifically to women Veterans and their families. Participants

include: women Veterans, women Veteran advocates from across the nation, active duty women service members (to include those in the Reserves and National Guard) VA employees who provide care to women Veterans, and representatives from a multitude of Veterans service organizations and nonprofit agencies. VA Medical Centers employ women Veterans program managers; community-based outpatient clinics employ a women's liaison; and VA regional offices employ a women Veterans coordinator.

"The number of women Veterans using VA health care has doubled in the last decade," said Patricia Hayes, chief consultant of VA's Women Veterans Health Strategic Health Care Group. "This training, coupled with direct feedback from women Veterans, will enable VA to continue to enhance health care and services to meet their needs."

Today, over 200,000 women are serving in the armed forces. About 11 percent of the U.S. forces currently serving in Afghanistan and Iraq are women. Recognizing

the valor, service and sacrifice of America's 1.7 million women Veterans, VA has stepped up its outreach efforts to women Veterans to increase their awareness of the comprehensive array of VA benefits and programs. Women Veterans are entitled to the same benefits and medical care as their male counterparts, including health care, disability compensation, education assistance, work-study allowance, vocational rehabilitation, employment and counseling services, insurance, home loan benefits, nursing home care, survivor benefits and various burial benefits.

In addition, VA also has a multitude of gender-specific services and programs that respond to the unique needs of women Veterans, including pap smears, mammography, general reproductive health care, counseling for substance abuse, sexual trauma, depression and evaluation and treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). For more information about VA, visit the Web site at www.va.gov and its Center for Women Veterans at <http://www.va.gov/womenvet>

Veterans Day Parade New York City 2011 Friday, November 11, 2011

Matthew Bryan, Parade Confirmations Director

On behalf of the Veterans Day Parade Committee of the United War Veterans Council, Inc. (chartered by the Mayors' Office, City of New York to produce the annual NYC Veterans Day Parade), I am proud to be your point of contact to help your group's participation in the parade.

The information on our Web site at www.VetsDay.org gives important and exciting information about the parade, as well as all applicable forms needed to be filled out in order to participate.

I have forwarded this letter and our Web site link to everyone on our vast mailing list, in pursuit of your group's authorized representative. Please help us by forwarding this to any fellow veterans who may not be on our mailing lists, or forward this information to anyone you feel needs to know about the parade.

For additional information about the parade, please visit our Web site at www.VetsDay.org or call me toll-free at 1-855-VETSDAY or 212-693-1476.

Complete the application on the Web site and get it back to us immediately.

Thank you for your patriotism and participation,

Matthew Bryan

Confirmations Director

Veterans Day Parade, NYC 2011

United War Veterans Council, Inc.

346 Broadway, Suite 807

New York City, NY 10013

Telephone: 212 693-1476

Fax: 212 693-1475

E-mail: paradeday11@yahoo.com

For Patrick Gualtieri

Executive Director and NYC Veterans Day Parade

VFW Joins in Houston National Cemetery Censorship Lawsuit

KANSAS CITY, MO, July 1, 2011 – The National Commander of America's largest and oldest major combat veterans' organization is appalled over allegations of religious censorship at one of the nation's national cemeteries, calling it a case of "bureaucracy running amok."

"This is a point in case of bureaucracy...or rather, a classic example of a bureaucrat running amok. In spite of VA policy, the cemetery director is making up her own rules and has imposed hurtful, unilateral restrictions of her own choosing," said Richard L. Eubank, the National Commander of the 2.1 million-member Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and its Auxiliaries.

Texas-based Liberty Institute has filed suit on behalf of the VFW, American Legion, and The National Memorial Ladies over allegations of religious hostility and unlawful censorship by the VA and its director of the Houston National Cemetery. "They've told the VFW and the

American Legion that they cannot have prayer during the burial services of our veterans, unless the family requests it in writing and submits the prayer for pre-approval," said Liberty Institute general counsel Jeff Mateer.

The VA, meanwhile, insists its national cemeteries welcome appropriate religious recitations. The "VA values and respects every veteran and their family's right to a burial service that honors their faith tradition," said Keith Ethridge, director of VA's National Chaplain Center. The Houston cemetery superintendent has declined to speak to the media, despite numerous requests.

"Generations of patriotic Americans have fought, bled and died to help defend the U.S. Constitution – that great document provides and guarantees fundamental rights of religious expression and freedom of speech. Those basic tenets are clearly being violated at the cemetery and that simply cannot be tolerated," concluded Eubank.

News from VFW Post 1545

Since Memorial Day, Post 1545 has been very active with community-wide events. We were honored to be chosen as the Color Guard for the Greene County Commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War held on the Courthouse steps in Catskill.

We held our 3rd Annual Golf Outing at the Windham Country Club on June 3rd, which was another fun-filled and successful event. On Saturday, June 11th, we were out in force on Route 23 for our Flag Day collection and distribution of hand-held American flags to the motoring public. An interesting human interest sidebar came from this event. While fishing in the collection bucket for a \$10 bill to make change for a donor, one of our members discovered a crisp \$100 bill. Needless to say, it surprised us all and thinking someone made an obvious mistake, awaited the owner to return and sheepishly ask for his/her money back. That didn't happen.

Come Monday, this same member was at a local bank and related the story of the mysterious and most welcome donation, only to be told that the bank person already knew about it. Upon further inquiry it was disclosed that the individual who made this most generous donation had passed through our collection line without making a contribution and proceeded directly to the bank. He obtained a \$100 bill from his savings account and made the donation on his way out of town. The bank would not reveal his identity, except to disclose that he was a Vietnam Veteran and wished to remain anonymous. We would love to know who this veteran was so that we could thank him – and better still – ask him to

join the VFW.

On the evening of June 11th, the Ladies Auxiliary held their first Bingo night to a full house at the VFW Post. Other Bingo nights are scheduled for July 9th and August 13th. The first event was very successful and if the same holds true for the remaining schedule, the Ladies will consider running Bingo throughout the fall and winter.

On Monday, June 14th, the Post held their Annual Flag Day Ceremony with the respectful destruction of hundreds of collected flags. We want to thank the Windham Post Office for once again being the collection point for residents to drop off old and tattered American flags.

Finally, the July 4th weekend was jammed with a Treasure Sale conducted by the Ladies Auxiliary on July 2nd and 3rd, followed by the traditional July 4th Parade. Our float, "The Tomb of the Unknown" was judged the Best Organizational Float by the Parade Committee (see photo on page 3). Bob Stefanko and Nancy Orr, an artist and wife of member Dan Davern, did a fantastic job in their labor of love in creating the float. It was an exact one-half size replica of the actual tomb at Arlington Cemetery. Thanks to all the Post members, Ladies Auxiliary and family members who participated. A special 'Thank You' to the Windham Community for their rousing display of support during the entire parade route. You made us proud.

Chris Mattiace
Commander

Patriot's Pen

Michael Spellman
Patriot's Pen Contest Chairman

To: ALL Posts, Auxiliaries, County Councils and Districts
Subject: 2011-12 Patriot's Pen Contest



I want to thank Department Commander Leavor for the re-assignment as this years' 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 2011-2012 Patriot's Pen theme is:
"Are you proud of your country?"

All student entries are due at the Post level by November 1, 2011. Your Post judging should be done by November 15, 2011 and you need to pass your winners to your District Chairman. The District judging should be completed by December 3, 2011, 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, 2011.

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 13495p.

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!



VFW POST 7172 Armed Forces Day Picnic Honors Our Wounded

By Frank A. Russo, VFW POST 7172
Communications Officer



VFW Post 7172 Commander Joe Konczynski honoring the wounded warriors.

On May 22, 2011 the VFW Post 7172 hosted its first annual Armed Forces Day picnic.

The picnic was part of the Staten Island "Welcomes Our Heroes" event sponsored by the John R. Tamburri Memorial Post 917 where five wounded soldiers from Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C. and two of their escorts were honored at a number of events during their two day stay in Staten Island.

The five soldiers and their guests were escorted from the Medical Center to Staten Island by police and approximately 250 bikers from various motorcycle organizations. The large crowd, under cloudy skies, resounded with loud applause for each of the wounded soldiers and their guests as VFW Post 7172 Commander Joe Konczynski announced their names.

Brendan Marrocco, the Staten Island soldier who lost all four limbs to an IED explosive on Easter Sunday in 2009 in Iraq, was also present to greet the other wounded soldiers.



Brendan Marrocco (in white T-shirt) chats with others at picnic.



The honored guests enjoying their day.