

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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Marlene Roll State Commander



IT'S ALL ABOUT ME

I thought I understood, but maybe I really don't.

I thought the VFW's mission was to help fellow veterans and their families, I thought

that is why we joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars. I thought our mission was to fight for the benefits earned by us and our fellow veterans, not to fight each other. I thought our mission was to promote our programs

in the community, not promote ourselves as dictators in our posts.

We once fought together, as one, in defense of our country. Can we no longer fight together, as one, for the betterment of our comrades in need? Have we been out of the military so long that we have actually lost our military bearing and have become civilianized to the point of "It's all about me" mentality?

I bring this up because I have had several complaints about territorial issues and
—STATE COMMANDER, continued on page 3

Harold "Hal" Burke, Jr. State Adjutant



Comrades,

Soon we will be setting our clocks back an hour as the Fall Season is upon us. The extra hour each day should provide us with that time we have been

looking for to do those extras that we have had difficulty finding time to do. As the first quarter of the year comes to a close, take this extra time to complete your Community Service Report and Trustee's Report of Audit.

State Commander Marlene Roll has included many new training initiatives in this year's programs. Take the opportunity

to view them on the Department Website. You are encouraged to use and share these valuable resources.

Communication is Paramount to our State Commander, and as information is received, it is being forwarded to those who we have e-mail addresses for. If you would like to be on the Department e-mail distribution list please provide me with your e-mail address.

State Commander Roll has placed great emphasis on the importance of the Department of New York, VFW responding to all communications in a timely manner. Therefore, she is requesting that all correspondence regarding VFW matters be sent to the Department of New York

—STATE ADJUTANT, continued on page 4

Dennis Sullivan Sr. Vice Commander



Comrades,

It was a busy start of the year traveling around New York State visiting VFW posts. I accompanied Commander Marlene Roll on her Empire Tour along with

Dave Czarnecki, State Inspector and my wife Terry, the photographer. Over the 2200 mile journey we visited many posts; as many as possible on a daily basis as we moved through each area and, of course, the availability of each post.

—SR. VICE, continued on page 2

William "Doc" Schmitz PRN Director of Veterans Issues



ON THE ROAD RUNNING


A three and one half month old new car which started out with 109 miles now has 15,809 miles. I have visited many Departments and

Posts in the Eastern States Conference and have met many wonderful members of our VFW. The support I have received from members of the Department of New York has been AWESOME!!! I want to take this

—DIR. VETERANS ISSUES, continued on page 4

Photographer:  **John Brunato**

Editor:  **Don Mackey**

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New York State Overseas Veteran

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** 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



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Michael Burke Jr. Vice Commander



Comrades,
It has been four months since I have taken the prestigious office of Jr. Vice Commander. During these four months, I have traveled to our Headquarters in Kansas and taken a leadership course. I have been across parts of the great State on New York and visited posts and attended some District meetings. It was great seeing old comrades and meeting new ones.

During my visit to the District meetings, attendance has been great across the board compared to two years ago. I commend you all. Thank you and continue with your good work. There is still much more work to be done and we need your continued support in order for New York to be back on top.

As you know, membership is the backbone

of our organization and sometimes we beat it to death and we have to, so everyone can stay focused on recruiting. Recruiting is not a one-person show but a team effort and we need everyone to participate on the team. To those Districts meetings I have attended, I have given the District Commanders handouts to give to each post in their district. Attending the leadership class, they have given me the tools to be successful and I have given these same tools to the District Commanders to distribute to the posts in their district so we all can be successful. As you know, sometimes things come from the bottom up and sometimes from the top down. So, if we all stay in this together the State of New York will fare very well.

Yours in Comradeship,
Michael Burke
Jr. Vice Commander
Department of New York

Dave Czarnecki State Inspector

Comrades,

I want to thank the District Commanders and District Inspectors that have taken the lead on getting Post inspections into Department Headquarters. As elected and appointed officers, we have a responsibility to the comrades of the VFW to maintain the integrity and financial stability of our Posts throughout the Department. The inspection process ensures this integrity to our membership across the State. The inspectors are assuring the membership that the Post is operating within the By-Laws and funds are being disbursed as per the memberships

direction. I ask all inspectors, Commanders and Quartermasters to provide a copy of three important documents: Trustee Report, Bond, and 990 with the inspection. Without these documents on file in the Department I cannot certify the inspection. I truly thank all the comrades that have accepted the responsibility of Inspector; your hard work and travel helps maintain the strength and health of the VFW.

Yours in Comradeship,
Dave Czarnecki
State Inspector

—**SR. VICE COMMANDER, from page 1**—

We experienced every type of weather except snow. We started in Albany in 95 degrees, two days later it was 40's and lots of rain and ended in Albany at 90 degrees.

We meet so many comrades who welcomed us to their posts. They fed us, gave us tours of their building and property and we discussed matters that was important to our VFW organization. Each post had one thing in common: They were all impressed and very happy to receive a visit from the New York Department Commander Marlene Roll.

During our tour, we saw such beautiful sights and one of them was the stars in the sky. Living in the city, I don't get to see that view unless I go to visit the Planetarium.

I look forward to visiting additional posts in the future.

Yours in Comradeship,
Dennis Sullivan
Dept of NY Sr. Vice Commander

Gene Ratigliano

Chief of Staff



Hello Comrades. Fall is upon us and it is a beautiful time of the year. I hope you are all taking the time to enjoy the changes of color and the wonders we are so fortunate to have here in the

east during the fall season. The leaves are changing and soon we will be faced with that inevitable white fluffy substance called snow. And even though we will be looking forward to another winter, as an organization we still have a job ahead of us. The membership gods are calling and as we move forward we need to continue to renew the members who have left the fold as well as think about the establishment of new posts in the Department. The Post Quartermaster can determine in his National Quartermaster Tools which members have lapsed their membership and the Department continues to receive calls about the establishment of new posts with many asking: "How do we do that?"

Firstly, there needs to be at least thirty-five (35) members interested in the formation of a new post of which twenty-five (25) need to be new members with an application submitted to the Commander-in-Chief. Once the Commander-in-Chief approves an application, the Commander must institute the new post within sixty (60) days of the date of the approval. If the new post is not instituted within the sixty-day period the approval may be rescinded.

Once the members wishing to form the new

post reach the required number of members for institution, the Department Commander will assign an Instituting Officer to oversee the establishment of the new post. The Instituting Officer will review all the documentation submitted by the members being mustered in and verify the eligibility of each applicant. After institution, election and installation of officers the Instituting Officer will submit a report to Department Headquarters. After 90 days, the Post Commander will verify the information necessary for the issuance of the charter and a charter will be issued by the Commander-in-Chief. Sec. 201 in the Manual of Procedure provides more detailed information on the Formation, Institution and Chartering of posts.

Even though in some areas posts are closing, there is still a need to establish a post when enough veterans are willing to do the hard work to establish another. There are many benefits to establishing a new post, but especially that of being a charter member. Charter members leave a legacy because their names will always be associated with that post whether it be 25 or 100 years down the road as long as that posts charter remains intact. It is a great honor to be a charter member and the names of those charter members will always be forever a part of the history of that post. Keep up the good work and don't forget to keep a member application in your wallet. You never know when you will meet that next veteran who will be our newest VFW member. I am available for assistance if needed and you may contact me at 518-885-9666/518-796-4338 or by e-mail at mcpc4@nycap.rr.com.

—STATE COMMANDER, from page 1

personal vendettas, some to which the fight is being carried on by those who were not even around when it started and the people who were, are now dead. Is this what we have been reduced to? Is this why our ranks are reducing?? Who wants to join an organization that eats their own?

It is truly disheartening to hear of the internal battles that result in nothing but anger, dysfunction and loss of members and ultimately advertises to our communities a bad image and over shadows all the good work others are doing for the Department of New York and the VFW as a whole.

Please, don't get me wrong. I have just returned from traveling around the state and have visited many posts and talked with many members that are giving it all they have in promoting our program and community cooperation and are succeeding nicely!! We also have posts that just recently have built themselves back up from the point of eminent closure. It took team work and cooperation and they are now thriving.

I am asking the next time a conflict comes up (and it happens, we are all human) to step back and ask: How can we make it so that it is for the best for the VFW? Please exercise being respectful to other posts and when a post makes a mistake and infringes on "your territory" look to joining forces and make it valuable for everyone!!! Don't shut it down so the community loses out...how is that service?

Just in case my message is getting lost in my writing...It is not about me, Marlene Roll, Commander...It is about our veterans and their families. Please stop the "Petty Jealousies and Trivial Personalities". We are better than that, We are Combat Veterans of the United States and Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars....Let's show them how it's done!!!! Be the First to Care, NOT the First to Tear!!!

Marlene Roll
Commander of this Great Department
of New York
Proud Member of the Veterans of
Foreign Wars

LOST MAIL

For months now, regular mail that is supposed to arrive at Department Headquarters has been going to the home addresses of Project and/or Department Chairs, Directors, Line Officers and every place but where it's supposed to go. Some critical mail destined for the Department Quartermaster or Adjutant ends up diverted to their homes. That increases the chances that mail is lost, misplaced or just plain late to arrive where all the data is compiled.

The consequence is, the critical reports and data that qualifies a post for All-State are not getting to the right place or persons or arriving past the due dates eliminating the chances of some posts to qualify at all. Some mail is even lost because officers don't realize the mail is for headquarters and not their round files.

All VFW mail must be sent to Department Headquarters, not to individual members homes. It is important that posts and members get all the credit they have earned so all required reports and information must go to: **Veterans of Foreign Wars, 69 Sand Creek Road, Albany, 12205** to the attention of the appropriate officer.

It's our responsibility to make sure posts and members aren't robbed of awards they deserve because of some misguided agenda, misinformation, and misunderstanding.

Bring
Our Troops
Home Safely!

—STATE ADJUTANT, from page 1

Headquarters to assure that she is successful in her quest. Headquarters will confirm the correspondence is properly annotated, distributed and responded to with actions that may be necessary to bring the issue to closure.

Should you receive a media inquiry, you should respond: “I have no authority to respond to your request” and you should refer your question to the Department Adjutant.

Cindy, Dale, Gene, Don and I are here to assist you, our membership.

If we can ever be of any assistance please do not hesitate to contact me at 518-463-7427.

Sincerely,

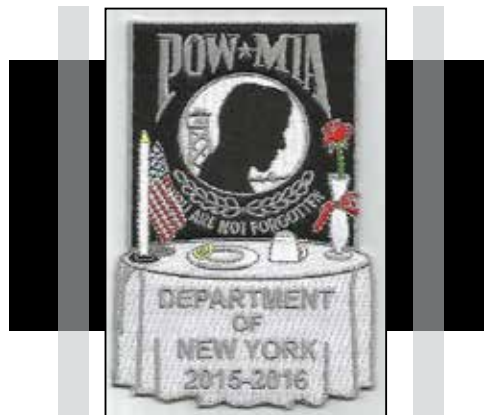
Hal
Harold “Hal” Burke Jr.,
PJAG/PSC/PSQM
State Adjutant

—DIR. VETERANS ISSUES, from page 1

opportunity to thank one and all: THANK YOU, THANK YOU, ONE AND ALL.

Five Departments have officially committed their support so far and many members of other Departments have spoken quite favorably in their personal support. The issues that need to be addressed are pretty much found in all Departments and all are stepping to the plate to address them. These are challenging times and we will be sticking together forming an army to confront them. I look forward to your continued support, and working with you in leading our great Veterans of Foreign Wars.

William “DOC” Schmitz PRN
Director of Veterans Issues
National Inspector General 2015-2016
Dept. of NY VFW Dept. Cmdr. 2014-15
Surgeon 2007-2012
National Surgeon General 2010-2011



DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK
 REPRESENTED AT FALL NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE
 IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

On September 23rd, Department Legislative Committee Members Joe Cognitore, Gene Ratigliano and David Czarnecki were part of the team which stormed Capitol Hill to communicate the VFW’s legislative agenda to Congress. More than 70 members of the VFW National Legislative Committee and VFW leadership met with their Senators and Congressional Representatives to give their perspective on issues affecting veterans, the military and their families.

Issues which were brought to the attention at Capitol Hill by representatives included implementation of the Veterans Choice Act, employee accountability, the claims backlog and eliminating the one per cent Cost-of-Living Adjustment penalty for future members of the military. At the top of the list on the VFW agenda was ending Sequestration, and the arbitrary spending caps imposed by the Budget Control Act which is harming DOD and could potentially threaten the VA.

These issues continue to be on the forefront of the VFW’s efforts to end sequestration and improve the care being given to our veterans by the VA. You can help and are strongly encouraged to continue the momentum of the conference by contacting your Senators and Congressmen to let them know what they can do to keep the faith with veterans and service members. You can also help by hosting as well as attending local Town Hall Meetings in your community.



Discussion with Congressman Paul Tonko
D/20 NY in his DC Office



*(L-R): Congressman Paul Tonko, Gene Ratigliano, Dave Czarnecki & Joe Cognitore
 Department Legislative Committee*

Department Legislative Committee meet with
Congressman Lee Zeldin R/1st NY Staff



(L-R): Joe Cognitore, Matthew Scott, Gene Ratigliano, Dave Czarnecki & Robert Feiler

I'M THE GUY!

I'm the guy who asked to join your organization.

I'm the guy who paid his dues to join.

I'm the guy who stood in front of you and promised to be faithful and loyal to the organization.

I'm the guy who came to your meetings and no one paid any attention to me.

I'm the guy who tries several times to be a friend, but they all had their own buddies to talk to and sit next to.

I'm the guy that came to several meetings but no one paid any attention to me.

I'm the guy that was left out when I volunteered to help with fund raising projects and membership recruitment.

I'm the guy who missed a few meetings because I was sick, but at the next meeting no one asked where I had been, I guess it didn't matter very much to others whether I was there or not.

I'm the guy that decided to stay home and watch TV one meeting night. At the following meeting no one asked where I had been.

You might say I'm a good guy, a good family man who holds a responsible job, loves his country and his community.

You know who I am?????

I'm the guy who never came back.

It amuses me how the heads of the organization and members discuss why the organization is losing members.

It amuses me to think that they spend so much time looking for new members when I was there all the time.

Does this occur at your Post? Is it possible this occurs? If so, ONLY you can change this in your Post.

Dan McMahon, Chairman
Membership

Joint O.T.I. Class held at Camp Pioneer on Lake Erie September 25 & 26, 2015



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HAPPENINGS AROUND NEW YORK VFW

The "Oldest" and "Newest" member

The Peter Andrews Memorial Post 7337 of Castleton, New York is proud to welcome its first female member: 1st Lt. Ellen McKnight, RN. Lt. McKnight joined the Army Medical Corp on 1 October 1941. Lt. McKnight spent eighteen months stationed at various hospitals in the United States, Puerto Rico and Okinawa. She was awarded the WWII Victory Medal, American Theater Ribbon and the American Defense Medal. At 96 years of age, Lt. McKnight is the "Oldes" and "Newest" member of Post 7337. Welcome aboard, Lt. Ellen McKnight!!!



Taken during the Peach Festival held in Lewiston. Shown in the picture left to right from Youngstown Post 313: Adjutant John MacArthur, District 7 Commander Art Scheuneman, and Post 313 Commander Gary Zanardi.



(L-R): Warsaw Post 4823: Quartermaster Justin Zuchowski, District 7 Commander Art Scheuneman, and Post 4823 Commander Gary Gardner after conducting a Post Inspection.



District 7 V.S.O./ Newfane Post 8438 V.S.O. Earl Schmidt, District 7 Commander Art Scheuneman, and Lockport Post 2535 3-year Trustee Gordon Bellinger at the Niagara County Fair where Lockport Post 2535 had a booth set up and manned for the five days of the fair.



Ricky Lee entertaining at the Buffalo V.A.M.C. on July 31, 2015.



Past District 7 President giving out an American Flag to one of the patient's children that attended the Ricky Lee Concert at the Buffalo V.A.M.C.



District 6 Erie County Council Commander Leonard Harris and Past Department President/Erie County Council Program Coordinator Mary Kreuzer enjoying the Ricky Lee Concert at the Buffalo V.A.M.C.

Italian festival held in Mount Morris on a soggy August 15, 2015.



The Lt. Thomas Boyd / Sgt. Michael Parker Post 547 had set up a booth for membership and to let the public know what we do for the veterans and the community.

Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul visited Arcade Post 374 on July, 2015.



Pictured left to right: District 7 Commander Art Scheuneman, Past District 7 President Karen Scheuneman, and Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul. Again the Commander's first aid bag is shown.

Commander's Tour 2015



Colonie Cake Cutting



Colonie Cake



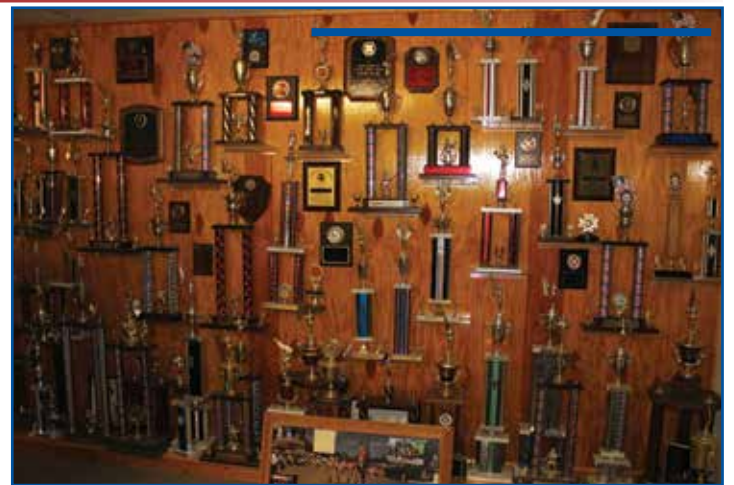
Dansville



Ellenburg



Fairport



Ghent

Commander's Tour 2015



Hastings



Keensville



Lyons



Monroe



Monticello



Phonex

Commander's Tour 2015



Plamyra



Plattsburgh



Post 1231



Post 2475



Post 5802



Post 7227

Commander's Tour 2015



Potsdam



Salamancia



Washingtonville



Sheridan



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The City of Saratoga Springs

Saratoga County

The Capital District of NY Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army

Presents



**A Tribute to
Vietnam War Era Veterans**

When: Saturday, 21 November 2015

From 7PM to 10PM

(Free General Admission)

Where: Saratoga Springs City Center

522 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, New York

Viet Nam Era music / show by DJ Gary Ferris

and

Representatives from Veterans Support Agencies



“Jungle Warriors: Service and Sacrifice”

By Jim Ryan

STUDENT VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Commander Biedrzycki has reissued a letter to all National Council Members asking them to assist in reaching out to the Student Veteran Association membership. With that in mind, I am asking our membership to step up efforts in this endeavor by using the following suggestions.

- 1.) Identify opportunities to speak to student veterans. Tell them how to access Department and Post Service Officers. OTI provides the training so let's use that knowledge.
- 2.) Offer them comradeship and the use of your Post facilities.
- 3.) Ask them to cooperate with you on community and veterans issues.
- 4.) Offer them assistance in conducting their events, celebrations and recognition ceremonies.
- 5.) Tell them about the VFW Legislative Fellowship Program and the ten fellowships that will be awarded. That means a trip to attend the National Legislative Conference in Washington DC from February 28th to March 2nd. A chance to meet legislatures and express their concerns on Veterans issues alongside our members. A chance to attend a meeting when our National Commander testifies before the Joint Congressional Veterans Committee. The VFW will pay for airfare, lodging and pay a stipend for expenses. The deadline to apply for these fellowships is October 31st. There are about 50 SVA chapters in New York. Adjutant Burke has sent out a notice on September 9th to all District Commanders concerning this subject. Apply at WWW.vfw.org/studentfellowship.
- 6.) Assist them in making community connections for mutual benefit.

James McNally
National Council Member



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