

MICHIGAN OVERSEAS VETERAN



• Reporting your positive impact on the Michigan community •

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SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

This year will soon be over. I hope that each Post accomplished the goals that they set for themselves last June. Time does seem to go by a little faster as we get closer to the end of our terms in office. To me, it seems that the year went by too quickly. I hardly have time to finish those things which I had planned for last year. For the incoming officers whose terms start in June, the month of May is critical. Your reporting starts this month. You can ill afford to get behind this early in the year. Set your goals and stay ahead of your deadlines, as this will make your year much easier to handle.

Look for changes next year, as circumstances will dictate how our organization functions in the future. Keep abreast of items that may affect your Post. Year by year, we change programs due to different problems that can arise, such as budget constraints, manpower requirements, national organizational goals, and many other items that pop up when least

Kirk Kennedy
Senior Vice Commander



expected. Very seldom do things go as we planned. I look forward to the many challenges that will come before me this next year as Commander, and I look forward to leading our great organization. I know I will have quality people to rely on in our C of A and in our newly elected department officers.

Commander Jack Pray, thank you so much for your leadership this year. It has been my pleasure to serve with you these last two years at the Department of Michigan VFW. I hope that whatever your future endeavors are you will have great success. VETERANS SERVING VETERANS.

JUNIOR VICE COMMANDER

To all the Post, District and Department officers, thank you for serving this past year and for everything that you have done, and will do in the future. To the newly elected officers (Post and District), congratulations and may your year be everything that you hope for. Read and study the National Bylaws, so you fully understand what will be asked of you this year.

By the time you read this, all election reports should be turned into Department and National, National and Department Delegate fees should be paid, and the delegate names sent in. Quartermasters and Commanders should have done this right after the elections in April.

Congratulations to the 2011-2012 ALL-STATE COMMANDERS and QUARTERMASTERS and LADIES ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS. This is a great achievement and I am proud of what you, your Post and District have done.

Ron Devereaux
Junior Vice Commander



Comrades, as we look to the future of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, there is a lot of changes coming down the line. Membership is going down and the average age of membership is going up. We are losing Posts all across the VFW and our members refuse to take offices like they used to. It's going to take every one of us working together to come up with new and better ideas for the future of the Veterans of Foreign Wars to survive.

Thank you for letting me serve as you Department J.V. Commander for the past year. It has been a pleasure and an honor.

REMEMBER WE ARE ALL TRUSTEES OF THIS ORGANIZATION

ADJUTANT/QUARTERMASTER

This will be my last article as your Department Adjutant/Quartermaster. It has been an event-filled fourteen years with many happy memories. It has been a pleasure working with all of the Commanders and Council of Administration members. I have made friends with more people in this organization than I can count. Very rarely in a person's lifetime do you ever have the opportunity to meet such extraordinary people that I have met through the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I have met many politicians and worked with representative and senators to pass legislation to help veterans. I have had the opportunity to meet two presidents and had lunch with a vice president. All these people you see on television make policy for you and me to live by. I have been asked to sit on advisory boards and to help resolve a problem.

None of that can compare to the heroes that I have read about and shook hands with. All of you that have done so much to keep this country safe and who volunteer so much of your time to help another veteran. The members of the Ladies and Men's Auxiliaries, who have supported veterans for so many years, need to be

Rob Weiss
State Adjutant/
Quartermaster



recognized more often than we do now, especially the Ladies Auxiliary. You ladies are great!

I will never forget the great things our members (and the Auxiliaries) have done for the men and women who served in the Persian Gulf War, Iraq and Afghanistan. When our help was needed, you all stepped forward and helped families cope with the wounds that their loved ones suffered in combat. We have sent family members to hospitals where their loved ones were recuperating, and all of the expenses paid by our members.

Please continue to support the officers of our organization.

Marcia, my family and I want to thank all of you for your support and friendship for the past fourteen years. I will continue to volunteer to help where I can and will see many of you at the conferences and Convention(s).

CHAPLAIN

Last issue, I wrote about Mid-Winter Conference and now soon it will be Department Convention. Yes, spring is here once again. It is the beginning of one season and the end of our fiscal year. What do you have planned for this time of year? Any big projects? Any celebrations? Whatever you are doing, may it be successful, positive and proactive!

As for me, this is my last submission for the year and I am so honored to have been your 2011-2012 VFW Department of Michigan Chaplain. I wish that there had been more days in the year and hours in the day for me to see all the wonderful members. Those that I did visit – Post, Ladies Auxiliary and Men's Auxiliary, I extend my thanks for your graciousness.

Let's all please continue to be a light unto others. As Matthew 5:16 states: "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." Your dinners, fundraisers, and the many, many other wonderful things that you do within the VFW are not in vain.

For this spring, especially Memorial Day, I'd like to leave you with a thought... it's not the best or all-inclusive, but I hum-

Jennifer Smith
State Chaplain



bly think it gives a heartfelt overview...

I am a soldier/Marine/sailor/airman/Coast Guardsman at heart.

I am in service to my comrades, to their families and those currently serving.

I am not willing to forget the sacrifices of those that paid for freedom with life, limb, blood, sweat and nightmares.

I am not willing to forsake the hope of return for those Prisoners of War and Missing-in-Action.

I am not willing to remain silent and content while former servicemembers and their beloved are denied benefits, when their benefits are reduced, when our flag is desecrated or when any veteran is mistreated – living or dead.

Yet, I am pleased that the Cooties bring joy and comfort to ill and wounded comrades.

I am grateful for my Ladies Auxiliary that not only tirelessly helps many with

— CHAPLAIN, continued on page 2

Department Service Officer SUCCESS STORY



A quarter...a mere 25 cents. What will that buy you today? Not much. In this case it produced literally thousands!

On a cold blustery December day in 2009 a veteran was seeking assistance from the Department of Veterans Affairs for a condition that he thought should be at a higher evaluation. In fact, one of our staff members was returning to the office and found this Army veteran in the hallway looking for directions to the VA front desk. "Can I help?" was the question our Advocate asked and the response was, "I hope so." The veteran was invited to the VFW Service Office and was assigned to an Advocate. His visit to our office on December 17, 2009 was the first step that will change his life forever.

The veteran filed his original claim in November of 2007 without the assistance of a professional advocate. After this filing, the veteran indicated that he could not work due to the severity of his arm condition. In March of 2009, the VA granted a 10% evaluation for a right arm condition with additional conditions granted at zero percent evaluations. Unfortunately for the veteran, this was a brokered case to another Regional Office.

After a thorough review of the case, we decided to file a Notice of Disagreement on December 31, 2009 and requested a Decision Review Officers de novo review of the VA decision of March 9, 2009 based on our own visual observations of the veteran's condition. It was our opinion that the veteran's condition reflected one of such severity that anyone in his or her right mind could see that he was not rated properly.

On March 11, 2010 a personal hearing was held at the Regional Office to extract information from the veteran that would enhance his case. During the hearing, our staff member eloquently phrased the content of the hearing and providing eye-opening techniques that would have a big bearing on the case. Remember, the argument was the severity of the veteran's right arm and that he could not work because of it. The line of questioning was targeted at the veteran's ability to use the arm. Dressing himself, tying shoes, carrying objects. The

veteran indicated that his wife helps him do all those things. As a maneuver to illustrate the veteran's dexterity with his fingers, our advocate placed a quarter on the table and asked the veteran to pick it up. He could not grip it, so he slid it off the table with his non-functional hand to the other hand. Eye opener? It certainly was in this case!

In addition, our Advocate noted that the evaluation that was done in 2008 measured scars and not functional loss as mandated in normal evaluations. The advocate requested another exam to determine the functional loss. After numerous delays and we mean delays of trying to get the VA to perform an adequate evaluation, it was finally accomplished in February of 2011.

On March 20, 2012 the VA issued a rating granting an increase in the veteran's right arm condition. In the decision it was noted that the personal hearing in March 2010 and the adequate exam that was performed in February of 2011 was the basis for the grant. In addition, the factual evidence that the veteran could not perform daily tasks were crucial.

So a quarter, a mere 25 cents, helped tip the scale in this case. It became a life-altering event that the veteran and his spouse will be ever thankful to three advocates from the VFW who had a part in his life! The one who had the veteran come to our office, the one who initially argued the case, and the one who followed the case through the maze to the final outcome.

You are probably wondering what was so life-altering about this case? Well, the veteran was granted an increase from 10% to 70%. In addition, he was granted Individual Unemployability and Special Monthly Compensation for the loss of use of the right arm and entitlement to automobile and adaptive equipment allowances. Oh, and by the way, the effective date of the grant went all the way back to his initial filing in 2007 – the date of his original claim. The veteran is currently waiting for a check in the amount of approximately \$140,000!!

Those of us who wonder how in the heck can a VA evaluation be so far off? I don't know. What I do know is that if it had not been for the VFW directing traffic in the hall at the McNamara Federal Building, the veteran's case could have been a real horror story!

CHAPLAIN, continued from page 1

devotion and selflessness, but enables me to better help others.

I am thankful for my Men's Auxiliary that earnestly supports my efforts with determination.

I am fortunate that a number of Gold Star Mothers (and family) are with me as I have often been humbled by their courage, while saddened by their loss.

I am happy that the Junior Girls wish

to contribute to our noble cause, as well.

Last, I am an army of patriots from a truly great and blessed nation.

I am the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Please be encouraged, be strengthened and be well. *Psalm 27:1: The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*

May God bless you.

ADVOCATING FOR OTHERS

Section 212 of the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2008, Public Law 110-389 (VBIA 2008), added 38 U.S.C. § 5121A, Substitution in case of death of claimant, which provides, in part, that if a claimant dies while a claim or appeal is pending:

[A] living person who would be eligible to receive accrued benefits due to the claimant under [subsection (a) of the accrued benefits statute] may, not later than one year after the date of the death of such claimant, file a request to be substituted as the claimant for the purposes of processing the claim to completion.

This section applies to pending claims or appeals in which the original claimant died on or after October 10, 2008, and a request to be substituted is received within one year of the claimant's death. It does not apply to claims where notice of the decision was provided prior to death of the claimant and no appeal was filed prior to death.

In its wording of the substitution statute, Congress closely linked accrued benefits to the opportunity for an accrued-eligible party to substitute upon the death of a claimant. Individuals who are eligible for accrued benefits are individuals who would be eligible for substitution. Such as the veteran's spouse, children in equal shares, dependent parents. In the case of a widow, to the children of the deceased veteran.

Accrued benefits are still derived from "existing ratings or decisions or [decisions] based on evidence in the file at date of death." As defined by 38 CFR 3.1000(d)(4), "evidence in the file at date of death" means evidence in VA's possession on or before the date of the beneficiary's death, even if such evidence was not physically located in the VA claims folder on or before the date of death, i.e., the evidence was in the "constructive custody" of VA. A substitute claimant, however, may submit additional evidence in support of the claim. Similarly, VA is responsible for obtaining any additional evidence required and addressing notice or due process defects in the same manner as if the original claimant were still alive. Unlike prior accrued benefits claims, the record is not closed on the date of death of the original claimant, but remains open for the submission and development of any pertinent additional evidence. Therefore, any eligible survivor submitting a claim for accrued benefits will automatically be considered as requesting to substitute and may be able to submit additional evidence in support of the claim.

An eligible survivor may submit a substitution request by filing a VA Form 21-601 Application for Accrued Amounts Due a Deceased Beneficiary, VA Form 21-534, Application for DIC,

Death Pension & Accrued Benefits by Spouse or Child; VA Form 21-0847, Request for Substitution of Claimant Upon Death of Claimant; or through any other communication indicating a desire to substitute for a deceased claimant. Receipt of a VA Form 21-534 will be accepted as both a claim for accrued benefits and a substitution request. Therefore, the claim for accrued benefits will be viewed as a continuation of the claim pending at the time of the claimant's death, and the individual substituting for the deceased claimant may submit additional evidence in support of the claim. The VA will process substitution requests that are not accompanied by or in the form of an accrued benefits claim. Individuals may waive the opportunity to substitute/submit additional evidence in support of the claim.

Substitution applies to the same benefits for which accrued benefits are payable, i.e., periodic monetary benefits (other than insurance and service member's indemnity) such as compensation, pension, DIC, and Chapter 18 benefits.

If a substitute claimant dies while the claim is still pending, the next preferred member of a subordinate class listed in the accrued benefits regulation, 38 C.F.R. § 3.1000, may file a claim for accrued benefits, which would serve as both a claim for accrued benefits and/or a request for substitution, provided the request was filed within one year of the original claimant's death. In such a case, the next preferred survivor would also be provided the opportunity to submit new evidence. If a substitute claimant dies while the claim is still pending and there is no next preferred member of a subordinate class, then there is no longer an opportunity for substitution on that claim.

Substitution in an appealed case requires a Notice of Disagreement to have been filed prior to the appellant's death. In such a case, an eligible survivor may file a request with the agency of original jurisdiction (AOJ) to be substituted for the original claimant for the purpose of processing the appeal to completion. If the original claimant dies on or after the date the appeal was certified and transferred to the Board of Veterans' Appeals, but before the Board issues a decision on appeal, the Board will dismiss the appeal and return the file to the AOJ. The AOJ will make a determination in the first instance regarding basic eligibility for substitution. Any adverse AOJ determination as to basic eligibility for substitution will be appealable to the Board. If found eligible for substitution, either by the AOJ in the first instance or on appeal to the Board, the substitute claimant will receive the same docket number that was assigned to the original claimant's appeal.



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DISTRICT 4 REPORT

Phil Merrow
District 4 Commander



This will be my last article in the *MOV*. I would like to thank each and every one of you for a successful year. I can't believe that the year is over already. I hope that John and Bev have a fun-filled, successful year.

There are a few people that I would like to personally thank. First, my wife Sandi and my daughters, Brittany and Alisha. I know that over the past three years I have been extremely busy with various Post, District and Department functions. After June, things will slow down and you will have to find some ways to entertain me.

A huge thank you to my friend, mentor, Chief of Staff, and right hand man, PSC Jim Van Hauter. Thank you for keeping me on the straight and narrow. Just a word of advice: stay away from Camp Trotter. You are the only person that I know who has a reserved room at the local hospital.

My Sr. Vice John and my Jr. Vice Matt, thank you for all your hard work over this past year. I would also like

to thank each and every one of my elected and appointed officers. I could not have worked with a better bunch on comrades.

To all the District 4 Posts, thank you for all your hard work and the great hospitality that you have shown me over the past three years. When I look at everyone (VFW, Ladies Auxiliary, and Men's Auxiliary) from District 4, I see my family – not just VFW and Auxiliary members.

Last, but certainly not least, thank you District 4 President Sharon Lewinski. I couldn't have asked for a better president to work with. I have had a great three years working with you. I have had many people tell me this year that they see a great chemistry between us. I appreciate all your hard work and ideas. Gary Lewinski, thank you for letting me work with Sharon for the past three years. Now you can get rid of your calendar.

I look forward to seeing each and every one of you around the District.



DISTRICT 7 REPORT

Kevin Conklin
District 7 Commander



As this year comes to a close, I would like to congratulate each of the Commanders, officers and committee chairpersons for a job well done. The Ladies Auxiliary did another outstanding job this year. I would like to thank everyone in District 7, including the Posts and Ladies Auxiliaries that supported me. It makes the year much more enjoyable when you know there are good people there to support you. I would like to apologize to the Posts in District 7 that I was not able to visit; however, I would very much like to visit in the future.

I learned this year that in order to be successful in this organization it takes a lot of teamwork. Support the comrades you elect as Commanders and encourage others to do the same. As Commanders you should be supporting those coming up through the chairs. We need to continue to work together to keep this great organization going. Let's take good care of the members we do have then worry about recruiting more. If you take care of the members you have, future members will seek you for a membership.

As your elections draw near, remember to vote for comrades that will lead by example, not because he/she is a "smooth talker". You know who gets involved in this organization. I am sure everyone has heard the expression "Past practices dictate future performance". Well, I am a firm believer. If you have someone that has caused nothing but problems, has been caught wrongdoing or never attends meetings, then why on earth would you elect that person to represent your organization? We need comrades that are here "for the good of the outfit". You must elect strong leaders who will listen to new ideas and get others involved in the Posts/District. Get them through the chairs so they can learn. Much of this I have spoke of in previous articles.

As summer approaches, there will be many opportunities to support your District and Posts. Get off your butts and do something to help a veteran! District 7 is always open and ready to serve!

Thank you once again for allowing me the opportunity to be your District 7 Commander.



DISTRICT 5 REPORT

John Bond
District 5 Commander



Another year has passed and it is now time to say a great big thank you. Thank you to all my line officers and chairpersons for their hard work and efforts during my term of office. Without the teamwork, we would not have accomplished all that the 5th District has done. A huge thank you to Macomb and Oakland County Council for all their hard work in making the year successful for the 5th District.

Thanks to all Post Commanders, Post members, and Post officers for all the support to myself and my staff. Thanks to the following Posts that have achieved 100% in membership: 334, 582, 2269, 2645, 3130, 3908, 4037, 4156, 6250, 6802 and 9021.

In closing, I would like to congratulate our 5th District elected and appointed officers for the upcoming year.



DISTRICT 8 REPORT

Jerry Lee Smith, Jr.
District 8 Commander



Comrades, the year is quickly passing away and it will soon be time for District elections in May at the Comstock Post. I would like to encourage all of you comrades to attend and take a hand in the elections of the comrades who will be responsible for representing you in the upcoming year.

I want to thank all of my Post Commanders for all they have done this year to make my job easier. I also want to apologize for not getting out to see all of you, but health problems and some special circumstances have kept me from visiting you. I want to also encourage all of you to attend the

upcoming State Convention in Troy at the Marriott.

I will keep this short, as it is my last input. We have many projects that we have accomplished and will still need to do; as always programs, membership and interacting with all of our comrades are goals we can all achieve. I know you all have done a great job of doing this and your incoming officers will continue the good work you have started.

I will still be available to all of my District members and incoming officers should they need assistance.

I want to thank you all again for all you have done over the last year.



DISTRICT 6 REPORT

Richard Schroeder
District 6 Commander



As you read this letter, our year together will have drawn to a close. I began in Ann Arbor's Post 423 on June 26, 2011 where we decided that I would visit all 27 Posts, when deputy inspectors would inspect all of the Posts, who would conduct the four charitable gaming events and when distribution of All-State, VOD, Patriot's Pen and Teacher of the Year packets occurred.

A Web site was established for the District at www.vfwm6.org directly thereafter. Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws examples were distributed to all Posts in order that they might update their organizational records.

Classes were conducted to train incoming Commanders, Quartermasters and trustees on how to perform their duties and another one on how to complete the new hospital forms.

Our District produced state winners in Patriots' Pen, Voice of Democracy and Teacher of the Year and our charitable

gaming activities enabled us to continue to support our District Ladies Auxiliary and State Honor Guard. We attained 100% in reporting in Community Service, Activities and Hospital Reports and, as of 1 April, we had a membership percentage of 92%.

Overall, we had a successful year together. I wish to give special thanks to Ann Arbor Post 423, Fowlerville Post 6464, Brighton Post 4357 and Lansing Post 701 for hosting our District meetings. Volunteers who worked the poker events, Post Commanders, District officers, chairpersons and inspectors are all included in my heartfelt thanks and appreciation for jobs well done. It has been an honor to work with you this year and I know you will continue your support for our incoming Commander. Best wishes to you all as you continue to serve our great VFW.

Continue to March!



We Protect Our Own.

When you donate to VFW mailings, the money stays in our Department, helping veterans right here at home.

Our programs depend on members like YOU. Please be as generous as you can.



DISTRICT 9 REPORT

Phil Patterson
District 9 Commander



It seems like only yesterday that I assumed the duties of 9th District Commander. Now as I write my last news article, and look back on this year so far, I could simply say that it was a good year and leave it at that. While it would be the easy thing to do, it would not be the responsible thing to do. Let me begin by saying we have had a very rough start, but have come a long way. Our organization is struggling to maintain its membership and some of its programs; it seems every time we turn around we are being asked to do more with less. Some of our Posts have no problems, while others have a daily struggle just to get by. We need to work as a team by helping those that need it by following the guidelines from Department and National Headquarters, the Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Rituals.

As of this writing, 12 of the 34 Posts in our District have attained 100% or higher membership status. Congratulations to Posts 2272, 2622, 2725, 3055, 3733, 4005, 4090, 4113, 5695, 5822, 10705 and 12082 for reaching the most difficult goal toward the pursuit of All-State status. There are five other Posts that need only six or fewer members to reach 100%. These Posts are 2292, 4646, 6579, 7542, 9455 and 9931. We stand at 95.19%. We still need 252 members to reach our 100% goal.

Hopefully, all Posts within the District took advantage of Buddy Poppy Days; monies received will go into your relief fund to one day help that veteran who may be in need.

The year is not over. I remain the 9th Dis-

trict Commander and just as importantly, all our Post Commanders remain Commanders of their Posts until the Department Convention. Many of our District goals have been met, but many have not. We must not let the tendency to quit early stand in the way of reaching these goals.

I would like to **thank all of the Officers and Committee Chairpersons.** I would also like to send a personal thank you to the 9th District President, Della Steege, for her hard work and dedication to the VFW Ladies Auxiliary.

Our Department Convention is June 6-10, 2012 at the Marriott Hotel in Troy. Our new District officers should be installed by this time. I wish them the very best in their upcoming year. I would like everyone to remember our candidates that are running for higher offices in 2012-2013.

Lynn and I would also like to thank each and every Post in the 9th District for your support over the past two years. The hospitality and friendship that you've given to both of us will always be remembered in our hearts. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve you as your 9th District Commander. I would like to thank each Post Commander and the Shiawassee County Council for all of their hard work and efforts in making the 9th District successful.

I would like to remind everyone that I still work for you and I am here to support you. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact me at 616-755-3176 or by e-mail at philvfw12082@rocketmail.com

Remember: Army Strong



DISTRICT 10 REPORT

Stu Billey
District 10 Commander



It is the end of the year and what a year it has been. I am proud to see the great strides we have made in upholding the traditions that make the VFW a great organization. We still have a long way to go, so keep up the good work. I would also like to thank all of you for making this year an enjoyable one. I have enjoyed traveling around the District and seeing all of the members and communities that we support. Remember that we are here to support everyone. Keep up with the programs and don't slow down in our efforts to help the community and veterans, just because this year is coming to an end. The incoming Commanders should be sending in reports now and not waiting until July. Reports are due every month. I hope that next year will see better results in the number of reports sent in. If Commanders are unsure how to fill out an activity/hospital report, contact the District representative and ask. We are here to help you.

Sadly, this year has not always been bright. We lost a Post in the District. I would like to say thank you to the Lexington Post for the years of service and dedication that they have devoted to the VFW. That brings me to membership. Comrades, we are currently last in the state for membership. As bad as this sounds, we are third for number of members. As of this letter, we have 5,185 members (93.17%). Keep recruiting new members

and do not forget our women veterans. I want to remind everyone, from this district as well as others, to make sure that you order your new copy of the Bylaws when they become available. This is one thing that I cannot stress enough. Do not use the excuse that they are backlogged or that you didn't know they were ready. They come into effect on 1 October. They are available to order around 1 September on the VFW store Web site. It might take a little while for them to ship, but you will receive it.

As I close on this final message, always remember that I am here to help in any way that I can. I have said this from the beginning of my year, and I will repeat this long after I have left as District Commander. I have heard members say that I haven't done enough or that I wasn't at events that I should have attended. If I don't know that the events are taking place, I can't be there. Do not assume that I can read minds and that I will be everywhere. If you tell me that I wasn't at an event, and I check my missed calls and yours isn't there, there's not much more I can tell you. Please do not take this attitude to future Commanders or even members of your own Post. We need to stop the bickering amongst ourselves and function as an organization designed to help others above ourselves.

Thank you all for a great year and for many more to come.



DISTRICT 12 REPORT

Virginia McGowan
District 12 Commander



Well, here it is – April already! Where did the last year go? It went by getting out there meeting the different Post memberships, attending conferences, having District 12 meetings and working with the different levels within the VFW. The 12th District was honored to have Department Commander Jack Pray at our last meeting in March at the Montague Post.

The Post Commanders have worked hard to get reports in, audits finished on time, and get their memberships up. By the time this comes out, you should have your elections done and ready for installation of your officers. Please bring a copy of your election form for Post and your Men's Auxiliary (if you have one) to me at the District meeting on May 6th. Speaking of May 6th, we will be having

our District meeting aboard the WWII LST 393 ship, 560 Mart, Muskegon, MI 49440. Free tours of the ship will be available to anyone with a VFW card. Lunch will be at 11:30 a.m. with the meeting at 1:00 p.m. Installation of officers will be held after the meeting.

OTS at Camp Trotter is May 18 and 19th. If possible, try to send your incoming officers. They will learn a lot about the VFW. Classes are taught by some dedicated members of the VFW. There is so much more to the VFW than the Post level.

Please keep District 12 Chaplain Larry Fortier and Past District Commander Gene Furgason in your prayers; both are ill.

Thank you to all those who supported me this past year.



DISTRICT 15 REPORT

Jack Lillar
District 15 Commander



Here it is April and we will be having our Post and District elections this month. Congratulations to all the elected officers and to those appointed to positions and committees. Thank you for your commitment to our organization and to veterans at large. I would ask that you take the Installation of Officers ceremony to heart and make a commitment that at the end of your term, you leave your Post in better condition than when you started. Everything begins with attitude.

I would like to thank all of the District officers and committee chairs for all of the hard work and effort that you put in this year. Thank you to all the Posts in the District for your efforts to make this a very successful year. When I asked for something all of you responded promptly, especially in the area of membership. As of this writing, we are at 96.99% in membership and leading the Department.

Thanks again for all your effort.

Military Order of the Cootie

"Ideas into Reality"

"Veteran's First"



VFW Comrades, Ladies and Men's Auxiliary and fellow Cooties, Grand Commander Martindale and Sr. Vice Commander Whittemore would like to thank all of you who participated and donated to the VFW National Home for Children Cootie Christmas Party.

The kids had a great time and had a very special guest. Santa Claus took time off from his busy schedule and paid them a visit. Our next Cootie Christmas Party is scheduled for November 30, 2012-December 1, 2012. We look forward to seeing you there.

In June, we send the National Home Kids to Cedar Point Amusement Park for a day in the sun. We are always looking for donations for that trip. Please help if you can.

"Michigan Nitpickers" for 2011-20012

The Grand of Michigan fundraiser is moving along very nicely with the help of PGC Bob Routhier, Jr. Proceeds from this project will help support the Grand

Programs. If you are interested in participating in this worthy program, you can send your request to PGC Bob Routhier, Jr., P.O. Box 117, Clio, MI 48420.

In closing, remember membership. It is the lifeblood of both the VFW and Military Order of the Cootie. Without it, there would be no VFW, Cooties, Ladies or Men's Auxiliary. Sign a new member up today!

"Keep 'em Smiling in Beds of White"

PGC Robert E. Wilson
Grand Adj/VFW-Cootie Liaison

**God Bless
Our Troops**

Grand Rapids Home for Veterans and D.J. Jacobetti Home for Veterans in Marquette

Report by PSC Richard "Chic" LaFave and PSC Ernie Meyers, Sr., Board of Managers

Great News! The Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Peter MacGregor of the 73rd District of Grand Rapids has sponsored HB5381 for an additional \$10 million for the State Veterans Programs. \$4.4 million is designated for capital outlay for the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans and \$1.6 million is earmarked for capital outlays for the D. J. Jacobetti Home in Marquette. In the House Bill, an additional \$2 million is to assist the VSO funding which would total \$5 million for the respective VSO's operating budgets for fiscal year 2013 beginning 1 October 2012. HB5381 also has an additional \$2 million for assisting some of the 83 counties within the State of Michigan for local veterans programs.

Currently, the Board of Managers is working very diligently with the Department of Management and Budget of the State of Michigan to push forth a request for the grant needed to build the canopy in front of the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans. This canopy has been on the drawing board for over a year with the Board of Managers. The canopy is an overhead weather shelter that will cover nearly the entire load and unload parking area for the buses directly in front of the Home. This will keep our resident veterans free from the inclement weather that they are experiencing while loading up

the buses. The sidewalks and the driving area where the buses are parked will be heated to avoid ice and snow from building up.

Recent Board of Managers changes the implementation of Senate Bill 799, which was signed into law by Governor Snyder effective 1 January 2012. The Veterans of Foreign Wars will have one (1) board member and The American Legion will have one (1) board member. The reduction will be done by attrition through each member's time left on the Board. There will be four (appointed independent) members and one (1) member representing the VFW, The American Legion and the DAV.

The Board of Managers has been asked to become more actively involved, more so than ever before. Members are being assigned to sub-committee work, both on capital outlay to the Homes and budgetary issues. The Board of Managers would like to welcome the newest member (independent) to the board – James L. Ausdemore, Col. (Ret.) from Pinckney, Michigan. LTC (Ret.) Ausdemore is retired from General Motors and the Michigan Army National Guard Aviation. Jim served in Vietnam with the U.S. Army as a pilot flying Hueys and gunships. He is a proven leader, both in the military and General Motors.

On behalf of the entire Board – Chic and I would like to say thank you for what you are doing for our veterans at these two Homes.

WOMEN VETERANS COMMITTEE

Just recently I traveled to Washington, D.C. for the 2012 Legislative Conference. It was a great experience and learned a lot more about the Veterans of Foreign Wars and history of women in the military. The National Women Veterans Committee met for a meeting. In the meeting we had a lot of discussion on several different programs the VFW has to offer. A Standard Operating Procedure has been put in place. I will be passing this out to District Commanders at State Convention in June.

We were honored to have a wonderful motivational speaker come speak to us, Past National Commander-in-Chief John Gwizdak. If you ever have the chance to listen to him, I strongly encourage you to do so! Some of the highlights from his speech were that leadership and leadership capabilities is like an iceberg (only the tip sticks out of the water); ask yourself why are you STILL here, not why did you join. Leadership by example: Character and Integrity, and one of my favorites, "You can't push a rope".

The committee went to visit the Women in Military Service of America Memorial. Brig. Gen. Wilma L. Vaught, USAF (Ret.), Foundation President and Marilla Cushman, LTC, USA (Ret.), Director of Development and Public Relations, spoke with us about the memorial and some of the things that the memorial can be used for such as weddings, receptions, ceremonies, and re-enlistments. They also are interested in being a speaker at your event. They pushed that ALL women that have served in the military should GET REGISTERED!! "What we don't record, we lose!" Have YOU served or KNOWN a woman who served?

The Women Veterans Committee also



Lynn Patterson
Women Veterans Committee Director

presented a wreath in the Hall of Honor (see photo below). This area of the memorial provides recognition to those women who, throughout history, have served with particular sacrifice and achievement. Honored are those women who died in service, were prisoners of war or were recipients of our nation's highest awards for service and bravery. This room contains the sister blocks of marble used for the Tomb of the Unknowns, appropriately located with flags of the states, territories and services.

In closing, I use this quote from Past National Commander-in-Chief John Gwizdak: "The Veterans of Foreign Wars is not the "V" or the Club. It's the Veterans of Foreign Wars – a place that is a pocket of patriotism, where heroes and patriots meet – not for Fish Frys, Pull Tabs or Bingo."



CAMP TROTTER TALES

Your VFW Camp Trotter for Children is on the move – all preparations are being made for the final upgrade on the buildings. The summer camp kitchen staff will enjoy some upgrades to the dining hall kitchen area, which includes

a state-of-the-art dishwasher (thanks in part to our Department Ladies Auxiliary Presidents over the past three years with their fundraisers). Cottages 1 and 2 will have a new look, along with welcomed heating and air conditioning that will be installed in the next few weeks. The children's shower/restroom building has been upgraded with a modern rapid recovery water heater. No more cold showers! You will recognize the "old" and see the "new" director's cottage in the upcoming *MOV* articles – the new director's cottage is being built as I write this article.

The Summer Camp Staff is being recruited and some are already onboard. If anyone knows of college students that are great with children (especially the 7 through 12 age group) or a potential counselor that has previous experience at a children's camping environment, please send them my way. I would love to speak with them about joining the summer team. Contact myself at emeyers76@att.net and/or find the info needed to join the team on our Web site at vfwmi.org/CampTrotter. Orientation week starts 9 July for a full week of training for the staff and then the children arrive on 15 July for the start of summer camp fun time.

The waterfront on Bills Lake will



Ernie Meyers
Camp Trotter Tales

sport all new fiberglass canoes, new paddleboats, kayaks and much more... check out the new docking system online with the new 24' pontoon boat. Enjoy the summer camp fun with the evening bond fires, the hayride that will last a lifetime, and the overnight in the special campsite with tents and your very own campfire setting.

Comrades and sisters, your VFW Camp Trotter for Children would not exist if it was not for your continued support, not just financial, but also getting the children to camp. The Camp can house 88 children per week, so let's chip in and get your children, grandchildren and your neighbors' children to camp. The VFW Camp Trotter for Children is open to all children ages 7 through 12 and you do not have to be a veteran to send your child to camp.

The VFW Camp Trotter for Children is a licensed Children's Camp regulated by the State of Michigan Department of Human Services. The summer camping season has a registered nurse on duty 24/7 during camping season, along with licensed certified staff employees.

Thank you for your support to Camp Trotter.

Your Camp Committee



Michigan Overseas Veteran 2012-2013 PLEASE ADHERE TO THESE DEADLINES

Issue	Deadline	Issue	Deadline
July/August/September	August 1	January/February/March	February 1
October/November/December	November 1	April/May/June	April 1

Please Remember!

- Do not type all CAPITAL LETTERS. Use capitals sparingly. When in doubt, do not capitalize a word. Use 12-point font type size.
- Please no handwritten submissions, as they will not be considered for publication.
- Do not write on back of pictures. Use a separate sheet of paper. Identify all people in the photograph. Try to limit number of people in photo to five or six, at most.
- Posts and Auxiliaries are encouraged to submit items of interest from their areas.
- We reserve the right to edit all submissions due to space constraints.
- Do not submit newspaper articles and pictures from newspapers UNLESS you provide written authorization from the publication involved.
- Never submit article or photos clipped from newspapers or magazines.
- DISTRICT COMMANDERS – Please submit your District Meetings schedule as soon as possible, so it can be published.
- MAIL ALL ARTICLES TO *MOV* EDITOR:

MOV Editor
Matt David, editormov@yahoo.com

Auxiliary Editor
Diane Ward, legalblaze@aol.com

A Day of Challenges

On February 18th, with the cooperation of the Department of MI VFW and the Michigan Tech University ROTC program, another successful Day of Challenges was held at the Student Development Complex on the MTU campus.

This year a total of 148 students on 24 teams competed against each other in a variety of events, such as swimming, diving, obstacle and leadership reaction course, skills test and a physical fitness competition. This year they also added a simulated M-16 shooting range, which was a big hit, but the swimming pool events were by far the most popular among the participants. They included a 25-meter timed event, a 15-meter event while wearing military gear, and the

infamous 20-foot platform jump. State Commander Jack Pray and Past State Commander Rick Redfern were in attendance this year, but both declined the opportunity to take the plunge and make history, deferring instead to be upstaged by the 10-year-olds and up.

This year the 15th District purchased two new traveling trophies and retired their 12-year-old predecessors. Two beautiful 3 ft. by 2 ft. birds-eye maple plaques were made by Dave Stimac of Nature's Way Woodworking of Alberta to be displayed at the winner's school for the next year (this Alberta is near L'Anse, not in Canada). Dave does some very fine work, with some of his creations selling for thousands of dollars. The trophies

were taken this year by Team Survivors in the Jr. Division and Team KAM in the Sr. Division, which ended L.L. Wrights High School team of Ironwood's two year hold on the big Kahuna. The two winning teams are both home-schooled. A total of 35 trophies were handed out in the two divisions for the several events and overall winners.

This year the challenges were a full month ahead of our normal date, due to a last minute scheduling conflict; something that can make us all a little uneasy because traveling through the U.P. in the middle of February can be a daunting task at times, to say the least. Luckily, State Commander Jack Pray and Comrade Redfern, a couple of "seasoned Yooper green card holders", volunteered for the task and we were all able to breathe a sigh of relief knowing we would be well represented by Department no matter what Mother Nature threw our way.

All kidding aside, I thank everyone at Department for supporting the Day of Challenges throughout the years. I also thank all the Posts and Auxiliaries from around the state for their financial contributions, and especially to the 15th District for its continued support. Also a big thanks to the members of Post 6165 and

its Auxiliary who cooked the meal, and to all the Post and Auxiliary members from Post 6507 who helped with the serving and clean up at the ROTC gym.

For years, the VFW has been encouraging us to partner with other organizations in the sponsoring of community events, and this certainly qualifies as just such an event. We have students of all ages from many different schools working with active duty military, as well as those in training to strive to make themselves better, regardless of where life may lead them.

The cadre and cadets at the MTU/ROTC program are to be commended on the professionalism they exhibit year after year in running such an intensive event with so many participants, going through so many stages, in a matter of three to four hours, and through all this entering and tallying each individual and the team score. Each team is assigned a cadet who is with them from registration to the awards ceremony. Hats off to Lt. Col. Spence and his staff and to Cadets Will Lytle and Hillary Drake and their ROTC classmates for pulling this whole thing off.

If your Post or Auxiliary would like to donate, just send a check to Department and earmark it for the "Day of Challenges". Thank you.



Commander Pray addressing students at trophy presentation.



Do you remember the "low crawl"?



Full house at lunch and trophy ceremony.



Student jumping from high board.

VFW Post 701 Presents Sea Cadet Award



At their unit's annual awards ceremony on February 18, 2012, Cadet PO3 Rimatzki (C) was awarded the Veterans of Foreign Wars Naval Sea Cadet Corps NCO Award by Lansing's VFW Post 701. This award is given annually to those Cadets (aged 13-17) demonstrating a dedication to leadership, patriotism, academic performance and community service.

Auxiliary News

DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT



Mariann Hamann

Time is flying by and it is almost time for the Department Convention in Troy. At the rap of the gavel on Saturday afternoon about 3:30 p.m., we will have a new Department President and Department of Michigan VFW Commander. I pledge my support and wish much success for the entire 2012-2013 Team.

As members, you should be very proud of your accomplishments in serving our Veterans and their families, along with your community. Maybe you served as an officer in your Auxiliary, volunteered at a hospital or fundraiser, joined in a Welcome Home Party for returning troops, served on a Red Flag Team or simply paid your

dues. THANK YOU for the role you played in the success of our organization. Hopefully, those successes will earn Michigan Department Ladies Auxiliary awards at the National Convention in Reno, Nevada.

To the Department Officers and Chairmen, you did an outstanding job working hard to promote the National and Michigan programs. Your efforts and your friendship are greatly appreciated! Your support got me through a difficult time.

It truly has been an honor and privilege to serve as your Department President this year. Thank you for that opportunity, your hospitality as I traveled and many wonderful memories.

To all VFW, Ladies Auxiliary and Men's Auxiliary members, thank you for carrying out my theme, "Every Minute Is Another Opportunity To Serve". Please remember to "Step Up - Leave No Veteran Behind".

God Bless You and God Bless the U.S.A.

DISTRICT 8 PRESIDENT

Holly Allison



Dear Sisters of the 8th District,

I cannot thank you enough for all your support this year. The year has flown by and I have learned so much, made so many new friends

and got to know a lot of you even better. One thing I have learned is that the 8th District is on its way to becoming the

Great 8th again! I saw so many of you working so hard this year to serve and honor our veterans and foster patriotism in the hearts and minds of our communities.

I am looking forward to seeing you at the Department Convention in June. I am hoping to hear your names called out constantly for awards! The 8th District would like to wish Mariann and the Dept. of Michigan all the best at the National Convention this year!

Thanks again and God bless you all!

DISTRICT 9 PRESIDENT

Della Steege



Sisters of District 9,

Time passes so quickly and it's hard to believe our year has come to an end. Congratulations to all who have accepted offices or chairmanships for

the upcoming year. This is a great organization, and we need leaders that are willing to put in the hard work and accomplish the goals set before them. Please respect them and the choices they make; give them the assistance required to get those goals met.

I have enjoyed being your President this year and I appreciate each and every one

of you ladies so very much. Remember to get your annual reports to the Department Chairmen by April 25, 2012, do your quarterly reporting, audits and attend your District meetings. Every year there are changes to our programs, and this year we had a change in how we report the work we do for our veterans and community. District meetings are where your Presidents and the members of the District learn of these changes, so please attend.

I wish Nicole and her officers a wonderful year, and I look forward to seeing each of you soon. Thanks for the great hospitality and wonderful food!

I'm here for anything you might need, Sisters, and thank you so much for the great memories.

DISTRICT 5 PRESIDENT

Linda Gloger



Dear Sisters of the 5th,

This is the last *MOV* article you will have from me. I would like to take this time to thank all of you for a very interesting and learning year. With all

the challenges we have had this year in the 5th, I really do believe we came out on the top again. I will truly miss talking to all of you on the phone and seeing you at your functions and your meetings.

I enjoyed all the parades I walked in, even the cold winter one. I had a lot of fun at every one of them. I have been to steak, burgers, dogs, taco and spaghetti dinners more than once this past year. They were all delicious and for worthy causes.

Sisters, from the bottom of my heart I want to extend by deepest appreciation and thank you to all of you for having the confidence in me to represent your District. This past year will be one that I will never forget for the rest of my life.

Thank you.

DISTRICT 11 PRESIDENT

Vickie Bushong



As this year draws to an end and a new one is about to begin, I would like to thank everyone for all that we have achieved together. As I traveled through our District, it was obvious

how hard all our Auxiliaries worked serving our veterans. Attending our District meetings was not only a learning

experience, but it was a time to share our suggestions and bond together to form a stronger unit. By doing this, we accomplished many great things.

Once again, thank you for letting me serve as your District 11 President. I sincerely hope you will continue to support our new President and her officers. In closing, I would like to thank each and every one of you for all the wonderful memories. I will cherish them forever.

DISTRICT 6 PRESIDENT

Ivette David



Greetings and Salutations:

Another year is almost over. Now it is time to gather, nominate and support our new leaders for this wonderful and honorable organization. I would like to extend my gratitude for allowing me to make the dream of being your 6th District President a reality. Thank you, and I hope that I was able to fulfill all that was expected of me.

I would like to thank all of my officers,

chairpersons and, of course, all the Sisters of our District for such wonderful support; but overall, for believing in me.

At this point I would like to encourage everyone to please attend the Department Convention in June 2012 if you can.

I would also like to ask the District to please continue to support our Membership program since this is the lifeblood to this great organization. Please keep recruiting new members and don't forget about the current members. Continue to promote and support all of our programs, since our goal is to honor our veterans and their families.

DISTRICT 12 PRESIDENT

Elizabeth Plont



Hello sisters of the Mighty 12th,

It is hard to believe at this writing that my term as your President is almost over. It has been such a rewarding and exciting year. The ladies of District 12

are simply awesome. Thank you so much for this opportunity and the privilege to have served as your President. I am so grateful to all of you for your help, support, kindness, friendship and hospitality. I will remember and cherish this past year for many years to come.

We are currently at 95.33% in the membership standings, which puts us in 4th Place. I am hoping we can move that and make it 100%. You all have done an incredible job and a big THANK YOU to Betty Girlchrist, our membership chairman. Also, to all of our officers and chair-

men, thank you so much for stepping up and taking on these assignments. It has been great working with all of you. You are all awesome.

As I went to all the Auxiliaries during the inspections, I have seen wonderful things going on in your communities. Your involvement and donations you have given are very heartwarming. Keep up the great work you are doing and thank you for all your hard work you do for our veterans.

I have been very fortunate to have gotten to know so many of the Department officers. I would like to thank Jan M., Annabelle, Deb, Marilyn and Jan L. for all of your help and for being my mentors this past year. To all of our past District Presidents who provided me with words of wisdom this past year, thank you. I never would have been able to do this job without all of your help.

Our last District meeting will be held on the LST 393 docked in Muskegon on

DISTRICT 7 PRESIDENT

Dee Manke



Greetings to my Auxiliary Sisters of the Great District 7,

WOW - what an exciting year this has been for me. I want to thank my Auxiliary Sisters for the honor of serving as

your District President this year. I wish to thank all the Auxiliaries for their hard work in membership this year. We did not make 100%, but we all did the best that we could and I thank you for that.

I want to thank all my Auxiliaries that

attended the May District meeting. Thank you, Department Chaplain Alice "Candy" Beatty for joining us at our District meeting.

I wish the incoming Officers of 7th District the very best in the coming year. I want you to know that you can count on my support. I also wish to offer my support to incoming Department President Annabelle Furgason and her Officers.

I wish to thank my District Officers, my Auxiliary and family for all their support this year. Without you behind me and supporting me, I could not have done it.

God Bless you all.

DISTRICT 13 PRESIDENT

Arvella Peterson



Ladies of the 13th District,

At this time, I would like to thank you all for letting me serve as your District President. I believe we had a great year.

Even with a few bumps in the road, we were able to smooth them out and continue on with everything.

I want to thank all the Auxiliaries for welcoming me during your inspection.

It was great seeing all of you! You are a great bunch of ladies! I also want to thank Cindy Bennett for traveling with me and supporting me. What a great lady! She will be a great District President.

Also, my thanks go to Judi Brown for working so hard on our membership and for everything else she has done for the District and for me.

Ladies, keep up the great work you are doing for our Veterans! Always remember to leave no Veteran behind.

Thank you.

DISTRICT 14 PRESIDENT

Kathleen DeNise



Dear Auxiliary sisters, What a spring we have had in the U.P.! It sure makes me wonder what the rest of the year will be like.

As we are closing out our business year, I have just a few reminders. Even though we have finished our year-end reports, we still have work to do in ALL the programs. It's the perfect time to make a donation to Camp Trotter to ensure a great start to the camping season. Voice of Democracy and Patriot's

Pen can be taken to the schools before summer break, and please...do not let up on our legislators! In this election year, we have to let them know that we will NOT tolerate cuts to our veterans and active military benefits.

I would like to thank all the District officers and chairmen for stepping up to fill these positions. Also, a big thank you to every Auxiliary sister in the 14th District for all you do for your Post, your communities and for all the love and support you have given me this year.

I wish all incoming officers and chairmen a successful year and pledge my support and love to each of you.

DISTRICT 15 PRESIDENT

Carole Lillar



A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the Auxiliary sisters of the 15th District. You all have been very kind and generous to me this year.

Please continue to work on all the programs. It is a great time to get VOD, Patriot's Pen and Teacher of the Year in

the schools for next year's competition. Do not give up on membership; it is the heart and soul of our organization.

Congratulations to all the new officers for the 2012-2013 year, both on the District level and the Post level. I know you all will do a great job for our organization.

Again, in closing, thank you for all you do for our veterans and God Bless America.

DEPARTMENT HOSPITAL CHAIRMAN



Merridy Lewis

This past year I've written of the many changes that have taken place at our VA Medical Centers. I would like to give you a few reminders:

New to the VA Medical Centers in the last few months

is a program called "No Veteran Dies Alone". Volunteers with training will sit with the Veteran as their time approaches.

"Home Care for Veterans" – this program is for Veterans that can be cared for in their homes. They are not ill enough to be hospitalized, but can't quite take care

of themselves, either. This cannot be a family member. In order to volunteer for this, you will need training.

"Clinical Video Telehealth" – this instantly connects a Veteran in one location with a health care provider in another location.

"Care Coordination Home Care" – for this, you enter your health information into the telehealth monitor every day. A licensed clinician reviews your information each day and calls you to discuss your disease and to answer questions.

"Women Veterans Health Care" offers a maternity program that started at the VA Medical Centers recently. For more information on any of these programs, contact your local VA.

DISTRICT 12 PRESIDENT, continued from page 7

May 6th. This is such an honor and privilege for our Post members to be installed on this ship. I am hoping we have an awesome turnout, as we will be nominating and electing our upcoming officers.

I hope everyone tries to make it to the Department Convention in Troy in June. Please come and support our very own Annabelle Furgason as she will be installed as Department President. Good luck to all the upcoming officers in Department, District and Auxiliary levels. Here is to a truly amazing year for all of you.

And finally, it truly has been a privilege

and very rewarding to serve on President Mariann's team. I would like to thank her for all her words of wisdom, encouragement and help over the past year – you ROCK!!! The night out on the town was so much fun and the food was so good. I found the recipe for the colcannon balls. I haven't tried making them yet, but I will be. I truly recommend them if anybody ever goes to Gallagher's Eatery & Pub in Kalamazoo.

Again, thank you to everyone, have a great summer and remember "Every minute is another opportunity to serve". God bless America.

**AMERICANISM CHAIRMAN/
PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR**



Nanette K. Spauling

What a year! All of the Annual Reports are in – now breathe! Do not stop sending in the activity reports – it will be passed on to next year's Americanism Chairman.

Loyalty Day is designated as the

time to show our homage:

- To our country by promoting Americanism in the schools and communities, along with promoting our Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem

- To our military as the defenders of freedom and protectors of our Good Ol' Red, White and Blue

- To our "street soldiers" (firemen and policemen) who put their lives in danger to protect us

- Last, but not least, we have the best opportunity to show allegiance and respect to our Veterans.

Memorial Day is the time to memorialize, a time to reflect on those who lost their lives and renew the American Creed. We must never forget our POWs and the MIAs. At Mid-Winter, we heard Lewis Gernsey, a WWII Prisoner of War, speak with dignity and grace. He felt undeserving of applause for something that "just happened!" (his words). Get to know a POW! You might develop a great bond and relationship just like I have!

ALERT-ALERT – We have been asked by our National President Gwendolyn Rankin to get involved with JPAC (Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command). Their home base, located in Hickam, Hawaii, needs to locate family members to help identify (through DNA testing) the remains of Prisoners of War and those still listed as Missing In Action. For more information to help with this American endeavor, go to: www.jpac.pacom.mil/

We need to be informed about PTS (Post-Traumatic Syndrome) which has affected many combat soldiers and Veterans who returned years ago. Keep on promoting Suicide Awareness in your Post and also in your communities. We are seeing the effects almost every week on TV. This "take home" illness from war is ongoing!

Once again with no surprise, the Ladies Auxiliaries throughout Michigan have shown just how patriotic and devoted they are to the cause. Take a pat on the back and give each other a BIG hug – both are well deserved.

At Convention, I look forward to presenting awards and accolades for the outstanding work that was accomplished this year and trust me, from the bottom of my heart, this is a very hard call.

Thank you to everyone – be proud to proclaim that your Auxiliary served our Department well and that all of you do show patriotism and did show that "Every Minute is Another Opportunity to Serve".

Help Needed to Find Vietnam POW/MIAs Pictures

Nanette K. Spauling
Americanism Chairman/Patriotic Instructor

According to an article that showed up in the March/April 2012 *VVA Veteran Magazine*, a woman by the name of Candace Lokey, who is also a Vietnam veteran, has been locating information and pictures of the POWs and MIAs from the Vietnam War. Candace has located all but 14 POW/MIAs. She has located most of them from the Home of Record files and also has traced genealogies back several generations.

Candace is asking for help to locate the remaining 14 POW/MIAs. Here are the list names:

- Allen L. Blewett: Navy starting Feb 46
- Edwin J. Martinez-Mercado: USA Enlisted Summer/Fall 66
- Frank L. Bytheway: Army starting Feb 57
- Dan D. McConnaughay: USN Enlisted Jan 60
- Robert A. Cairns: USAF Enlisted Jun 49
- Dewey A. Midgett: USA Enlisted Mar 65
- Isom C. Cochran, Jr. USA Enlisted Sept 67
- Anastacio Montez: USA Special Forces,

- 3rd tour, Enlisted Dec 46
 - Benjamin D. De Herrera: USA Enlisted Feb 67
 - Linus L. Oakley: USAF Enlisted Dec 68
 - Carroll J. Deuso: USN Enlisted between 52/59
 - Samuel J. Padgett: USA Enlisted 1956, Special Forces
 - Charles D. Hardie: USN Enlisted May 61
 - Benard J. Sparenberg: USN Enlisted July 46
- Some of the photographs that she has gathered are not of the highest quality and she is also working on replacing them, but she has high hopes of completing this GREAT endeavor by locating the remaining 14 POW/MIAs.

If you served with any of the soldiers listed above and by chance have information or pictures, please feel free to contact Candace at the address and e-mail listed below.

Thank you and let's see what the Department of Michigan Veterans and Ladies Auxiliary can do to help her out.

Contact: Candace Lokey, P.O. Box 206, Freeport, PA 16229 or e-mail her at mlokey@aol.com



DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN



Sandy Medos

TICK TOCK... Time IS running out. We are in the 9th inning and it looks like we are going into extra innings.

It's time for Operation Embrace. Membership unites Sisters who care about our organization. It will take each of us to look into the reason why we are here – to help our Veterans and their families.

As of March 21, 2012, the Department of Michigan was at 95.75%. Congratulations to District 4 for reaching 100.19%. What a great job! District 5 and 11 are getting close, and I know you can do it. It's definitely time for all of us to step up to the plate. I am asking every Past Department President, past and present District Presidents, and past and present Auxiliary Presidents to step up to the plate and recruit or reinstate one member. I'm signing mine up on Friday! Let's "Step Up – Leave No Veteran Behind". Ask your VFW members if their mothers, wives, daughters or sisters are members. You may be surprised.

It is just about too late to send out letters asking for dues, so it's time to get on the

phone. Ask them why they joined. If they say they have a problem with someone at your Auxiliary, encourage them to not let this interfere with what they do for our Veterans and their families. Every dollar helps us do this. Remind them of our Department President's theme, "Every Minute Is Another Opportunity To Serve".

I know some of you are holding dues because it is almost time to collect for next year. Please do not do this. This hurts the member that paid her dues, as well as the Department President. Maybe you can just collect the \$11.50, so that it won't be too hard on those members, since in a few months she will owe for 2013. Remember, the Cancer Grant does not start until you are a member for one year.

Ohio went ahead of us in the Big Ten standings. Are we going to let them beat us? I say, "No way!" We can all help our Districts reach their 100% and put Ohio where they belong...at the rear.

In closing, I want to thank each of you for trying your best. It's been a hard year for everyone and I appreciate everything that you have done. Remember, if you need help with your Annual Reports, just give me a call or e-mail me.

See you at Convention where I am praying I can do the happy dance.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY/PATRIOT'S PEN



Gloria Dobbie

Congratulations to Post and Auxiliary 9809, District 9, for sponsoring Ashli M. Savage, our 1st Place Department winner in the Voice of Democracy contest. Ashli was awarded a \$6,000.00 scholarship from our Department, and she placed 7th in the National competition, awarding her a \$4,000.00 scholarship.

Congratulations to Post and Auxiliary 1031, District 11, for sponsoring Hunter D. Ullom, our 1st Place Department winner in the Patriot's Pen contest.

Hunter was awarded a \$1,000.00 prize for his efforts.

The theme for the 2012/2013 Voice of Democracy audio/essay contest is "Is Our Constitution Still Relevant?" and the theme for the Patriot's Pen essay contest is "What I Would Say to Our Founding Fathers." Entry forms for both contests are available online at www.lavfwmi.org under Programs, and Voice of Democracy. Please provide this information to the students in your area, prior to school dismissing for the summer months. This will allow ample time for the students to perfect their essays before the due date of November 1, 2012.

Thank you for your continued support of this important program.

VETS AND FAMILY SUPPORT CHAIRMAN



Kathy Kirby

Dear Sisters,

This year is almost over and I would like to thank you for all you have done to help our veterans, their families and our troops. Your dedication to this

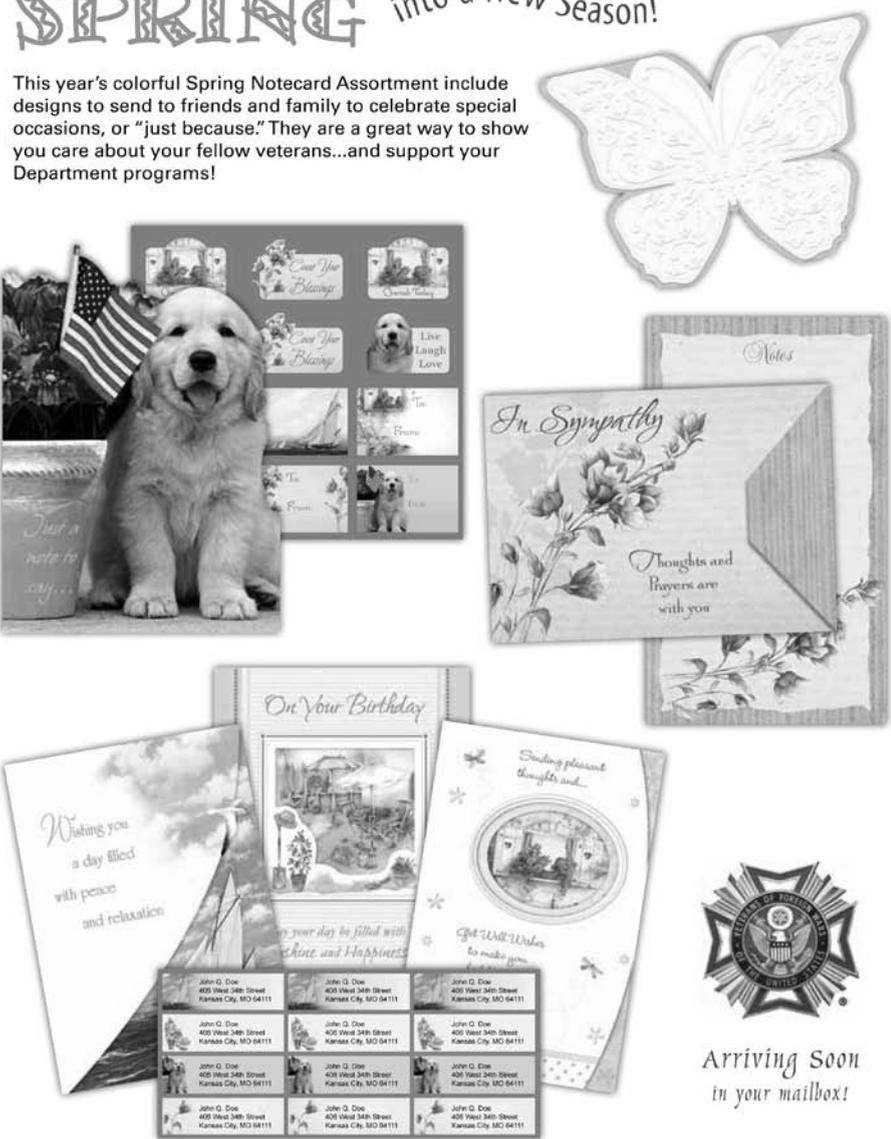
organization is incredible. Keep up the good work! The Department needs each of its wonderful volunteers to do the incredible work we do for all the veterans.

Good luck at Convention and at National; may your good works be rewarded.

Please keep sending in your donations for National Military Services to the National Organization.

SPRING into a New Season!

This year's colorful Spring Notecard Assortment include designs to send to friends and family to celebrate special occasions, or "just because." They are a great way to show you care about your fellow veterans...and support your Department programs!



Arriving Soon in your mailbox!

Show Your AMERICAN Pride!

Soon you'll be receiving colorful patriotic labels personalized with your name and address. Share your "love of country" with friends and family ... and support your Department.

Coming Soon to You!



John Q. Doe
406 West 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111



SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

Don't Balance Budget on Backs of Disabled Veterans and Military

VFW National Commander testifies on veterans' behalf at the Legislative Conference



WASHINGTON March 7, 2012 – In testimony today before a joint hearing of the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committees, the national commander of America's oldest and largest major combat veterans' organization urged Congress to not balance the budget on the backs of disabled veterans or on the men and women who continue to serve in uniform.

"Your two committees have a long history of taking care of veterans in a bipartisan manner," said Richard L. DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass., who leads the 2 million-member Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. and its Auxiliaries.

"We understand that current budget realities are forcing very hard choices in Congress and in agencies and departments across the executive branch. I urge you all to remember in the coming days that Congress' first mandate is the protection of its citizens, which can only be accomplished if Congress first protects those who volunteer to protect our nation in uniform."

Today's congressional testimony caps the VFW's annual legislative conference in which 300 VFW leaders from around the country visited their elected officials to discuss issues important to veterans, service members and their families. Atop their legislative agenda this year was protecting the Department of Veterans Affairs budget from mandatory cuts should sequestration occur, and stopping Defense Department proposals that would reduce military pay, force military dependents and retirees to pay exponentially more for their Tricare health coverage, and to civilianize the current military retirement system.

Other high-interest topics range from military transition and assistance programs to Post 9/11 GI Bill improvements, the proper care and treatment of

wounded warriors, women veterans, the 1.7 million VA claims workload and adjudication error rate, the VA rating schedule change that could have veterans with similar wounds compensated differently, and combating veteran suicides and homelessness, among others.

Other events during the weeklong legislative conference include:

Presenting the VFW Congressional Award to House Armed Services Committee Chairman Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-Calif.) for fighting to strengthen the military and to invest in a force that can meet and beat any threat. He also led efforts to keep terrorist detainees off of U.S. soil, increased missile defense funding, restored the tradition of keeping non-defense social issues out of the defense bill, and is a leading voice to keep the military intact in this budget-cutting era.

Presenting the VFW Gold Medal and Citation to the Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment, plus hosting more than 70 wounded warriors and their families to dinner at the National Press Club.

Awarding a \$30,000 scholarship Sunday evening to Elizabeth Scannell from Goose Creek, S.C., the winner of the annual VFW Voice of Democracy program, a patriotic-themed contest that this year judged 50,000 high school student entries. She was joined by Lydia Macfarlan from Siloam Springs, Ark., who beat almost 125,000 other middle school students to win a \$10,000 U.S. Savings Bond in the VFW's annual Patriot's Pen contest.

And receiving checks for \$1 million from USAA Executive Vice President and retired Army Lt. Gen. Stephen Speakes, \$450,000 from Burger King franchisee owner Mike DeRosa, and earlier, \$450,000 from Sports Clips founder and CEO Gordon Logan. All donations will help the VFW and the VFW Foundation reinforce their nationwide support programs for military and veterans.

Home Depot Grant Now Open Apply to Fix Up Your Post Building

VFW Posts can receive up to \$5,000 to fix up their buildings

February 24, 2012 – The Home Depot (HD) has opened their Community Impact Grants cycle, which will be in effect from February 6, 2012 through August 13, 2012, though it is suggested you apply as soon as possible.

VFW Posts can receive up to \$5,000 to fix up their buildings; however, of course, there is no guarantee of funding.

To begin the process, type in the following Internet link: <http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/how-we-help/grants.html>

Near the bottom of the Web page, choose "Click here to start the application".

To help you complete this application, the VFW Foundation has prepared a step-by-step, how-to guide.

We have tried to make the instructions as simple as possible. Any deviation from this guide will most likely result in not being able to submit the application.

To receive this information send an e-mail to: foundation@vfw.org

Type the following in the subject heading: Need Home Depot Guide

The application must be filled out via the Internet only (no telephone calls to HD, e-mails or written submissions will be accepted nor will you be able

to turn this application in at your local HD store).

Pay close attention to the Tax ID Instructions Section. You will use the Employee Identification Number (EIN) of your Post and upload the Post's 501(c)(19) IRS determination letter at the end of the application.

If you receive funding it will come in the form of Home Depot gift cards that can be used to buy materials at your local HD store. You will need to recruit Post members or other community volunteers to do the work. The project must be completed within 6 months. You will also be required to fill out a final report. Failure to do so will negatively impact your Post's ability to receive any future funding from The Home Depot.

After submission of the application, you should receive a written e-mail response from HD usually in six weeks letting you know if you received the grant.

Should you have any questions, please contact Richard Freiburghouse, Grants Manager, at 816-968-1124 or rfreiburghouse@vfw.org

Burger King Restaurants Surpass \$1.7 Million in Donations to Unmet Needs Program

November promotion raises \$450,000 for military families

KANSAS CITY, MO., March 6, 2012 – For the fifth consecutive year, participating Burger King® Restaurants raised funds for the VFW Unmet Needs Program, which provides emergency financial assistance to military families. The Veterans of Foreign Wars Foundation is proud to announce this year's promotion raised \$450,000, bringing the five-year donation total to over \$1.7 million. Burger King® customers were encouraged to donate \$1 or more at participating locations across the country with the proceeds helping military families in need.

"Each year I am continually impressed with the work of Burger King® Restaurants and their fantastic customers," said VFW Foundation President Allen "Gunner" Kent. "The Unmet Needs Program assists military families when they are in their greatest time of financial need and Burger King® Restaurants have continually made it clear that they are standing tall with the VFW to provide the support our military families so desperately need."

"Burger King® Restaurants are proud to support America's military families and we appreciate the support of all of our great customers in assisting those who have sacrificed so much for our country," said Burger King® Franchisee Owner and VFW Foundation Board Member Mike DeRosa. "In five years, to be able to donate \$1.7 million and to hear the many great stories of those that have been helped through this initiative has been simply amazing."

Since 2007, over 1,200 Burger King® Restaurants in 24 states have participated in the November Unmet

Needs promotion.

Since 2004, the VFW Unmet Needs Program has provided over \$4.3 million in financial assistance to over 3,100 deserving military families. The program assists with basic life needs such as rent, mortgage, utilities, vehicle repair, medical expenses or food/basic assistance. Funds are available to all five branches of the military, as well as members of the National Guard and Reserves. Assistance is awarded in the form of a grant, not a loan, so recipients are not required to repay it. The money is paid directly to the creditor, not to the individual.

To learn more about the VFW Unmet Needs Program, please visit <http://http://www.unmetneeds.com> For more information about Burger King® Restaurants, please visit www.bk.com

About the Veterans of Foreign Wars Foundation: The Veterans of Foreign Wars Foundation is the official charity of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW), America's largest organization for combat veterans. Its mission is to support programs and services that provide emergency financial assistance for military families, free phone calls for deployed troops, VIP treatment for service members and their families at entertainment events, morale boosting events for military units, and critical services that guide veterans through VA entitlement claims. These programs and services are provided at no cost to the recipients. The VFW Foundation is one of the nation's highest rated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. For more information, please visit www.vfwfoundation.org



Bylaw Amendments

Amendment MI-1:

Amend the Department of Michigan Bylaws Article X Finances, Section 1, by deleting the first sentence in its entirety and adding the following:

The Department per capita (dues) shall be nine dollars and fifty cents (\$9.50) per annum on each member in good standing, effective October 1, 2012.

Amendment MI-2:

Amend Article XVII (Amendments) of the Department of Michigan Bylaws to read Article XVIII Amendments

Amendment MI-3:

Amend Article XVI (Definitions) of the Department of Michigan Bylaws to read Article XVII Definitions

Amendment MI-4:

Amend Article XVI as follows: Article XVI Veterans of Foreign Wars Motorcycle Association

Section 1. A Post, District or the Department may form a Veterans of Foreign Wars Motorcycle Association hereinafter referred to as VFW Riders, aka, Riders, aka, VFWR within the jurisdiction of the Department of Michigan, Veterans of Foreign Wars in accordance with the Bylaws established for the VFW Riders by the National Council of Administration of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Section 2. Each association unit shall be audited quarterly and provide a copy of each audit to the Commander of the sponsoring unit within 30 days of the end of each calendar quarter.

Section 3. Each association shall prepare a report of election of officers each year and provide a copy of said report to the Commander of the sponsoring unit and a copy to the Department of Michigan VFW Adjutant within 30 days of the election but not later than June 30 of each year.

Section 4. Each association shall maintain a roster of members in good standing a copy of which shall be submitted to the Commander of the sponsoring unit and to the Department of Michigan Adjutant not later than June 30 of each year. When possible said report should be prepared and submitted in a computerized MS Excel format.

Amendment MI-5:

Amend Article II, Section 1 by adding a comma and County Councils after the word Posts.

Article II, Section 1 should read: "The Department of Michigan shall be composed of subordinate units known as: Posts, County Councils, and Districts."

Amendment MI-6:

Article V which is now blank add the following:

Article V "County Councils"
"Section 1 – Per Article III, Section 301 of the National Bylaws a Department, if the Bylaws of the Department having jurisdiction so provide, may form a County Council."

"Section 2 – County Councils must follow the standard operation procedure as it is set forth by the Department of Michigan."

VFW Announces 2011-2012 National Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Essay Contest Winners

America's youth write about and discuss patriotism and pride in our military

March 05, 2012 – The winners of the VFW and Ladies Auxiliary sponsored Voice of Democracy audio-essay competition and the Patriot's Pen essay competition were announced late yesterday afternoon during the 2012 VFW Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

The Voice of Democracy program celebrated its 65th year with this year's theme, "Is There Pride in Serving in Our Military?" The first-place winner, Elizabeth Scannell, sponsored by Post 10256 and Ladies Auxiliary in Goose Creek, S.C., received an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., where she was presented with the T.C. Selman Memorial Scholarship award in the amount of \$30,000. The second-place winner, Josiah Lippincott, sponsored by Post 2002 in Tulare, Calif., received the \$16,000 Charles Kuralt Memorial Scholarship Award. The third-place winner, Alexis Dominique, sponsored by Post 12065 and Ladies Auxiliary in New Iberia, La., received the \$10,000 VFW Scholarship Award. All other state winners received at least a \$1,000 college scholarship. Nearly 50,000 students participated in this year's competition.

The Patriot's Pen program is designed to foster patriotism by allowing students the opportunity to express their opinions on democracy based on an annual theme, this year's being "Are You Proud of Your Country?" The first-place winner, Lydia Macfarlan, sponsored by Post 1674 and Ladies Auxiliary in Siloam Springs,



Ark., received an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., where she received a \$10,000 savings bond. The second-place winner, Emily Jones, sponsored by Post 261 and Ladies Auxiliary out of Lawrence, Ind., will receive an \$8,000 savings bond and glass plaque. The third-place winner, Ashlyn Carlson, sponsored by Post 11402 and Ladies Auxiliary in Olympia, Wash., will receive a \$7,000 savings bond and glass plaque. Wood plaques will be sent to all of the sponsoring Post's Department headquarters for presentation during their respective Department Convention or other appropriate ceremony. A total of 140,000 students participated in this year's competition.

VFW Discusses Issues with President

Protecting VA budget and stopping negative DoD proposals lead agenda



WASHINGTON (March 8, 2012) – The National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. met with President Obama this afternoon to discuss issues important to veterans, service members and their families. Topping the agenda was protecting the Department of Veterans Affairs from mandatory budget cuts should sequestration occur, and VFW opposition to certain Defense Department proposals that could jeopardize the continued existence of the all-volunteer force.

"The president has been consistent in word and action on protecting and increasing the Department of Veterans Affairs budget, and he pledged to continue to do so even in these tough budget times. We gratefully appreciate that commitment," said Richard L. DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass., who leads the 2 million-member VFW and its Auxiliaries.

"The advocacy work he and First Lady Michelle, and Vice President Joe and Dr. Jill Biden, continue to do for our military and veteran families everywhere has been outstanding," he said, citing as examples the passage of advanced VA budget appropriations, the Family Caregiver Bill, and just this week, bringing financial relief to thousands of service members and veterans whose homes may have been wrongfully foreclosed upon since 2006.

Discussed with the president was the VFW's opposition to certain DoD proposals that would significantly raise healthcare fees on military families and retirees, and change the current military retirement system. DeNoyer also expressed his concern about the negative impact sequestration would have on overall force readiness and national security.

The VFW national commander said that ensuring the security of the nation is expensive, but that cost pales in comparison to asking people to voluntarily do more for their country in a few short years than most Americans do in a lifetime.

"In my travels to Afghanistan, Europe, the Pacific and around the country, the number #1 issue from the troops is what the Pentagon is doing to their pay and benefits," said DeNoyer. "I am honored to carry their concerns to the Oval Office, because as the nation's largest and oldest major combat veterans' organization, one of the reasons why the VFW has maintained its relevancy for more than a century is we work hard to defeat any proposal that negatively impacts national security or the many people programs we fought equally hard to create within DoD and the VA."

Also addressed was the need for full funding of those organizations charged with returning missing Americans from current and previous wars and conflicts – the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office, Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, and the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs.

"The president fully agreed that there is no mission more sacred than to recover our fallen from the battlefield and return them home to their families," said DeNoyer. "The VFW is very comforted to hear that, because the upcoming renewal of recovery operations in North Korea is a new mission requirement that must come with additional funding so that all missing Americans from all wars and conflicts receive the same highest recovery priority," he said.

"I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to sit down and address these VFW issues with the president, and I look forward to discussing them further in the near future."

VFW Announces Three Teachers Selected for National Awards

Teachers honored for their commitment to teaching Americanism and patriotism

February 21, 2012, Kansas City, Mo. – Each year for the past 13 years, three exceptional teachers have been recognized by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) for their outstanding commitment to teach Americanism and patriotism to their students.

The VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award recipients are selected from entries submitted by local VFW Posts in every state, District of Columbia and overseas. There are three categories of competition: elementary school (K-5), middle school (6-8) and high school (9-12). During the competition more than \$212,000 in awards were presented to more than 1,100

teachers at various levels in the VFW.

Debra Howell, a 4th-6th grade teacher at Monte Cristo Elementary School in Granite Falls, Wash., has been named the winner at the elementary school level. At the middle school level, Kelly McDermott, a middle school teacher at Hidden Oaks Middle School in Prior Lake, Minn., was named the winner. George Zorman, a teacher at Mountain Home Junior High School in Mountain Home, Ark., was selected at the high school level.

Each teacher receives the VFW Past

AWARDS, continued on page 12

VFW Returns to Michigan International Speedway to Sponsor VFW 200 Truck Race

Partnership provides national platform to raise awareness about veterans' issues

BROOKLYN, MICH. (February 24, 2012) – The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and Michigan International Speedway (MIS) are proud to announce the continuation of the VFW 200 NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race at MIS on Saturday, August 18.

The 2012 season marks the VFW's fourth year as a partner at MIS, including three years as the title sponsor of the VFW 200.

Founded in 1899, the VFW is America's largest major combat veterans' organization. The VFW offers several assistance programs to lessen the burden on active-duty military, veterans and their families; offers counsel and assistance to military veterans to navigate VA entitlement and disability claims; and actively lobbies Congress and the administration on issues that impact the lives of our nation's veterans.

The title sponsorship of the race at MIS allows the VFW a national platform to recognize and salute veterans and their families around the country.

"It's a pleasure to have the opportunity to once again partner with MIS in this most important event," said VFW National Commander Richard DeNoyer. "Not only is the intent of the event to bolster the morale of our troops, but at a time when demand to meet the urgent needs of U.S. military service personnel and their families becomes more difficult, it allows us to get the word out about our various programs and services. These include free communication options for troops overseas so they can call home on a regular basis and financial assistance to their families for rent, mortgage, utilities, vehicle repair, food and medicine."

"We're pleased to continue our partnership with the Veterans of Foreign Wars," Michigan International Speedway President Roger Curtis said. "No has done more

for veterans and their families than the VFW, and many veterans are NASCAR fans. So this is a perfect partnership because we work together to bring exposure to the needs of some of our best Americans through the power of NASCAR."

In addition to the VFW 200 race, the VFW will honor local military families through the "Salute to Military Families" hospitality event on Sunday, August 19, for the Pure Michigan 400 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race. Guests will enjoy complimentary pre-race hospitality, pit tours, special access to drivers and pre-race ceremonies and grandstand tickets to the Pure Michigan 400.

The VFW has hosted the "Salute to Military Families" program at MIS since 2009, designed to bring awareness to the unique problems and needs of troops and their families. Through its "Unmet Needs" initiative, the VFW has provided more than \$4.3 million in direct financial assistance to military families for rent, mortgage, utilities, vehicle repair, medical expenses and basic food assistance.

Other VFW programs include "Operation Uplink's Free Call Days," which facilitated approximately 1.5 million free long-distance calls overseas for troops in 2011; morale boosting "welcome home" and "sendoff" events for military units; and direct, free assistance to veterans obtaining VA entitlements from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

About Michigan International Speedway: Nestled in the lush Irish Hills of Southeastern Michigan, Michigan International Speedway is the Great Escape, a venerable NASCAR national park where fans can get away and enjoy the very best in racing and camaraderie. It's the love of racing and the thrill of a great time for race fans and drivers alike.

USAA's Scott Halliwell Joins VFW for Free 'Financial Fridays'

USAA offers a new opportunity to the VFW community

March 23, 2012 – USAA and VFW have teamed up to offer an exciting opportunity to the VFW online community as part of our joint commitment to the financial well-being of our members.

Coming this April, USAA's Scott Halliwell, primary advice provider for USAA's Financial Advice Community and CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™, will address finance questions provided by VFW's Facebook community of more than 200,000.

The purpose of the partnership is to offer VFW members real answers to common finance questions in an easy to understand way that is free from the "sales pitches" which often accompany such guidance.

Cast your vote during our Monday Facebook polls to determine the "Financial Fridays" topic of the week. We'll then send a "call out" for questions, which Scott will address via video message on Friday.

Be sure to "Like" VFW on Facebook to

get in on the action!

This material is for informational purposes and is not investment advice, an indicator of future performance, a solicitation, an offer to buy or sell, or a recommendation for any security. It should not be used as a primary basis for making investment decisions. Consider your own financial circumstances and goals carefully before investing.

Views and opinions expressed by members are for informational purposes only and should not be deemed as an endorsement by USAA.

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USAA Enters Second Year as Title Sponsor of Return the Favor Campaign

Association continues support for VFW Foundation military appreciation events

WASHINGTON March 7, 2012. – The Veterans of Foreign Wars Foundation is proud to announce that USAA, a leading provider of banking and insurance products and services to members of the U.S. military and their families, will continue its title sponsorship of the VFW Foundation's Return the Favor campaign. USAA Executive Vice President and retired Army Lt. Gen. Stephen Speakes presented a \$250,000 check to VFW National Commander Richard DeNoyer on behalf of USAA's support for the initiative, which honors, celebrates and supports active-duty military veterans and their families.

"We could not be happier to be continuing our relationship with USAA," said VFW Foundation President Allen "Gunner" Kent. "Not only does the association provide top-notch products and services for members of the military and their families, but it is also committed to serving those who have served our great nation. Through this wonderful sponsorship, the VFW will be able to continue assisting heroes who need it most."

"We're thrilled to be the title sponsor for the VFW Foundation," said Speakes. "USAA has been working with the VFW, their Foundation and the Ladies Auxiliary VFW for more than a year, and we are very pleased with their Return the Favor effort. We appreciate the entire VFW organization and its support of combat veterans and their families."

USAA and the VFW Foundation are also celebrating a successful first year in which they joined forces to help the military community. In May, the two organizations sponsored a Southern California Chick-Fil-A Military Appreciation Night that provided free meals

to more than 8,000 military and family members. In June, USAA participated alongside the VFW Foundation in the Salute to Military Families weekend at Michigan International Speedway. Three hundred service members and their families were treated to a VIP race experience, including pit tours, on-track access and pre-race hospitality.

Additional troop support events occurred in conjunction with the Kansas City Chiefs and the Missouri Valley Conference, an NCAA Division I college athletic conference.

"Last year was a fantastic year for our relationship," said Kent. "It is our hope that we will continue to work with USAA on similar events for many years to come."

The VFW Foundation's Return the Favor campaign supports programs and services that provide emergency financial assistance for military families, free phone calls for deployed troops, VIP treatment for service members and their families at entertainment events, morale boosting events for military units and critical services that guide veterans through VA entitlement claims.

About USAA: USAA provides insurance, banking, investment and retirement products and services to 8.8 million members of the U.S. military and their families. Known for its legendary commitment to its members, USAA is consistently recognized for outstanding service, employee well-being and financial strength. USAA membership is open to all who are serving or have honorably served our nation in the U.S. military – and their eligible family members. For more information about USAA, or to learn more about membership, visit www.usaa.com/vfw

America's Heroes

Presenting the new 2012 VFW Calendar, arriving soon in your mailbox!




Welcome in the new year and support your Department programs!

Watch the mail for your 2012 VFW Calendar. The dramatic, eye-catching photography makes it the 2012 calendar you will want to proudly display in your home or office this year!

AWARDS, continued from page 11

Commander-in-Chief John Smart award of \$1,000 for their professional development and another \$1,000 goes to their school. In addition, all three teachers receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Reno, Nev., where the awards will be presented

during the 2012 VFW National Convention, July 21-26.

Steve Van Buskirk, director of VFW Programs, acknowledged, "Next to parents, teachers hold the key to raising up young civic-minded patriots who will perpetuate the values that have made this nation great."

93rd State Convention Agenda

June 6-10, 2012

Wednesday, June 6, 2012

Golf Outing TBA

Thursday, June 7, 2012

7:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Registration	Dennison Ballroom
8:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Displays and Booths	Dennison Ballroom
8:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Photo Room	Niles I
8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m.	Service Officers Budget and Finance Bylaws & Resolutions	Grand Ballroom E-H
10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Open	Grand Ballroom E-H
11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.	Lunch On Your Own	
1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Registration	Dennison Ballroom
1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	C of A Meeting	Grand Ballroom E-H
5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.	Directors Reception (by invitation)	Commanders Hospitality Room 1512
7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.	Joint Hospitality Room	Room 1512

Friday, June 8, 2012

7:30 a.m.-12 Noon	Registration	Dennison Ballroom
8:00 a.m.-12 Noon	Photo Room	Dennison Ballroom
8:00 a.m.-12 Noon	VFW Convention Opening Session	Grand Ballroom E-H
12 Noon-1:30 p.m.	Lunch On Your Own	
1:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.	Registration	Dennison Ballroom
1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.	Joint VFW & Aux Meeting Presentation Recognition All-State and Achievement Comments from our National Representatives	Grand Ballroom E-H
3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	Joint Camp Trotter	Grand Ballroom E-H
4:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	District Commanders & District Monitors	Mediterranean
5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.	Joint Memorial Service	Grand Ballroom A-H
7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.	Joint Hospitality Room	Room 1512

Saturday, June 9, 2012

7:30 a.m.-12 Noon	Final Registration	Dennison Ballroom
8:00 a.m.-12 Noon	Photo Room	Niles I
8:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	General Business Session	Grand Ballroom E-H
8:30 a.m.-11:30	Men's Auxiliary Meeting	TBA
11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.	Lunch On Your Own	

All displays and other items must be removed from area before the 1:30 p.m. meetings

1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.	Meet the Candidates (All candidates in one room)	Grand Ballroom E-H
2:30 p.m.-2:45 p.m.	District Commanders Pick Up Final Reg. Forms	Dennison Ballroom
2:45 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Convention Elections	Grand Ballroom E-H
Installation of 2011-2012 Officers after Business Session		
4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.	First C of A Meeting Election Celebration – Buses will be provided to Troy Elks	Grand Ballroom E-H

Sunday, June 10, 2012

HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME!

CRUZ'N 528 Veterans Car Show

Lt. Gamble – Mayflower VFW Post 6695 has hosted the Wednesday Night CRUZ'N 528 Veterans Car Shows since 2004 and is sponsored by the **Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 528, Plymouth/Canton.**

The 9th season for **CRUZ'N 528 Wednesday Night Veterans Car Shows** will begin on May 23rd and conclude on September 5, 2012 with an average of 85 cars each Wednesday, and some shows exceeding 125 cars.

The cruisers enjoy the camaraderie, bench racing and tall tales. There are burgers, hot dogs, chips, corn on the cob and refreshments along with our Host, **DJ Koz**, back by popular demand to spin the oldies, announce upcoming events and call out the door prize and 50/50 ticket numbers. Our **Guest DJ Gary Luyben from WPON 1460 AM** will be on hand again for three shows this year: June 13, July 18 and August 15, and will be giving away Daly's Restaurant gift certificates to those who can correctly answer some Oldies Trivia questions.

Each Wednesday, a participation plaque is awarded to one cruiser from all the registered cars; there are fabulous door prizes; a 50/50 drawing which includes additional prizes given away each week, like T-shirts, hats and goodie bags loaded with products from our sponsors who have supported us from the beginning: **Meguiar's, Mother's and Stoners Car Care Products, Main Street Car Wash of Plymouth, Summit Racing Equipment, Quick Lane Car Care Center of Canton, Hagerty Classic Car Insurance, Tim Horton's of Garden City, Daly Restaurant of Livonia, Doyle's Tavern – Zack's – Rock Bar & Grill – Lee's Chicken of Plymouth, Cruisnews News in Sterling Heights and Mustang Race Technologies in Novi.**

Since 2004, CRUZ'N 528 has distrib-

uted over \$19,000 to needy Veteran's and Veteran's Organizations such as VA Hospital Ann Arbor, the Ambulatory & Burn Center for the Intrepid in San Antonio, Texas, we purchased tickets for WWII veterans to visit the WWII Memorial in Washington and in 2008, we purchased, packed and mailed 92 packages with special need items to the troops in Iraq and we have also supported local veterans who need help to pay bills, provide house maintenance (inside or outside), prescriptions, transportation needs and other items. Since 2008, Lynn Dery from the VVA has collected 4,624 cell phones for soldiers. That's 277,440 minutes of talk time to our troops – OOH Rah!!!!

A job well done to all the VVA, VFW volunteers who help every Wednesday: Show Setup, Registration, VFW Ladies Auxiliary, Cooking, Cashier, 50/50 Raffle, Door Prizes, Show Photos, the Radio Coverage by Guest DJ Gary Luyben from WPON 1460 AM and especially VFW Post 6695 – for use of the parking lot and buildings.

Plymouth/Canton Chapter 528, Vietnam Veterans of America and CRUZ'N 528 would like to thank all those who participated, sponsored, helped or just perused the show, and the cruisers who supported us through the rain, heat and cool weather. Without you guys and gals, CRUZ'N 528 Vets Car Show wouldn't be here. Our fans are the greatest bunch of people you'd ever want to meet; who are also certifiably car crazy.

The committee members for CRUZ'N 528 Car Show have started planning for the summer of 2012. WE ARE BACK. You can bet your GTO, STANG or DUSTER on that or maybe the wife and kids if you're having a bad day.

**Bob Paul
CRUZ'N 528**



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Join Department of Michigan VFW
**Commander Kirk Kennedy and
 President Annabelle Furgason
 on a trip to the**

ARMY/NAVY Game 2012

December 6, 2012

0800 Depart from VFW Post 701 Lansing
 1000 Depart from VFW Post 9568 Romulus
 1700 Arrive Comfort Inn Motel, 53 Industrial Hwy., Essington, PA;
 Phone: 610-521-9800; then on to Casino.
 Harrah's Casino is 3 miles from hotel; free shuttle service.
 Gaming package: \$25.00 plus \$5.00 towards buffet each day.
 (Subject to change at Casino's discretion)

December 7, 2012

0900 Leave for tour with guide to the historical area until 1700;
 Then to local VFW Post for dinner (included)

December 8, 2012

TBD Tailgate at motel; then leave for game or shopping.

December 9, 2012

Leave for home, stopping for breaks and lunch (out of pocket)

**\$450 per person/double occupancy;
 without game ticket, \$380 and go shopping instead.
 Single \$150 extra.**

Half payment due June 1, 2012. Final payment due September 1, 2012.

VFW Contact Person: Doug Masseur at 517-484-3092

Make reservations through:
Tours by Ruth, LLC
 P.O. Box 70177
 Lansing, MI 48908-0177
 517-267-0662
 800-363-8141

Pay by Check – VISA – MasterCard
Checks payable to:
TOURS BY RUTH

Send to:
Doug Masseur
 307 Alger Street
 Lansing, MI 48917

 Please fill out below and send with payment to address above:

Smoking: ___Yes ___No **Game Tickets:** ___1 ___2

1st Passenger Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

2nd Passenger Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Michigan Department Ladies Auxiliary VFW 85th Annual State Convention Troy Marriott, Troy, Michigan

June 6-10, 2012

Wednesday, June 6

6:00 p.m.	Golf Outing Hospitality	TBD Dept. President's Suite Room 1412
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Thursday, June 7

10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Registration	Dennison Foyer
10:00 a.m.-12 Noon	Joint Officers and Council Members Meeting	Dept. Pres. Suite 1412
11:00 a.m.	Instruction to Pages	Grand Ballroom A-C
12 Noon-1:30 p.m.	Lunch On Your Own	
1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Registration	Dennison Foyer
1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.	Cancer Booth	Dennison Foyer
1:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	Council of Administration Meeting	Grand Ballroom A-C
3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	Floor Practice	Grand Ballroom A-C
5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.	Joint 2012-2013 Officers and Council of Administration Members Meeting	TBD
7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.	Joint Hospitality Room	Room 1512

Friday, June 8

7:30 a.m.-12 Noon	Registration	Dennison Foyer
8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.	Cancer Booth	Dennison Foyer
8:00 a.m.-12 Noon	Auxiliary Business Session Opens	Grand Ballroom A-C
	• Rules Committee	
	• Introduction of Convention Committee and Pages	
	• Resolutions	
	• Program Awards	
	• Cancer Donations	
	• 2012 Membership Transmittals	
12 Noon-1:30 p.m.	Lunch On Your Own	
12 Noon-1:30 p.m.	District Jr. Vice Meeting with Department Jr. Vice Marilyn Malick	TBD
1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.	Registration	Dennison Foyer
1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.	Joint VFW and Auxiliary Meeting	Grand Ballroom A-F
	• Presentation and Recognition of Auxiliary and District Achievement Winners and All-State Commanders	
	• Comments from National Representatives	
3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	Joint Camp Trotter Committee Meeting	Ballroom E-H
5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.	Joint Memorial Service	Grand Ballroom A-H
7:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.	Department Hospitality Room	Room 1512

Saturday, June 9

7:00 a.m.	Past State Commanders/ Past State Presidents Breakfast	TBA
7:30-10:00 a.m.	Registration	Dennison Foyer
	Registration will close promptly at 10:00 a.m.	
8:00 a.m.-12 Noon	Cancer Booth	Dennison Foyer
	Note: 2013 Cancer Pins Available for pick up beginning at 8:00 a.m. today	
8:00 a.m.-12 Noon	Auxiliary Business Session Resumes	Grand Ballroom A-C
	• Flag Presentation	
	• Presentation of Past Department Presidents	
	• 45-Year Plus Recognition	
	• Welcome Dept. President (song)	
	• Jankowski Scholarship Award	
	• Presentation of Patriotic Art Winner and Jr. Girls Princess/Scholarship	
	• National Representative Comments	
	• Nominations	
	• Candidates Question and Answer Session	
12 Noon-1:30 p.m.	Lunch On Your Own/Caucus	
1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.	Auxiliary Business Session Resumes	Grand Ballroom A-C
	• Drawing of Dept. Raffle Tickets	
	• Cancer Booth Totals	
	• Chapel of Four Chaplains Presentation	
	• Election of Officers	
	• Installation of Officers	
	• Closing Ceremonies of Auxiliary Convention	
3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	2013 Membership Kick-Off and 2013 Dues Round-Up	
4:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.	2012-13 Council of Administration Meeting	
7:00 p.m.-until	Celebration with entertainment and free bus transportation	

Sunday, June 10 Have a SAFE journey home!

Camp Trotter for Children Sixth Annual Charity Golf Outing Sponsored by Dept. of Michigan VFW



Dear Supporter:

The Camp Trotter for Children is holding its Sixth Annual Charity Golf Outing, Friday, June 22, 2012 at Village Green Golf Course located in Newaygo, Michigan and sponsored by the Department of Michigan Veterans of Foreign Wars. To be a huge success, this Charity Golf Outing needs your support.

We do hope you will consider supporting this fundraiser for the VFW Camp Trotter for Children. Camp Trotter for Children was established for children ages 7 through 12. Camp Trotter is located on beautiful Bills Lake in Newaygo County. The Camping Season runs from 15 July through 12 August 2012. Donations from supporters like you make our event one that everyone wants to attend year after year.

Donation Opportunities:

- **Sponsor a hole or tee box.** Because of the popularity of sponsoring holes and tees, we are recognizing those individuals, Corporations or Groups with the appropriate sign on the tee or hole. (\$55.00 minimum donation)

- **Sponsor a Team.** \$60/person or \$240.00 per foursome.

- **Donate a product or gift certificate** that can be used as a raffle prize or a door prize.

- **Make a monetary donation.**

The proceeds from this year's Charity Golf Outing will be used to offset the cost of the newly built Director's Cottage. Drop by and see some of your money at work with major renovations that have taken place. Go online with the Internet at www.vfwmi.org and click "Camp Trotter" on the bottom of the Home Page, and check out your Camp Trotter for the latest changes that have taken place.

Thank you for supporting our children's camp and making this veterans site one to be proud of for many generations to come.

Ernie Meyers, Sr.
Chairman
925 Forest Street
Charlotte, MI 48813-1264
E-mail: emeyers76@att.net
Phone: 1-517-543-0014

Annabelle Furgason
E-mail: Bittersweetgolf@gmail.com
Phone: 1-231-834-9376

Donations to the VFW Camp Trotter for Children are tax-deductible under section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Forgotten Vet is 1,000th Buried with Dignity and Military Honors

The Dignity Memorial network is a proud partner of VFW

April 23, 2012 – On a rainy winter day in Portland, Oregon, veterans, active-duty military personnel, local leaders and community members gathered to honor the life and service of Navy Chief Petty Officer Stevenson Roy. Few of those in attendance knew Roy. He passed away with no family and no place to call home.

Despite Roy's challenges in life, the Dignity Memorial® Homeless Veterans Burial Program made sure his service to his country was remembered with full military honors. Roy, who served in the Navy, was the 1,000th veteran to be served by this program.

Without assistance from the Dignity Memorial Homeless Veterans Burial Program and similar efforts, Roy and the scores of America's forgotten veterans who pass away without a home, money

and family would risk burial in pauper's graves, without services or military honors.

Since its inception in 2000, the program has provided qualified homeless veterans with honorable burials in VA or state cemeteries. The program is a cooperative effort among Dignity Memorial funeral, cremation and cemetery service providers, local medical examiners and coroners, VA, VFW and other veterans' advocates.

The Dignity Memorial network is a proud partner of VFW. It has assisted, free of charge, thousands of VFW members secure VA burial benefits through local funeral homes.

Dignity Memorial funeral providers also offer a free, informative brochure called 10 Important Facts About Your VA Burial Benefits.

Camp Trotter for Children Sixth Annual Charity Golf Outing

Sponsored by Department of Michigan
Veterans of Foreign Wars



Friday, June 22, 2012

8:00 a.m. – Registration

9:00 a.m. – Shotgun Start

Village Green Golf Course

8130 Bingham Avenue

Newaygo, MI 49337

Phone: 231-652-6513

Cost \$60.00 Per Person/\$240.00 Per Team Includes:

- * 18 Holes with cart
- * Lunch at the Turn
- * Grilled Steak Dinner
- * 4 person scramble
- * Team Placement Prizes
- * Door Prizes

Golf Entry Form

This entry form must be returned with registration fees by June 15, 2012.

Captain's name: _____

Phone # _____

Address: _____

Player #2 Name: _____

Player #3 Name: _____

Player #4 Name: _____

Hole/Tee Sponsor \$55 _____ Cash Donation \$ _____

I am able to donate products or gift certificates. Please contact me.

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Check payable to: Camp Trotter for Children

Mail to: PSC Ernie Meyers, Sr.

925 Forest Street

Charlotte, MI 48813-1264

Questions? Call Ernie Meyers, Sr. at 517-490-1221 or e-mail: emeyers76@att.net

Donations to the VFW Camp Trotter for Children are tax-deductible under section 501(c)(19) of the IRS Code.

TAPS, continued from page 16

6464-FOWLervilleDE MARAIS, FRANCIS J., 81, USN/WWII
HAMMONS, JONATHAN, 64, USA/
VIETNAMSPALDING, THEODORE, 82, USA/WWII
TANNAR, KENNETH, 92, USA/WWII**6466-HARRISVILLE**

GONZALES, JOE, 77, USMC/KOREA

6754-SPRUCE

WILOS, KENNETH, 62, USA/VIETNAM

6756-CENTER LINE

FRANCE, RUSSELL, 85, USA/WWII

6864-CADILLAC

CULVER, COLE L., 92, USN/WWII

NOLAN, ERNEST S., 83, USA/WWII

STOCK, GLENN W., 91, USA/WWII

6896-WESTLAND

LAPINSKI, JOSEPH, 87, USA/WWII

7302-HEMLOCK

EMERY, ADRIAN, 94, USA/WWII

LOEPPLER, ANDREW, 83, USN/WWII

7542-BIRCH RUN

LANDRY, JOHN, 87, USN/WWII

SCHALLER, HAROLD C., 90, USA/WWII

7546-DEARBORN HEIGHTS

BACA, EUGENE, 88, USN/WWII

BACA, EUGENE, 88, USN/WWII

BRANADINI, ALBERT, 92, USA/WWII

LAPSHAN, STEPHEN, 80, USN/KOREA

MITCHELL, OCIE, USA/KOREA

PERNAK, JOHN, 86, USA/WWII

PLACIDO, JOSEPH, USA/WWII

7804-POSEN

SMIGELSKI, HARRY N., 91, USA/WWII

7979-EVART

HINKLEY, VIVIAN, 90, USN/WWII

8135-BARTON CITYCRANDALL, FRANK W., 78, USA/
WWII/KOREA/VIETNAM**8275-AU GRES**

BLAKLEY, HAROLD M., 77, USA/WWII

BRAMAN, RANDALL P., 83, USA/WWII

ERHARDT, WILLIAM B., 76, USMC/WWII

REINHARDT, EARL, 80, USA/KOREA

STEWART, ALVIN, 84, USA/WWII

8372-ENGADINE

CRIPPIN, ALBERT, 88, USA/WWII

DOHMEN, RICHARD, 91, USN/WWII

FENELEY, GENE K., 81, USAF/
VIETNAM

THEUT, GEORGE, 85, USN/WWII

8846-MUSKEGON

BOURDON, RICHARD N., 86, USA/WWII

CUTLER, ROBERT J., 85, USN/WWII

GRIMARD, JAMES V., 87, USN/WWII

HOPMA, OTTO, 91, USA/WWII

LAMBERT, THERESE M., 87, USA/
KOREA

OKLAND, DOUGLAS, USA/KOREA

SWANSON, FRANK E., 85, USA/WWII

9023-BRIMLEYLAMOREAUX, CLAYTON, 83, USA/
KOREA**9084-WAKEFIELD**

DUMS, WILFRED, 67, USA/VIETNAM

9293-EASTPOINTE

BROWN, TEDDY J., 81, USA/KOREA

PARADOWSKI, HENRY, 90, USN/
WWII**9568-ROMULUS**

JACOBS, MICHAEL, 62, USA/VIETNAM

10329-MANCHESTERBRANNOCK, WILLIAM, 48, USMC/
KOREA**10770-LEROY**

FEDEWA, WAYNE, 84, USA/WWII

SHAFTO, DONALD, USA/WWII

VANDERBOSCH, JOHN L., 84, USA/
WWII**10912-BLISSFIELD**

VADER, GARRY W., 85, USA/WWII

GLOWICKI, JOHN J. JR., 88, USA/WWII

Auxiliary TAPS

607-ROGERS CITY

CLENDENIN, FLORENCE

GANSKE, BERNADINE

701-LANSING

BEDELL, ALMEHDA

1008-WATERFORD

ADAMS, STELLA

1075-HARRISON

GORKA, YVONNE G.

SMITH, ANDREA

1136-WYANDOTTE

HOLODY, FRANCES

1137-BENTON HARBOR

SCHAENFELD, BETTY

1146-ST CLAIR SHORES

CHAMBERS, SUN

CLARK, DOROTHY

FROMHOTZ, DOLORES

GAJOS, JULIE

KINSCH, DELORES

KNOTH, JANE

MERICHKO, SEMONE

MITCHELL, KATHY

SCHMIDT, EVELYN

SZEPIETOWSKI, IRENE

TAYLOR, JOSEPHINE

TREMONTI, ROSE MARY

VITALE, MICHELLE

1355-STURGIS

MILLIMAN, KRISTINE

1407-FERNDAL

KOTALREK, JUNE

PACZKOWSKI, KATHRYN

1584-ADRIAN

CHEESBRO, MILDRED

HASTINGS, DORIS

1794-MT. CLEMENS

FELTON, EMMA

1888-TRENTON

LUSK JOYCE

2051-HARBOR SPRINGS

KORTMAN, CAROL

2269-WIXOM

DEERING, PRICILLA

2272-DURAND

MCDANIELD, HELEN

2326-GRAND HAVEN

BEEKMAN, ROBERTA

BENNINK, ELIZABETH

FRICKMAN, BARBARA

KREFT, LOIS

2356-HILLMAN

NICHOLAS, JEANNETTE

2406-CHARLOTTE

MORRISON, CATHY

2496-ALPENA

MODRAK, FRANCES, 96

SCOTT, EDITH, 85

SOLTYSIAK, PEARL, 76

WEISE, FLORENCE, 86

2780-TRAVERSE CITY

CADMUS, DORIS

MESSINA, GLORIA

2891-CRYSTAL FALLS

BALL, REBECCA

SNODIE, JANNETT

2964-REED CITY

BRYAN, LILLIAN

WEINRICH, JUNE

3030-OTSEGO

BAUMGARTNER, BETTIE

DENDEL, IRENE

HADDEN, AGNES

HAESSIG, GERTRUDE

3033-MT. PLEASANT

DUNCAN, EILENE

FABER, ALICE

GRACE, JOANN

3039-FARWELL

EISENHAEUER, JANE

3087-FLINT

SAUCIER, LINDA

3243-FENTON

SIMS, ELSIE, 77

SMITH, RUTH, 82

3727-HOLT

REY, MARIANNE

3733-FOWLER

GLINKE, RUTH

LA FAVE, PAULINE

STEWART, WINNIFRED

3753-PINCONNING

BUCKLEY, LENORA

COYLE, MAE

KRUGER, JOYCE

KRUPA, UNA

MALONEY, MARION

SALOIS, VICKIE

STEIN, FLORENCE

3791-FLINT

CLAIRBORNE, DICEY, 90

3925-ERIE

KNAKIEWICZ, LILLIAN

4005-CORUNNA

HAGAN, MARY LOU, 65

SCHULTZ, MILDRED, 84

SHERMAN, LENA, 90

VOORHIES, CAROLINE, 86

4087-DAVISON

KOWALSKI, VIVIAN

4090-PORTLAND

HENDEE, BARBARA

4159-ROSCOMMON

BOHRER, RITA

PITCHER, DELORES

SHOEMAKER, BEVERLY

TYLER, JOANN

4162-HAMTRAMCK

MUCZYNSKI, JUNE

4187-TECUMSEH

COUTURE, RUTH, 86

4357-BRIGHTON

MARSHALL, MARY

4553-DETROIT

DOLSON, TERRY

4644-WESTLAND

TUTRO, HELEN

5065-SHERIDAN

GOODENOUGH, VELMA

REEDER, FRANCES

5315-BALDWIN

NORTON, REBECCA R.

5319-ATHENS

BOYER, SELINA JANE

BUDD, BETTY JUNE

5602-SIX LAKES

CUMMINS, PHYLLIS

PHELPS, ARLENE

WATTS, VERLENE

5670-GWINN

MATTSON, ANNA, 86

5855-PORTAGE

DAVIDSON, BETTY

ELY, SARAH

HOMAN, ANNAMAE

5857-ONAWAY

OPALEWSKI, GERALDINE

6056-SPRINGPORT

YAHNKA, NANCY, 76

6165-SOUTH RANGE

HAYRYNEN, MARGARET

RINTALA, LAVERNE

TAUCHER, ROSE MARIE

ZAGER, AGNES

6464-FOWLerville

KUCH, CAROL

6507-CHASSELL

ROSE, CLARA

6950-KAWKAWLIN

HOFMIESTER, MARGARET

PIOTROWSKI, EVELYN

7302-HEMLOCK

WINCHELL, JEAN

7303-GLADWIN

BRONIKOWSKI, LORRAINE

EATON, BETTY

7435-HALE

THOMPSON, MILDRED

7542-BIRCH RUN

SCHMITZER, VALERIE

7546-DEARBORN HEIGHTS

HAMMERSCHMIDT, VIRGINIA

7573-NEW BALTIMORE

HAZEL, YVONNE

7581-WAYLAND

SUHOVSKY, CHRISTINE

7646-PELKIE

HUHTALA, HILJA

8945-COVINGTON

HENDRICKSON, EMILY, 86

9023-BRIMLEY

EISILIONES, LAUREN

9084-WAKEFIELD

MORRISONMYRTLE

VITTONI, CHARLOTTE

9411-HOMER

HOGGATT, BERYL

9455-OWOSSO

MCCONNELL, MILDRED

MOYER, TINA

15023-AT LARGE

DEAN, JANET

God Bless Our Troops

VFW Salutes New GI Bill Protections

Executive Order better protects military and veterans' communities from predatory practices

April 27, 2012 – WASHINGTON – The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is saluting President Obama for signing an Executive Order today to better protect the military and veterans' communities from the predatory recruiting and financial loan practices of some colleges who fail to deliver on their educational promises.

The VFW-supported Post-9/11 GI Bill became law in June 2008, but since then there have been reports of aggressive and deceptive targeting of service members, veterans and their families by educational institutions, particularly for-profit career colleges, according to the White House. Some institutions, for example, recruit veterans with serious brain injuries and emotional vulnerabilities without providing academic support and counseling; they encourage service members, veterans and their families to take out costly institutional loans instead of first recommending less expensive federal student aid; and they engage in misleading

recruiting practices on military installations, and do not disclose the institution's graduation rate.

"The VFW is big on education, but we are even bigger on the proper administration and oversight of a new GI Bill we fought for 10 years to get enacted," said Richard L. DeNoyer, National Commander of the 2 million-member VFW and its Auxiliaries.

"The VFW has worked very hard to get these protections created, and the president's Executive Order will go far to crack down on the predatory recruiting practices and poor performance of all schools who participate in the Post-9/11 GI Bill, but our fight isn't over," he said.

"Our veterans are America's future leaders, and what they expect is a solid education that is marketable and relevant to today's environment. The VFW looks to the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense and Education to quickly implement the requirements of the Executive Order."

leave your MARK for the future-
become a LEGACY LIFE member



VFW Life Members can now take the next step in ensuring veterans a better tomorrow by becoming a Legacy Life Member today. Be remembered for your service as a veteran and VFW member.

It's easy to get started:

- Choose from Gold, Silver or Bronze, each with its own prestigious benefits.
- Gold \$1,200
- Silver \$800
- Bronze \$400
- Legacy is tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed.
- Use the installment plan option to make quarterly payments.

For more information call 1.800.963.3180.





Lest We Forget
269-925-7176
dealsbro@sbcglobal.net
www.lestweforgetusa.org

Re-enactment Directors:
WWII Historical Re-enactors Society
317-788-1836
sheets@netdirect.net

- ♦ Easy access off I-94
- ♦ Distance from ...
- Chicago 1 1/2 hrs
- Holland 1 hr
- Kalamazoo 1 hr
- Grand Rapids 1 1/2 hrs
- Frankenmuth 3 1/2 hrs
- Detroit 3 1/2 hrs
- Indianapolis 3 1/2 hrs
- Toledo 3 hrs

St. Joseph & Benton Harbor, Michigan

LEST WE FORGET WW II RE-ENACTMENT



This special event returns in 2012. Created by LEST WE FORGET and performed by re-enactors from all over the country, they teach us that Freedom Isn't Free.

JUNE 29 - JULY 1, 2012

- ♦ WWII Play "Make It Home" - directed by Larry Nielsen, June 21-23, (site to be determined) weekend prior to main event weekend
- ♦ Community Flag Week - residents asked to fly their flag June 24-July 1
- ♦ Ducks, Gators & Higgins Practice - Friday afternoon. Gator rides available - \$10.
- ♦ Leap Dog Parachute Team lands American Flag on Tiscornia Beach to commence landings. Jumps will follow at Airport.
- ♦ Aircraft from Yankee Air Force (B-17, B-25 and C-47) on display & available for rides
- ♦ Troops Arrive and Set-Up Camp - Friday at the Airport
- ♦ Line of Flags at the Airport
- ♦ American Huey Medevac 369 Flights for Huey 369 members ... memberships available
- ♦ War Birds Aerial Display (Saturday & Sunday)
- ♦ Speakers, Medal of Honor Recipients
- ♦ Chow Hall Food - Public invited to eat with the troops. Pancake breakfast 7am-noon. Lunch & dinner provided by vendors.
- ♦ WWII Flame-Thrower Demos by David Michael & Hershel "Woody" Williams
- ♦ Rides in Korean Bell (bubble) H13 Sioux Helicopter \$30






A WORLD AT WAR . . .

- ♦ European & Pacific Landing Invasions at Tiscornia Beach - Begin with parachute drop and aerial assault on the beach with pyrotechnic effects. European Landing (Saturday 0930 hrs) followed by Pacific Landing attack (approx. 1200 hrs).
- ♦ Iwo Jima Flag Raising (Saturday) witnessed by Hershel "Woody" Williams, Iwo Jima MOH recipient
- ♦ Veterans' Stories - Listen to stories of those who lived through it
- ♦ Ground Attacks - Saturday 1500 hrs, (Sunday 1300 hrs) at the Airport
- ♦ Military Vehicles & Cars from the 30s & 40s on Display co-sponsored by SW MI Car Collectors and Lest We Forget
- ♦ Vehicle Parade Friday evening through Benton Harbor & St. Joe
- ♦ USO-style Hangar Dance - Music from the 40s. Big Band music, entertainment and food from the Canteen. Fiskars Hangar, Saturday, 2000-2300 hrs.
- ♦ Church Service in Camp - Led by Medal of Honor Recipient Hershel "Woody" Williams, Sunday 0900 hrs
- ♦ Military Equipment Demonstrations Saturday & Sunday
- ♦ 20th Century Military Museum returns with equipment displays
- ♦ Docents - Meet "Eisenhower," "Patton," "MacArthur" and "Rosie the Riveter"
- ♦ Master Modeler Jerry Lindquist returns with his military dioramas
- ♦ Break Camp - Sunday 1500 hrs
- ♦ WWII Re-enactment will be directed by the WWII Historical Re-enactor's Society (sheets@netdirect.net)

All times are approximate, to be finalized closer to event. Activities are subject to change.






SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN TOURIST COUNCIL
www.swmichigan.org

Hotels & Motels

Baymont Inn
Boulevard Inn
Candlewood Suites
Comfort Suites, Benton Harbor
Comfort Suites, Stevensville
Courtyard by Marriott
Days Inn & Suites
The Harbor Grand, New Buffalo
Hampton Inn
Holiday Inn Express, Benton Harbor
Holiday Inn Express, St. Joseph
Howard Johnson
Knights Inn
Motel 6
Red Roof Inn
Silver Beach Hotel
Super 8



Support Our Troops

Lynn Patterson
Candidate for
Department of Michigan
Department Quartermaster
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:
District 9
David A. Huhn VFW Post 12082
Her husband and family

Harry "Les" Croyle
Candidate for
Department of Michigan
Department Jr. Vice Commander
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:
District 5
Cpl Richard W. Menge
VFW Post 6756
His wife and family

Leonard "Lenny" Milewski
Candidate for
Department of Michigan
Department Jr. Vice Commander
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:
District 4
City of Wyandotte VFW Post 1136
His wife and family

Billy G. Stancroff
Candidate for Department of
Michigan
Department Jr. Vice Commander
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:
District 12
Lt. Clement F. Dereziński VFW Post 7729
His family

John E. dePierre II
Candidate for
Department of Michigan
Department Judge Advocate
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:
Celery City Post 6248
His wife and family

Andy Conklin
Re-Elect for Department of
Michigan
Judge Advocate
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:
District 7
His Wife and family

Larry Coleman
Candidate for
Department of Michigan
Department Surgeon
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:
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City of Trenton VFW Post 1888
His wife and family



Jack Pray
Candidate for
Department of Michigan
National C of A Member
2012-2014



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His wife and family

Lloyd Putman II
Candidate for
Department of Michigan
National C of A Member
2012-2014



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His wife and family

Bonnie Pray
Candidate for Department Guard
2012-2013



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Ladies Auxiliary 3243
Her husband and family

Sandy Medos
Candidate for Department Guard
2012-2013



Endorsed and supported by:
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Ladies Auxiliary 4422
Her husband and family

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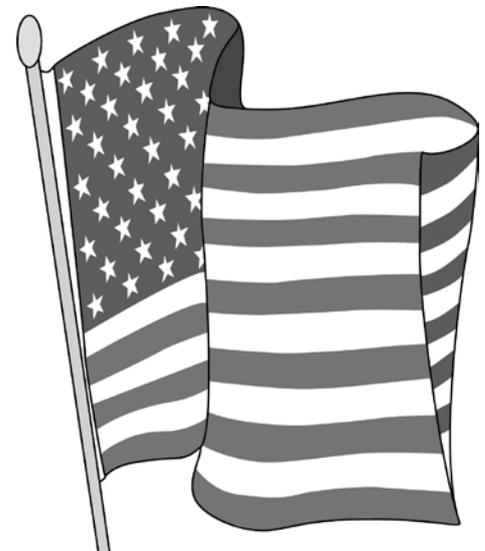
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VFW



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Every Hero Needs a Hero

The VFW knows that when many of our defenders return from battle they'll still have to fight. Fight for quality medical care. Fight for fair and timely benefits. Fight to ensure their spouses and children will be cared for, always.

Thankfully, they're never alone. They have VFW service officers on their side.

Please support the National Veterans Service. Your generosity helps so many veterans right here in our state.

You never know when you—or your closest comrades—might need a hero on your side.

Helping our Heroes



STATE COMMANDER

Now is the time to elect our new Post officers and look forward to the 2012-2013 VFW year. As you know, the State Convention is moved up a couple of weeks to start June 7, 2012. Please remember, in order to vote at the State Convention, your Post must be in good standing. That means that current Post Commanders and Post Quartermasters shall insure that the new election report is into the Department and National HQ and that all required Post audits have been submitted. Right now there is a large number of Posts behind on at least one audit and some behind on two. Don't forget to pay your delegate fees. Every year we have to sit at Convention while the Adjutant/Quartermaster reads a long list of Posts that cannot vote because one of these required items is not in on time.

Statewide, at the end of March, the Department was just short of 95% in membership. Comrades, we have all of April, May and the first week of June to reach our goal of 100%. At last year's end the number was 58,108. Why is this important? I feel we need to stop the bleeding of membership and hold our own for a change. The larger our membership, the stronger voice we have when we fight for our veterans, active duty troops and their families.

Those of you that have not had the chance to visit Camp Trotter should take the time to check it out. This spring has seen the renovation of the kitchen with the addition of a commercial dishwasher, the teardown of the director's cottage, and the start of the new director's in Troy.



Jack Pray
State Commander

cottage with a mid-May expected completion date. The camp has really come a long way in the last two years. Our camp is available for use by our members and their families when the children are not there. Put the address for Camp Trotter for Children into your GPS and take a road trip to see what your donations have done. The Camp is at 5566 86th Street, Newaygo, MI 49337. Unlike the National Home for Children in Eaton Rapids, the camp is owned and operated by the Department of Michigan and all its members.

In closing I would like to thank all of you for your confidence in me and let you know that even though the job of State Commander takes a lot of time and effort, I will tell you that at the end of the day it is an honor and a privilege to be able to serve this great veterans organization.

Even though as Commander, you are called upon to do some things that you don't want to, it usually ends up being for the overall good of the membership. I do hope to see all of you at the State Convention in Troy.

Support Our Troops