

CANNON NEWS

Francis Cannon VFW Post 7589
Manassas, Virginia
February 2016



Jerry Martin of VFW Post 7589 was chosen as "Volunteer of the Year" by the Inter-Service Club Council of Greater Manassas. Pictured are Jerry and wife Sandy after the ceremony.
Photo by Pete MacLeod

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CANNON NEWS—2015 National VFW Publications Silver Award
2013, 2014 and 2015 Clair B. Poff Public Relations Award for
Most Outstanding Post Publication/Newsletter, VFW Department of Virginia

Commander's Message

Pete MacLeod



I stepped through the back door of the VFW Post 7589 Hall in late September of 2001 and I knew no one. The Post and Ladies Auxiliary was having some kind of a Fall picnic. I had just started going to meetings at the Post. As most newcomers do, I felt really uncomfortable. Suddenly a strong female voice broke through: "Are you looking for something to do?" It was my introduction to Nancy Dazzo.

Nancy very quickly had me very busy and you know something? I felt better and more at home. Nancy was in charge of so many events at Post 7589 over the years as a leader and member of the Auxiliary. From Bingo to Buddy Poppies I doubt there was an Auxiliary member or comrade for that matter who ever worked any harder over a longer period of time.

We all feel sad about Nancy's recent passing and the passing a few years ago of her husband Joe. Those are two people you never replace. There are two memories I will always have of this power couple.

One night I showed up late for Bingo setup and found Joe, nearly 90 years old at the time, proudly standing there surveying a total Bingo setup he had just completed alone! He said he couldn't wait any longer and did it himself. How a guy his age lifted those heavy tables by himself, I will never know. And when Joe did a Bingo setup, those tables were set in place correctly to the inch.

The memory I will have of Nancy goes back just a few months. Current Auxiliary President Mary Corkhill was away and suggested I give Nancy a ride to the annual evening POW/MIA ceremony at the American Legion Post 10. But when I called, Nancy proudly told me she could drive herself. I will never forget that night how radiant and confident Nancy looked as she sat at a table doing her thing and talking with everyone. She was still very much in charge. A short time later she became ill but on that night, it was vintage Nancy. Nancy and Joe are two shining examples of the Greatest Generation and they both will continue to be missed by all who knew them.

Is it possible to be prouder of being a member of VFW Post 7589 then I was on the evening of January 21 at the Manassas Church of the Brethren auditorium? On that night Comrade and former Post Commander Jerry Martin was chosen as Volunteer of the Year by the Inter-Service Club Council of Greater Manassas. Jerry had to beat out some tough competition. There were seven other people nominated for the honor. But the organization members were so impressed by Jerry's continuous work helping fellow veterans and participating in veteran's organizations that he took home the top prize. How many times have you seen Jerry accompanying a World War Two veteran to an event? How many times have you seen his name listed on a committee planning a parade or an organization searching for remains of U.S. combat veterans on the Pacific islands? Well, apparently other people have noticed and thanks to Post Adjutant/Historian Paul Chase, who made the nomination, Jerry received long overdue recognition. Former Post Commander Ron Knowles and I were there and happy to see Jerry and his wife Sandy in the spotlight.

It was called by many the most successful "Day on the Hill" ever. On Thursday, January 14 members of the Virginia VFW made in person visits to delegates and state senators at the statehouse in Richmond pushing a legislative agenda that will help veterans. Ron Link, Rick Raskin and myself represented Post 7589. Former state commanders Dan Boyer and Doc Crouch ran a smooth show, splitting the groups into smaller groups so we could get more done.

It's not easy meeting all these delegates and having to talk on a series of issues you may not know well. It is a good experience and we all were treated to a series of messages in the afternoon by the governor and various state officials and a moving battlefield experience told by delegate and Iraq War veteran Scott W. Taylor, from the 85th district. You could hear a pin drop as Taylor, a former Navy Seal, told of clearing the enemy from a building in Iraq and then his wounding and very close brush with death.

Why was it billed as such a successful day? We got to see more delegates, face to face, then ever before and we received more support for VFW issues than ever before. Day on the Hill is an experience every VFW member should go through. I strongly urge you to take part next year if you possibly can. It costs nothing except your time.

Auxiliary President



I want to thank all the members of our Post and Auxiliary who attended the Memorial for Past Auxiliary President Nancy Dazzo on January 30th at the American Legion. The VFW and the American Legion Auxiliaries, along with family and friends, came together to bid a fond farewell and to celebrate

her life. We will miss her terribly. We also wish to send out our condolences to Ms. Cookie Cullen, Auxiliary Chaplain, for the loss of her husband on January 1, 2016. Both families are in our prayers.

In January, we had the Department Winter Conference in Williamsburg, VA. There were several awards given out from the different Department Chairmen. Congratulations to the members of 7589 for placing 2nd from the Historian Chairman for the number of reports submitted. We also received our new charter from National. With information from the members, it is an honor to have Ron Knowles do the framing. He will have it completed by the time the National President visits our Post. During the banquet, the recipients of Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen read their essays. The Department VOD recipient was from 3103 (Fredericksburg) in the 8th District. I would like to thank Francine Filippone and Janet Raskin for your attendance at the Conference.

There are several events scheduled for February. First is **Valentine's Day** on February 14th, the Mid-Year Conference in The Dominican Republic on February 9-14th, and the 8th District meeting on February 19th at Southern Fauquier Post 7728. Lunch will be served at noon with the meeting starting at 1:00pm. The VFW Auxiliary is honored to host a dinner for the National President Francisca Guilford's visit on February 23rd. The event will start at 5:30pm until 7:30pm when everyone will leave 7589 and travel to 1503 for dessert. We have been planning for her visit for the past several months. Please pray for nice weather. Also, the 2016 National Legislative Conference will be from February 28th - March 3rd. (Part of this event is to honor the Voice of Democracy from all Departments.)

Just a reminder of the upcoming contest deadline, February 15th, for the Auxiliary's Continuing Education Scholarship and Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Teacher Award. The Auxiliary is also working on the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest for the high school students. That deadline is **March 31, 2016**. Since the Auxiliary has been participating in these contests, we have been honored to have several entries placed in the Department. If you know of any high school or home schooled students who would like to participate in this contest, please let any Auxiliary member know or you can contact me at 703/361-8950 or mcorkhill@comcast.net.

We want to thank Ginger Harvey for the excellent job she did as the Wreaths Across America chairman. With the assistance of several corporations and private individuals, we exceeded our

goal from last year. Well done Ginger. If you know of any corporations that fly the US Flag, please let us know. We would like to give them a certificate. Our Auxiliary will be having a Yard Sale in May. The date has not been set yet but I wanted you to know so if you wish to do a little cleaning and want to get rid of your unwanted items, please consider donating them to the Auxiliary Yard Sale. We will even pick up your items.

Just an advance notice. In April we will be electing new officers for the 2016-2017 Auxiliary year. Please consider taking an office so we can continue to support our Veterans. I want to thank everyone for such a wonderful job you are doing. You all are **Unbelievable**.

I want to thank everyone for the Campbell Soup labels. They have been forwarded to the National Home for Children to assist in purchasing another bus. Please drop any labels off at the Post or give them to any Post or Auxiliary member. Thank you in advance.

For any individuals or family members who are ill or hospitalized, **PLEASE** keep them in your prayers.

Respectfully,

Mary Corkhill
Auxiliary President





Celebration Time

WE NEED YOUR HELP
To Raise Funds
for
Dee when
she is our
National President

**We are in prep-mode to Host a National Event for
Our First National President from Virginia. It will be Huge!**

Dee Guillory

ANY MEMBER, AUXILIARY, POST OR DISTRICT THAT MAKES A \$50 OR MORE DONATION BY 4-30-2016, WILL RECEIVE A SPECIAL CERTIFICATE AT JUNE 2016 CONVENTION AND YOUR NAME WILL GO IN A DRAWING FOR \$25.00.

Please make your check Payable to Ladies Auxiliary VFW, VA & send your check to our Department Treasurer Debbie Martin
539 Westwood Drive, Ruckersville, VA 22968-3676
Make sure your check is earmarked "Dee's Celebration"

Any Questions or Suggestions for Fundraisers, Contact:
Ellen Stogsdill, 757-777-6275
Patricia Jurgensen, 703-754-1244
Laine Beckwith, 757-722-0235
Mary Corkhill, 703-361-8950



NATIONAL PRESIDENT FRANCESCA'S VISIT TO VIRGINIA

FEBRUARY 21 – 24, 2016

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US!!!

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS TO THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT CAN BE DONE AT EACH AUXILIARY

2/21/2016

Arrives Norfolk International Airport – 9:35 pm
Hotel: Holiday Inn Norfolk Airport
570 N. Military Highway
Norfolk, VA 2350
757-213-2231

PLAN FOR FUN, FOOD AND A CHANCE TO MEET OUR NATIONAL PRESIDENT!!!

2/22/2016

Breakfast: Hosted by Auxiliary 392 – 9:00 am
Oceana NAS/Flame of Hope and Virginia Legends Walk
RSVP: Coleen Lewis - 757-748-6231
Lunch: Hosted by Auxiliary 4809 – 12:00 pm
Darden's Country Store & Smokehouse
Dinner: Hosted by Auxiliary 8545 – 5:00 pm
RSVP: Suzann Pittman - 757-880-5514

2/23/16

Breakfast: Hosted by Auxiliary 3219 – 9:00 am
RSVP: Marlena Adams – 757 - 771-3484
Tour of Mariner's Museum
Lunch: Hosted by Auxiliary 9808
RSVP: Kim Boheme – 804-402-8651
Shopping at Dress Barn
Dinner: Hosted by Auxiliary 7589
RSVP: Mary Corkhill – 703-361-8950

Want to present a gift? Remember everything has to be shipped! A Dress Barn Gift Certificate would be great! She loves Dress Barn and they don't have one in Alaska!!

Dessert: Hosted by Auxiliary 1503

2/24/16

Drive Francesa to DC for Legislative Conference

Youth News & Notes

Pete MacLeod

Teaching school is a tough job. There is a TV commercial running now which just begins to show the complexity and challenge of teaching five classes of about 30 students each every day. In it artificial intelligence attempts to answer every question a teacher could ask except the most important one: "How to keep the kids quiet!" Ask anyone who has ever attempted fulltime teaching and they will tell you it is the toughest job they've ever had. I have heard many say after speaking to one class for 45 minutes: "Aw that wasn't so bad." Now try it four more times that day and then start over the next day until you reach a full school year! Coming up with new ideas, interesting ways of presenting things so you won't bore your audience to death and then there is that thing about keeping everyone quiet! Oh yes. There is the myth about the short working hours. That myth keeps being told by people who have never come home after a full day of teaching to be greeted by 150 papers to correct and lesson plans to be made out for the next day. Still there are many who fall in love with the profession and wouldn't do anything else. And we all remember dedicated teachers we had who inspired us and whose classes we will never forget.

Teachers, especially in the K-12 area don't always get the credit they deserve and the pay, while better than it used to be, is still not going to make you rich. That is why there are awards like the VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award. The VFW and the Auxiliary annually recognize top classroom teachers in three categories: Grades K-5, 6-8 and 9-12. When you look for an outstanding teacher, keep in mind the VFW/Auxiliary criteria for what that teacher does in his or her classroom: civic responsibility, patriotism, community volunteer projects, inviting veterans into the classroom, special projects that emphasize democratic values and beliefs, and finally a teacher who displays joy and satisfaction in working with young people.

If you are aware of such a teacher, please enter him or her in our VFW/Auxiliary Teacher of the Year program. The deadline for entries is Feb. 15, 2016. All you have to do is write why that teacher deserves the award in 350 words or less and submit it to VFW Post 7589. Later, to compete at the District level, the teacher will need a one page resume, some documentation of awards or honors they have received and a head and shoulders photo. While there is a chance for glory at the District, State and even National level, many times the most meaningful recognition is right here in Manassas at Post 7589. March 7, before the regu-

lar Post 7589 and Auxiliary general membership meetings, we will present certificates and cash awards to each of our chosen teachers. VFW Teacher of the Year applications are available from any member of the Post 7589/Auxiliary Youth Committee. The will also be stacked on the lunch counter in the Post and can be printed from the VFW National website at www.vfw.org.

Our District 8 Youth essay winners will be honored at the District meeting on Saturday, Feb. 20 at 1:00 pm at Southern Fauquier VFW Post 7728, located in Morrisville at the intersection of U.S. 17 at Rt. 836. The list of 2015-2016 District winners are:

Voice of Democracy – "My Vision for America"

- First Place: George P. Tryfiates, Post 3103
- Second Place: Brendan Rogers, Post 7589
- Third Place: Shane M. Rice, Post 9835

Patriot's Pen – "What Freedom Means to Me"

- First Place – Sebastien Cotto, Post 7589
- Second Place – Peter Nosal, Post 9835
- Third Place – Juliette C. Orr, Post 7589

We have one more deadline: March 31, 2016 for entries in the Auxiliary Patriotic Art Awards. See Auxiliary President Mary Corkhill or any Youth Committee member for an application. Call me for more information on any of these contests, 703 220-4545.

PATRIOT'S PEN AND VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

The new essay contest themes for 2016-2017 are as follows:

Voice of Democracy **"MY RESPONSIBILITY TO AMERICA"**

Patriot's Pen **"THE AMERICA I BELIEVE IN"**

Although the new entry forms should be up on the VFW national websites no later than March 1, 2016, those sites have already been updated with the new 2016-17 themes. The student entry deadline for 2016-2017 will be November 1, 2016 for both contests.

From the Trenches

Paul Chase



I have tried hard to be non-political in my articles and will continue to do so. This year's upcoming national elections will be more critical than in decades. Radical Islam has declared war on Western values and our way of life. Nearly all the major political candidates have proposed a more "muscular" foreign policy for the Nation to deal with the threat. I have no quarrel with that. We must face reality and declare we are in a state of war. We should not try to win it on the backs of our service men and women by more and more deployments and shorter "dwell" time and longer hours. Smart investments and spending need to be made to achieve victory. I don't see that in any of the campaign rhetoric from any of the candidates. More deficit spending is immoral in my mind. Making our grandchildren pay for our reckless spending is not acceptable to me. At the current rate of spending by 2020 one third of our budget will go to interest on the debt.

Just stating the problem is not constructive on my part. A broad based tax increase would not be acceptable to the American electorate and in my opinion is not necessary. I propose a two part solution:

(1) Government, corporate and personal accountability is a must!

Only when individuals, corporations and government public servants are held accountable will deterrence take effect. Why can't the media publicly disclose what specific individuals are held accountable for their corruption, ineptitude, wasteful spending and incompetence? How about some jail time, firings and demotions? Slap on the wrist fines made in the face of willful violations of the law are the norm. That needs to stop. Here's an example: The government spent \$1 billion to reform a major administrative program and produced just one form! What government officials were in charge of this outrage? What contractors enriched themselves from this action?

(2) Government spending must be NEEDS based not JOBS based.

Right now government spending, especially defense spending is predicated on creation of jobs not on meeting specific needs. What possible future national threat is there to justify spending billions on amphibious attack craft? Unlike past wars beaches can now be neutralized with stand-off weapons and ships launching amphibious craft will be very vulnerable.

The F-35 is another example. When we already have the new world class F-22 do we need to spend 1.5 TRILLION dollars on a new fighter that has only marginal increased capabilities over the F-16 and Super Hornet? The 2015 average cost of a single F-35 is 250 million dollars, multiple times over the projected costs. Contractors have subcontracted in all 50 states to spread the jobs wealth and thus prevent any one state from making objections. A single use helmet (one that can only be worn by a

specific pilot) for a F-35 is \$400,000 which is four times the cost of a current helmet. Programs like the F-35 have become "Too Big to Fail". The costs of the F-35 to the Air Force are so burdensome it is trying to retire the A-10 which has proven capability against ISIS. Do we need stealth capability to defeat ISIS? The honest answer is not now or ever.

The depressing thing is that none of the current political candidates propose anything like these solutions.

Spotlight on Ron Knowles



This month's Spotlight Article is on another distinguished and accomplished member of Post 7589, Ronald Knowles. There is hardly enough space here to tell the whole story of his accomplishments and contributions to our community.

He enlisted in the Army from his home town of Wichita, Kansas in 1957. Based on his excellence in the Army Engineering School he was quickly selected and assigned to the Army White House Signal Agency in July 1958. In 1962 it became the White House Communications Agency (WHCA) and is probably one of the most select assignments anyone in uniform can ever have. The WHCA is hard to get into and even harder to get out of as evidenced that Ron eventually served 17 1/2 years there. From 1967-1968 in Vietnam as NCOIC, of the Engineering and Plans Section with the 18th Engineer BDE. He retired from the Army in 1977 in the grade of Master Sergeant (E-8).

He is a Life Member of the VFW, DAV, American Legion and Vietnam Veterans of America, all of which are the beneficiaries of his enormous energy and leadership skills. He has served as Post 7589 Chaplain, Adjutant, Junior and Senior Vice Commander, Commander and Trustee. In all of these positions he demonstrated exceptional professionalism and dedication. As Post Commander he led the post to All State Honors. In addition to the above he served on the Manassas Veterans Parade Day Committee from its start to 2014.

He has 57 years of award winning service with Boy Scouts of America in a variety of senior leadership positions, including as a member of the VFW National Scout Team. He currently serves on the BSA-Bull Run District Committee and Troop 670 Committee. The BSA is a superb character building organization and Ron has been an "Impact Player" for decades with this superb organization.

It is hard to believe he had the time, but he founded his own small business, Knowles Hobbies Unlimited in 1970 and Knowles Custom Creations, Inc. in 1990. Ron has been a PPFA-certified Picture Framer since October 1989. He is also a devout member of the Baha'i World Faith and father of three grown children.

Ron, as a Veteran and Community Activist you make us all proud. We are all blessed to be recipients of your dedication and talents.

On the Wounded Warrior Project

By Joel Chase

Everyone wants to support American veterans - even those who were previously scorned for serving in Vietnam. So when you hear about all the "great work" being done by charities such as the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), it is hard to resist opening your wallet to support these organizations. However, who/what/where are your donations actually supporting? Not too many vets in real need it seems.

The following figures are reported from the WWP tax forms for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Those forms are hyperlinked so you may want to view them for yourself.

[Wounded Warrior Project IRS Form 990](#)

So where did all the money go? For starters, let us take a look at

	2012 -2013	2013 - 2014
Revenue	\$234,682,943	\$342,066,114
Expenses	\$158,073,943	\$248,005,493
Total Profit	\$76,609,000	\$94,060,675
Total amount to Organizations	\$16,849,420	\$41,305,308
Total amount to individual veterans	\$853,365	\$804,393

the top three WWP executive individual tax statement salaries. Keep in mind that these figures are before bonuses, retirement packages and insurance.

	2013	2014
Executive Director	\$375,000	\$473,015
Deputy Executive Director	\$337,000	\$369,030
Chief Program Officer	\$218,267	\$262,750

Of the more than 56,000 vets that the WWP claims as "alumni," meaning that they have been registered with the organization, many don't directly engage with WWP, and less than 62 percent of alumni participated in at least one WWP activity or service during the past year. But, according to the internal database, 78.9 percent of "alumni" have been involved with "engagements and interactions" with WWP in the past year. So just who are the ones being served by the WWP?

Thus, my advice is to do your own research as to which charities to open your wallet to. You can check [Charity Navigator](#) or [Charity Watch](#) to see how donations are used.

The opinions expressed above are those of the writer and do not necessarily represent those of Post 7589 or the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

1/27/16: The charity for wounded veterans, the Wounded Warrior Project, is facing accusations of using donor money toward excessive spending on conferences and parties instead of on recovery programs, according to a [CBS News report](#). - Ed.

JANUARY 16, 2016

Department of Virginia VFW endorses Debra Anderson for Quartermaster General



If elected, I will work hard for the members to strengthen our organization. I believe the future lies in attracting and retaining veterans of all conflicts, keeping a sound financial footing, and providing those services and programs that are of value to veterans. We are and can continue to be the premier veterans' organization in the United States.

To date the Departments of Mississippi, Alabama, Arizona and Michigan have also endorsed Debra.



OCCUPY DEMOCRATS

Department of VA to publish VFW directory

The Department of Virginia has partnered with PCI (also known as Publishing Concepts) to produce our new Members Publication. PCI is a company located in Dallas, TX that publishes directories for educational institutions, fraternities, sororities and military organizations across the nation. This project allows Virginia VFW to receive important updates to our database so we know more about our members and how we can better serve you and future members. The email you receive from Kim DeShano is completely legitimate and your response is appreciated. Your participation is totally optional. For FAQ visit <http://vfwva.org/home/pci-membership->

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

IMPORTANT MEMBER VERIFICATION NOW DUE
Please Call 1-877-889-4709 Immediately

Your Personal ID#: [Number]

Dear [Name]

We are asking all Virginia VFW members to contact us to update their member information as part of a comprehensive data verification project. We've assembled the information currently listed in our members' files and now need your assistance to confirm the accuracy of your member data.

Please give Publishing Concepts (PCI) a call so that we may verify your information. PCI is a trusted partner of the Virginia VFW.

We need your help. Please call 1-877-889-4709 (toll-free) to verify the accuracy of the data currently listed on file.

Your prompt assistance is greatly appreciated. Please call the dedicated, toll-free Virginia VFW member data verification line today. For more information about this project, please [Click here](#).

Sincerely,
Kim A. DeShano
Kim DeShano
Adjutant/Quartermaster

▶ ID#[Number]

☎ 1-877-889-4709

🕒 Hours of Operation (CT):
M-F: 7:00 AM - 9:00 PM
Sat: 8:00 AM - 4:45 PM
Sun: 11:00 AM - 4:45 PM

Jerry Martin voted Volunteer of the Year by Greater Manassas ISCC

On January 21 Comrade Jerry Martin was chosen as "Volunteer of the Year" by the Inter-Service Club Council of Greater Manassas.

The banquet and awards ceremony was held at the Church of the Brethren Auditorium in Manassas and was hosted by Boy Scout Troop 670. Jerry was nominated by Historian/Adjutant Paul Chase of Post 7589 who is our representative to the Council.

I was there and was proud to have a comrade get all the richly deserved attention and applause. A salute to Jerry Martin who puts in many untold hours of work on behalf of veterans!

Commander Pete MacLeod



Jerry Martin speaks following his award as ISCC Volunteer of the Year

Service Officer's Report



Our Service Officer program exists to help and serve all veterans here in the Manassas/Prince William area. If you know of a veteran in need please contact us and let us know.

Our number one goal is providing the best service to our veterans and their families.

Please do not hesitate to speak to any of our Veteran Service Officers and find out just what they can do for you! They are myself and :

Stephen Meade 1-703-408-0875

Email: so2@vfw7589.org

Our goal is simple here. We want to take care of all our veterans with the greatest level of service that our resources will allow. Thank you for your service!

If you have any questions please feel free to reach us at our VSO phone line of: 1-703-659-0849 or Email: so@vfw7589.org Thank you.

Steven M. Botello

Post Service Officer
Veteran of Foreign Wars Post # 7589
(Office) 1-703-659-0849
(FX) 1-703-991-0677
Email: SO@vfw7589.org

Ex-Marine Can Wear Medals He Didn't Earn. A Court Calls It Free Speech.

A federal court in California has ruled that a former Marine can wear service medals he did not earn, saying that displaying them was a form of free speech.

The case involving Elven Joe Swisher, an Idaho man who enlisted in the Marines after the Korean War, touched on a sensitive issue that has wound through Congress and the courts, and has been scrutinized by groups dedicated to confirming when people, either motivated by profit or status, claim to be military heroes but are not.

On Monday, the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco ruled that Mr. Swisher, who was honorably discharged from the Marines in 1957, had the right to wear the medals, including the Purple Heart and the Silver Star, even though he had not been awarded them.

It tossed out a previous conviction of Mr. Swisher, saying that iconic symbols, such as flags or other emblems, were intended as a “short cut from mind to mind” when conveying ideas, and that “wearing a medal has no purpose other than to communicate a message.”

The case highlighted a timeline of court actions and laws that have tried to address similar instances, and it has drawn the attention of organizations devoted to keeping battlefield credit where it is due.

There were more than 33,000 deaths in battle and about 100,000 wounded in the Korean War, which ran from 1950 to 1953.

Larry C. Kinard, the national president of the Korean War Veterans Association, refers to himself as “lucky” he did not get the Purple Heart, which is awarded to the wounded or dead. He said it was increasingly important to veterans organizations to confirm the claims of those who say they served or were decorated.

He said bogus claims were an affront to those like his friend, a former Korean War Marine who lost a leg and an eye.

“It is very important that those who wear any kind of decoration earned what they wear,” said Mr. Kinard, who was deployed in an infantry division north of Seoul in 1952. “All the organizations do the best they can within the realm of the privacy act to verify that.”

One of the most extensive treatments on the subject is in the book “Stolen Valor: How the Vietnam Generation Was Robbed of Its Heroes and Its History.” A co-author of the 1998 book, B. G. Burkett, has said he helped expose the fictitious military stories of about 1,800 people.

The website Guardian of Valor, also known as Stolen Valor on Facebook, also tracks and investigates such cases, posting some of them on YouTube.

This week it included portions of a narrative that Mr. Swisher had filed in 2001 when seeking disability payments, in which he wrote that he and about 130 other Marines “came under heavy enemy gunfire” on a hill during a combat mission.

The California court’s judgment this week referred to that narrative, saying that in 2001, more than 40 years after his 1957 discharge, Mr. Swisher filed the disability claim saying he had post-traumatic stress syndrome from serving in the secret combat mission in North Korea.

His narrative as quoted in the court document described a hospital bedside visit from a captain who presented him with a Purple Heart and who said he had earned several other medals and ribbons, the court document said.

In 2004, the government began paying Mr. Swisher’s benefits for post-traumatic stress. But the next year, in an unrelated twist, he wore a Purple Heart during a trial of a man accused of soliciting a murder, apparently to use it to bolster his credibility as a witness.

In 2006, the government stopped making his disability payments after it received information that Mr. Swisher’s claims about earning the medals were fraudulent. In 2007, Mr. Swisher was convicted of violating the Stolen Valor Act, which made it a misdemeanor to falsely claim military accomplishments.

Since then, the Stolen Valor Act has gone through several changes. In 2012, a case that arose from a man who claimed to be a Medal of Honor recipient was addressed by the Supreme Court, which overturned a portion of the act, saying it infringed on free speech. In 2013, Congress removed a provision that made it illegal to wear a medal.

Monday’s court decision set aside Mr. Swisher’s 2007 conviction, which had gone through several motions and appeals, his lawyer, Joseph T. Horras, said. “His conviction could not be overturned just because the statute was amended,” he said.

Mr. Swisher, now in his late 70s, lives in northern Idaho, retired from work that Mr. Horras said made him a “jack-of-all-trades.”

Asked why Mr. Swisher wore medals he did not earn, Mr. Horras said, “There is a narrative that he wrote and that is essentially his position.”

“It was a constitutional matter rather than a factual matter,” Mr. Horras said, referring to the case. “It was regardless of what he was saying, whether someone has the right to wear the medal, whether they earned it or not.”

See proposed Virginia legislation on Page 11 — Ed

Happenings: Day on the Hill 2016



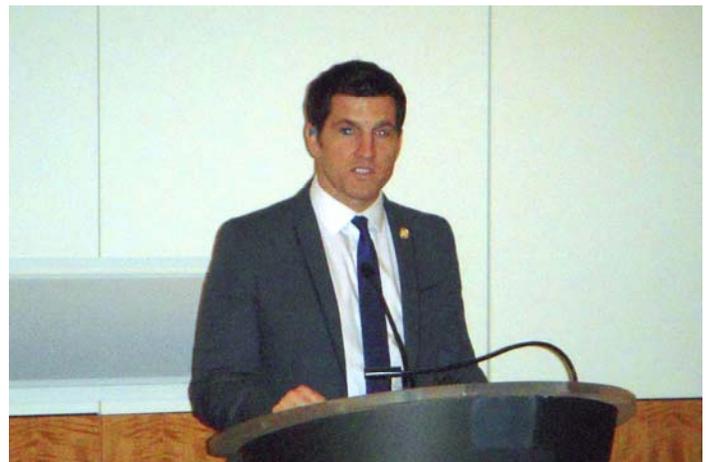
Visiting Delegate Scott w. Taylor of the 85th District



Governor Terry McAuliffe addresses the Joint Leadership Council meeting following our meetings with legislators.



Visiting Delegate Paul E. Krizek of the 44th District



Delegate Scott W. Taylor, a former Navy Seal and Iraq War Veteran speaks about his battlefield experiences.



(Left) Attendees at the Joint Leadership Council meeting following Day on the Hill.

BILL NUMBER	LIS SUMMARY	JLC	HOUSE	COMPANION BILLS
HB 21 - Farrell - Retail Sales and Use Tax; exemption for certain nonprofit veteran entities.	<p>Sales and use tax; exemption for certain nonprofit entities.</p> <p>Provides a sales and use tax exemption for entities exempt from federal income taxation under § 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code, an exemption for veterans organizations that meet certain requirements.</p>	2016-05	Finance	HB63 (Lingamfelter); SB533 (Surovell)
HB 54 - Lingamfelter - False representation of military status; stolen valor, penalty.	<p>False representation of military status; stolen valor; penalty.</p> <p>Provides that any person who, with the intent to obtain money, property, or other tangible benefit, falsely represents himself to be a member or veteran of the military, or a recipient of any decoration or medal created by federal or state law to honor members or veterans of the military, and obtains such money, property, or other tangible benefit is guilty of larceny.</p>		Courts of Justice, Criminal Law Sub-Com	HB950 (Keam)

**Position Paper 2016-05
Veterans Service Organizations and Virginia Tax Designation**

1. **OBJECTIVE:** To classify 501(c)(19) Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) as charitable non-profit organizations under state law. Without this classification, VSOs are vulnerable to being considered as “for profit” entities and therefore subject to local taxes.

2. **BACKGROUND:** VSOs are not identified as charitable nonprofit organizations in the Virginia Tax Code as they are in the Federal Tax Code 501(c)(19). Therefore, VSOs are vulnerable to tax levies by local governments and municipalities. This threatens their financial ability to do charitable work to support Veterans and Virginia communities and in some instances the continued existence of VSO-owned facilities that have had a long- time presence in the community.

3. **DISCUSSION:**
 - a. Many VSOs are organized under 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). This tax code was established by Congress in 1972 to provide special recognition to VSOs for their service to our nation.
 - b. Many states have already followed the example set in 1972 by Congress. This is not the case for the Commonwealth of Virginia.
 - c. By not recognizing VSOs as charitable non-profit organizations, the Code of Virginia permits counties, cities, and towns to tax VSOs organized under IRC 501(c)(19), treating VSOs like “for profit” businesses, when in fact VSOs are organized for fraternal and charitable purposes.
 - d. Local taxes include real estate taxes. One local post, in its current location for over 52 years, has recently been informed that it may owe such taxes.
 - e. Local VSOs often serve as centers of a local community. VSOs sponsor baseball teams, host community meetings at VSO-owned facilities, participate in fundraising drives and community events, and generally make a lasting and meaningful impact on the communities in which they are located.
 - f. Requiring VSOs to pay local taxes on VSO-owned facilities could mean the difference between these VSOs staying in operation, or having to close their doors and cease operations.
 - g. The exemptions provided for 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations should be extended to 501(c)(19) Veterans Service Organizations because of their charitable and fraternal nature, and because of the vital role they serve in Virginia communities.

4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Governor and General Assembly pass legislation to extend to 501(c)(19) Veterans Service Organizations the exemptions provided for 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations.

Repairman fixes family's furnace for free after learning husband is deployed

Bridget Stevens arrived home with her two sons to a very cold house. Her thermostat read 50 degrees, and when she tried to turn it up, the furnace wouldn't kick in. So Stevens got on the phone and called Betlyn Heating and Cooling, a local heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning contractor service.

Stevens spoke with Paul Betlyn, the owner, who coached her through some potential fix-it methods. But nothing seemed to work. Although it was evening (Stevens was even surprised she got an answer), Betlyn said he would visit the residence and fix the furnace himself.



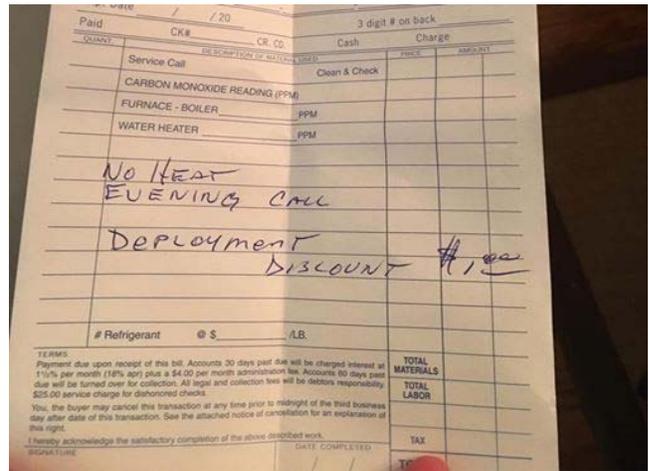
While there, Stevens spoke with Betlyn about her husband, who is currently deployed. "I had mentioned in passing that I tried to figure it out with my husband, but since he's deployed and couldn't see it, he wouldn't know what to do," she explained in her January 2016 post.

When all was said and done, Stevens said she was

"apprehensive" about the cost of the fix. But when Betlyn handed her the bill, she was stunned. On the slip, he noted a "deployment discount," and charged Stevens a mere dollar for his work. But when she tried to pay the repairman, he refused.

"When I tried to give him any money at all, he said that the \$1 was a joke, and to thank my husband for his service," she recounted.

Stevens' story struck a chord with viewers, who were touched by Betlyn's gesture. "That brought tears to my eyes. There are good people in this world, Betlyn Heating and Cooling you are awesome!" one commenter wrote.



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Military Medal Review

The Department of Defense announced yesterday the results of a year-long review of the military decorations and awards program. DOD is specifically focused on combat and valor recognition, to include a review of the Medal of Honor process, as well as to create new devices. Among the key changes are:

- Implementation of new goals and processes to improve timeliness of the Medal of Honor and other valor awards;
- Standardization of the meaning and use of the “V” device as a valor-only device to ensure unambiguous and distinctive recognition for preeminent acts of combat valor;
- Creation of a new combat “C” device to distinctly recognize service members performing meritoriously under the most arduous combat conditions;
- Adoption of a common definition of Meritorious Service Under Combat Conditions to determine eligibility for personal combat awards;
- And the introduction of an “R” remote impacts device to recognize service members who use remote technology to directly impact combat operations. The “R” device would be affixed to preexisting non-combat awards and eliminates any further discussion about creating the controversial Distinguished Warfare Medal that the VFW helped to jettison in 2013.

The complete list of changes to the military decorations and awards program can be found at: <http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Military-Decorations-and-Awards-Review-Results.pdf>.

The VFW Wants to Hear from Women Veterans

In our continued effort to better represent the needs of our membership on Capitol Hill, the VFW is asking all women veterans to take a short survey on veterans’ health care, benefits and services. We thank the more than 1,200 women veterans who have already participated. If you have not participated, click here: <https://www.research.net/r/VFWSurveyofWomenVeterans>.

TRICARE Pharmacy Copays to Increase:

Starting Feb. 1, copayments for brand name drugs through TRICARE Home Delivery will increase from \$16 to \$20 for up to a 90-day supply. At retail pharmacies, generic drug copays go from \$8 to \$10, and brand name drug copays go from \$20 to \$24, for up to a 30-day supply. Copays for non-formulary drugs and for drugs at non-network pharmacies will also change. All drugs ob-

tained from military pharmacies, and generic drugs through TRICARE Home Delivery, will still be at no cost to beneficiaries. TRICARE officials say beneficiaries can save up to \$208 for every brand name prescription drug if they switch from a retail pharmacy to TRICARE Home Delivery. Learn more at: www.tricare.mil/pharmacy.

TRICARE Nurse Advice Line

TRICARE has established a Nurse Advice Line (NAL) that is available at no cost to TRICARE beneficiaries in the continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii. The NAL is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The NAL has health care professionals on staff ready and able to answer urgent care questions, give health care advice, provide assistance locating a doctor, and schedule next-day appointments at military hospitals and clinics. More than half of the calls to the NAL are related to pediatric health concerns, which are routed to the NAL’s experienced team of pediatric registered nurses. The NAL may also answer questions about high fevers, allergic reactions, rashes, and/or accidents, and advise you on the clinically appropriate level of care you should seek for your child. To learn more about the NAL, visit:

<http://www.tricare.mil/ContactUs/CallUs/NAL.aspx>.

Senate Hearing on MyVA Transformation Plan

On Thursday, (January 21) the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs held a hearing to discuss Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert McDonald’s plan to transform VA into a high performance organization. In his testimony, Secretary McDonald outlined 12 breakthrough priorities for 2016, which focus on improving veteran experience, improving employee experience, improving support services, establishing a culture of continuous improvement, and enhancing strategic partnership. Senior Legislative Associate Carlos Fuentes submitted testimony offering the VFW’s support for many of the MyVA programs, and provided suggestions to improve others. To read the VFW’s testimony or view a video of the hearing, visit:

<http://www.veterans.senate.gov/hearings/vas-transformation-strategy-examining-the-plan-to-modernize-va>.

Upcoming Events

- Feb. 1 Post/Auxiliary Meeting—7:30pm
- Feb. 9-14 Auxiliary Mid-Year Conference — Dominican Republic (Mary Corkhill attending)
- Feb. 12—14 Recruiting—Nations Gun Show, Chantilly (8th District recruits on Sunday (14)
- Feb. 15 Deadline for Teacher of the Year Contest & Continuing Education Scholarship
- Feb. 20 District 8 Meeting 1:00pm — Southern Fauquier Post 7728 – (Lunch at Noon)
- Feb. 23 National Auxiliary President's dinner at Post 7589 — 5:30pm
- Feb. 28—
March 3 National Legislative Conference — Washington, D.C.
- March 1 Post/Auxiliary Meeting—7:30pm
- April TBD Recruiting at J. E. Rice



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CANNON NEWS

The official publication of Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.
Francis Cannon Post No. 7589
P.O. Box 10206
Manassas, VA 20108-0668

Please visit our website at www.vfw7589.org

Editor: Rick Raskin
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