

CANNON NEWS

Francis Cannon VFW Post 7589
Manassas, Virginia
September 2015



Barbara Diehl, from the Prince William Area Agency on Aging discusses the Wills for Veterans program at our August 3rd meeting. The program will be offered at the Post beginning September 19. See page 6.

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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



New VFW Auxiliary Now Welcomes Men

Historic change reflects today's military and veteran families

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (August 21, 2015) — [August 21], John A. Biedrzycki Jr., national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) added his official signature to the new congressional charter of its Auxiliary organization in a historical event solidifying the VFW's commitment to membership equality for all military families.

[Watch the charter presentation ceremony.](#)

The former Ladies Auxiliary VFW, founded in 1914, is the VFW's highly regarded support organization and is considered its "Partner in Service."

Under its former name Ladies Auxiliary VFW, membership within the organization was offered exclusively to female spouses and family members of any member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The gender-specific eligibility requirement remained for more than 100 years until July 20, 2015, when delegates to the VFW's 116th National Convention in Pittsburgh voted to

amend the dated by-law to extend the same membership opportunity to eligible males.

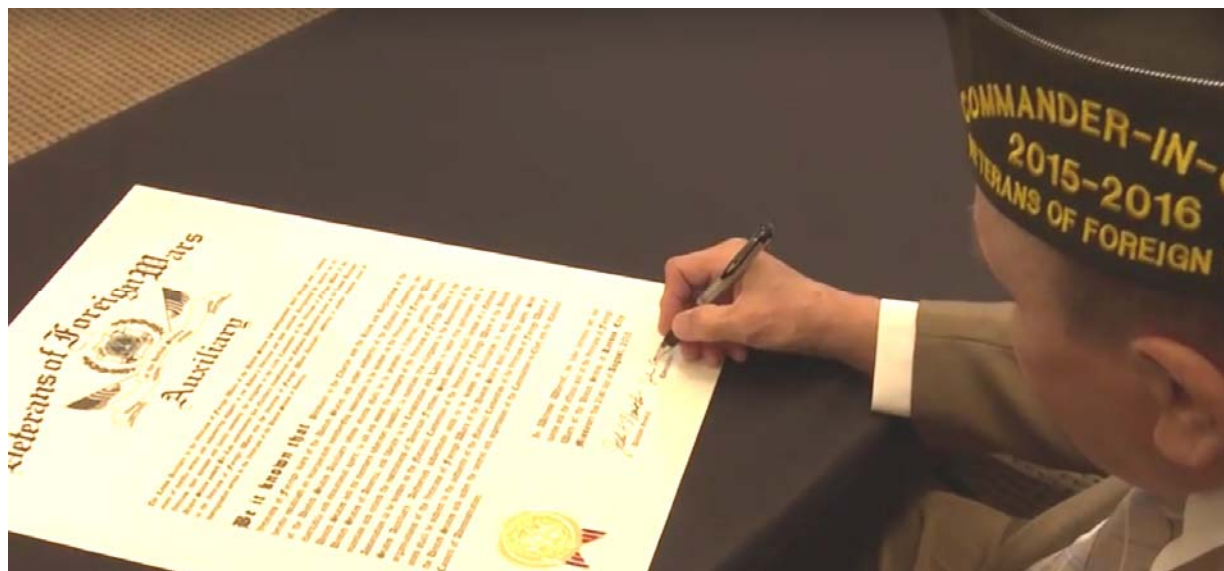
Appropriately, the Ladies Auxiliary VFW has changed its official name to the VFW Auxiliary.

"It's an exciting time to be a member of the Auxiliary," said National President Francisca Guilford. "Women comprise nearly twenty percent of our nation's military, and this change allows all spouses, fathers, grandfathers, sons, grandsons and brothers to serve others in honor of their veteran."

Currently, the Auxiliary has more than 465,000 members, a number that is now expected to sharply increase over the next year. Its members represent all 50 states, the District of Columbia, several foreign locations including Germany, Guam and Panama, and have made an impact in local communities around the globe.

Last year alone, its members worked to provide \$4.6 million dollars in monetary aid to veterans, active duty military and their families, and volunteered nearly 800,000 hours in VA Medical Centers, hospitals, nursing and veterans' homes. Auxiliary members also contributed greatly to cancer research, youth activities, civic patriotism and much more.

For more information about the VFW Auxiliary, please visit www.vfwauxiliary.org



John A. Biedrzycki Jr., national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) adds his official signature to the new congressional charter of its Auxiliary.

Post Commander's Report

Pete MacLeod



When I was about three years old, many years ago, we had a young paperboy in our neighborhood who delivered the afternoon newspapers to our house every day. He was in high school and came by on his bike and if I was outside playing, he would roll a ball over to me or help me line up my toy cars and trucks. I got in the habit of waiting for him every day. All of a sudden, he didn't come by any more, there was a new kid delivering the papers. My mother said something about the Kinder boy had enlisted in the

Marines and was on his way to Korea where a war was raging. Soon the family learned he had arrived just in time to be in the intense fighting around the Chosin Reservoir when the Chinese entered the war. He was listed as "Missing in Action." And he still is today. In front of City Hall in Marlborough, Mass. his name stands out in bold letters as one of the Marlborough "boys" who didn't make it home from the Korean War.

Unfortunately this story is not that rare or unusual in our country. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, as of August 26, 2015, still lists 7,841 U.S. service members as missing from the Korean War. There are still 73,515 missing from World War Two. 1,627 missing from the Vietnam War and 132 missing from the Cold War, Desert Storm and the Iraq and Afghan wars.

It is especially excruciating for the families of these missing people. There is no closure. In many cases, no funeral or gravesite where relatives and friends can pay their respects. I know the parents of my missing paperboy had a very hard time dealing with it and the family eventually moved from town. That is why the gloomy task of finding the remains of missing military mem-

bers is so important. Closure is so important to the families and friends of the missing in action.

Our own Post 7589 member and former commander Jerry Martin and our Service Officer Steve Botello are involved with the Kuentai-USA group of Japanese and Americans which is working hard recovering Japanese and American M.I.A.'s in the Pacific islands where so many battles were fought during World War Two. And if you subscribe to the weekly online news report put out by the VFW Action Corps Weekly you can keep up on the latest worldwide recovery efforts.

In fact in a recent Action Corps dispatch there was news about the recovery of remains belonging to U.S. Army Sgt. Christopher V. Vars of Amherst, N.H. who died fighting with the Army's 2nd Infantry Division around Chosin Reservoir in North Korea on Nov. 29, 1950. The Action Corps Weekly allows you to click on a link and find the details of what happened to Sgt. Vars.

Mary McClung, daughter of a missing Marine from Korea, said she was only three years old when her father was lost. But this summer she attended a conference put on by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) in Washington. As families told stories of their lost loved ones she told the DPAA she felt a common bond with the people she met and talked to at the conference. And even though her dad has been missing for over 60 years she said she is still curious about what happened to him and is glad there are agencies and groups who are out there still looking and searching.

And of course there are the former POWs. Merle Hancock of our Post 7589 has a riveting story of capture by the Germans during World War Two.

That is why I urge you to take time during National POW/MIA Recognition Day on Sept. 18 to attend ceremonies and services and remember the missing and the POWs from our wars and support efforts to make sure they all come home!

VFW Post 7589 Commander Pete MacLeod

Auxiliary President's Report

Mary Corkhill



It is official!!! The Ladies Auxiliary is now known as the "AUXILIARY". We can now accept male family members of our Veterans as part of the VFW Auxiliary organization. The eligibility for male members is the same as the ladies. With all the changes that will be implemented, I will keep you up to date as soon as they are announced. We welcome and look forward to the male family members being part of the Auxiliary.

As I have stated in my previous news articles, on July 1st, the National organization has discontinued the Cancer Aid & Research and the Jr. Girls Unit programs. The Cancer Grants **WILL NOT** change. This restricted fund will continue to provide Cancer Grants to eligible members as a member benefit.

On Saturday, August 15th, the VFW and Auxiliary of 7589 hosted the 8th District meeting. I would like to thank the Comrades and Auxiliary members for setting up, serving, and cleaning the Hall after the event. The Auxiliary members were: Nancy Dazzo, Patsy Gough, Ginger Harvey, Janet Raskin and Yvonne Sullivan. Everyone did such an awesome job.

Again this year, the not-for-profit Wreaths Across America (WAA) organization has provided us the opportunity to have a fundraiser for our organization's needs along with helping WAA gather sponsorships for wreaths. We are working to place more wreaths than ever before on Veterans' graves at Quantico Na-

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

tional Cemetery. There were over 2,000 wreaths distributed at Quantico last year. We ask for your support because this is a major fundraiser for us. Sponsorships are \$15 per wreath. Sponsorship forms can be printed from our website at www.vfw7589.org or contact Ginger Harvey at 571-641-5350 or gch1130@aol.com. To learn more about WAA or to pay for your sponsorship with a credit card, please visit www.wreathscrossamerica.com and remember to include our **Sponsoring Group ID No. VA0040P and Cemetery ID No. VAQNCT. DEADLINE is November 27th.**

As you are aware, the Auxiliary monthly meeting is the first Monday of each month and Labor Day falls on that day, September 7th. The Auxiliary will be meeting the following Monday, September 14th, at 6:00pm at Miss Patsy's house. Please RSVP me so we will know how many members will be attending. Thank you in advance.

We will be distributing the Memorial Buddy Poppy during Bingo and September 11th. If you would like to have some of these special Memorial Buddy Poppies to distribute, please let any member know. They are to be given to the public.

On Saturday, October 3rd, from 10:00am – 5:00pm, the Comrades and the Auxiliary will again be participating in the Manassas Fall Jubilee. As in years past, this annual event gives us the opportunity to meet and greet the public and pass out information about our organization and programs. We will have some freebies and will be running a raffle. Please contact me 703/361-8950 or mcorkhill@comcast.net to let me know your availability to assist in helping at the booth.

As we are coming close to the end of 2015 I would like to remind our annual members to please send in your dues for 2016.

IF your dues are not paid by December 31, 2015, you will not be a member in good standing and you will have to re-apply for new membership and the time you spent as a member before you re-apply will also start over. If you unfortunately are diagnosed with Cancer during the time you re-apply for new membership, you will not be eligible for the Cancer Grant. The waiting period for eligibility is a year and it will **NOT** cover that Cancer during or after the waiting period. So please, forward your dues of \$20 to the Auxiliary Treasurer, Elanor Doczi, 7415 Roxbury Ave., Manassas, VA 20109. Thank you.

The National Home for Children provides housing and support services to struggling military and veteran families from across the nation at their 70-acre campus village in southern Michigan. In order to assist the VFW National Home for Children, we are collecting Campbell's soup labels. We are also happy to receive any labels from the public. Please bring the labels to the Post.

The Auxiliary's Chaplain, Ms. Cookie Cullen's husband, Vince, had surgery. Please keep him and any individuals or family members who are ill or hospitalized in your prayers. We want to see you on the road to recovery.

The schedule for the next few months is as follows:

- Sept 5 Auxiliary Department Council of Administration, Hopewell, VA Aux. 637 10am
- Sept 10 Executive Meeting – 7pm
- Sept 11 9/11 Memorial Buddy Poppy - Distribution to public
- Sept 12 Flag Retirement – 9:30am (with Pack 1355)
- Sept 14 Post/Auxiliary Monthly Meeting -- 6:00 pm (dinner at Patsy's house)
- Sept 17-20 National President's Homecoming, Anchorage, AK
- Sept 18 POW/MIA Ceremony - 5 pm - Manassas Veterans Memorial
- Oct 1 Executive Meeting – 7pm
- Oct 3 Annual Fall Jubilee - 10am - 5pm (Post & Auxiliary will attend)
- Oct 5 Post/Auxiliary Monthly Meeting - 7:30pm
- Oct 9 Set-up for Yard Sale 4-8pm
- Oct 10 Yard Sale (Auxiliary Event)
- Oct 30 Executive Meeting – 7pm
- Nov 1 VOD & PP (**Deadline**)
- Nov 2 Post/Auxiliary Meeting — 7:30pm
- Nov 7 Veterans Day Parade — 11:00 am — Line up at 9:00 — marching in parade
- Nov 11 Veterans Day Activities — 8:30 am—Manassas Veterans Memorial — 9:00 am Cemetery
- Nov 14 District 8 Meeting — Location TBD — 1:00 pm
- Dept. Commander & Dept. President Homecoming — Post 4809 - Norfolk, VA
- Nov 19—22 Southern Conference, Savannah, GA
- Nov 27 Wreaths Across America (**Deadline**)



Notes from the trenches

by Paul Chase

"In my monthly words I want to make sure I have a balance between Positive and Negative matters. This is all positive.

First, In a recent article for Post Newsletter I lamented the fact that an innocent individual was murdered on a Metro train with many on-lookers doing nothing to stop the outrage. Just this last week two American servicemen on a train headed for Paris took decisive action to prevent the murder of scores of innocent people. It was a classic case where the courage and initiative of a few spurred others into action. Over and above saving the lives of fellow passengers the two servicemen reflected great credit on all Americans in uniform before the international press.

The second bit of good news concerns the upcoming establishment of a "Veterans Treatment Court" for Fairfax County. This



is from an initiative made by Judge Penny Azcarate (Chief Judge of Fairfax General District Court). Judge Azcarate is a USMC Veteran of the Persian Gulf War. As a veteran she was appalled by the numbers of veterans who repeatedly appeared before her court with obvious service related issues. Research shows one in six service members who served in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom have substance abuse problems. Research shows there is a link between combat stress and substance abuse. Vir-

ginia has the sixth largest population of veterans in the Nation (850,000). Fairfax alone has 85,000. Establishing a Veterans Treatment Court is a serious undertaking. It will entail coordinating multiple local and federal agencies and specific training to ensure a smooth start. Veterans will be assigned mentors, receive close follow-up, random and frequent drug testing and employment assistance. Funding will come from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Current plans call for the operation to begin in January 2016. We will be closely following the progress of this badly needed initiative.

The third bit of good news concerns the Post Aluminum Can Tab

collection program. We established a goal of 200,000 tabs for 2015 and we now have 219,000. We have 34 collection containers distributed throughout Manassas, Gainesville, Warrenton and Haymarket with more to come. This is more than about raising money for the Boston Burn Center. The program goes a long way to show the public how the VFW is active in their community. When Joel and I distribute and collect the full containers we make a point of going with our VFW shirts and caps which results in "High-Fives" salutes, and pats on the back. Makes it all worthwhile. A lot of credit needs to be spread around but I want to specifically mention Rick Raskin, Pete Slusher, my brother Joel and the Inter-Service Club Council (ISCC). We have already started sending VFW letters of appreciation and thanks signed by Post Commander Peter McLeod to the standout establishments who have given the program exceptional support. When I've gone to the places who have received our letters of appreciation they seem a little overwhelmed that we would go to such lengths to thank them.

It is heartening when there is positive news about Americans in uniform and how the community is assisting in helping those in need and there is action being taken to solve the special needs of veterans. It does not get much better than that.

SPOTLIGHT ON COMRADE WAYNE MOORE



Comrade Wayne Moore joined VFW Post 7589 in 2009 and has been one of its strongest performers. He has served as the Post Building Manager which is a high profile job that involves among other things managing the rental account which earns nearly half of the Post's income. He has also been a regular contributor to the Post weekly Bingo operation. Wayne has a military background that is probably unique to our Post. He started his service in the US Army assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division in Vietnam and followed by duty in Korea. He joined the US

Navy in 1981 and had service aboard multiple ships around the globe. He served as an Air Intercept and Anti Submarine Warfare Controller. He served in Iraq with the 6/9 Cavalry Division as a Counter Improvised Device Detection Manager. Comrade Moore brings to our Post his diverse experience and considerable energy and dedication which is greatly appreciated.

Join American Legion Post 10 for the September 18th POW/MIA ceremony at 2000

Veterans and families of VFW Post 7589 are welcome to attend the ceremony and are also welcome to come early 5:30 - 7:45 to enjoy our Seafood night. The Riders will be at the door that

evening and we will sign in any VFW members that are not AL members.

Merle Hancock, WWII POW, will be the speaker.

Rebecca Christovich
1st Vice Commander
American Legion Post 10

Wallet Left Behind 70 Years Ago in Austria During World War II Returned to California Veteran



Eligio Ramos examines the wallet he lost 70 years ago while serving in World War II.

A wallet lost 70 years ago by an American soldier in Austria during World War II was returned to its rightful owner thanks to a doctor who discovered the item in his late grandfather's farmhouse.

Josef Ruckhofer told AFP he had been renovating the house near the city of Salzburg when he stumbled across the leather wallet under a wooden plank in June.

Military identity papers revealed that the purse had belonged to Eligio Ramos, an American soldier from Texas whose battalion had been stationed in Austria in 1945.

The wallet also contained "family photos of a woman and child and old stamps, but no money", Ruckhofer said.

"Given that we've been commemorating the 70th anniversary of WWII this year, I thought it would be a nice idea to find the owner and maybe return his wallet, if he was still alive," he added.

After an online check of Texas phone directories failed to turn up results, Ruckhofer expanded his search to the whole of the United States.

He eventually found a man in California whose name and birth-date matched those of the soldier.

"I sent a letter with a copy of the identity papers and a few of the photographs to that address, asking him to get in touch if he was the owner," the Austrian explained.

"After a week or so, I received an email from his son confirming that I'd found the right Eligio Ramos. He said he would be very happy if I could send him the wallet."

Ruckhofer learnt that Ramos had lost his wallet when he and his battalion spent a night at the Austrian farmhouse.

The doctor said he had not been able yet to speak to the American because he was in hospital.

"As it turns out, he is the only survivor of his battalion," Ruckhofer said. "Maybe we'll still find a way of talking directly to each other. —From AFP



A ghost at the Legion or Ron Link doing a little levitation? Actually, a ball slipped from the ball holder and was suspended in an air current from the blower for about 30 seconds. Monday, August 17 at American Legion Post 10.

Wills for Veterans

The Prince William Agency on Aging, in Partnership with the Prince William Bar Association and the VFW Post 7589 (with support from Prince William area veteran groups) is sponsoring a "Wills for Veterans" Program.

The Prince William Bar Association will be drafting Will and Testaments, Power of Attorneys, and Medical Directives for the Veterans (and their spouses) of Prince William County -FREE. All veterans are encouraged to participate who do not have a Will or Power of Attorney.

The first meeting will be an Informational Session--scheduled at the VFW Post 7589 on Centerville, Road next to the Manassas Fire Station on Saturday, September 19, 2015. Space is limited to the first 80 veterans who sign-up w/ an RSVP to guarantee your participation. Those who participate must attend 3 different sessions (9/19; Oct 3rd & Oct 24th. At the 2nd session, veterans will meet with an attorney to go over their own personal document(s). The 3rd session will be the actual signing of the document(s) to include notaries and witnesses which will be provided--- Veterans will then be able to take home their legal documents----ALL FREE!

To Sign Up for the Informational Session, please contact Ms. Barbara Diehl, at the Prince William Area Agency on Aging at (703) 792-7175 or email bdiehl@pwcgov.org.

An Important Scam Notification from USAA

Social media scam targeting service members

DO NOT provide your personal banking information through social media.

There is a social media scam, predominately seen in Instagram, which is targeting military service members. This scam has been around for over a year, but has picked up steam over the past few months and more and more people in and out of the military are falling prey to fraudsters. Please review the following items and stay alert.

The fraudsters are targeting military, veterans and their families. In exchange for their personal banking information, they are promised the ability to make easy money. The victim provides their log in/password information and the fraudster gains the ability to deposit fraudulent funds directly into their account. They immediately pull out their fee, before the institution can identify the credibility of the deposit, and the victim is left responsible for the used funds. The amounts range from \$2K to \$20K, growing the debt of the victims in a matter of minutes.

The consequences are very unpleasant - you are responsible to pay back the entire amount. Funds are transferred to collections, impacting the victim's credit score and could even result in criminal charges.

Take a moment and think about offers that seem too good to be true. If you have to question if it is legit, walk away. Many victims thought the most they could lose was the balance in their

DO NOT provide your personal banking information through social media.

account – they were wrong.

To the people who influence the potential victims, take time to be an advocate and help us educate. They are being taken advantage of and it is our obligation to protect them.

Here are some tips. Make sure to read, follow and share, regardless of where you bank:

- Offers of free money. USAA (and no other legitimate financial institution) is NOT going to post offers of easy money on social media.
- Odd phone numbers. A credible USAA number is either a 210 area code or 800 number.
- Requests for your information. Fraudsters ask for things

USAA or any other legitimate institution would never ask for, such as personal identifiers, debit card information and account numbers — USAA and legitimate banks already have all that.

- Unprofessional pictures. The pictures (fraudsters use) on Instagram might show cash or risqué images of women. They are not images representative of legitimate bankers, investors or USAA employees. That's not USAA's image.
- Directions to send money back. USAA recently had a conversation with a fraudster posing as a USAA official. The scam was an offer to deposit unclaimed insurance money into the member's account but required a 50% fee to be sent back to the fraudster after the deposit was made. USAA or any other legitimate financial institution would not deposit funds into a member's account and ask them to send half back.

Another PC Scam—Beware

Several of our members have recently reported a phishing scam making the rounds. An email claims that your PC is infected with numerous errors and that you should click on an enclosed link to initiate repair. BEWARE! This is a scam and the sender will install malware on your machine, take control and then charge you to remove it.

DO NOT CLICK ON ANY LINK OR DOWNLOAD ANY PICTURES UNLESS YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY SURE THAT THEY ARE GENUINE.

Check the sender's address and even if it is someone you know, be wary. As shown below, the senders address is in India. Ask yourself, "How in the world would they know that my PC had errors?"



This is a dead give-away. The domain suffix is .in = India

Also, there is another scam where you receive a phone call basically telling you the same thing. The caller asks for access to your machine to clean up errors after offering you a tech support agreement.

DO NOT FALL FOR THIS ONE EITHER!

Again, how in the world would they know your PC had errors?



DOD Announces New Prescription Drug Policy:

This week, the VFW was briefed on the new TRICARE policy that will require military retirees and family members to obtain certain prescription drugs through the mail or at a military treatment facility (MTF). The change affects only maintenance medications. Acute medications such as antibiotics may still be obtained through retail pharmacies. Active duty military are exempt. Similar to the TRICARE for Life pharmacy mail order pilot program, generic formulary drugs will be free with home delivery and name brand formulary drugs will cost \$16 for a 90 day supply. This is compared to \$8 for generics and \$20 for name brands currently charged at network pharmacies for a 30 day supply. There is no charge for drugs obtained at MTFs. DOD estimates this new policy will save \$88 million a year for them, and \$16.5 million a year for beneficiaries. Receiving a single name brand drug through home delivery rather than a retail pharmacy will save beneficiaries up to \$176 per year. Affected beneficiaries will begin receiving letters on September 1 with additional information on the new policy and how to obtain waivers if necessary. For more information on TRICARE pharmacy copays, visit: <http://www.tricare.mil/pharmacycosts>.

The VFW Wants to Hear from You:

In our continued effort to better represent the needs of our membership on Capitol Hill, the VFW is asking you to take a short survey on what's important to you when you seek health care. To take the survey, click here: <https://www.research.net/r/VACareSummer15>.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day 2015:

The third Friday in September is designated as National POW/MIA Recognition Day every year. This year it falls on Sept. 18, and VFW Posts nationwide will be recognizing those who were captured and returned, as well as remembering the 83,000 Americans who have yet to return home from their wars and their families who continue to hope and pray.

To sign up new veterans' advocates, click here:
<http://capwiz.com/vfw/mlm/signup.htm>

Candidate Suggests Eliminating VA:

Earlier this week presidential candidate Dr. Ben Carson suggested that the Department of Veterans Affairs could be eliminated by moving its services and programs under the Department of Defense. The VFW strongly opposes this idea and VFW National Commander John Biedrzycki Jr., explains why this breaks faith with our wounded, injured and ill veterans here: <http://www.vfw.org/News-and-Events/Articles/2015-Articles/VFW-Against-Candidate%E2%80%99s-Call-to-Eliminate-the-VA/>. To view Carson's comments, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=814&v=VfGQG7oH-CY>.

DOD Launches Website on New Prescription Drug Policy:

Earlier this month, the VFW reported on a new TRICARE prescription drug policy that will require certain beneficiaries to refill select maintenance medications through home delivery or at military treatment facilities. This week, TRICARE published a summary of the changes on its website, including which beneficiaries will be affected, which medications will fall under the new rules, how to request waivers if necessary, and contact information for additional questions. Active duty military personnel are exempt from the new policy. The change will take place on October 1, 2015, and DOD will begin sending letters with additional information to beneficiaries on September 1. To view the new TRICARE prescription drug webpage, click here: <http://www.tricare.mil/RxNewRules>.

Sing It America:

Visitors to Washington on Sept. 14 might consider joining thousands of others at the Lincoln Memorial to celebrate the bicentennial of the Star Spangled Banner. Musicians and choirs will be saluting our National Anthem for a full 24 hours, from Dawn's Early Light to Dawn's Early Light. Read more at: <http://www.singitamerica.com/>.

GI Bill Covers O&P Training:

The Department of Labor wants veterans to know that the Post-9/11 GI Bill also includes the training required to become licensed Orthotics and Prosthetics (O&P) technicians. O&P is a trending health profession that includes both cutting edge technology and hands-on patient care. The training, which is only offered at five colleges or universities, includes the evaluation, fabrication, and custom fitting of artificial limbs and orthopedic braces. According to the department, the career field is very marketable in industry, as well as in public, private and government medical facilities. Learn more at: <http://www.opcareers.org/>.

VFW's Motion Granted: Unseal Prudential's SGLI Records

All documents had remained sealed at Prudential's request

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (August 26, 2015) – Yesterday, U.S. District Judge Michael A. Ponsor issued a ruling that grants a motion filed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) to unseal documents related to the class action lawsuit brought against the Prudential Insurance Company of America, subject to certain exceptions. The suit was filed in response to the company's administration of the Servicemembers Group Life Insurance (SGLI) program for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The underlying case alleged that Prudential failed to pay death benefits to military service members, veterans and their families in the manner required by the laws governing SGLI and the Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI) programs. That lawsuit was resolved in December 2014 in a nearly \$40 million settlement.

"We're pleased with Judge Ponsor's ruling and now have a lot of work to do. We anxiously await the opportunity to re-

view the documents involving this matter," said John A. Biedrzycki Jr., VFW national commander. "We want to better understand the manner in which Prudential and the VA have been administering these programs. And through this review, we will continue to be the voice for America's combat veterans and their families."

Filing the motion in June 2013, the VFW has consistently taken the position that documents filed by Prudential should be made available to the public. Yesterday's ruling requires Prudential to disclose all but 16 of the documents it has been arguing should remain from public view. The parties must file all other documents (not redacted) by September 28, 2015, according to the ruling.

Prudential has denied wrongdoing throughout the proceedings, but most of the records filed in the case have been sealed from the public at Prudential's request. The VFW insists that it is in the best interests of the families and the public to fully understand what Prudential has done in connection with its administration of federally subsidized life insurance programs for service members and veterans. Yesterday's decision underscores that.

Words On War

Veterans **Dr. Frederick Foote**, **Bill Glose** and **Jim Mathews** join **Claudia Gary**, former *Vietnam Magazine* senior editor, to share their writing and examine the role creative expression has as a coping mechanism and as an element of the healing process for service members with PTSD and traumatic physical injuries. Dr. Foote will also discuss the [Green Road](#) healing garden, the Walter Reed arts program, and the Maryland Network of Arts and Gardens for Veterans. Jim Mathews, an instructor and editor with the [Veterans Writing Project](#), will talk about its mission and goals.

<http://www.writebytherails.org/wbtr-calendar/in-the-company-of-laureates/>

IN THE COMPANY OF
LAUREATES

JOIN with more than 20 Poets Laureate from a five-state region in celebration of American poetry. Readings, workshops, open mics, young poet activities, and more. Co-hosted by Write by the Rails, a chapter of the Virginia Writers Club, and the Poetry Society of Virginia. For more information, visit our websites: writebytherails.org poetrysocietyofvirginia.org hyltoncenter.org

Hylton Performing Arts Center
10960 George Mason Circle
Manassas, VA

October 11 • 1pm-5pm

Free - open to the public

In the Company of
LAUREATES
2015

NPRC 1973 Records Fire

► What you Can Do To Help Recover Data

Shortly after midnight, on July 12, 1973, a fire was reported at the NPRC's military personnel records building at 9700 Page Boulevard in St. Louis, MO. Firefighters arrived on the scene only 4 minutes and 20 seconds after the first alarm sounded and entered the building. WWI, WWII, and Korean War Veterans' files were stored in cardboard boxes stacked on steel shelves lining the sixth and top floor of a large, rectangular federal building. They were packed so tightly within the thousands of boxes that, when the fire erupted, it burned so intense, so quickly, so out of control, it took the responding 43 fire departments more than two days to smother. During the long ordeal, firefighters faced severe problems due to insufficient wa-

The NPRC records fire is 42-year old news, yet even today it continues to impact the lives of our most sacred Veterans and their dependents and survivors.

6.5 million burned and water-damaged records. Today, it has a preservation program, split between two teams (1 & 2), reconstructing what was recovered. This has proved helpful and hopeful for the many "treasure hunt" stories that occa-

their dependents and survivors. How does an Army Air Forces bombardier from our Greatest Generation apply for VA healthcare and benefits without records of his service? What can be done for the fiduciary of an Army Nurse Corps Veteran looking for records to piece together his grandmother's legacy? How does NPRC staff deal with the thousands of records requests from this time period it fields each year? In the days following the fire, NPRC used experimental treatments to recover about 6.5 million burned and water-damaged records. Today, it has a preservation program, split between two teams (1 & 2), reconstructing what was recovered. This has proved helpful and hopeful for the many "treasure hunt" stories that occasionally surface in media profiles. But, what about those whose records were not recovered?

You can help VA help NPRC reconstruct the damaged record.



ter pressure. Exacerbating the situation, one of the department's pumper trucks broke down after 40 hours of continuous operation. Numerous times, the fire threatened to spread down to the other floors; but firefighters were successful in halting its advance.

When the smoke settled and the interior temperature cooled, the building's staff found that up to 18 million Veterans' personnel records had been reduced to smoldering piles and puddles of ash. While millions of records were destroyed, some survived but remain badly damaged. There was no motive, no suspect, and few clues. The person(s) responsible for destroying 80 percent of Army personnel records for soldiers discharged between 1 Nov 1912 to 1 Jan 1960 and 75 percent of the Air Force records of Airmen discharged between 25 Sep 1947 to 1 Jan 1964 (with surnames beginning with Hubbard and running through the end of the alphabet) has never been found.

The NPRC records fire is 42-year old news, yet even today it continues to impact the lives of our most sacred Veterans and

There is a specific request form at www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/na-13055-info-2-reconstruct-medical-data.pdf which you must fill out that gives VA the authority to ask NPRC to reconstruct that file. This request provides information that allows the NPRC to search for other types of documents, such as individual state records, Multiple Name Pay Vouchers from the Adjutant General's Office, Selective Service System registration records, pay records from the Government Accounting Office, as well as medical records from military hospitals (current Army list; current Air Force list), unit records and morning reports, and entrance and separation x-rays and organizational records, that would assist you with your VA healthcare access or compensation claim, or for valuable research on your family member's service history.

When it comes to VA compensation, however, maybe you don't have time to play detective. It is critical, in the request you send to VA, that you provide as much information as you can, includ

(Fire on page 11)

(Fire from page 10)

ing the units you were assigned to, as well as the name of the company, battalion, regiment, squadron, group, and/or wing. VA will accept, as alternate sources for records, statements from service medical personnel, certified “buddy” statements or affidavits, accident and police reports, Employment-related examination reports, letters written during service, photographs taken during service, pharmacy prescription records, insurance-related examination reports, medical evidence from civilian/private hospitals, clinics, and physicians that treated you during service or shortly after separation, and photocopies of any service treatment records that you may have in your possession.

It is important to note that, although these details can significantly help, VA does not rely only on service treatment records when deciding claims for cases that are related to the 1973 fire.

While this can appear daunting, there is help available; VA encourages you to work with an accredited representative or agent if you need assistance. Go to <http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp> to verify accreditation. You can also request an attorney, claims agent, or Veteran Service Organization representative online.

The ramifications of this tragedy have been longstanding and well documented, and it couldn’t have happened to a more heroic group of Veterans at a worse time—when those files were needed most. Archaeologists two centuries from now are not going to magically dig up microfiche duplicates that were never created. Those records are lost to time. With NPRC’s assistance, VA is committed to ensuring that no eligible but affected Veteran goes without the benefits and services (or information) to which he and she have earned. In 2012, NPRC relocated to a new building housing 60 million records (from the Spanish-American War to about the year 2000) in 1.8 million boxes “in a climate-controlled warehouse with a constant temperature of about 35 degrees and with a relative humidity that never dips below 40 percent.”

[Source: VAntage Point Blog | Jason Davis | August 10, 2015 ++]

2015—16 Essay Topics
Patriot’s Pen (Grades 6-8)
“What Freedom Means to Me”

Voice of Democracy (Grades 9–12)
“My Vision for America”

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Visit our website: www.vfw7589.org

**VA DVS AGENT SERVICE
AT POST 7589**

**2nd & 4th Thursdays
0900– 1500**

**You may also visit the Fairfax
office.**

NEW LOCATION
9990 Fairfax Blvd., Ste.120
Fairfax, VA 22030

703-359-1210
703-359-1239 fax

Upcoming Events

- September 5 **State Recruiter Training—Post 9808, Mechanicsville—0900**
- September 10 **Executive Committee meeting — 1900**
- September 11 **Patriot Day — Auxiliary distributes 911 Buddy Poppies**
- September 12 **Flag Retirement Ceremony with Cub Scout Pack 1355 — Post Home — 0930**
Council of Administration meeting — State HQ, Staunton — 0900
- September 14 **General Membership meeting — **In lieu of Labor Day** — 1930**
- Pow/MIA ceremony — Manassas Veterans Memorial — 1700**
- September 18 **American Legion Post 10 — 2000**
- Post 7589 members are welcome to come early 1730 - 1945 to enjoy Seafood night. The Legion Riders will be at the door to sign in VFW members that are not AL members.**
- September 19 **“Wills for Veterans” — Informational meeting — Post Home**



CANNON NEWS

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

Please visit our website at www.vfw7589.org

Editor: Rick Raskin
Copy Editor: Janet Raskin

Please email articles to quartermaster@vfw7589.org
Please send photos as attachments and not imbedded in your article.
We reserve the right to edit submitted articles for timeliness, clarity and syntax.



Tax ID 20-8362270

Wreath Sponsorship Form

*Sponsored wreaths are placed on the grave markers at state, national veterans cemeteries as well as local cemeteries each December. Wreaths may be purchased online at www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org

If you wish to make your sponsorship with a credit card please visit our website for a secure online transaction.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: (To receive our FREE email newsletter) _____

Sponsorship	Price	Quantity	Total
Individual= 1 Wreath	\$15.00		
Family= 4 Wreaths	\$60.00		
Small Business= 10 Wreaths	\$150.00		
Corporate= 100 Wreaths or more	\$15.00 each wreath		
		Grand Total	

****SORRY - WE CANNOT TAKE GRAVE SPECIFIC REQUESTS****

Sponsoring Group ID Number: VA0040P
Cemetery Designation: Quantico National Cemetery
Cemetery ID Number: VAQNCT

Please make checks payable to:
Wreaths Across America TM
Mail to:
PO Box 249
Columbia Falls, ME 04623
Questions? Please call 877-385-9504

Cut-Off Date is November 27, 2015
*WAA ceremony will take place at Quantico National Cemetery on
Saturday, December 12 at 12 Noon.*

Thank you for your Sponsorship and joining us in our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach!

Please note that all sponsorships are sent directly to the location and no wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.



SPONSOR A WREATH FOR A VETERAN'S GRAVE

Wreaths Across America carries out its mission **REMEMBER** the fallen, **HONOR** those that serve and **TEACH** our children the value of **FREEDOM** in part by placing wreaths on veterans graves during the holiday season.

The **Francis Cannon VFW Auxiliary 7589** is working with Wreaths Across America to help place more wreaths than ever before on Veterans' graves at **Quantico National Cemetery**.

On **Saturday, December 12, 2015**, Wreaths Across America ceremonies will take place at over 741 locations in the USA and beyond.

Sponsorships are \$15 each. We are participating because we think it is a great program and \$5 of every sponsorship will support the Francis Cannon VFW Auxiliary 7589 directly so we may continue to assist veterans and families as well as our community.

PLEASE JOIN US -- All wreaths will be placed by volunteers on Saturday, December 12, 2015 at 12 Noon at Quantico National Cemetery. This is a moving experience that you should make part of your holiday tradition. With your help our local heroes will be remembered this Holiday Season. **How many sponsorships can we count on you for?**

YARD SALE

INSIDE

AUXILIARY 7589



VFW POST 7589

October 10, 2015

7:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Post Home - 9304 Centreville Road

Manassas, VA

(We will be taking Donations on Friday October 9, 2015 from 4 pm – 8pm at the Post)