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mony, **Department Judge Advocate Buddy Weekly** praised Peter's presentation describing how judging was done and how the recipient's entries answered this year's theme. Congratulations to all.

Thank you to **Mary Corkhill** and the Auxiliary members who prepared the refreshments after the District meeting. Many comments were given on the meal. Thanks for all the Comrades.

With the resignation of **Pat Templeton** as a Post Trustee, the membership nominated and elected **Dave Crowder** to assume the position. Thanks to Pat for his service to the Post and thank you to Dave for stepping up.

During this month, we lost two members:

Kenyon Anderson, U.S. Navy—Desert Storm. Comrade Anderson was a life member of the post. He was the nephew of Quartermaster Rick Raskin.

Bernard Earle Russell, U.S. Navy—Pacific Theater. Comrade Russell was a tireless worker for the Post. He worked BINGO, Buddy Poppies and Recruiting. We were honored by Earle's family in officiating the funeral and graveside ceremony. Thanks to Rick Raskin, Steve Botello, Tom Wahl and Mary Corkhill for assisting.

Congratulations to **Peter MacLeod** on his appointment to the VFW National Iraq-Afghanistan Committee. This makes the third National Committee Person in our Post.

Yours in Comradeship

Ron Link

Education Awards Presented at the Winter Council of Administration

Department winners of the Patriot's Pen, Voice of Democracy and Teacher of the Year Awards received acclaim at the Winter COA Banquet on January 21.

1st Place VOD Winner Megan C. Vazgues, sponsored by Post 1211, 2nd District presented her essay on "Is There Pride in Serving in the Military" to an enthusiastic crowd and received a standing ovation before receiving her award of \$1000.00.



Other contest winners included:

First Place Patriot's Pen:
Matthew L. Jones, sponsored by Post 8243, 5th District

The VFW Teachers of the Year:

Elementary School: Rachel B Johnson, LaCrosse Elementary, LaCrosse. Sponsored by Post 7166

Middle School: Dennita Miskimen, Manchester Middle School, Richmond. Sponsored by Post 2239

High School: Michelle Webb, Heritage High School, Newport News. Sponsored by Post 5500

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Bryce Reeves—R, 17th District and Senator Linda Toddy Puller—D, 36th District (SB 433)



Department SVC Margo Sheridan & Kathy Graham meet with Senator Toddy Puller.

Notes: Currently the Code of Virginia allows the funeral homes to dispose unclaimed cremains after 90 days. There is not a requirement for the funeral home to provide the names of the unclaimed cremains to the DVS for determination of veteran status. The Assembly and Senate bills will require the funeral homes to provide the names to the DVS for verification of veteran status. Once the veteran status has been established, the cremains will be turned over to the DVS for an honorable burial.

Sales and Use Tax Exemption for Veterans Service Organizations:

Goal: Recognize the community service and philanthropic contributions of Virginia's Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) by establishing an exemption for VSOs from local Sales or Use Taxes.

Status: Not supported by Governor McDonnell. No further action pending

Notes: The IRS has nationally organized and rec-

ognized VSOs as exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Code of Virginia provides an exemption for sales and use taxes for 501 (c)(3) or 501 (c) (4) organizations. The VSOs classified as 501 (c) (19) perform the same functions as the 501 (c)(3) or 501 (c) (4) organizations. During the year 2010, the VA VFW (both Comrades and the Ladies Auxiliary) reported the expenditure of \$1,852,292 and a donation of 339,052 in volunteer hours. This resulted in over \$4.5 million in support of youth and community activities.

Many of the VSOs were 501 (c)(3) or 501 (c) (4) organizations before they became 501 a (c)(19) organization. We are not asking for anything "new", just what we had prior to the new section 501 (c)(19). The exemption would free sales and use taxes on fuel, maintenance, cleaning, office supplies, and other items not for resale. Thus would put all VSOs on an equal basis with the 501 (c)(3) or 501 (c) (4) organizations.

Budget Objectives:

Homeless Veterans:

Goal: Reduce and prevent veterans homelessness in Virginia by implementing as many strategies identified in the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) 2010 study as state fiscal resources will allow.

Status: Governor McDonnell's introduced budget includes \$197,018 and two Homeless Veterans Coordinator positions.

Notes: a 2010 "Point in Time" survey of homeless veterans put the number of homeless veterans in Virginia at 995. Trends reported by US Department of Veterans Administration (USDVA), veterans advocacy groups, and social services agencies show a significant increase in the number of woman veterans among the homeless. Also, there are trends showing the Iraq and Afghanistan veterans are becoming homeless at a faster rate than veteran of previous conflicts.

Administrative Objectives

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Veterans Identification:

Goal: Provide a simple, ready means of identification of veteran status for Virginia's veterans by creating a Virginia Veterans ID Card.

Status: Supported by Governor McDonnell. Under development by DMV. Target rollout is Memorial Day, 2012.

Notes: *Veterans who have served in the active military, naval, or air service and who have been released under condition "other than dishonorable" could qualify for the VA Veteran's ID Card. This card would provide a quick and convenient way to prove their veteran status; allow the veteran to qualify for the discount which merchants offer; qualify for other cost saving features such as free access to Virginia's parks and/or reduced fishing license fees; and honor the service of a veteran to Virginia and the Nation.*

There are several bills in front of the General Assembly. Look at the matrix regarding the bills—we will keep you updated via the Post website, www.vfw7589.org.

Youth Committee Video

The Youth Committee intends to produce a short PowerPoint/video for use when speaking to school students, Boy or Girl Scouts or other youth groups that tells about the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Ladies Auxiliary; explaining what we do and who we are.

If you would like to be involved in this project please contact Pete MacLeod at 703-794-1103.

The next Youth Committee meeting will be at 1900 hrs. Thursday, Feb. 16, at the Post Home.

Upcoming Events

February/March TBD - Recruiting at Manassas Mall

March 17 - St. Patrick's Day Parade - 1000

April 22 - District 8 Convention - Culpeper Post 2524 - 1300

May 26 - 28 - Memorial Day Weekend Events

- May 26: Poppies - Location TBD - 0900 - 1300
- May 27: Poppies - Location TBD - 0900 - 1300
- May 28: Ceremony - Manassas Veterans Memorial - 0830
- Flag Placements - Manassas Cemetery - 0900

June 2 - 66th Anniversary Picnic & Open House 1130 - 1430 - Post Home

June 7 - 10 - Department Convention - Williamsburg

June 28 - Planning Meeting - Open



AT VFW POST 7589