

NEW YORK STATE OVERSEAS VETERAN

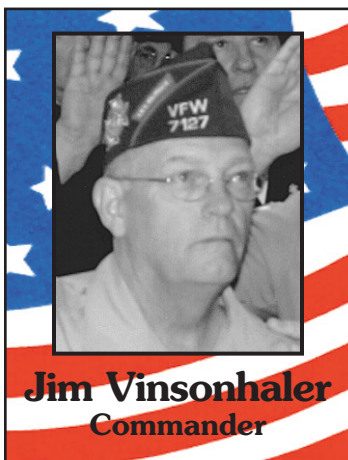
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November/December 2004

"Service and Representation"
Jim Vinsonhaler, New York State Commander

Volume 24, Issue 5



Jim Vinsonhaler
Commander



forward to meeting many more of you before the year is through.

Throughout my travel, I had had the chance to hear many of our comrades tell of the programs that are being conducted on behalf of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Though we have done a great job with all the programs, we have participated in for many years, I am most pleased by the participation in "support the Troops" programs being held throughout the state. This type of program not only involves our members but entire communities, and this gives face to the organization as doing the right things.

We are also asked many times by comrades as to why something cannot be changed in the Department or National organization. Most times the

answer to these questions are quite simple, our Congressional Charter and By-laws do not provide for it. Therefore, we would suggest that if there are issues the members feel need changing, you need to take the proper approach and submit resolutions through the proper channels to the Department Convention. Remember, this is YOUR organization; and it is up to YOU to request changes that you feel may be needed.

It won't be long now, and we will be in Albany for our Legislative Conference when we present to our state leaders what the veterans of this state feel are important to us. Please try to find the time to attend, as a strong turnout is impressive to our state legislature.



L-R: Sharon Connolly, PDP and Secretary, Helen E. Weeks, PDP, Department Commander Jim Vinsonhaler, and Terry McGarr, Auxiliary President, take a well-deserved break at Fall Conference.

In closing, let us remember that there is still a lot of work to do yet this year, and we need all the help from all of you to make this a successful year. Together, we can do it. I wish all of you and yours, a Happy

and Healthy Holiday Season and look forward to meeting with many of you in the remaining year.

Yours in Comradeship,
Jim Vinsonhaler, Commander

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30, 2004 – The National Archives and Records Administration is not destroying any military records, officials here said.

The agency is trying to counter an Internet rumor that advised veterans to apply for their Official Military Personnel Files to save them from destruction.

There is no truth to this "urban legend" being perpetuated on the web. "We heard it about a month ago," said Susan Cooper, the archive's public affairs officer.

The records are stored at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis. Officials there said that there has been an uptick in the number of veterans requesting their records. This takes time away from other legitimate requests – such as veterans requesting separation documents or medical records.

"We have a limited number of people to do the work and anything that ramps the requests up this quickly is a big production issue with us," said John Constance, NARA's director of congressional and public affairs.

Archivists are digitizing some records, Cooper said. "We are going to digitize some of them for

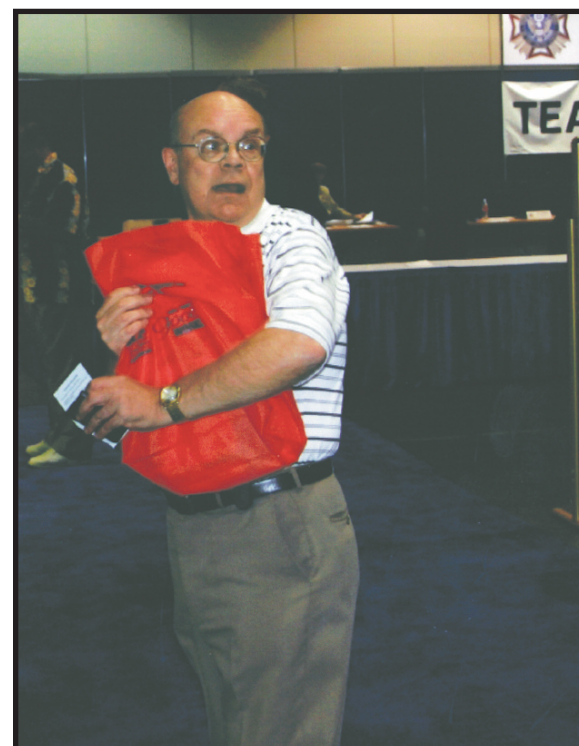


Department Commander receives instructions on cake cutting from Granddaughter Teaghan.

reference and preservation," she said. "When records are handled frequently, it causes some wear and tear. The idea is to preserve (the records), not destroy them." Officials emphasize that the paper records remain intact.

NARA preserves and protects the files because they are permanently valuable records that document the essential evidence of military service for veterans.

Bottom line: If you receive this sort of e-mail, ignore it. Your military records are safe.



He was caught but never convicted at the National Convention. He was quoted as saying, "Tom Todaro doesn't mind being in an orange bag." He's none other than our State Adjutant Art Koch.

Photographer:
William
Juteau



State Editor:
William
"Doc"
Schmitz

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Editor: William "Doc" Schmitz
Photographer: William Juteau

2004-2005 State Officers

Commander:
James Vinsonhaler
Sr. Vice Commander:
James McNally
Jr. Vice Commander:
Donald Doell
Judge Advocate:
Philip C. Schiffman, PSC
Surgeon:
Robert Barnhart
Quartermaster:
Jim Longendyke
Adjutant:
Art Koch III, PSC
Chaplain:
Rev. Edward R. P. Kane
State Chief-of-Staff:
Robert Stinger
Inspector:
Jack Haight
Patriotic Instructor:
James Wilson

POLICY

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NYS Overseas Veteran
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Donald Doell Junior Vice Commander



**Donald Doell
Jr. Vice Commander**

I feel that it is an exciting time of year in our country. There is Election Day, Veterans Day, and despite my service in the Army, I will mention the Marine Corps' Birthday, as well as the anniversary celebration of the Statue of Liberty. It is an exciting time not just for veterans but also for all Americans. With a closely contested Presidential race, both veterans and active duty personnel have been thrust into the forefront of the public eye. Perhaps, both can benefit from the exposure after the dust of the election has cleared.

Veterans Day is a time for reflection and awareness for everyone to remember those who gave all. Some of our citizens still believe that there is no price to be paid for freedom. It is part of our mission to let them know that the bill has been paid and still is being paid by the men and women that wear the military uniform

of the United States of America.

Commander Vinsonhaler and I attended the VFW National Ladies Auxiliary annual ceremony at the Statue of Liberty on October 28, 2004. We should be proud of our ladies, President Terri McGarr represented a very large contingent of ladies from New York during the presentation of colors. It was a very pleasant ceremony on a very pleasant day.

Then, after all that, we are headed straight into the holiday season. I hope that everyone enjoys their time with family and friends. But, let us be thankful for and give blessings to those who are deployed overseas to help ensure our safety as well protect our freedom.

Which would then bring us to the Mid-Winter Conference. (Time flies when you're having fun.) Legislation and Veterans Service, many times, deal with the same issues. So with Commander Vinsonhaler's dedication to Veterans Service and Legislative Chairman Karl Rohde's love for all things political, it should prove to be an enlightening as well as successful conference. As an added bonus to the conference, the National Representative will be our Commander-in-Chief John Furgess.

Until then, be well, enjoy the holidays; and I look forward to seeing you in Albany in January.

Yours in comradeship,
Don Doell



Fall Conference is still humorous at times. L-R: Philip C. Schiffman, P.S.C. and Judge Advocate, and Donald Doell, Junior Vice Commander.



Note the hats! Who's the real State Quartermaster? L-R: Quartermaster Jim Longendyke, PSC, and Robert Barnhart, Surgeon - Political aspirations?

James McNally Senior Vice Commander



**James McNally
Sr. Vice Commander**

DID YOU VOTE? Voting is the one opportunity each of us has to determine the future of our government. Democracy only works when we, the people, make it work. That means voting for the candidate or issue of our choice. It is one thing to vote and then criticize; it is another to criticize not having voted. We usually pay more attention when we have an interest in something. If you take the time to vote, you have a stake in the outcome and will usually stay more informed. As a veteran and a citizen, it is your duty and right to vote.

Our Fall Conference was just held in Saratoga, NY. In the lull between the informative meetings and our Saturday evening dinner, I had the chance to make a quick visit to the historic Revolutionary War battlefield just outside the village of Schuylerville, formerly Saratoga. This key battle took place on October 7th, the same time as our conference. The American

forces stopped the British advance here and along with the battle at Oriskany, convinced the world that America was a force to be recognized.

The main speaker, Past National Commander Cooper T. Holt, stated that there are more veterans eligible to join our organization now than after WW II. This surprised me a little. We must try to make these veterans aware of our organization. As one office from Nebraska put it, "Community Activities Build Membership - Membership Builds Community Activities". While your members are out doing community service such as assisting the Salvation Army ring Christmas bells, volunteering on Make a Difference Day, or selling Poppies on Veterans Day, ask people you meet if they have served. If they have, invite them to join our organization.

I wish to thank the following: MIA-POW Vice Chairman Steve Brundage for inviting me to witness the District 2 team put on their ceremony at the Elks Lodge in Red Hook, NY. The Hudson Mohawk CC Commander and President for the good time I had at their testimonial held at the Poestenkill Post, where I met a group of fellow Shellbacks. Commander Czek and President Schweitzer for the generous hospitality at the 49th Anniversary of Post 9591, and the Mohawk Adirondack CC for a great dinner at the Rome, NY Post.

This is our organization - let's keep it strong.



Fall Conference 2004 - L-R: Donald Doell, Department Junior Vice; James McNally, Department Senior Vice; and Cooper T. Holt, Past Commander-in-Chief.

National Home meeting was held Saturday, October 9 at 10:45 A.M. to organize a trip to the National Home in Eaton Rapids, July 20, 21, and 22, 2005. Hotels, bus transportation, meals, and scheduled events are being planned. Each District will coordinate this effort to maximize a successful trip. Contact your District Commander President for details. Future meetings will be held at forthcoming Department Conferences.

Legislative Chairman

Karl Rhode



Karl Rhode
P.S.C. & Legislative Chairman

It is time to start thinking about our Department Legislative Agenda. At the Fall Conference, the State Legislative Committee met to begin putting together the agenda. For the first time, the State PAC Chairman Mike Pisapia and the Ladies Auxiliary Chairman Lisa Rapale were in attendance. Mary Burgess the Auxiliary Legislative Chair had a meeting to attend but was invited. We must work as a team and show our strength through members.

We put together a preliminary agenda that we will refine by the time you read this article. However, it is important that you, the membership, understand the direction that we are going with this term's agenda. It was extremely rewarding that with all the legislative issues that are pending and all the legislative concerns that were put forward that the NYS Legislative Committee felt that the Flag Amendment and keeping God in our pledge should be the lead item in our agenda. There was major concern that our National organization had continuously dropped the ball on this vital issue.

- 1) Support Flag Amendment and keeping God in the pledge.
- 2) Ask our elected state legislator to assist in monitoring the VA Facilities in the state.
- 3) Identify, track and monitor homeless veterans. There is a concern that non-veteran homeless are receiving veteran benefits.

4) Increase the number of veteran nursing homes in the state.

5) The needs of our guard and reserve components must be addressed.

I gave a report from the National Legislative meeting in Washington that I attended 9/11-9/14. It was a very busy and informative meeting. The first day we wrote the National Legislative Agenda. The next two days were spent on the hill visiting all of New York's congressional offices. Please read the National Agenda that is at the conclusion of this article.

2004-2005 VFW National Legislative Priority Goals

VA Budget

Ensure that adequate funding is authorized and appropriated for VA health care so that the system can properly fulfill its obligation to care for all of our nation's sick and disabled veterans.

Further, authorize and implement the mandatory funding of veterans' health care to ensure fully sufficient funding on a regular and timely basis.

Education

Authorize and fully fund a GI Bill for the 21st Century that provides service members the full cost of tuition, fees, books,

supplies and living expenses for attendance at any institution of learning of their choosing.

Repeal the \$1,200 pay reduction for participation in the Montgomery GI Bill educational benefit.

Guarantee that the educational benefit for the Guard and Reserve be increased so that it is proportional with the active duty benefit and that it be regularly increased in accordance with the active duty benefit.

Military Retirees

Ensure that Congress authorizes and fully funds legislation allowing all eligible disabled military retirees to receive their full military retirement pay and full disability compensation without offset.

Additionally, prevail upon the Congress and Administration to enact a law ending the offset between the Survivors Benefit Program (SBP) and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC).

Military quality of Life Issues

Increase the annual pay of armed forces members to equal the pay of their civil service counterparts.

Obtain increased funding for improving active-duty housing and work facilities.

Secure health care and retirement benefits that recognize today's essential contributions of our National Guard and reserve component members.



National Convention draws a crowd, let's gather again at the Legislative Conference.

Bowling Chairman

Wilbur A. Gray

The Department of New York Veteran of Foreign Wars 42nd State Bowling Tournament will be hosted by the Waterloo Memorial Post 6433 and its Ladies Auxiliary.

The bowling will be held at the Sunset Lanes in Geneva. All doubles and singles will be held on each Saturday, starting April 23rd, April 30th, and May 7th. The times for these events are 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Team events will be held on each Sunday, starting April 24th, May 1st and May 8th. Times for these events are 10:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

This year's tournament directors are Bill and Karen English. They have invited any Post that has a Men's Auxiliary to bowl along with the Post teams or make up their own team.

See you in Waterloo.

Respectfully submitted,
Wilbur A. Gray

State Surgeon

Robert E. Barnhart

Disaster Relief Fund – Hurricanes in Florida

As you are aware from the news, Florida has been hit very hard by four hurricanes in the past 32 days. Many of New York's senior citizens (and Veterans) have homes in this state. Many people have lost everything or have been devastated by the damage. Our Department Office has had several inquiries if we are doing anything to help.

The VFW always pulls together to assist those in need – in keeping with our motto, "Honor the Dead by Helping the Living". We most recently supported those affected by the ice storms in upstate New York and then September 11th. We can do it again!

Let's all rally together to assist those affected at this terrible time. Please use the bottom portion on this memo to send in a donation as soon as possible! This donation can also be included in a subsequent Community Activities Report.

Thank you for your anticipated support!

Bob Barnhart

Disaster Relief Fund Donation

Post # _____ Check # _____ Amount: \$ _____

Earmark your check "DISASTER RELIEF FUND"

Please send your donation to:

VFW State Headquarters
1044 Broadway
Albany, NY 12204



The job as Department Surgeon lets you hang around with some pretty people. L-R: Robert Barnhart, Department Surgeon; wife, Karen; Gloria Siesta; and Sharon Connolly, P.D.P. and Department Auxiliary Secretary.



Members American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, plus Bill Schoenmuller is with C.W.V. Charles Arnot is also a member of C.W.V. and Ben Singer is Senior Vice Commander County of J.W.V. You can see we all believe in the concept of the Veterans. We all explain the meaning of Veterans to schoolchildren. The Eagle Scout is Chris Metzger, Troop #119, posing with Metzger are Bill Schoenmuller, Historian of Glendale Post 104; Charles Arnot Commander; and Benjamin Singer, Whitestone Post 4787 VFW – the best Post in Whitestone, NY.

Commander's Special Project

As part of phase two of the Commander's Special Project, "Cell Phones for Soldiers", Henry Sanchez, Department Chairman, delivered 179 used cell phones to "Cell Phones for Soldiers" at a Make a Difference event at Abington High School in Abington, MA, on Saturday 23 October 2004.

Present were the founders of "Cell Phones for Soldiers", Brittany and Robbie Bergquist as well as their father, Bob Bergquist. Brittany, Robbie and Bob expressed their "sincere gratitude" for our participation in the program and for everything we are doing to help the cause.

Henry has stated our goal is to deliver over 5,000 cell phones to the program before the Department Convention in June. "I believe this to be aggressive but certainly not unrealistic".

We ask that your reach out to local businesses, churches and Chambers of Commerce to enlist their assistance. Remember, if you ship phones directly to Cell Phones for Soldiers, please send a report on the number of phones you shipped and when.

"Cell Phones for Soldiers" was created by **Robbie and Brittany Bergquist of Norwell, MA**. After reading a story about a soldier who ran up a huge phone bill calling home from Iraq, these two teenagers decided to help out. They started by opening an account and donated \$21.00. They are collecting donations of money, prepaid calling cards, and **old cell phones** to be recycled.

Their cause has motivated people and businesses around the country to donate to this worthy cause. Their goal is to allow every serviceman and woman to be able to call home for free.

Please visit their website at www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com to see how you can help.

VFW Points of Contact:

Henry Sanchez, Chairman – 315-451-0811/9676,

VFWHANK@YAHOO.COM

Edward Hedin, Co-Chairman – 845-427-2633

Rick Gales, Co-Chairman – 516-437-7329



Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi today announced that the Bush Administration will expand Benefits for all former POWs with strokes and common heart diseases

"This is an issue that has been studied and debated too long," Principi said. "We have scientific studies supporting the association of these illnesses to the military service of our former POWs."

The secretary, who oversees the operations of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), announced the new benefits in a speech tonight at a National Convention of the American Ex-Prisoners of War.

The Administration's decision benefits former POWs with strokes and most heart diseases. Those veterans will be automatically eligible for disability compensation for those common ailments, and their spouses and dependents will be eligible for service-connected survivors' benefits if

these diseases contribute to the death of a former POW.

In September 2003, Principi launched a nationwide outreach effort to identify and provide benefits to the estimated 11,000 former POWs who were not receiving VA disability compensation or other services. There are about 35,000 living ex-POWs.

The secretary also has urged Congress to change federal law that required that former POWs must be detained for at least 30 days to qualify for the full range of POW benefits.

The Administration's new decision will add to the list of 16 medical problems that VA presumes to be linked to the military service of former POWs. The new rules are likely to take effect on October 7, 2004.



Herkimer County WW II Veterans return home from an expense-free trip to the WW II Memorial. The 54 Veterans and their families were invited to attend a dinner in their honor at VFW Post 4915 in Herkimer, NY. The returning Veterans had nothing but praise for the treatment they received from the Red Cross and VFW Post 4915. A second trip to the Memorial will take place in April 05 for 54 more WW II Veterans. All expenses were sponsored by the members of the community to support our American Red Cross and our Veterans.

CUB SCOUTS GET FLAG INSTRUCTION



On October 9th, at the Sgt. John W. Cooke VFW Post 395 flagpole on Lake Avenue in Saint James, a flag raising instruction was held for the Wolf Cub Scouts of St. James Pack 228. Honor Guard member Red Morgan conducted the instruction, assisted by members of the Post and Cubmaster Steve Ochs. About 12 Cub Scouts were instructed in the correct way to raise and lower the U.S. flag, how to fly the flag at half staff, and the meaning of the POW flag. The Post's Drummer Les Olsen was on hand to provide some examples of drumbeats relating to our nation's colors, such as "to colors" and "retreat".

SAINT JAMES DAY

Saint James Day was a great success, with a large amount of poppies distributed, with the money collected for the benefit of veterans.

Pictured above (L to R) are Joe DeFilippo, Post Quartermaster Dominic Ercolano, and Lou Bruno of the AMVETS Post 55.



Post #8213 Somers and Boy Scout Troop #228 established a "Flag Drop" – L-R: Martin Rowe, Sr. Vice Commander; Michael Pasciolla, Commander; Timothy McArdle, Adjutant; Robert Lange, Jr. Vice Commander; John Sullivan, Past Commander; and Boy Scout, Joseph Bauer.

2005 Schedule of Events

January 8, 9 10

Legislative Conference, Albany

To Be Announced

State Dues Round Up

April 15, 16, 17

Spring Conference, Syracuse

April 24 to 30

Commander-in-Chief's Trip

June 22 to 26, 2005

State Convention Buffalo



To: All Districts, County Councils and Posts
 Re: Department of New York POW-MIA Fund

Dear Comrades,

Once again, it is time for us to ask, have you forgotten, or should we say, lest we forget.

Each year the Department of POW-MIA program attempts to collect \$5,000. Why? Because this is our personal commitment to the National Alliance of Families for those missing in action from all wars. This money allows them to operate for another year. They go to Washington and fight for the fullest possible accounting. They update the web site, they send our updates on recent news of what they and our search teams are accomplishing.

We do not think this is a lot of money to ask for. We seek a mere ten cents per member, of course, anything beyond that will be appreciated. We, as veterans, owe this to the families. They do the fighting, we supply the support.

Please make all checks out to Department of New York and in the memo part put POW-MIA Fund. Mail all checks to:

Vinnie Esposito
 3758 Sarah Rd.
 Wantagh, NY 11793

We thank you in advance for your support on behalf of the families.



Vinnie Esposito
 Department POW-MIA Chairman



Steve Brundage
 Department POW-MIA Vice Chairman

**TESTIMONIAL DINNER
 HONORING
 VINNIE SIESTA**



Mid-Winter Conference
 Wolf Road Marriott
 Sunday, January 9, 2005

Cocktails 6:00 to 7:00 (Cash Bar)

Dinner at 7:00 P.M.
 Chicken Breast Dinner

Cost: \$30.00 per person

Vinnie was the Department Photographer from 1974 to 2004. Please join us in recognizing Vinnie for his 30 years of service to the Department of New York Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary.

Make checks payable to: Dept. of NY VFW
 Reservation Deadline: December 20, 2004

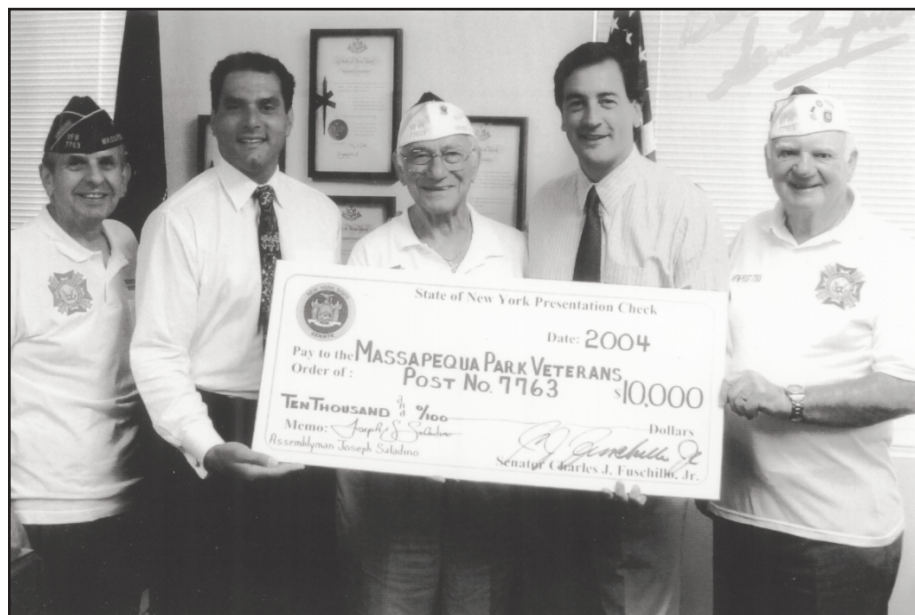
Name: _____ Number Attending: _____

Address: _____ Amt. of Check: \$ _____

Return this stub and payment to Dept. of New York VFW,
 1044 Broadway, Albany, NY 12206. Deadline: December 20, 2004.



Post #7462, Piermont – Twenty-nine Post and Auxiliary members visit the WW II Memorial in D.C.



At a meeting with State Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr., 8th Senate District and Assemblyman Joseph Saladino on September 3, 2004, a grant for \$10,000 was presented to VFW Post 7763 Massapequa Park, NY, for the replacement of the outside rear staircase. The grant was obtained through the efforts of Past Commander Lou Pisano and Senator Fuschillo. Pictured left to right are Commander Richard Begandy, Assemblyman Joseph Saldino, Past Commander Lou Pisano, Senator Fuschillo and Past Commander Steve Piller.

**CROWLEY RENAMES VA CLINIC FOR
 DECEASED MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT
 THOMAS P. NOONAN**



At the John V. Daniels, Jr. VFW Post 2813 (L-R): Vice Commander Bill Clausman, PPC 2813; Diane Ballek, Aide to Assemblywoman Nolan; Congressman Crowley; Eric Gioia, NYC Council; and Regis Quirin, Judge Advocate Post 2813.



Post #395, St. James – Enjoying a moment after the Memorial Day Ceremonies: Comrade Ed Farrell, flanked by LCPL's Paul Kaplon (left), and Douglas Butera (right).



**VFW NATIONAL HOME
FOR CHILDREN**

**Trustee Garrett Attends
Quarterly Board Meeting**

Eaton Rapids, MI – Appreciation and resolve were the focus of the VFW National Home for Children Board of Trustees during their quarterly meeting held Friday, October 22, 2004 on the National Home campus. District 2 Trustee Mel Garrett participated actively, continuing his service to the Departments of Europe, New Jersey and New York.

The presence and support of VFW and Ladies Auxiliary national leadership was a great source of appreciation and excitement for the Board of Trustees and staff. National President Jo Anne Ott returned to the National Home for the second time this fall, bringing with her Trustee and National Secretary/Treasurer Celia Davis and National Senior Vice President Sandy Germany. National Senior Vice Commander Jim Mueller represented Commander-in-Chief John Furgess.



P.S.C. Mel Garrett instructing at O.T.I.

“It means so much to the staff to have the national leadership on campus to serve on the board of Trustees in guiding policy and decisions,” said Patrice Green, Executive Director.

Led by then President Lewie B. Cooper, the 17-member Board of Trustees worked with resolve on plans for continued fiscal improvement of the National Home budget while maintaining the necessary quality of care.

“Donations are up 76% from last year at this time, a trend we hope to continue to get the National Home back on a solid fiscal foundation,” Green said.

Garrett joined the board of Trustees in welcoming four new members, including District 3 Trustee Ronald G. Stensland of Pennsylvania, District 6 Trustee Dorothy Verrill of Missouri, District 7 Trustee David Schmid of Wisconsin and District 10 Trustee Roy Ator of Texas.

Trustee Garrett reported for duty on Thursday, October 21 as a member of the Development and Public Relations committees of the Board. Garrett’s term runs until 2007.

The VFW National Home for Children is governed by a Board of Trustees elected from Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary members who are Life Members of the National Home. There are 12 elected Trustees and five ex-officio members from the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary. The Trustees are elected for six-year terms and meet quarterly to conduct their responsibilities of oversight and policy setting. Duties of the Trustees also include traveling, speaking and fundraising in support of the National Home.

Since 1925, the VFW National Home for Children has been providing for the children and families of our nation’s veterans, while at the same time serving as a living memorial to our nation’s heroes. For more information on the National Home, please call (517) 663-1521 or visit our web site at www.vfwnationalhome.org.

Buddy Poppy 2004 Fall Conference Report

Buddy Poppies have been a solemn remembrance to those who sacrificed their lives, so we can enjoy the freedoms our country has continued to enjoy since our founding. There is no better way of demonstrating, “We Remember”, than wearing a Buddy Poppy. Even with this knowledge, we elude reaching the million purchase of Buddy Poppies by a substantial amount.

Considering the final purchase of Buddy Poppies for 2004 by Department of New York was slightly over 570,000 with the acquisition of Buddy Poppies increase from \$115.00 to \$130.00 per thousand, the Buddy Poppy Goal for Department of New York has been reduced by \$300,000. Department of New York Buddy Poppy Goal has been established at 700,000, which should be more of an attainable goal.

Every Post throughout New York State should strive to distribute Buddy Poppies during the entire year in order to assist your Welfare Fund. This fund is designed to help members within your Post who are in need

of assistance. Therefore, strive to be prepared to assist by distributing Buddy Poppies.

To date, only 117,000 poppies have been purchased. This is a 4,000 reduction from last year at this time.

Remember, Buddy Poppies can only be ordered through Department of New York for Veterans or Memorial Day. If planning to receive Buddy Poppies for Veterans Day, your order must be received by Department of New York no later than Friday of next week in order to guarantee on time delivery.

Only you can help in reaching 700,000 Buddy Poppy Goal. With your assistance, this goal will be attained.

Good Luck on your Buddy Poppy Drive.

This concludes the Buddy Poppy Report for Department of New York 2004 Fall Conference.

Yours in Comradeship,
Fred P. Schwally
Department of New York
Buddy Poppy Chairman

New Department Web Site

Comrades,

I am in the process of creating a new web site for the Department. The intention is to make the web site useful to both members and non-members. Much of the work has been done, but there is still a lot more to do. I hope to have the new site online on January 1st.

Part of the site will be information similar to what appears in the State Directory. Recognizing that many members do not have an opportunity to attend all meetings, other parts of the site will contain notices and other information, which is normally mailed from Department. I believe it is important for members to be able to contact officers and committee chairmen at all levels and for non-members to obtain information about the organization and about Posts across the state.

I have been advised that there are spammers who search web sites in order to obtain e-mail addresses. Because of that, I will not list anyone’s personal e-mail address unless given permission to do so. If you have a web site or an e-mail address that you would like listed, please let me know. You can send me a note at Department Headquarters or e-mail me at joe@vfwny.com.

Yours in comradeship,
Joseph Bernstein
Membership Director



O.T.I. instructors have to go to school, too. As you see, it’s serious business. L-R: Joseph Bernstein, Membership Director, and P.S.C. Art Koch III, Department Adjutant.

GUIDE DOG FOR A VET PROJECT

At the August meeting, we had the pleasure of having a briefing by Mike Seargent, Director of Field Operations and Program Development of the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Inc. Mike, a SAR Vietnam veteran and a Florida resident, had traveled to the National Headquarters of the Guide Dog Foundation in Smithtown to select suitable dogs-in-training for veterans currently in need of guide dogs. One of these veterans will be sponsored by Post 395, under our new Guide Dog For A Veteran Project, approved at our July meeting.

Mike gave an outstanding briefing, giving us a real sense of the procedures and training that the dogs and veterans undertake together and fielded many questions at the end of the session.



Mike Seargent (L) and Jeff Bressler (R) of the Guide Dog Foundation with Commander Woltman.

FALL CONFERENCE



General Session – Fall Conference



Post #6251, Cheektowaga – center-Edward Sitek receives a National Award for Community Service; left-Cooper T. Holt, Past Commander-in-Chief; and right-Department Commander Jim Vinsonhaler.



Sharon Connolly accepts DMZ Award in memory of her deceased husband, former Department Surgeon Neil, presented by Department Commander Jim Vinsonhaler.

Receiving donations for Commander's Special Project – L-R: James McNally, Senior Vice; Cooper T. Holt, Past Commander-in-Chief; Commander Jim Vinsonhaler; Henry Sanchez, Special Projects Chairman; District #3 Commander Joseph Brooks and Donald Doell, Junior Vice Commander



(Center) District #4 Commander Anthony DeSalvatore turns in membership to Department Commander Jim Vinsonhaler (left) and (right) Past Commander-in-Chief Cooper T. Holt.

Judge Advocate

Philip C. Schiffman

You have requested that I answer the following question: What procedure is a Post required to take to become affiliated with a County Council of its choice when the County Council it had formally been affiliated with has been dissolved?

Since the Department of New York By-Laws makes no provision for this kind of situation, we look to the National By-Laws for guidance. (See Article XVI, Section 1:00 of our Department By-Laws) Section 303 of the National By-Laws – Affiliation: Disaffiliation provides as follows... A Post in a County where a Council cannot be organized may affiliate with the nearest Council by application to and acceptance in said Council, subject to the approval of the Department Council of Administration. The Post would, prior to making such an application, pass a motion to become so affiliated.

In view of the fact that the County Council with which the Post had been affiliated with, has been dissolved, and the Council's Charter having been surrendered, any Post, which formally was apart of the dissolved County Council, may take the above steps to once again be a part of a County Council.



COLOR GUARD MEMBERS, PRIVATE ADOLPH BLOCK POST 1305, MINEOLA

From left to right: members Tony Bernardo, Gary Randone, Gerry

More Legal Issues Regarding Buddy Poppies

It was related to me that you had apparently created a bit of excitement at the National Organization Convention by displaying and giving away a more "Modern Version" of the Buddy Poppy.

You had advised me at the last County Council meeting that you are aware that the Buddy Poppy is owned and trademarked by the National Organization of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Inc. and has the exclusive right to manufacture and distribute the Buddy Poppy. (See Section 711 of the National By-Laws and Section 711 of the Manual of Procedure).

In that conversation, you indicated that you were prepared, if need be, to defend litigation for infringement of that copyright.

I tell you in all candor not to get caught up in litigation in the defense of your position with respect to the Buddy Poppy.

I would urge you, as well as anyone else sympathetic to your position with respect to Buddy Poppy, to handle the situation in the right way.

That right way would be to submit a resolution

through channels, setting forth in that resolution the changes which you wish to make in the manufacture and distribution of the Buddy Poppy.

I anticipate that you are going to encounter a lot of opposition to the changes you propose. This, notwithstanding, that in our conversation you did relate to me that there appears to be universal acceptance of this new poppy.

Further, I do not feel that you are getting the best kind of legal advice in accomplishing your goals with respect to the manufacture and distribution of the Buddy Poppy.

Rather than go to the expense of litigation, let me suggest that you and those who believe in your cause, would be well advised to spend those dollars promoting the changes in the National By-Laws Section 711 and Section 711 of the manual of Procedure, by way of a resolution.

Philip C. Schiffman, PSC
Judge Advocate
Department of New York



Rocco Moretto when he received the Legion of Honor from the French Government. Rocco is a member of Post 2348 of long Island City, NY. He was a member of the 1st Div. that landed on Omaha Beach, June 6. Rocco was one of only 100 D-Day Vets from across the country that was chosen for this award.



Part of the Commander's hospitality hard at work?



**POST #536
FLUSHING, NY**

Commander Carl J. Winter at our last meeting, September 14, 2004, just initiated his son, Charles Winter to full membership in Post 536. He is a Vietnam Vet, five years in the Air Force. The Post just lost our Chaplain Bob Romer.

Membership Chairman

Allan E. Davenport

The V.F.W. Needs You...

The membership in our organization has been dropping every year in the last decade. The Department of New York had a membership of over one hundred thousand a decade ago; and now, we are under ninety thousand. Realizing that the Veterans that served in World War II and Korea are leaving us every day, we need a better way of recruiting. Excuses are not the solution; the solution to get back to the place we were can come from you.

The reason the V.F.W. was formed was to fight for our rights, and it still is. The more strength in numbers we have, the more our Government will listen to our pleas to save our rights and benefits.

I ask that you, the member, ask your neighbors, friends and relatives that served in harm's way, as you did, to join the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Every one of

us comes in contact with Veterans everyday, but we don't include them. Guess what? When they are asked, they mostly always say that NOBODY EVER ASKED THEM TO JOIN. Please, ask them.

This is a request to all members, regular or life members, active or not. I AM SPEAKING MOSTLY TO THE MEMBER THAT DOESN'T GO TO THE POST OR GO TO MEETINGS, BUT DOES THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO BELONG. Please help us out and recruit a member, or a few members, or whatever you can.

Now the hard part. If you recruit without an application, that is OK; someone will finish that part for you. Get in contact with someone from your Post, hopefully the Quartermaster, get the cost of the first year's dues; and that's it. The information you will need to collect from the new member will be shown in a membership form below. That information, the dues, and a copy of DD214,

or whatever other proof he or she has, (remember, the Korean War was 1951-1953; but we honor service in Korea from 1949 until now). The veteran currently serving in harm's way now needs only that he is there; and his folks, for example, can sign him up with a letter home from him; therefore, making the envelope the proof of his service.


Now, if you can't get help from anyone from your Post or you area, then write me; and I assure you that they will become members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. If you can't get information about the cost of dues from anyone, let's call it \$20.00 for the first year, And if you haven't paid the dues yet, PLEASE DO THAT NOW, ALSO. We need you to help.

Your State Membership Chairman,
Allan E. Davenport, P.O. Box 17, Troy, NY 12182,
518-238-9393

Branch of Service: <input type="checkbox"/> Air Force <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Army <input type="checkbox"/> Marines <input type="checkbox"/> Navy <input type="checkbox"/> Coast Guard		VFW Membership Application VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES		Current Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Active Duty <input type="checkbox"/> Reserve <input type="checkbox"/> National Guard	
Name <u>JONES</u> <u>JAMES</u> <u>H.</u> (Type or Print) Last First Middle					
Present Address <u>123 RIVER ROAD</u> <u>COHOES</u> <u>N.Y.</u> <u>12147</u> Street and No. City State Zip					
Date of Birth <u>7-10-45</u> SSN <u>123-07-6431</u> Phone <u>518-523-0761</u>					
E-mail _____					
Foreign Service from: <u>10-10-67</u> to <u>11-1-68</u> Date Date					
Where <u>VIETNAM</u>					
Name of Campaign Ribbons or Medals <u>VIETNAM CAMPAIGN</u>					
Hometown/Permanent address: _____ Street and No. City State Zip					
Post No. <u>163</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Reinstate <input type="checkbox"/> Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Life (see back) <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer (Please attach MCR form)					
Old Post No. _____ ID # _____					
I have investigated the character and campaign medal service of the applicant and hereby endorse him/her as eligible and worthy of membership in the VFW.					
Recruiter Card No. <u>1236743Z</u> Recruiter Signature: <u>Your Name</u>					
Recruiter (Please Print) <u>YOUR NAME</u> Date <u>10-12-04</u>					

(NATIONAL COPY - SUBMIT WITH TRANSMITTAL FORM)

I want to pay my membership fee by credit card.
 (Not valid in non-direct dues states for annual membership.)
 MasterCard VISA Discover
 Card No. _____
 Exp. Date ____/____/____ \$ _____
 Signature _____

<p>TEMPORARY RECEIPT</p> <p>Membership Application - Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.</p> <p>Received from _____ Date _____ \$ _____</p> <p>Application for Membership in Post No. _____</p> <p>City and State _____</p> <p>Received by _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CASH <input type="checkbox"/> CHECK <input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> MASTERCARD <input type="checkbox"/> DISCOVER</p>	<p>Admission Fee paid \$ _____ Dues paid \$ _____ Date _____ 20 ____ LM Fee Paid \$ _____</p> <p>The investigating Committee has performed its duties and recommends _____ approval _____ rejection. (Signatures of Committee Below)</p> <p>_____ Committee Member</p> <p>_____ Committee Member</p> <p>_____ Committee Member</p> <p>Applicant Approved _____ Obligated _____ Date Date</p> <p>PLEASE SEPARATE FORMS BEFORE SIGNING</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VFW PLEDGE</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">In the presence of Almighty God, I do, of my own free will and accord, solemnly promise and declare that: I will bear true allegiance -- to the Constitution of the United States of America -- and I will always be loyal thereto. I do further solemnly promise and declare -- that I will comply with the Congressional Charter, By-Laws and Ritual of this order -- and I will always be loyal thereto -- that I will never wrong or defraud this organization -- nor a member thereof -- nor permit any wrong to be done to either -- if in my power to prevent it. I will never propose for membership -- any person not eligible -- nor one whom I know to be unworthy. I will never make known to anyone -- not authorized to receive it -- any of the work of this order. Should my affiliation -- with the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States -- cease in any way -- I will consider this pledge -- as binding outside the order -- as though I had remained a member of same. All this I promise and pledge -- upon the honor of a true comrade -- and a citizen of our great republic.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">  I attest that I am a citizen of the United States, that my U.S. Military Service was honorable, that I have never subsequently been discharged under other than honorable conditions, and that I believe in God. I also certify that (1) I am entitled to a campaign ribbon or medal authorized by the U.S. Government based on my overseas service or; (2) I have served overseas in Korea or; I have received Imminent Danger/Hostile Fire pay. I further give authority to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States to verify honorable overseas service entitling me to membership. Date _____ Signature _____ Questions? Simply e-mail us at membership@vfw.org. </p>
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