



NEW YORK STATE OVERSEAS VETERAN

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Veterans of Foreign Wars
of the United States



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April/May/June

Of course people are getting smarter nowadays; they are letting lawyers, instead of their conscience, be their guides. – Will Rogers

Volume 28,
Issue 3

Jack Haight Department Commander



The year is rapidly winding down. Community Service Reports are due soon. Also, it is time to get those last minute details on the programs done and knock on the doors of unpaid members. The membership team has done a fantastic job, but we are still about 4,000 behind last year. It will soon be Convention and time to hand out those White Hats.

It has been a very busy and interesting year. I want to thank all the Comrades and Sisters that received me and my wife (or Historian, when my wife couldn't make the trip), with their respect and friendship.

Election time is coming up. Don't forget that your District Commander is your voice on the Council of Administration. Elect comrades that reflect your point of view. Also, make sure to send in your election report. New York VFW lost Posts because they didn't send one in. Other Posts were lost because no delegate fees for the National Convention were sent. It is only a few dollars. Do not lose your Post. National is getting very strict on these issues.

To all my chairmen, I give a "Well Done." I know they have worked very hard, and at this point, are still working. To my hospitality crew, one more event to go.

Clyde Lewis was the oldest National Commander-in-Chief. He served as Commander-in-Chief 1949-1950. He recently became deceased and the Dept. of NY VFW was well represented at his funeral. I received the honor of being one of the pallbearers. One side of the coffin was VFW members wearing their VFW caps.

Comrades, I will see you in my remaining travels or at the Convention in Buffalo. This should be an interesting Convention.

In the photo on the left, Commander Haight is given a tour of the Brooklyn VA Hospital.

2009 Legislative Conference

Two Legislative Conferences have passed since the last issue of the *Overseas Veteran* – one in Albany and the other in Washington, D.C. The VFW has advised our elected officials about the issues that are most important to veterans.

The State Legislative Conference was a great meeting. We stormed the hill and presented the New York State VFW Legislative Agenda to a joint meeting of the Senate and Assembly Veterans Affairs Committee. The conference room was packed with few vacant seats. The officials in Albany were able to see first-hand the strength of the VFW. Remember there is power in numbers. Past Commander-in-Chief Paul Spera spoke to the gathered legislators and reminded them of their responsibility to our nation's veterans. He also thanked them for what they had accomplished in the past year on behalf of New York's veterans. Auxiliary President Cindy Campbell, National Rep Leanne Lemley and State Ladies Auxiliary Chairman Marlene Webster all addressed those assembled. State Commander Haight asked the Legislators to listen intently to the VFW Legislative Agenda because it is a vital document that spells out the needs of the veterans of this great state. It was then my honor to present the agenda to our elected representatives for the sixth time. Following the presentation, the comrades and sisters of this great Department took time to visit their elected officials and talk up our agenda.

The beginning of April found me on a train bound for Washington, D.C. for the National VFW Legislative Conference. In the past five years, I have traveled to this conference on various different means of conveyance. and each time it is always a thrill to go to our nation's capital. Joining me for a second time on the newly expanded Legislative Committee was two past State Commanders: Mel Garrett and James McNally. On Sunday we had a busy schedule of workshop meetings that honed our

CONFERENCE, continued on page 5



Presenting the 2009 Legislative Goals in Albany, NY were: Back row, L-R: Legislative Chairman Karl Rohde, Aux. Legislative Chairman Marlene Webster and State Commander Jack Haight. Front row, L-R:) Past Commander-in-Chief Paul Spera, State Auxiliary President Cindy Campbell and National Auxiliary Conductress Leanne Lemley.

Photographer:



John Brunato



Editor:



Arnie Anderson

INSIDE this NYSOV



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** POLICY

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** **Editor** is looking for VFW oriented newsworthy articles from all levels of our VFW Organization which would be of interest to our members. Examples include: VFW sponsored functions, VFW individuals receiving or presenting awards, VFW community service projects, VFW youth activity awards, etc.

** **PLEASE e-mail your short news articles in MS Word and attach a picture to the e-mail as a separate attachment (if available) in .jpg picture format.** The picture you send can be fully captioned with names and description of event, at the top of your MS Word article. **Please include with the article: The name and phone number of the person sending the news article, in case there are questions.**

** **Editor:** reserves the right to edit any article for length or grammar and to reject any article which may be deemed not to meet current editorial needs.

** **ALL ARTICLES AND PICTURES SHOULD BE E-MAILED TO: ATAnderson@fairpoint.net** (the above e-mail address is for Overseas Veteran Newspaper information ONLY!) **E-mail subject line should have:** Post number - or - Overseas Veteran Article

** **Mail - Post, Council and District Newsletters to:** NYS Overseas Veteran, Editor Arnie Anderson, 94 Rothvoss Road, Ancramdale, NY 12503 (518) 329-7554

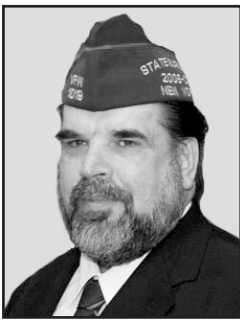
** The firm and final article submission deadlines for the next newspaper will be posted in a highlighted box within this newspaper.

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** **POSTMASTER:** If undeliverable, send form 3579 to: New York Overseas Veteran, 1044 Broadway, Albany, NY 12204.

Allan E. Davenport Sr. Vice Commander



Spring has sprung! Unfortunately our membership, and other programs, need a lift.

I realize that most of the members reading this are not the active members, but of course we wish you all were, as without membership we become an organization without the clout in Washington to get the things done for us as veterans, or the veterans of future generations.

If you get this newspaper, you have paid your dues, as a Life Member, or a regular yearly member. But I'm sure you must know someone who hasn't paid, therefore please ask them to do so. I just returned from Kansas City (our National Headquarters) with next year's programs and the need for your support.

Hope to see you at the State Convention.

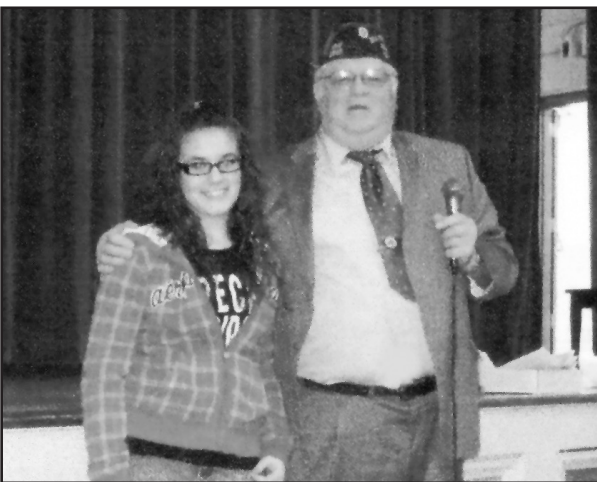
Edward Bassett Chief of Staff



Spring has sprung - well, at least down here in the south country. For you comrades in the north country, spring will get there someday. Time is running out for this year's membership program, but it is never too late to start a new Post. As I have said all year there is no reason why we cannot at least put in one new Post.

I have talked with National and they are also concerned with membership, as we are. They say if you cannot get a new Post, at least take two Posts that are in the same area and are thinking of turning in their charter in, and try to work out a plan and consolidate them into one Post - the main idea is to save the membership. By the time you read this article it will almost be Convention time - see you all in Buffalo in the summertime. As before, please feel free to contact me or a deputy anytime - we are in the directory.

Young Lady Makes Special Requests For "Her" Birthday Presents



What kind of presents do you think a teenage girl would ask for when her birthday party is just around the corner?

For Courtney Hill (shown above), she dreamed big and asked her party guests to bring presents. Presents - not for her personally - but presents which could be donated to the veterans who use the Fisher House in Albany, NY. Her birthday party guests were generous and brought \$600.00 cash, \$15.00 Target Gift Certificates, 97 pair of socks, 25 new DVDs, many assorted toiletries, along with many other items too numerous to mention.

Word of this wonderful birthday event made its way to Commander Jack Haight and on February 13th, Commander Haight went to Williamson Middle School and presented a certificate of appreciation to Courtney during an assembly.

Jack Veazy Jr. Vice Commander



We had a great Spring/Legislative Conference in Albany and are now looking forward to our State Convention in Buffalo in June. I am personally looking forward to meeting as many Comrades as I can. At that time, if you have any suggestions that might help our organization, please feel free to approach me with your issues.

I know you are tired of State Officers pushing MEMBERSHIP, but this is the backbone of our organization. If every member could try to recruit a new member or reinstate a former member, we would have a job well done.

Elections are coming up in April. Please remember to send in your Post Election Report. This is very important. Looking forward to seeing you at the Convention.

Harold Leavor State Inspector



Comrades, the beginning of April is already past, and Post, County and District Inspections are still coming in. There are still 144 Posts, 11 County Councils and 5 Districts that need to be inspected. Each Post, County, and District is required to be inspected each year. Let's try and get them done before June.

All Post election reports are due at National Headquarters by June 1, 2009. Failure to do so may result in the suspension or revoking of your Post Charter. You can either fax (1-816-968-1149) or mail the report to National Headquarters, Attention: Kevin Jones, 406 West 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111. Do not forget to send a copy to Department of New York Headquarters, Attention: Art Koch III, 1044 Broadway, Albany, NY 14202.

Post Quartermasters - Section 222 of the National Bylaws require that each Post register at least one delegate to the National Convention in the amount of \$10.00. Try and get these done early. Do not take a chance of losing your Charter.

New Post, County and District Inspection Forms for 2009-2010

The new Inspection Forms are being printed at National Headquarters sometime in April. These new Inspection forms are lengthier, and more detailed. Some of the changes you will find are under Post Funds, All Other Account Types: for instance Bell Jar, Bingo, Bar Account, etc. Also under the Post Quartermaster: date of last IRS 990 filing, along with a question regarding if the 990 form is available for public inspection. Does the Post own real property, and the name of the Title Holder. You must also have your Employee Identification Number (EIN).

All Forms are available online at WWW.VFW.ORG or WWW.VFWNY.ORG

Mail Inspection Reports to: Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Department of New York, 1044 Broadway, Albany, New York 12204. They will be stamped and dated at Department and then sent to me for comments. In the event some are mailed to my address, you will still be credited.

Post 307 Moves into 21st Century

There is a need to have the new returning veterans get involved with our organization. Clinton L. Patchen-William H. Briggs Post 307 in Rochester has elected four veterans of the Global War on Terror as the top offices in the Post.

Elected were: Commander Greg Ferguson, Sr. Vice Commander Craig Jandreau, Jr. Vice Commander James Ingerick and Quartermaster Erik Hasler.

Ranging in age from 24 to 48, they are in touch with the needs of all veterans. They all are also active members of the U.S. Army Reserves, serving with the 2-389/4 98th Division.

Lloyd Creeley

Commander Haight's Special Project: The Fisher House

Statue of: Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher



As you enter each Fisher House, the first thing you will notice is the statue of Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher. It is prominently placed near the front entrance, facing the front entrance as they still greet and welcome each and every veteran or family member into the home.

Spring Conference Presentation to The Fisher House



While Commander Haight was making his way back to New York after being stranded during a snowstorm in Chicago, IL, Sr. Vice Commander Allan Davenport got things rolling at the Department Spring Conference.

Shown in the picture above, Sr. Vice Davenport (center) presents a check to Fisher House Manager Jerry Jensen (left) while Past Commander-in-Chief Paul Spera (right) and Chairman Lloyd Creeley (back-center) look on.

Well, here it is the final issue of the *Overseas Veterans* paper for this year. I would like to take this opportunity to again thank Commander Haight for the privilege of serving as his Special Project Chairman for this year. The Fisher House is a great project for any organization to get behind.

In the three previous issues of the *Overseas Veteran*, I have provided you with all the background information about the Fisher House, who started the Fisher House and what the Fisher House does for veterans and their families. We are fortunate to have one in Albany and we look forward to the day when another can be built in New York State. Until that time, we should continue to support the Fisher House we already have.

At the Legislative Conference, I had the privilege to lead a group over to the Fisher House for a tour of the home. Everyone who went, came away impressed with everything that is done at the house. The picture below was taken in the living room and as you can see, this really does look like home.



Pictured above: (L-R) Bruce Mullenax, Paul Dyer, Jerry Jensen (Fisher House Manager), Lloyd Creeley, Jim Fields and Dennis Sullivan.

The Fisher House works on a first-come, first-served basis. A veteran who lives outside a pre-determined distance from the hospital but receiving treatments and not admitted as an inpatient of the VA Hospital, can stay with their family at the Fisher House at no cost. The same can be said when a veteran who is an inpatient at the VA or the neighboring hospital; their families can stay at the house at no cost. There is no limit as to the amount of time they can stay, as long as there is a need.

I left the Fisher House with a feeling which cannot be expressed properly in writing. Not only can these worthy individuals stay for free, but the house is more like their own homes with all the services they are offered. If you have never been to the Fisher House, I encourage you to take a few minutes out and visit Jerry Jensen (house manager) at the Fisher House and I am sure he will proudly give you a tour just like he did with our group.

At the Department Convention in June, I will be available to answer any questions about the Fisher House and I am hopeful to have some literature and contact information from the Albany Fisher House. Even though our year is winding down and the new Commander may have a different Special Project, it doesn't mean we should forget about the Fisher House. Donations can be made right to the Fisher House. Please keep this in mind because every day more and more veterans, both young and old, are in need of the VA system and the help provided to them and their families by the Fisher House. It has never been needed more.

Again, thank you for your support this year.

To-Do List Before Department Convention

There are some very important things that your Post and county council must make sure is done this year before we get to June and the Department Convention.

The first and foremost is each Post Commander should make sure a 2009-10 election report has been filed for the Post with both the National Organization and a copy filed with the Department of New York. The one you send to the Department of New York should arrive at least 30 days before the State Convention so the members of your Post are represented at the Convention through your Post, council and district delegates. If your Post files an election report late, it would be a good idea for the Post Commander or Delegate to bring a copy with them to the Convention. Last year at the State Convention, many members and Posts were not represented during the voting because an election report for the Post had not been filed prior to the convention.

The second thing that is very important is registering at least one delegate for the VFW National Convention. It only costs your Post \$10.00 and it is a requirement according to our Bylaws.

It is understandable with the economy the way it is that members are checking the

financial status and looking for ways to save money. A good investment for any Post, council and District this year is to send your officers and delegates to the State Convention to represent you and your wishes.

This year's State Convention in Buffalo is a very important one. There is a need for the officers and delegates at all levels to be present and help shape the future of our state organization. There will be some very important issues discussed and voted on, and it should be the membership of our great Department of New York who decides which direction to lead us, and you have to be there to make your vote count.

This year above all years, it is important that each County Council send at least one of the following members: Commander, Sr. Vice Commander or Jr. Vice Commander to represent your county council during the business session of the Department Convention this year in Buffalo. When roll call voting is done, the precedent has been set that the County Commander, Sr. Vice or Jr. Vice Commander vote the strength of their council.

We hope to see you in Buffalo on June 25-28, 2009.

Commander Haight Tours Brooklyn VA and Recognizes VAVS Volunteers



During his recent tour of the Brooklyn VA Hospital, Commander Haight was shown some of the diagnostic equipment that the VA uses on the veterans they treat.

So Close...Yet So Far Away...



Don Parady of West Pawlet, VT and "Bucky" Kentile of Tupper Lake, NY met for the first time in 62 years after they left the Marines in 1947.

A former Auxiliary member of Post 1653 of Granville, NY, Lori Bleau moved to Saranac Lake a couple of years ago and worked at the VFW there. Two weeks ago, she came back to visit the Post and Don asked Lori if she happens to know a Marine there by the name of Bucky Kentile. She said she would ask around and let him know... and the rest is history.

Bucky had to travel to Albany, NY for hearing aid equipment and decided to come to Granville, NY to meet his buddy from World War II. They met at Don's VFW Falvey-Fringi Post 1653 of Granville, NY for the first time since 1947. They now have each other's phone numbers and plan on staying in touch.

Pictures were taken by Maggie Shaddock and Chris Burch and it was so enjoyable to see friends who went through so much during the war, get together after so many years. They reminisced and exchanged stories for a few hours, and then Bucky had to travel back to Tupper Lake.

Don and Bucky both want to thank Lori for making this very enjoyable event happen.

Submitted by Arthur Brannigan Past Commander of Post 1653 abrannigan@comcast.net - 802-645-0473

The Argonne-Marine Park Post No. 107 is Celebrating its 90th Anniversary this Month

They have been an influential part of the community since its inception and extremely generous to the Brooklyn VA Hospital over the years. In keeping with this, they donated a TV to the respiratory clinic (for training patients to use the equipment).



L-R: James O'Mera, Steve Nefteberg and Post Commander Gray Lewis.



Pictured (L-R): Leslie, Tom, Commander Haight and José.

During his visit to the Brooklyn VA Hospital, State Commander Jack Haight took time to recognize three VAVS volunteers with a certificate which reads: "In appreciation for providing assistance and support for veterans in need and cooperation with the Department of New York Service Officers."

Hurley VFW Post 5086 Changes Name

Hurley Memorial Post 5086 has been changed to the John F. Jordan Memorial Post 5086 VFW in honor of Commander "Jack" Jordan, who served as Post Commander for over 20 years. Jack passed away while in office on March 31, 2008.

The Post Flag was dedicated during the Veterans Day Ceremony on November 11 at the Hurley Cemetery.



Pictured, L-R: Past State Commander Robert Barnhart, New Post Commander Albert J. (Jim) Cahoon and Post Sr. Vice Commander Donald Briggs.

Eastern States Conference Memorial Ceremony



Pictured, L-R: Commander Jack Haight and President Cindy Campbell remember and pay tribute to our deceased members with a salute during the Memorial Service.

The Vietnam Memorial Wall (the moving wall)

American Veterans Traveling Tribute Replica of Vietnam Veterans Memorial Knox Farm State Park, East Aurora, NY (16 miles from Buffalo) We are working on transportation from the Convention.

Ceremony Friday, June 26, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

More info at www.avtt.org

Specific info will be provided in Convention packet upon arrival to Department Convention.

Monument Dedication Ceremony VFW Strickland Post 4635

Albion, New York • December 7, 2008



The Orleans Veterans Club, in conjunction with VFW Post 4635, dedicated a new monument and flagpoles in memory of "those who served" in a formal ceremony on December 7, 2008. Keynote speaker for the event was New York State Assemblyman Steve Hawley from Batavia.

Submitted by: Joe Gehl, Quartermaster Strickland Post 4635 Albion, New York 14411 585-682-5781

New Navy Commissary Grand Opening

Gene Ratigliano, Commander of VFW Post 420 in Saratoga Springs, reported that he received a flyer for the grand opening of the new Navy Commissary in Saratoga Springs, New York on April 4, 2009 (9:00 a.m. ribbon-cutting ceremony).

The Commissary in Saratoga will take the place of the one now located on Route 5 in Scotia, New York. An Exchange (PX to the Army and Air Force guys) will be under construction in the next couple of months, as well. I thought many of the VFW members in the vicinity might like to know of the relocation and grand opening.

Veterans Upward Bound (VUB)

Post-secondary education is not specifically set up for non-traditional students, such as most former or current military service members. After spending several years serving our country, many veterans realize the importance of getting their education. However, not having been in an academic setting in years, many veterans wind up avoiding college. It is important to have a support group and some academic assistance as the veteran adjusts to school once again.

The Veterans Upward Bound program is a FREE U.S. Department of Education program created to help veterans refresh their academic skills and give them the confidence they need to successfully receive a college degree and pursue a career.

LaGuardia Community College's Veterans Upward Bound program is one of only 39 colleges and universities across the United States (and the only one in the tri-state area) funded by the U.S. Department of Education to help veterans prepare for college.

The classes are non-credited and designed to focus on short-term remedial/refresher college prep classes. We offer a range of services designed to prepare veterans for success when they enter their chosen educational program, whether it is a two-year community college, a four-year college or university, or a public or private vocational or technical school. This includes assisting veterans in applying to the college of their choice, offering assistance with financial aid, academic advice, career counseling and assistance in obtaining veteran services from available resources, including the VA. Classes currently run in the evenings on a six-week schedule. For more information and to find out if your eligible, please contact Ms. Edith Segovia at 718-482-5231.

Ron Sakonyi MAP Chairman

Since my last report, I have been kept busy fulfilling requests supporting the Adopt-a-Unit program, Memorial Commendations, Operation Uplink Telephone Cards and a request from an elementary student who wanted to provide a Penny Harvest Grant to Operation Uplink.

North Syracuse Post 7290 adopted the HHC, 527th Brigade Support Battalion, 27th Brigade Combat Team from Syracuse, New York. The Post made a commitment to support not only the troops with care packages, but on the local level to offer support to the dependents left behind when their unit deploys. I thank Post 7290 for building a relationship with your adopted unit.

Twenty telephone cards were forwarded to Dan McMahan from Grand Island Post 9249 for presentation to service members from Camp Phoenix and FOB Lindsey. Nationwide, 10,448 telephone cards were forwarded to service members during the February/March period.

There were 202,507 telephone connections made during this period. Of these, 191,949 connections were made during the free call days of February 14 and March 15 amounting to 2.3 million minutes of talk time. The next call days are May 10, June 21 and July 4.

Department of NY donations for Operation Uplink were \$7,639.64.

Under the Military Assistance Programs, 46 events were conducted consisting of 39,550 attendees and involving 29 Departments.

Nationwide, we had 50 casualties during the period with 35 requests for the Memorial Commendation. In our Department alone, we had eight of these requests. I offer my condolences to the families and friends for their loss. God bless them and all their families for their sacrifice toward the greater good.

The Unmet Needs Program provided support to 90 families amounting to \$144,008 nationwide. 123,907 military members and their families were supported through your hard work with National Military Service Programs.

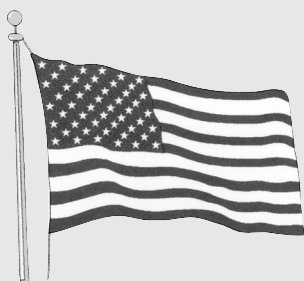
The Common Cents Penny Harvest grew from one child's desire to feed the homeless, and the past 17 years, children between the ages of 4 and 14 have been converting their natural compassion for others into action by collecting pennies and turning those pennies into grants for community organizations.

This year, students from Ms. Danielle Lichtenstein's 4th- and 5th-grade class at Nathaniel Woodhall Elementary school considered a grant to Operation Uplink. The request was made for information on Operation Uplink by 4th-grade student Ormandy Martinez to Ms. Ferguson, VFW Manager, Special Programs and Projects. Ms. Ferguson thought this would be a great opportunity for a VFW representative to talk to them. After receiving Ms. Ferguson's e-mail, I contacted Queens County Council Commander James Blount, who visited the class on Tuesday, March 31. Jim, along with his officers, gave a presentation that was well-received. They were all invited back.

Thank you, Jim, for a job well done.

Memorial Day Sunrise Services

VFW Post 7955 will be hosting **Memorial Day Sunrise Services at 5:45 a.m. on Monday, May 25th**. Post members will be joined by members of The American Legion Post 1160, local elected officials and spectators as they travel to 13 locations (War Memorials or cemeteries) in the Towns of Ancram and Copake, NY. At each location, a prayer is offered followed by a rifle volley, then by *Taps*.



Always
&
Forever



Fred Schwally Buddy Poppy Chairman

With the economy in a major tailspin more than ever, every Post Relief Fund is going to be challenged with members needing assistance throughout this great state. The sole purpose of issuing Buddy Poppies is to assist in maintaining your Post Relief Fund for just these trying times. However, in recent years the number of such distributions has been declining, with this year down from last year's totals.

Buddy Poppies are made by disabled veterans who work as a form of rehabilitation and for a small financial increase in their pockets. This program is designed to help producers, Posts and members in dire need. Your assistance in having Posts purchase Buddy Poppies will help your state, district, county and Posts plan to assist needy members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars to get over these rough times.

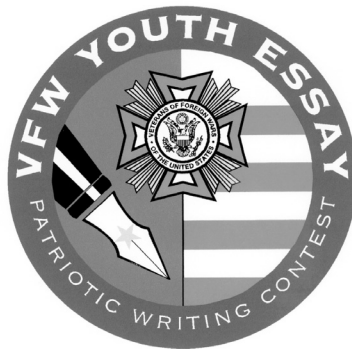
Incentives have been initiated by National to possibly get states, districts, counties and Posts to build a stronger Relief Fund. A rebate is given to districts and counties based on the number of Buddy Poppies ordered within their respective echelon.

Any Post that has a potential of reaching 100% in membership and earning a white hat, must purchase Buddy Poppies in order to be eligible to receive a white hat. As you can see, there are incentives on every level, yet a reduction in purchases of the Buddy Poppies continues.

534,000 Buddy Poppies were ordered within the Department of New York in 2008. As of **January 31, 2009**, only **226,000** Buddy Poppies have been ordered, which is 35,000 poppies behind last year at the same time.

Remember, send your Buddy Poppy order to Department of New York HQ, 1044 Broadway, Albany, NY 12204. The cost of Buddy Poppies are \$130.00 for 1,000 Buddy Poppies and \$65.00 for a minimum order of 500 Poppies.

Please help us reach our goal of **700,000** Buddy Poppies.



Patriot's Pen Essay Contest

The end of the year report from State Chairman Michael Spellman is as follows: There were 62 Posts and 31 Auxiliaries participating this past year in New York's Patriot's Pen Contest. From those Posts and Auxiliaries, there were 2,329 students participating.

There was a total of \$16,418.00 in awards presented by the Posts and Auxiliaries. Additionally, \$700.00 in awards were presented to students from county councils and \$2,441.65 in awards were presented by Districts. All eight Districts participated and the state awards were listed as: 1st place, \$500.00; 2nd place \$300.00; 3rd place, \$200.00, with each of the remaining District winners receiving \$100.00 each.

A grand total of \$23,971.57 in prizes were awarded in the Department of New York for the 2008-09 Patriot's Pen Contest.

2009 Legislative Conference



VFW and Auxiliary members filled the gallery in support of our VFW 2009 Legislative Goals at the Legislative Office Building (LOB) during the joint session with members of the NYS Senate and Assembly.

CONFERENCE, continued from page 1

skills for presenting the agenda to Senators and Members of the House. Unfortunately, we were in D.C. during a recess and all the elected national legislators were in their home states. Mel, Jim and I divided our 31 senators and representatives three ways and paid their office staffs a visit. Mel accompanied me to visit our new Senator Kirsten Gillibrand. We had a fruitful visit with her staff.

Rather than reprise both the State and National Agendas that are available online and in the "Whoville Legislative Register" I am going to note two bills that National is especially keen for us to back and to contact Washington about. There will be more on this in the next issue of the Register. If you want to receive an e-mail copy, send me a note at NYVFW_Legislative@Yahoo.com. (There is an underscore between the W and the L.) The big issue is advanced appropriations for VA health care. The VFW fully supports H.R. 1016 and S. 423, bills that would fund the VA health care system a year in advance. The second is the "Women Veterans Healthcare Improvement Act" S.597 and H.R. 1211. This legislation addresses the challenges faced by women veterans and proposes beneficial solutions to help the VA to overcome these barriers by expanding gender-specific services. Please write your support of these bills.

Legislative actions never cease. Please continue to contact those who we voted into office at all levels.

Karl Rohde Legislative Chairman



Karl Rohde (standing) has served as the Legislative chairman for the past several years and is also one of New York's "ALL-AMERICAN" Department Commanders. He has served the Department of New York in many capacities and has done a great job.

Now as a year's worth of legislative work comes down to the last couple of days, Karl presents the final plans to the Council of Administration meeting for the member's trip to the Legislative Office Building in Albany. On Monday, March 23rd, Karl led the way during a joint session with the State Assembly and Senate.

Spring Conference Photos

**Parade of Donations
VFW National Home**



Above, L-R: National Home Trustee Joan Chwalisz, Sr. Vice Commander Allan E. Davenport and Robert Wasiczko from Post 375. In the back (at podium) is National Home Chairman Robert Walton.



Above, L-R: National Home Trustee Joan Chwalisz, Sr. Vice Commander Allan E. Davenport and Dutchess CC Commander Sakima Brown. Pictured in back is National Home Chairman Robert Walton and Father Kane.

**Department
Patriot's Pen Contest Award**



Above, L-R: Past Commander-in-Chief Paul Spera, District 5 Commander Alexander (Dan) Meholczo and Sr. Vice Commander Allan E. Davenport. Pictured in back is Patriot's Pen Chairman Mike Spellman.

Membership Recognition



Above, L-R: Past Commander-in-Chief Paul Spera, District 5 Commander Alexander (Dan) Meholczo and Department Commander Jack Haight. Shown in back is Membership Chairman George Osborne.

After being stuck in the snowstorm in Chicago, Commander Haight arrived just in time to recognize Commander Meholczo for leading the state in the "District" membership totals.

**Harold Burke
Quartermaster**

We have three months left in this VFW year to complete your goals and those set by our State Commander. Let each of us make one last effort to bring the membership of your Posts, County Councils and Districts to 100% and complete the programs outlined in the Department Membership Program. Please remember All-State Awards will be awarded based on Membership and programs received with a May 15, 2009 postmark.

Post Commanders, as you complete the Post Election process it is important that your Election Report is completed and submitted so that the National Organization can mail your Membership Kits! Post Election Report forms were mailed to Post Quartermasters with instructions that they complete and return the forms directly to National Headquarters immediately following the election of Post Officers, but not later than June 1, 2009.

National will begin mailing Quartermaster's Membership Kits to those Posts who have submitted their completed Elections Reports. The weekly mailing will begin in May and are expected to be completed by the end of June 2009.

Membership Kits will include membership applications, benefit brochures and a disk containing manuals and forms. A hard copy of the Quartermaster Manual will not be provided in the Post Quartermaster Membership Kit. Membership Rosters will be mailed separately from the kit and will go out with the June Monthly Maintenance Journal (MMJ). Rosters will be generated at the close of business on June 30, 2009. If no Election Report has been received, then the MMJ and roster will be forwarded to the Department.

Post Commanders are reminded that each Post is required to register, in advance, at least one delegate to the National Convention by the payment of a fee in the amount of ten dollars (\$10) per delegate. Advanced registration for the 110th National Convention should be mailed with each delegate's name and address to: Convention Registration,

406 West 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111 or you may register online at www.vfw.org

LIFE MEMBERSHIP PAYOUT. As described in the National Bylaws it has been determined that, for the 2010 membership year, the Life Membership Fund will pay out \$2.84 for each Plan A, B and C Life Member, \$3.67 for each Plan D Life Member and \$9.00 for each Plan E Life Member to their Post, Department and to National Headquarters. Payment will be made in September 2009 for all Life Members recorded as of August 31, 2009. In addition, \$9.00 will be paid in January 2010 for each Life Member processed from September through December 2009 (Plan E) to their Post, Department and to National Headquarters.

The Internal Revenue Service has implemented new requirements for filing the Annual 990 tax form. These requirements necessitate the inclusion of policy statements for all levels of our organization. The new requirements also include questions about non-financial issues within our organization. We are currently preparing said policies for adoption by the Department. Additionally, we are addressing the non-financial questions which are now a part of the revised 990 tax form. Our expectation is that the policies and responses to the non-financial questions will be completed by this office and available for distribution to each level of our organization by September 2009.

The National Organization is offering some new programs which are available to our members. The programs include; Accidental Life, Auto Insurance, Memorial Funeral Program, Financial Seminars, Long-Term Health Care, Reverse Mortgage and a Cell Phone program for members. Please visit the Department Web site at <http://www.vfwny.com> for detailed information.

If I can ever be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am at headquarters on Tuesdays and Fridays and can be reached at 518-463-7427 or anytime by e-mail at qmnyvfw@msn.com

**Melvin Garrett
State Judge Advocate**

The 2008-2009 term of office for which you were elected or appointed will terminate on Saturday, June 27, 2009 when the new State Commander is elected at the state Convention in Buffalo, New York. As prescribed in the Bylaws and Manual of Procedure, all Post elections are to be held in April, County Council and District in May and Department in June. Be very selective in your choice of those who will serve in the next year.

This year was a test of why this advice was so important. For example: during this past year, some offices changed hands, there were suspensions of Posts and members, Post charters revoked and disciplinary charges against members who were found guilty of the Bylaws. Members were removed from the membership rolls because of ineligibility. Many unsolved issues still exist.

Posts are drifting away from the reason why they are organized. It is very critical to select and appoint knowledgeable comrades to fill offices each year. I repeat – you must acquaint yourself thoroughly with the provisions of the Congressional Charter. There is only one way to stay out of trouble and that is the "VFW" way. A lot of quality time during the year was spent on solving problems that should have been spent on programs and activities. Planning and organizing is the key to success. "GOOD LUCK, COMRADES!"

**Wall That Heals
Coming to Fairport**

Perinton Memorial VFW Post 8495 has been selected to host the Wall That Heals, a half scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. along with an information center and museum to bring the message of The Wall to the Post Freedom Hill in Fairport from **August 20 through August 23.**

Local groups and dignitaries from Monroe and surrounding counties are being contacted to participate in this event. The Wall committee is chaired by Post Commander Rich Gough. For more information, visit vfw8495.org

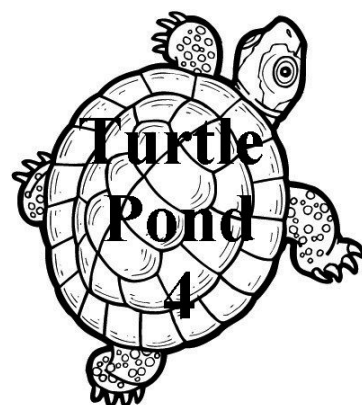
**Department of Veterans Affairs
Data Theft Litigation**

On January 27, 2009, VA agreed to pay \$20 million to settle a class action lawsuit filed after a computer, containing personal information on over 26 million veterans and family members, was stolen from the home of a VA employee. The money, less costs and attorneys fees, will be used to pay claims from veterans who can show that they suffered harm as a result of the theft.

Although VA eventually recovered the computer and the FBI stated that the confidential information had not been compromised, thousands of veterans purchased data security monitoring services; still others suffered emotional distress as a result of the theft.

The settlement was approved by the Federal Judge assigned to the lawsuit on February 10, 2009. The attorneys for the plaintiffs (VA) have stated that they will publish public notices describing the claims process. The ruling stipulates that payments will range from \$75 to \$1,500 for veterans who incurred expenses for credit monitoring or physical symptoms of emotional distress.

More information concerning the settlement may be found at www.VeteransClass.com, or calling toll-free 1-888-288-9624 or by writing to VA Settlement, P.O. Box 6727, Portland, OR 97228-6727.



Why Does VFW Send So Much Mail?

By Allen "Gunner" Kent, Adjutant General

Lately, I've been hearing some grumbling about the amount of fundraising mailings our members receive. I'd like to set the record straight. Because I really believe if everyone knew the sound reasoning behind our mailing schedule, it would clear up a lot of misunderstanding.

The fact is, dues paid by VFW members cover only 11% of the costs of VFW programs. So, without the generosity of members who respond to our fundraising mailings, America's veterans would not be able to rely on the VFW for help. It's that simple.

Think, too, about the demands we now face as an organization. Tens of thousands of troops are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan looking to us for help to make it through these tough times. Add this to an aging veterans' population, and the crisis of need becomes even clearer.

I understand that it may seem like you get mail from the VFW very frequently. But that just underscores how much we rely on you – and every VFW member – to help us fulfill our enduring commitment to "Helping Our Heroes." We don't want to turn even a single veteran away – ever.

However, please do know we are listening. And we, of the VFW, are committed to doing everything in our power to make your membership valuable, convenient and a constant source of pride.

If you're concerned about the amount of mail you receive, I encourage you to join VFW's Partners in Patriotism program – an automatic giving option that puts you in the driver's seat. You can decide how much you want to contribute each month, quarter or year. Once enrolled in Partners in Patriotism, you will no longer receive fundraising mailings from VFW National Headquarters.

Getting started is easy. Simply call Donor Services at VFW National Headquarters, 816-756-3390, Ext. 6318. Someone will personally walk you through the simple process.

Thank you for your generosity and for never forgetting the men and women of America's military. God Bless America.

Robert Walton

VFW National Home Chairman

As of February 13, 2009, Todd Marriott, facilities coordinator, reported that he is waiting for the present family to move out of House 1 so he can get it ready for a new family. He will be replacing the carpet, which will cost between \$2-3,000. At this present time, there is no extensive work needed on House 1 or 2.

In speaking with Pat Cotter, public relations, as of February 9, 2009, there is a total of 129 children in the program, 85 on campus, 37 after care and 7 in college.

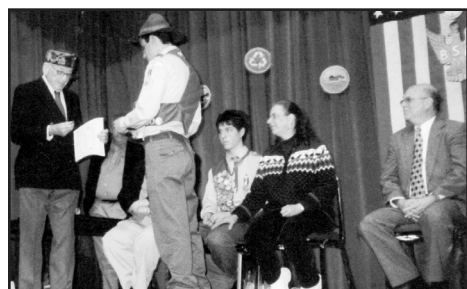
At the present time, we have received \$7,990.00 in donations for this year. \$1,000.00 of that money is going to be used to bring some children to the state Convention in June. We are still accepting donations for the National Home and trying to make our \$10,000.00 goal.

\$4,015.00 of the donations was raised on July 26, 2008 from Squeaky's annual golf scramble and the American War Dads 44.

This year's golf scramble will be held on July 25, 2009 at Big Oak Golf Course in Geneva, NY.

Finally, the National Home is currently going for their fifth van with Campbell's Soup labels. The 2008 van cost 1,600,000 labels. Save your Campbell's Soup labels and let's try to get the next van soon.

Boys will be boys...BUT... Some become EAGLE SCOUTS



For the past 50 years, Whitestone VFW Post 4784 in Flushing, NY has recognized and honored Eagle Scouts from Boy Scout Troop #1 in Queens. On February 7, 2009 they continued that tradition during a Boy Scout Court of Honor by presenting two new Eagle Scouts, Ken Chan and James Shannon, with certificates.

90th Annual State VFW Convention Buffalo, New York – June 24-25-26-27-28, 2009

Dear Comrades and Sisters:

The 90th Annual Department Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars will be held in Buffalo, New York on June 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28, 2009. The Headquarters for **both** the VFW and the Ladies Auxiliary will be at the **Hyatt Regency Buffalo**, located at Two Fountain Plaza. **VFW activities will be held at the Hyatt Regency Buffalo. The Ladies Auxiliary meetings will be held at the Buffalo Convention Center** (which adjoins the Hyatt). Convention information and forms may also be found on the VFW Web site at www.vfwny.com and the Ladies Auxiliary Web site at www.vfwnyaux.com

Joint Opening and Memorial Services

Chairman Raymond Peterson: Presentation of VFW and Ladies Auxiliary Colors and Memorial Service are scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 25, 2009 in the Grand Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Buffalo. (Assembly will be at 12:15 p.m.) Awards will be presented to Districts and Counties who carry the American Flag and their Colors. Commander/President awards will be presented to the District and County with the most Colors. Proper attire required.

Auxiliary Opening Meeting

Thursday, June 25, 2009 at 8:00 a.m. – Buffalo Convention Center.

VFW Opening Meeting

Friday, June 26, 2009 at 8:00 a.m. – Hyatt Regency Grand Ballroom.

Housing

Chairmen Dan McMahon, VFW and Kathy Macris, Auxiliary: Room rates are \$99.00 per room per night. **Room reservations** will be handled by **directly** calling the Hyatt Regency or online. The code for room reservations is **VFW1**. **General housing deadline is May 30, 2009.**

Program Ad Book and Booster Sheets

Chairman E. F. "Bud" Lembke: Check must accompany copy and contract made payable to the **90th VFW Convention Committee Corporation**. **Ad deadline is May 30, 2009.**

Registration

Chairmen Marlene Roll, VFW and Bonnie Salisbury, Auxiliary: The Registration fee of \$5.00 per delegate includes Convention Badge and Program. Register early and be eligible to win \$50.00 (VFW) and \$50.00 (AUX). Early registration deadline is June 15, 2009 – *winner need not be present*.

Commanders and Presidents Dinner

Chairmen Leonard and Patricia Marciniak and Don Gratien: Thursday, June 25, 2009 at 7 p.m. Dinner tickets are \$35 per person. Tickets must be **prepaid** by check or money order. **Dinner reservation deadline is June 15th.**

Auxiliary Presidents Luncheon

Chairman Susan Darveau: Friday, June 26, 2009 at 12 Noon – Cost is \$21 per person. Deadline June 15th.

Commanders and Presidents Reception

Saturday, June 27, 2009 (5-7 p.m.) Hyatt Regency Buffalo, Two Fountain Plaza, Buffalo, NY 14202

Directions:

From the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport (9 miles):

Take the Kensington Expressway (33W) to Goodell Street exit. Follow overhead Pearl St. signs and bear left onto Pearl Street. Hotel is approximately three blocks further on left side of Pearl and West Huron Streets.

If you are coming from:

EAST (also Rochester and Albany):

Follow I-90 West to exit #51W (Rt-33 West). The expressway will end, placing you on Goodell Street West. Bear to the left onto Pearl Street (Rt. 5 west). Hyatt Regency Buffalo is located three blocks down on the left.

WEST and SOUTH:

Follow I-90 East to I-190 North. Exit on Niagara Street and turn right (heading South). Turn left after the blinking light onto West Huron Street. Turn right onto Pearl Street. Hyatt Regency Buffalo will be on the immediate left side.

NORTH:

Follow I-190 South. Exit on Niagara Street and turn right (heading south). Turn left after the blinking light onto West Huron Street. Turn right onto Pearl Street. Hyatt Regency Buffalo will be on the immediate left side.

NEW YORK CITY:

Take I-87 North to I-90 West, and then follow directions from East (above).

Levittown/Island Trees Post 9592



Pictured, L-R: District 1 Commander Robert Spicer, Hempstead Town Supervisor Kate Murray, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bopp, PCC Jack Stein and Post Commander George Doll.

The members of Post 9592 held a fundraiser to honor GM3 Peter Bopp, who was a casualty of the Battleship Iowa. GM3 Bopp, a local resident of Levittown, perished during the Turret Two explosion in April of 1989.

In his memory, a monument will be erected in Levittown Memorial Park on Memorial Day as a result of monies raised during a recent fundraiser at Post 9592. PCC Jack Stein spearheaded the project, and with the help of his fellow comrades and Kate Murray, Hempstead Town Supervisor, was able to completely fund this worthy endeavor. This project has gained much enthusiasm and support within the community.

The Department of New York Remembers Those Who Have Served Their Country and Have Gone Before Us

IN MEMORY OF:

Clyde Lewis,
Past National Commander-In-Chief
1949-1950



IN MEMORY OF:

Earl Stock
Past National Commander-In-Chief
1987-88



IN MEMORY OF:

Herbert Brian
PSC
1966-1967



IN MEMORY OF:

Marine Lance Corporal
Blaise A. Oleski
Killed in action in Afghanistan.



IN MEMORY OF:

John W. Falvey – WWII and
Sullivan Fringi – WWII



IN MEMORY OF:

Charles F. Owen, 1931-2008, US Navy in Korea
Life Member VFW Post 1419
You Are Missed By Everyone Who Knew You.



IN MEMORY OF:

US Marine Lance Corporal Daniel Geary
3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment,
2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force –
Died March 20 while supporting combat
operations in Farah Province, Afghanistan.

IN MEMORY OF:

Stephan H. Haight, US Army. In helicopter that
was shot down in 1970.
All others were accounted for.
No remains were found for Haight.



IN MEMORY OF:

Sandra K. Davenport (1946-2002)
Wife of Sr. Vice Commander Allan Davenport.
Auxiliary member of 7062.



IN MEMORY OF:

VFW Post 1019 would like to remember
all members, Post and Auxiliary,
that have left us and the spouses
that supported them.



IN MEMORY OF:

Sgt. Jerome C. Bell, Jr.
US Marine Corps – Killed in action
September 19, 2008 in Afghanistan.



IN MEMORY OF:

Army Sergeant Christopher C. Simpson
1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment
3rd Brigade Combat Team 4th Infantry Division –
Killed in Iraq on 17 March 2009.



IN MEMORY OF:

Lance Cpl. Alberto Francesconi
Died while supporting combat operations
in Helmand province, Afghanistan.
He was assigned to 3rd Battalion,
8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division,
II Marine Expeditionary Force.

IN MEMORY OF:

Arthur Koch, Jr.
(Dad)



IN MEMORY OF:

Floyd Dennie, US Army
WWII North Africa and Europe
Died 2009.



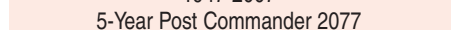
IN MEMORY OF:

Joseph Burm, USAF 1929-2009
Veteran Korea and Vietnam War Tail Gunner.
Shot down twice.



IN MEMORY OF:

James S. Ray
1947-2007



5-Year Post Commander 2077



IN MEMORY OF:

Harold M. Burke, Sr.
(Dad)
US Army



IN MEMORY OF:

Thomas B. Ronayne, Jr. – PFC, USMC
We love you and miss you.
Tom, Linda, Tommy, Billy and Joey (R.I.P)



IN MEMORY OF:

Lance Cpl. Julian T. Brennan,
died Jan. 24, while supporting combat operations
in Farah province, Afghanistan. He was assigned
to 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment,
2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force.

IN MEMORY OF:

Bernard A. Borucki 1918-1995
USAAF WWII (1939-1946)
Motor Transportation Section
Combat Bronze Star with "V" insert.



IN MEMORY OF:

Daniel Anderson
1941-2003 Norwich, NY
U.S. Air Force – Vietnam 1967



IN MEMORY OF:

VFW Post 107
Brooklyn, NY mourns the passing of our
Past Commander Howard Adrian.



IN MEMORY OF:

PFC Patrick A. Devoe II
US Army – Killed in action
March 7, 2009 in Afghanistan.



IN MEMORY OF:

Capt. Philip Dykeman
US Marine Corps – Killed in action
June 26, 2008 in Iraq.



IN MEMORY OF:

Post 9587 members Buddy Colliton (Chaplain),
George Dorris and Ray Vomero (Charter Members)
May they rest in peace.



IN MEMORY OF:

Ronald D. Anderson
1944-1971, Norwich, NY
A1C U.S. Air Force – Vietnam 1967

MIA's Returned to New York

By Bruce Mullenax



SOLDIER MISSING IN ACTION (MIA) FROM THE KOREAN WAR IS IDENTIFIED:

Cpl. Steven Lucas, U.S. Army, of Johnson City, NY was identified July 8, 2008 and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors on July 11, 2008 in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

In late November 1950, Cpl. Steven Lucas was assigned to the Heavy Mortar Company, 31st Infantry Regiment making up part of the 31st Regimental Combat Team (CT), then engaging enemy forces east of the Chosin Reservoir near Kaljon-Ri, South Hamgyong Province, North Korea. On November 29th, remnants of the RCT began a fighting withdrawal to more defensible positions near Hagaru-ri, south of the reservoir. Cpl. Lucas never made it to the lines at Hagaru-ri and was last seen on November 30, 1950.

MISSING WWII AIRMEN ARE IDENTIFIED:

2nd Lt. Irving Schechner, of Brooklyn, NY was one of 11 U.S. Servicemen, missing in action from WWII, that have been identified and returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

On December 3, 1943, Lt. Irving Schechner was part of the crew of a B-24D Liberator that departed Dobodura, New Guinea, on an armed-reconnaissance mission over New

Hanover Island in the Bismarck Sea. The crew reported dropping their bombs on target, but in spite of several radio contacts with their base, they never returned to Dobodura. Subsequent searches failed to locate the aircraft. Three hunters from Papua, New Guinea came across the aircraft wreckage about four miles from Iwaia Village.

AIR FORCE PILOTS MISSING FROM THE VIETNAM WAR ARE IDENTIFIED:

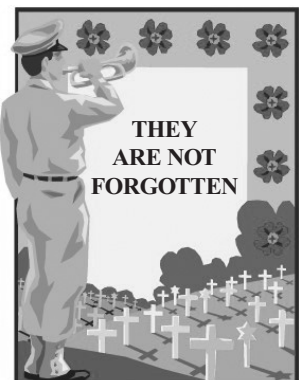
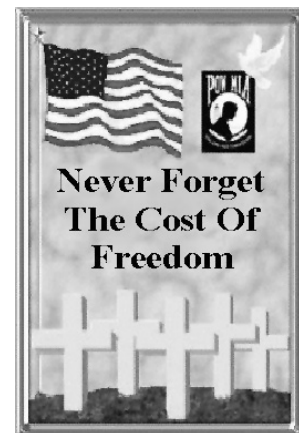
Capt. Gomer D. Reese III of Scarsdale, NY, one of two U. S. Servicemen missing in action from the Vietnam War, has been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors in the Spring of 2009, in Arlington Cemetery, near Washington, D.C.

On April 24, 1970, Capt. Gomer Reese was flying a U-17B light aircraft on an orientation flight over Xiangkhoang Province, Laos. The aircraft was struck by enemy ground fire, crashed and burned. U.S. aircraft in the area flew over the crash site and did not see any movement or receive any beeper signals or radio transmissions. In 2007, a joint team excavated the crash site and recovered human remains and crew-related items. In the spring of 2008, a team completed the excavation and recovered more human remains.

SOLDIER MISSING IN ACTION (MIA) FROM THE KOREAN WAR IS RECOVERED AND IDENTIFIED:

Sgt. Stanley E. Baylor, U.S. Army, of Webster, NY was recovered and identified Feb. 17, 2009. He was a Korean War POW-MIA. He will be buried Aug. 1st in Warsaw, NY with full Military Honors.

Sgt. Stanley E. Baylor was assigned to Company L 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division. On November 1, 1950, the 8th Cavalry was occupying a defensive position near Unsan, North Korea in an area known as the Camel's Head, when elements of two Chinese communist force divisions struck the 1st Cavalry Division's lines, collapsing the perimeter and forcing a withdrawal. The 3rd Battalion was surrounded and effectively ceased to exist as a fighting unit. Baylor was reported missing on November 2, 1950 and was one of more than 350 servicemen unaccounted for from the battle at Unsan.



PLEASE REMEMBER

Article Deadline for Next Issue:
JULY 15, 2009

You don't have to wait until the deadline to send your article. I will be setting up the paper as I receive the information from officers, chairmen and Posts.

**DEDICATED TO SERVING OUR
UNITED STATES MILITARY
AND OUR VETERANS!**

**IN GOD WE TRUST!
GOD BLESS AMERICA!**