

NEW YORK STATE OVERSEAS VETERAN

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Commander Durkin Starts New Year



Thirty-two years ago when I joined the VFW, I never thought I would be standing in front of America's elite group of combat veterans as their Department Commander. Comrades, becoming your State Com-

mander is not a task you take on without very special people helping you along the way. First, I would like to thank my bride of 37 years, BARBARA (some of you know her as my first wife) for all her support and my DAD, who has always been my hero and made me what I am today – Jim Durkin. This journey was started not so very long ago in Orlando, Florida, just outside of the

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Michael Pascal Sr. Vice Commander



Comrades, It's been a bit of a bumpy road starting out this year as your Senior Vice, but I'm sure everything will smooth out as time passes. Having to deal with some very pressing personal issues

has put me behind the eight ball, but I'm looking forward to a very promising growth spurt for the Department of New York.

It seems never-ending, the incessant push for new members, but if not for members we have no base and without a base, we will flounder and fade into oblivion. Fading into oblivion is not what I had in mind when I joined the VFW and I am not about to back away from the challenge today or ever. That

SR. VICE, continued on page 2

Marlene Roll State Inspector

Comrades,

I first would like to thank Commander Durkin for this appointment and entrusting me with this important job.

It is a New Year and that means Post inspections are due again, as they are a requirement for all Posts. In an effort to cut

costs, forms will not be mailed out to the District Commanders. We are asking Post Commanders to go on the Department website at vfwny.com and print off the inspection form. Once there you will find it by clicking the tab "Dept NY", click on "Administration", click

INSPECTOR, continued on page 3

Post-2001 Veterans Can Get \$25/\$500 for Taking a Survey

Calling all veterans of at least one deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan: If you are between the ages of 18 and 59 and can read and write English at an eighth-grade level or higher, researchers with the State University of New York-Albany and University of South Florida want to hear from you. They'll pay \$25 for the first 900 participants to take a survey, and you also get a chance to win a \$500 Amazon.com gift card.

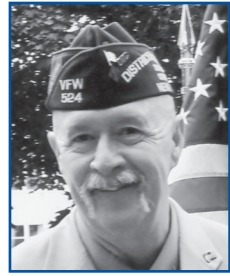
The research study, according to USF officials is to understand the impact of combat deployment on a variety of behavioral health outcomes.

The Defense Department-funded study is part of ongoing research at the universities' Restore Lives Center – a collaboration that aims to improve mental health treatment for troops and veterans.

Other ongoing studies involve the effectiveness of specialized eye movement therapy on reducing Post-Traumatic Stress symptoms and a web-based therapy for mild traumatic brain injuries. Veterans can sign up for the current survey at www.myserviceimpact.com

ARMY TIMES, 27, August 2012

William "Doc" Schmitz Jr. Vice Commander



I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my Comrades for your support and assistance throughout my involvement in our great organization. I'm not going to lecture you on membership, recruitment and retention.

Well...maybe just a little! Our membership has been steadily dropping for years and impacting every aspect of our organization. Membership

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New York State Overseas Veteran

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** ARTICLES:

Articles: Any and all articles involving and/or including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, its members, member communities, awards and activities are welcome.

** SUBMISSION & FORMAT:

Please prepare all articles in Microsoft Word (version 2003 or newer) or plain text. JPG/JPEG is the only picture format accepted and captions are appropriate. E-mail all articles and pictures as attachments with the sender's name, address and phone number in the base of the e-mail. Submissions from other sources must have complete credits such as publication name, address and dates published.

** EDITORIAL POLICY:

Inappropriate, demeaning, unduly critical articles and/or statements will not be published. Article length, inaccuracies, composition and other miscellaneous errors and/or mistakes may be edited.

Although every effort is made to maintain an honorable and accurate publication, the Department of New York and/or its staff, editor and other publication participants are not responsible for the content, views and/or positions of any article(s)/submissions.

**** ALL ARTICLES AND PICTURES MUST BE E-MAILED TO: CITadmin@VFWNY.com. They become the sole property of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of New York.**

** DEADLINE:

Deadline: Articles must be submitted by the 15th of each month...July, October, January and April.

If you are using regular mail, send the items to CITadmin, P.O. Box 116, Carlisle, NY 12031.

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Department Hospitality room at the National Convention. A few of us got together to understand what it would take to run from the floor for Jr. Vice.

As soon as I got home, I called a very good Marine friend of mine – PSC Ron Bush. I asked Ron about running for State Commander.

I did not get from him the response “you need to wait your turn” (which then was 41 years). Ron supported the idea and thought we could do it.

I then talked to two other good non-Marine friends: PSC Jim McNally and PSC Hal Burke. They also thought it was time for someone to step forward.

So I started the process of running for State Jr. Vice.

I needed help during the past four years to get here. Most of the help came from the general membership by letting me hear your issues and working on solutions. Other assistance came from comrades who stuck their necks out to help me.

First was PSC Jack Haight who asked me to be his Budget Chairman, my first state Chairmanship.

The following year PSC Allen Davenport selected me to be his State Inspector. This action put an end to our rotation system.

This year my advisor will be PSC and National Council Member Ron Bush, but on the way here I have used the council of many others, including Jim McNally, Mel Garrett, Tony Farrarese, Jimmy Longendyke, Bob Barnhart, Ben Thompson, Jim Vinsonhaler, Don Doell, Hal Burke, Karl Rohde, Harry Worth and Allen Davenport.

I have found in my work experience that if you surround yourself with people who think like you do, then you don't really need them. I will need different points of view and people who have experienced things that I have not in order for us to make good decisions. This is why I will continue to use the council of many different people within the department this coming year.

Membership – We lost more members this year in the Department and our numbers continue to fall. “WE NEED TO STOP THE BLEEDING THIS YEAR,” a quote from DOC.

Michelangelo once said, “The greater danger for most of us is not that we aim too high and we miss it, but that we aim too low and we reach it.” So let's not aim for 100% membership this year. Let's aim high and go for 110...NO, 120%. We really need to get back to numbers we had six or seven years ago to keep our current programs funded.

Our future leaders, comrades and replacements are out there; we just need to bring them in with open arms.

OTI – This year it will be done at the District level per the National Bylaws. The department will supply training CDs as

requested and that way the OTI schools across the State teach the same thing. The Department will also send in an OTI team of three Instructors to conduct your District OTI if requested. Our goal is to have Districts complete the OTI by October 1, 2012.

Most of the problems we have today at the Post level are issues addressed in our Bylaws. Many leaders at the Post level have never been to an OTI or have seen a Bylaws manual. District and County Commanders, I will charge you to get these comrades to OTI this year.

All-State Awards: Requirements are going to follow Michelangelo's goal of Aiming High. Doing the bare minimum per the Bylaws does not make us All-State material. By taking the extra steps to be a shining star, make us All-State material. Read the requirements and get a good understanding of the points system for this year.

All-State/All-American requirements will be posted on the Department web page VFWNY.com shortly after Convention. They will not be mailed due to budget cuts this year.

Remember this: What we think or what we know or what we believe...in the end is of little consequence. The ONLY consequence is what we do and NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS than us. So let's AIM HIGH THIS YEAR

Thank you, Comrades.

James Durkin
Department Commander

SR. VICE, continued from page 1

should never be a consideration as leaders and dedicated members of such a fantastic organization.

The VFW honors the past and the future. The past because of our history and heritage, the future because of tomorrow's heroes, the new breed of veterans we must turn this grand organization over to. When we were young we were invincible and today we think we are indispensable. The trouble is we like to assume we will live forever and we are the only ones that know what is best for the VFW.

If that's the case, why do our membership numbers continually drop year after year with fewer and fewer new ones? Why does all our hard work seem to be for nothing? Why aren't we growing? If we have all the answers, why aren't they working for us?

It is a very confusing issue and the times are changing. Maybe we need to change our thinking and what better way to accomplish that than to get a few younger vets to enlighten us. The future is there for the taking...we just have to reach out and grab a handful of it.

Mike Pascal
Sr. Vice Commander

JR. VICE, continued from page 1

makes our VFW go round...along with money, volunteers, community image, people to do programs, members to attend meetings to make decisions and hospital and home visits.

The issue at hand is who will be there for us when we are older (and that's real close to age 65 for most of us, including me). Who will come see me or send this veteran a card? Will I have a post to stop in to and read the paper, a place to be with brother and sister vets? It's looking very scary for us, we are combat vets, and this just might be the last battle we might get to fight. I want our VFW to win this battle on membership.

Just get ONE, if we all can do that we will win. Did you know that some departments only get together once a year at their Convention? With the declining membership and money we are headed in that direction!

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the fall conference and hopefully all those in the future.

William "DOC" Schmitz
Dept. Jr. Vice Commander

INSPECTOR, continued from page 1

on "More Forms", and then click on "Inspection Reports for Posts, CC & District". Please take the time to review it so you know what the inspectors are going to be asking for.

Please note that question #10 pertains to the IRS 990 Form. Each and every Post must file a 990 with New York. It does not matter how much or how little income your Post takes in, but it is a state requirement for all nonprofits to maintain their nonprofit status. A copy of your 990 must be attached and sent in with your inspection report. If you insist that you "never had to do one before" and plan not to file one or think it is a private matter, you could be running the risk of an audit done by the State of New York IRS.

New York has gotten very tough in this area so if you are found to not be in compliance, you lose your nonprofit status and they will make you pay income tax on money taken into the Post going back to your last filing. If your Post owns property, you could be paying property taxes back to your last filing. FYI: 990s are public record and each Post is a part of the larger Department and National organization that allows Posts to obtain the nonprofit status.

If you have questions, you can talk to your District Commander or call me at 716-937-4549. Let's see if we can accomplish these inspections within the next few months and get it off our checklist for the year!

I wish to thank you in advance for your cooperation and know I will help wherever needed.

Sincerely,
Marlene Roll
Inspector

History of Commander Durkin's Bunny

On December 1, 1955, the squadron was re-designated as VM CJ-2 after former Marine Photographic Squadron 2 (VMJ-2) was decommissioned and joined VMC-2. As 1955 was also the year *Playboy* magazine was first published, it soon followed that the squadron adopted the *Playboy* name and logo with their permission.



Since its designation in 1975, VMAQ-2 deployed detachments of EA-6A aircraft [designated Detachments Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie] and EA-6B aircraft [designated Detachments Xray, Yankee, and Zulu] on a continuous basis in support of Marine forces in the Western Pacific and in support of Fleet Commanders on aircraft carriers, including lengthy deployments on the *USS Midway*, *Nimitz*, *America*, and *Saratoga*. In 1977, the squadron transitioned to the EA-6B Prowler and now operates the Improved Capability III version of the aircraft. In 1986, a detachment of the squadron participated in U.S. raids against Libya.

***Bring Our Troops
Home Safely!***

A Veteran Commits Suicide Every 80 Minutes...

...but the true number of veterans who die by suicide is unknown. The VA estimates that 18 veterans kill themselves every day, but this number is extrapolated from extremely limited data. Specifically, states provide death data to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for inclusion in the National Death Index, but only 16 of U.S. states indicate veteran status in their data. The number of veteran suicides from the remaining 34 states is extrapolated to estimate the overall number of veteran suicides. Further, the current numbers are extrapolated from three year-old data.

George Washington stated, "The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the Veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation."

Veterans and Suicide

The Army Times stated in 2010 that an estimated 18 veterans die by suicide every day. *The Times* also stated that as many as 950 suicide attempts occur every month among veterans already receiving VA services. The rate of younger veterans 19 to 29 who are receiving VA services each month is lower than other age ranges.

Young veterans (under 25) living in rural areas and getting treatment from a clinic rather than an established mental health program were not likely to continue their PTSD treatment, especially in group therapy. At the same time the suicide rate for 18 to 29 year olds getting VA treatment is lower than the rate of those not getting treatment.

There's a stigma among males when dealing with equals or the public in general. Many older veterans imply that every veteran should "suck it up and move on" and degrade the younger veteran's experiences and negate their feelings and emotional struggles. "After all, the real veterans survived and manage just fine, and we won the war," they say.

There's new data that shows an average of 950 suicide attempts every month by veterans receiving treatment at some VA facility. Data shows that 7% of veteran suicide attempts are successful and those that don't succeed try again within months.

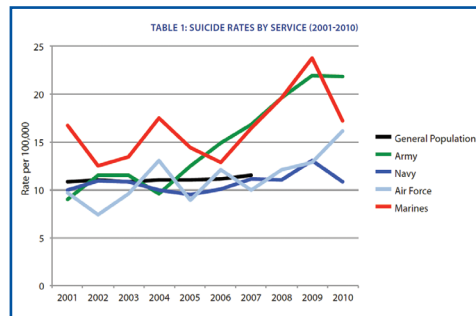
The statistics are alarming and there doesn't appear to be any concrete answers because the experts just don't know what's causing this alarming trend. There needs to be a concerted tracking effort if there is to be any hope for conquering this tragedy.

This problem is not confined to the VA or any other treatment center. Everyone has to be aware and determined to make

a difference, our heroes deserve better and they deserve every possible chance to survive. Their loved ones deserve our support as well because the price paid by families left behind is catastrophic and the scars are forever.

In June of this year the Department of the Army stated there was a total of 154 suicides. This is higher than U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan during the same period. This number is JUST among active duty army troops and does not reflect Marine, Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard or those serving in the reserves and National Guard or veterans who have already returned home.

This chart shows the ratio of suicides per military service from 2001 to 2010, leaving us to wonder what the rates are for the last two years.



Some statistics on those serving in the military:

- 95% males
- 95% are enlisted
- 80% are white
- 47% under age of 25
- 41% were receiving treatment
- 34% stated their intent to die
- 30% failed the first time
- 20% were on depression medication
- 14% had a history of self-injury

Everyone can help. If the symptoms are there they can be seen, heard and felt giving us the chance to intervene. Learn the signs, know the risk factors, and get them help.

Some Risk Factors are:

- Previous Suicide Attempts
- Personal Failure
- Recent Loss
- Diagnosed Depression or Anxiety
- Family History of Suicide
- Low self-esteem

Some signs of suicidal tendencies are:

- Depression
- Hopelessness
- Anger
- No Joy in life
- Isolation

- Insomnia or Excessive Sleeping
- Change in Eating Habits
- Giving Away Valued Items
- Preoccupation with Death
- Expressing Suicidal Thoughts (drawing, writings, songs)
- Substance Abuse
- Sudden Change in Behavior
- Calling old friends, particularly military friends, to say goodbye
- Visits to graveyards
- Obsessed with news coverage of the war
- Wearing their uniform or part of their uniform
- Talking about military honor
- Becoming overprotective of children
- Standing guard of the house
- Hording alcohol
- Spending spree, buying gifts for family members "to remember me by"
- Defensive speech ("you wouldn't understand," etc.)
- Stops making eye contact or speaking with others

They might make statements that should get attention...

"It'll all be over soon" or "I hate my life."
 "I wish I were dead" and "You'll be better off without me" or "Nothing matters anymore."

There's more: <http://healthland.time.com/2012/07/12/military-suicide-help-for-families-worried-about-their-service-member/#ixzz23BKfdUj4>

Here are a few resources:

Suicide Prevention Lifeline,
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Department of Veterans Affairs,
 suicide prevention
www.mentalhealth.va.gov/Suicide_Prevention

National Call Center for Homeless Vets
 877 4AID-VET (424-3838))

Vet2Vet Veterans Crisis Hotline
 (877) VET2VET (838-2838)

Army Suicide Prevention
www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/suicide

Families get Help Too
www.taps.org/survivors/survivor.aspx?id=6320

Suicide Outreach
www.suicideoutreach.org/

Erie County Veterans Service Agency
 Suicide Prevention Awareness Center
www.erie.gov/veterans/suicide_prevention.asp

Richard DeNoyer to Speak at Department Fall Conference

Commander-in-Chief John E. Hamilton has designated Past Commander-in-Chief Richard L. DeNoyer to represent the national organization at our Department Fall Conference, October 19-21, 2012, in Corning, New York. His lovely wife, Theresa, will accompany him.

Richard L. DeNoyer Commander-in-Chief, 2011-2012 Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Richard L. DeNoyer was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars on September 1, 2011, at the VFW's 112th National Convention, held in San Antonio, Texas.

DeNoyer served in the U. S. Marine Corps from 1960-1982 including a tour in Vietnam, July 1966-July 1967, attached to Ammunition Co., Force Logistics Support Group "A," 3rd Marine Division. His deco-

rations include the Combat Action Ribbon, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm and Drill Instructor Ribbon. During his Marine Corps career he received a bachelor's degree from Bridgewater State College in Bridgewater, Mass.

DeNoyer joined the VFW in 1981 at Post 1012 in Medford, Massachusetts, where he maintains his Life Membership. He has served in elected and appointed positions at the Post, District and Department (state) levels culminating with his election as Department Commander in 2000-2001. He also has served on numerous national committees and as chairman of the Eastern States Conference.

After his military retirement, DeNoyer served as a national service officer for American Veterans of World War II organization. In 1988, DeNoyer began working for Paralyzed Veterans of America as a national service officer, senior benefit advocate and

national field director, as well as supervising the Boston office and nine offices in the Northeast.

DeNoyer is a member of The American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Marine Corps Association, Marine Corps Mustang Association, Marine Corps League, U.S. Marine Corps Drill Instructors Association, Military Officers Association of America and Masons.

Rich and his wife, Theresa, have two children and six grandchildren; they make their home in Middleton, Massachusetts.



2012-2013 Membership

First, I would like to thank Commander Durkin for my appointment as Chairman of the Department's Membership Team as it is an honor to serve on it. With everyone's help, we can make this a very successful year for our membership programs. As I read some past *Overseas Veteran* articles on membership for some insight on our membership program, the reality set in that we have been doing and saying the same things each year with the same results...a bigger loss of membership than the previous year. With everyone's help and support, we can reverse this trend. From the Department Membership Team down to the smallest Post, no one alone can recruit enough Veterans to increase our membership. So, with this in mind, I am asking that each level of our great Department sit down in small groups and contact some of the

members missing from your own Post. This would not be recruiting, but rather would be reconnecting with an old friend and Veteran. Find out why that Veteran left the Post and did not renew. Ask that Veteran to come back to your Post's social functions and begin a new era in the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Another source of membership is our At-Large membership for the Department of New York. Who fits this membership? Veterans who's Post may have closed and they were not aware of it and members who have joined the VFW online. The third source of membership is our neighbors who have moved from another state and may still maintain their membership in a Post from another state or they have become a delinquent. Ask these Veterans to transfer into your Post or reinstate them.

Why do I suggest we attempt to renew and reinstate these members? The Department of New York only needed 1,901 members to renew or reinstate for 100% for the fiscal year just ending. Yet, we had 6,778 unpaid members in New York State late in May. At the same time, there were 5,289 delinquent at-large members and 2,834 delinquent members from out of New York Posts living in New York. We don't have to go very far to achieve our goals. Remember "No one does more for Veterans" than we do. Let's aim high and Recruit, Reinstate and Renew a member today. Need some help? Call 716-622-6911 or email dbm021@yahoo.com

Thank you,
Dan McMahon

Legislative

Comrades:

On behalf of Department Commander Jim Durkin, I'm proud to report that 65% of last year's goals were reported to committee in both chambers of the State Legislature and 15% were signed into law.

Goal No. 1, S.6089 by Senator Ball and A.9473 by Assemblyman Ortiz, will create a "Visor Communication Card" to assist law enforcement officers to identify the driver as a person with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and establish a New York State Traumatic Brain Injury Fund.

Status: Referred to Senate Transportation Committee on January 4, 2012 and referred

to the Assembly Transportation Committee on March 5, 2012.

Goal No. 2 would allow combat wounded civil servants with career ending injuries to receive their Civil Service pensions.

Status: Unknown

Goal No. 3, S.6904 by Senator Larkin and A.8067 by Assemblyman Paulin, will allow all New York State veterans who deployed in defense of our nation to buy back their military service. This bill would amend the retirement and social security law to allow combat veterans of the State and City of New York Retirement Systems to buy back their military service no matter when

they served. We request that this law cover periods of military conflicts as determined by the awarding of an expeditionary medal. We also hoped to develop language that will make this amendment a reality and cover all pension systems and all conflicts.

Status: Referred to Senate Civil Service and Pensions Committee on April 9, 2012, amended on May 14, 2012 and referred to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee on May 1, 2012.

Goal No. 4, S.7489 by Senator Ball and A.10388 by Assemblyman Ramos, provides service-disabled veteran owned and vet-

————— *LEGISLATIVE, continued on page 6*



Commander's Special Project

I am honored to be named as Department Commander, James Durkin's Special Project Chairman. The Commander's Special Project for the coming year is the funding of Scholarships for the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Programs.

The Department of New York and the Ladies Auxiliary provided the funding for three scholarship prizes at the National level of these programs. For the Voice of Democracy, we present the Rev. Albert G. Salmom Memorial Award of \$3,500 and the Troy and Sandy Rothbart Memorial Award of \$2,500. The Patriot's Pen Award is the Clyde A. Lewis Award of \$4,000. With the downturn of the economy, the principal which funded the scholarships has been used to maintain the size of the award and has, therefore, all but disappeared. Commander Durkin has made the restoration of this fund the goal of his Special Project.

Active participation in these core programs at every level of the Veterans of Foreign Wars must be viewed as essential, to maintain both an investment in the future of America and the future of the VFW. The youth scholarships themselves are the obvious investment in the future of our great nation. The programs and the media coverage they bring locally shine a spotlight upon the VFW, making us attractive to join and bringing awareness to local Veterans of an organization they may not have been aware existed in their locality.

Please get behind Commander Durkin and support his Special Project. Consider an amount of \$5 or \$1,000+ (and anything in between) – no donation is too small or too large. Members, Posts, County Councils and Districts working together will spell success. Make your check payable to VFW Department of NY with Commander's Special Project written in the memo area. Send it to VFW Department of New York, 69 Sand Creek Road, Albany, NY 12205-1823. Do not wait; send in your donation today!

Arthur L. Hanley
PDC

Educational Benefits for Families

Spouses and dependents who receive veterans' survivor education benefits and later earn GI Bill benefits in their own right could have a combined 81 months of benefits under the new law that takes effect in 2013.

Eligible service members and veterans who have earned GI BILL benefits through their own service would still be limited to 48 total months under a provision of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring

for Camp Lejuene Families Act of 2012 that was signed into law August 6.

Full eligibility for two veterans' education programs is aimed mainly at the children of those who die on active duty, who could attend college using survivor benefits, then use Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits for further education. The new policy takes effect October 1, 2013.

Army Times, 27 August

LEGISLATIVE, continued from page 5

eran owned small businesses with increased opportunities state contracting.

Status: Referred to Senate Veterans Committee on May 25, 2012 and referred to the Assembly Governmental Operations Committee on May 24, 2012.

Goal No. 5, S. 2724-A by Senator Addabbo and A. 4269-A by Assemblyman Miller, will acquire funding for our VFW Service Officers and allow the State's VSO Service Officers to increase the revenue they generate in the form of VA Compensation for New York's veterans. Last year, they generated \$57,180,718 in compensation, which was spent in New York's economy. Additionally, we worked with Department Senior Vice Commander Mike Pascal and the Senate Veterans Committee to secure another grant to fund this year's Service Officer operations.

Status: Referred to Senate Investigations and Government Operations Committee on January 9, 2012 and amended on January 31, 2012, and referred to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee on January 4, 2012 and amended on January 25, 2012.

Goal No. 6, S. 5381 by Senator Ball and A. 1386A Assemblyman Ortiz, will provide for a statewide cemetery in New York State under the federal VA State Cemetery Grant Program. This program assists states in providing gravesites in those areas where the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) cannot fully satisfy Veterans' burial needs.

Status: Signed into law on March 30, 2012 by Part W of Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2012.

2012 was a good year for veterans legislatively.

The Legislative Committee met on Friday August 3, 2012 to develop a strategy and select the following Legislative Goals for the 2013 Legislative Calendar:

Goal No. 1 Acquire Funding for VFW Service Officers amend S2724 and A4269 to include all state level Veterans Service Organizations that are Congressionally Chartered with VA recognized Service Officers and to ensure that the cost of altering tax forms to include this option be paid for

with funds generated by the option prior to disbursing any funds.

Goal No. 2 TBI Bill S6089 and A9473 amend to provide training so that law enforcement officers can recognize veterans with TBI and PTSD and to provide the option of having a service connected disability status indicated on a veterans NYS Drivers Licenses or non Drivers Licenses Identification.

Goal No. 3 Veterans Enterprise Opportunity Act amend S7489 and A10388 to provide all veteran owned businesses and enterprises the same preference for bidding on state contracts as those offered to other minorities and protected classes.

Goal No. 4 Alternative Veterans Property Tax Exemption S4387-2011 to amend subdivision 1 of section 458-a of the real property tax law by adding a new paragraph, defining "active duty member of the military".

Goal No. 5 Civil Service Veterans' Buy Back Bill S6904 and A8067 will allow the newest veterans and veterans who received expeditionary medals to buy back service time on government pensions. Reintroduce S3954 to include all expeditionary service.

Goal No. 6 Veterans Courts Support the establishment of a Veterans' Court in each of New York State's 13 Judicial Districts.

As you know our work cannot end here. I challenge each of you to take the lead in your Districts, Councils, and Posts and organize our members to write and visit our legislators in their home office to convince them to make each of this year's public laws. Publicize our Legislative Goals by conducting interviews and press releases using Talking Points with your hometown newspapers. Finally, track the progress of our goals so you can provide the grassroots input needed to guide our Committee's efforts in securing a third reading and affirmative vote in both chambers for all of our goals.

Again comrades, thank you for the opportunity to serve this great Department.

Marvin Jeffcoat

Harold "Hal" Burke, Jr.

State Judge Advocate



Comrades,

I would like to thank the members of the Department for your support and the confidence you have placed in me by my reelection to the office of State Judge Advocate.

I extend my best wishes and congratulations to our State Commander James Durkin, State Sr. Vice Commander Michael Pascal, State Jr. Vice Commander, PNSG, William "Doc" Schmitz, State Quartermaster Robert Barnhart, State Surgeon Dennis Sullivan, State Chaplain Father Kane, all the newly elected and appointed Department, District, County Council and Post Officers.

Congratulations to PSC Harold "Mick" Leavor and the officers who served with him on an outstanding year.

Once again, we would like to remind you that each year the State Commander receives letters of concerns or complaints regarding issues within various Posts throughout the State. While we are sure all of the concerns or complaints are sincere and valid, there is a chain of command that must be followed before these letters reach Department Headquarters. The National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure Article IX provide instruction for those issues that result in disciplinary action. Post level concerns or complaints begin by presenting the problem at a Post meeting. If after presenting the issue to the Post membership no resolution can be reached, follow the steps outlined in Article IX. It is impossible to address the influx of letters received at Department Headquarters if the correct procedures are not followed. Following the steps outlined in Article IX should bring the issue to the appropriate level of the VFW for resolution.

PLEASE NOTE: A LETTER OF CONCERN OR COMPLAINT SENT DIRECTLY TO NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS WILL NOT SPEED UP THE PROCESS. IT ACTUALLY SLOWS IT DOWN. NATIONAL FORWARDS ALL COMPLAINTS BACK TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR REVIEW AND APPROPRIATE ACTION THUS

DELAYING THE PROCESS EVEN MORE. NATIONAL OBSERVES THE CHAIN OF COMMAND AND EXPECTS ALL VFW ENTITIES TO DO THE SAME.

The following amendments to the Department Bylaws were passed at this year's State Convention and will have an effect on the Districts, County Councils, Post and Membership. I am providing a recap of those Bylaws and their effect for your information and action as necessary.

Article XVIII, Sec. 1.00 The per capita tax (dues) of Men's Auxiliary Members of the Department shall be \$5.00 per annum by every member in good standing.

The per capita tax (dues) of Men's Auxiliary Members of the Department shall be increased by an equivalent amount whenever the Department or National VFW annual member per capita is raised for every member in good standing, except Life Members.

The Men's Auxiliary Units will receive notification from the State Adjutant after January 1 of the dues payable to the Department of New York for 2012-2013.

Article VII, Sec. 4.00 Department Delegate registration fee. THIS IS NEW

Each Post will pay, in advance to the Department of NY, a Department Delegate registration fee of ten dollars (\$10) which shall entitle the Post to one identified registered delegate for the Department Convention. Each additional delegate attending the Department Convention will pay a five dollar (\$5) delegate fee.

This new Bylaw requires each Post in New York to register (at minimum) one Post Delegate to the Department Convention.

The National Bylaws, Article II Sec. 213 Arrearages, Deficiencies and Omissions, addresses this issue: Any Post in arrears for any financial obligations to County Council (if applicable), District, Department and National for fees, dues, poppy money, supply money, failing to have the office of Quartermaster properly bonded in accordance with Section 703, failing to ensure that the Post is properly insured in accordance with Section 709, failing to submit properly completed quarterly Post Trustees Report of Audit, Post

Election Report for the ensuing year or other obligations shall be deprived of all representation in County Council meetings (if applicable), District, Department and National Conventions. Such representation shall be restored promptly upon proper adjustment of such deficiencies.

Posts will receive notification of delegate fees from the State Adjutant after January 1, the delegate registration fees payable to the Department of New York for 2012-2013.

Article XIII Miscellaneous

Sec. 4.00 It shall be permissible for the Convention Corporation to charge a fee, in their discretion, not to exceed seven dollars (\$7.00) for advance registration and ten dollars (\$10.00) for registration at the Convention Site, for the Convention badge, program and any other items that they may wish to include in the form of entertainment for the delegates and visitors.

This fee registers a delegate/member for the Convention only.

Please do not confuse this Convention fee with Article VII SECTION 4.00 Department Delegate Registration fee.

Sec. 2.04-Regular and Special Meetings; Quorum; Authorized Attendees. (was Article III Sec 3.05)

Each County Council shall hold an annual County Council Convention for the purpose of electing County Council officers and for the transaction of business; such Convention to be held not less than ten (10) days nor more than forty-five (45) days prior to the convening of the Department Convention.

This adjustment for the time period in which a County Convention can be held is consistent with the changes made to the date of the National Convention.

I pledge my support to the Officers and members of the Department of New York. Once again, thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving as the State Judge Advocate.

If I can ever be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at 518-598-3923.

Sincerely,

Hal

Harold "Hal" Burke, Jr., PSC/PSQM
State Judge Advocate

Bring Our Troops Home Safely!

VOD Chairman

Greetings, Comrades and Sisters,

Unfortunately, our days of summer are quickly winding down and it's time to start thinking about our VFW Youth Development Program. I would like to thank Commander Durkin for this appointment. I will serve the VFW Department of New York and the patriotic high school students that reside in this great department to the best of my ability.

Fall not only brings Nature's bounty, but also the VFW-sponsored Voice of Democracy Essay Contest. The contest is open to high school students in grades 9 through 12, including home-schooled students.

Student entry forms and rules are available online by visiting the department website at www.vfwny.com and selecting VFW on the top menu, then VOD or by going to the National website at www.vfw.org, selecting COMMUNITY then SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS and Voice of Democracy.

The following dates are set by National and must be strictly adhered to.

Submit entry to Post by Nov. 1st

Post judging to be completed by Nov. 15th

District judging to be completed by Dec. 16th

Department of New York judging to be completed by January 7, 2013. National

has moved the submission to Department Headquarters up two weeks. I will announce the date and location of the judging at the Department Fall Conference.

In closing, let's all work together to achieve a goal of having a student from the Department of New York win the National competition and come home with a \$30,000 scholarship. I am looking forward to meeting many Post and District program chairmen at this year's Fall Conference at Corning.

Yours in Comradeship,

Wally Zincio
Dept. VOD Chairman

Patriot's Pen Contest

I want to thank Department Commander Durkin for the re-assignment as this year's Department Chairman of the Patriot's Pen Youth Essay Contest. I encourage ALL Post and District chairmen to please coordinate your efforts with your Ladies Auxiliary counterpart.

All scholarship information is available online at www.VFW.org. Type in Patriot's Pen in the SEARCH box and you will be directed to the "Programs" section of the Scholarship Programs.

Post Chairmen need to copy and provide each student with a Patriot's Pen brochure/entry form directly, or through the teacher or youth leader. To participate in the Patriot's Pen contest, a student needs to submit a completed entry form and their essay (no pictures, please). **This year's 2012-2013**

Patriot's Pen theme is: "What I Would Tell America's Founding Fathers."

All student entries are due at the Post level by November 1, 2012. Your Post judging should be done by November 15, 2012 and you need to pass your winners to your District Chairman. The District judging should be completed by December 3, 2012, after which time the winning District entry will be submitted to the Department chairman. The Department judging will be held at the Malsan-Jones VFW Post 7393 during the week of December 14, 2012.

District Chairmen: The District winner's materials that should be forwarded to the Department chairman are:

- District winner's completed official entry form
- District winner's typed essay

- District winner's photograph (clear, close up head and shoulders picture)

Please send your District winner's information and the District report form to: **Michael Spellman, 18 Seventh Street, Yorkville, NY 13495.**

If you have any questions in regards to this contest, please feel free to call me or leave a message at 315-736-2456. Thank you for your support and your participation in the contest. Good luck to all Posts and Auxiliaries. To all the chairmen, please make your deadlines on time, especially at the Department level.

District Commanders: Please send me the names, addresses and telephone numbers.

Michael Spellman
Patriot's Pen Chairman

VFW Teachers' Awards

The VFW launched the National Citizenship Education Teacher Award in 1999 to recognize classroom teachers for promoting citizenship education. Three teachers from each level (grades K-5, 6-8 and 9-12) are selected as national winners. Each national award teacher winner receives the Past Commander-in-Chief John Smart Award and \$1,000.00. Their respective schools also receive a \$1,000.00 award. They receive a paid trip to a VFW National event to receive their award.

Visit <http://www.vfw.org/Community/Teacher-of-the-Year/> or the Department of New York website www.vfwny.com; then click on Dept_NY, then Programs and Awards and Teachers Award for more information and entry forms.

Deadlines:

November 1: Deadline for teacher nomi-

nations at the Post. Post judging should be completed by **November 15th** and winners sent to District. District judging should be completed by **December 15th** and winners forwarded to the Department. Department judging should be completed **January 10th** and winners submitted to VFW National Headquarters by **January 15th**.

SPECIAL NOTE: Anyone may nominate a teacher, except for the teacher himself or herself (or the teacher's relative.) While a school official may nominate a teacher, permission from a school or district is not required.

Judging:

Select competent and unbiased judges. A panel of at least three to five judges is recommended. The VFW chairman should be present at the judging to provide assistance, but should not be one of the judges. Prior

to the judging, the chairman should review all nomination forms to ensure they adhere to the rules. Make sure entry is not a self-nomination. The nominator should keep to the 350-word limit and sign the nomination.

Judges should grant points based on four criteria with the potential of 100 points as follows:

1-25 points: Does the teacher teach and/or model good citizenship and community involvement?

1-25 points: An innovative approach to teaching citizenship.

1-25 points: Development of resources to teach citizenship education.

1-25 points: Passion for teaching citizenship education.

Contact Teachers Award Chairman Don Mackey at namvetdem@yahoo.com with any questions.

Community Service

How a Post interacts with its community determines the relevancy of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Someone once said, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

The VFW and its Auxiliary's ability to impact veterans, youth, political issues, patriotism, civic pride, volunteerism, almost anything you can name, is directly dependent upon the Post being recognized as a caring and involved participant in the community.

The Post is, for most Americans, the only thing they know about the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Make sure those Americans in your community have a favorable opinion of our great organization and our veterans.

Importance of Reporting VFW & Ladies Auxiliary Volunteer Service

During the 2011-12 VFW & Ladies Auxiliary Programs' year over 8 million volunteer hours and over \$48 million were contributed towards the completion of community service projects by Posts and Ladies Auxiliaries.

It is essential that the VFW Department establish and maintain a system of program reporting to enable the VFW to substantiate its tax-exempt status and provide information about Post and Ladies Auxiliaries volunteer efforts in their communities.

Biannually, the VFW Department will provide the VFW National Community Service Program a report compiling each Post (to include Cooties, Sons of the VFW and Cooties Auxiliary) and Ladies Auxiliary

(to include Junior Girls) community service projects that include the number of volunteer hours for the time period and the dollars donated to complete the projects. The dollars donated should include the 14 cents mileage amount for charitable work allowed by the IRS, value of donating the Post Hall use to community nonprofit groups and other in-kind donations.

For reporting purposes, only volunteer service projects benefiting the community are to be reported. Projects/activities benefiting VFW and Ladies Auxiliary members only cannot be reported.

The creation of a Post and Ladies Auxiliary community service record book to display at the Post Home or to display at community events is a great public relations tool, however, if cancelled donation checks are being displayed the Post and/or Ladies Auxiliary bank account number and signatures of officers should be blanked out to avoid potential theft.

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS is more than just words; it is a commitment, a promise and a dedication to the goals and values of the VFW. Community service is one way we expose those goals and values to the public in a very real way. We are all about service, why not brag about it? We think we know how many hours and dollar values we donate but record keeping and reporting those numbers prove what we do and we don't make mistakes or skew those numbers.

Go to the Department website under Dept_

NY then Programs and Community Service to get the materials and forms you will need. The document(s) include a description and outline of the program(s), entry forms and request forms. Get started today! Don't forget to **REPORT to Department between 11/1/2012 and 5/1/2013** and show your pride – serve the community so the list can grow.

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE POST

There should be at least one Post in your Department that will be selected as a National Outstanding Community Service Post. Each Department will select at least one Post (depending on Department size) to receive the National Outstanding Community Service Post Award at the VFW National Convention.

The award includes a plaque inscribed with the name of the VFW Post and its Ladies Auxiliary (if applicable), a \$599 stipend to cover part of the Post representative's expenses to the National Convention, publication of the Post's name in the Convention program booklet and a street sign identifying this national award for the Post to put up in their community.

Your VFW Department is responsible for the selection criteria for this award and sending the name of the selected Post(s) to the National Programs Department by May 1 each year.

Don Mackey
Community Service Chairman

Public Servant Award Citation and Recognition

Every year the VFW recognizes outstanding and special heroes. These special dedicated public servants go the extra mile every day to serve the public and we should recognize their sacrifices and reward them in some small way for all they do. Recognition is appreciation, so let's appreciate all of them. Submit a Post candidate this year and don't let their accomplishments go unnoticed.

VFW National Emergency Medical Technician Public Servant Citation:

Any individual, who actively gives emergency medical treatment, provides rescue service or civil disaster assistance as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to give emergency medical care, provide rescue and civil disaster assistance to our nation's citizens.

VFW National Law Enforcement Public Servant Citation:

Any individual who serves in a municipal, county, state or federal unit tasked with enforcement of the laws pertaining to their

area of responsibility. This award does not apply to individuals employed by private companies or security services.

VFW National Firefighters Public Servant Citation:

Any individual who actively fights fires as a member of any public or volunteer company organized to fight fires and give assistance to our nation's citizens.

Criteria for these awards – Candidates must have demonstrated:

- 1) Recognition by their colleagues or those they serve.
- 2) Consistent excellence in the performance of their duties
- 3) Consistent dedication to their official responsibilities over a period of years and continuous growth in responsibilities and skills within their profession.

Documentation required for all Candidates

- 1) Nomination letter containing the candidate's name, title, address, telephone and identifying the award for which the individual should be considered.

- 2) One (1) page resumé of the candidate's overall background.
- 3) One (1) page resumé of the candidate's background in their field.
- 4) One (1) page listing of the candidate's accomplishment and awards in their field.
- 5) Photograph (preferably a head shot) of the candidate.

Nomination – Post Safety Chairmen should send the above information to their Department Headquarters to arrive no later than January 1.

DEADLINES:

Public Servant National Award (Law Enforcement, Firefighter, Emergency Services) – **January 1**

Nominations from Post to Department – **February 1** (to guarantee receipt for Department Convention), Nominations from Department to National

Don Mackey
Safety Chairman

In Memoriam

Domenick A. Volpe

Domenick A. Volpe died on July 16, 2012 at the wonderful age of 95 leaving behind three devoted daughters, three grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

A vibrant man, Dom was a patriot whose love for his country with all its freedoms and opportunities carried him from the Normandy Invasion during World War II as a First Sergeant to the New York State Commandership of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (1977-78). An All-American Commander at every VFW level: State, District and County, his leadership and promotion of war veterans is legendary.

Dom was predeceased in death by his loving and loyal wife, Jean Mackenzie Volpe, in 2008; they both lived at Decatur House in Sandwich, Massachusetts in their later years, making new friends after having spent their lives and childhoods in Brooklyn, New York.

Dom Volpe was a self-made man who lived by his wits, intelligence and grit to make a good life for his family; he was a plucky entrepreneur in the food industry, who also worked for NYC Civil Defense, the federal Park Service, Bellevue Hospital and Appeal Printing. He worked two and three jobs at a time to make sure his family was well cared for, stressing the importance of a good education and individual responsibility.

Domenick was famous for his ever-present sense of humor, his superlative culinary and grilling skills and his commitment to his family. His proud daughters: Ann V. Daley, Walpole, Massachusetts; Janet V. Vailokaitis, Manhattan Beach, California; and Denise V. Sullivan, Cataumet, Massachusetts, as well as his extended family, learned a lot from the "Old Vet," God speed.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Wednesday, August 1, 2012 at the Corpus Christi Parish in East Sandwich, Massachusetts (324 Quaker Meeting House Road) with burial at the Bourne VA Cemetery. Condolences may be sent to Denise Volpe, P.O. Box 469, Cataumet, MA 02634.



Military Funerals Get More Protection

President Obama signed the 'Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012' into law. This legislation will improve protections for family and friends at military funerals making it more difficult to disrupt and defame the final call of our fallen heroes.

The new legislation dictates that protests must be held at least 300 feet from military funerals and are prohibited two hours before or after a service. Congress agreed on these increases in protection after a more sweeping funeral protection legislation was struck down by the Supreme Court as a violation of the first amendment.

The Westboro Baptist Church, a Kansas-based organization, has vowed to defy the law continuing its despicable protests. State counter protests are affected by this new law, as well. The so-called 'counter protest groups' state the church fails to take into consideration the bikers, veterans and

citizens blocking the church are there to pay their respects to the fallen warrior, not denigrate his or her memory and sacrifice and certainly not protest the ultimate sacrifice.

As quoted in the August 14, 2012 article in the *Huffington Post*, "Two of these counter-efforts drew national attention when large groups of people turned out in both Missouri and in Texas in an attempt to create "human walls" to shield attendees of military funerals from Westboro's demonstrations." Obviously that human wall was composed of so many individuals desiring to pay their respects that the 'church protesters' were just crowded out. How ironic, the church protesters were outnumbered so they have to resort to threats, intimidation and sacrilegious acts in an attempt to dishonor America's Best.

One veteran said, "It's about time something was done about these disgraceful acts; they are downright disgusting, something only traitors do."

U.S. Small Business Administration Educates Veterans

Ms. Man-Li Kuo Lin, an Economic Development Specialist with the U.S. Small Business Administration and Queens County Council VFW Commander Bernard Robinson hosted a seminar aimed at educating and encouraging veterans to start their own business.

Ms. Lin discussed a wide range of topics which included starting an e-business, developing a business plan, qualifying for government contracts, R & D Grants, marketing and much more. Veterans who wish to start their own business should contact Ms. Lin at 212-264-7060 or man-li.lin@sba.gov; or 26 Federal Plaza, Room 3100, New York, NY 10278. The SBA's web site is www.SBA.gov

Organization Information: Queens County Council VFW is a subordinate unit of District No. 1, Department of New York. The mission of the 2.1 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary is to foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts; to serve our veterans, the military and our communities; and to advocate on behalf of all veterans.

Contact Information: Chairman Department Legislative Committee, Adjutant/Past County Commander Marvin R. Jeffcoat SFC, USA (Ret.), Queens County Council Veterans of Foreign Wars, 50-55 45th Street, Woodside, NY 11377. Phone: 347-841-4335 or e-mail jeffcoatm505@aol.com

Department of New York Veterans of Foreign Wars 2012 Mixed Bowling Tournament

TEAM SCRATCH, 1st Place: Post 5296 Salamanca – Dennis Titus, Bill Butler, Billy Owns, Mike Milanowski

TEAM HANDICAP, 1st Place: Post 5296 Salamanca – Todd Rider, Tony Hodara, Jim Magiera, Mike Milanowski

DOUBLES SCRATCH, 1st Place: Post 5296 Salamanca – Chad Herrick, Lee DeBoy

DOUBLES HANDICAP, 1st Place: Post 8495 Fairport – Roy Larose, Terry Berthold

SINGLES SCRATCH, 1st Place: Post 5296 Salamanca – Mike Milanowski

SINGLES HANDICAP, 1st Place: Post 5296 Salamanca – Bill Butler

ALL EVENTS SCRATCH, 1st Place: Post 5296 Salamanca – Bill Butler

ALL EVENTS HANDICAP, 1st Place: Post 8495 Fairport – Terry Berthold

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members, officers and Auxiliaries for the great job done for the 7th Annual Mix Department bowling tournament held in Salamanca, John F. Ahrens Post 5296.

They hosted 26 Team Events, 42 Double Events, 85 Singles Events and 80 All Events.

The 8th Annual Veterans of Foreign Wars Bowling Tournament will be hosted by the John F. Ahrens Post 5296 and its Auxiliaries in Salamanca.

Yours in Comradeship,
Wilbur A. Gray, State Bowling Chairman

Excelsior College Launches Online Veterans' Center

By Judy Reed, Director of Veteran Services and Outreach



At a time when traditional colleges provide a space on campus for veterans to come together to socialize, support each other in their academic pursuits and provide advocacy for appropriate resources to aid success in attending college and obtaining a career, veterans attending Excelsior College can now do the same!

Excelsior College's over 3,000 veterans will soon have an online space of their own. The veterans' center provides a mentorship program, an area to share educational

and career achievements, have access to resources, college orientation materials and a discussion area on numerous topics to include degree programs, exam study buddy search, job search, mentorship program, starting a veterans group, textbook exchange and VA educational benefits.

The purpose of the Excelsior Veterans' Center is to provide a place for veterans to connect, ease their transition to the online campus, access to resources and enjoy peer support and camaraderie. The veterans' center is a foundation for providing veterans the ability to provide feedback to improve the center, as well as be connected to information useful to them while they are attending the college as an enrolled, degree-seeking student, an alumni or simply a visiting student taking one class. There will now be that

sense of connection with other veterans at Excelsior College.

The Excelsior College Veterans' Center, which launched August 17, is accessible to student veterans who have identified themselves to the college. If you are a veteran and do not have access to the Veterans' Center, please contact the Center for Military education at 888-647-2388, Ext. 1352. Links to enter the Excelsior Veterans' Center are located within the military and veteran web pages at <https://my.excelsior.edu/group/veterans-center/home>

Excelsior College has an education partnership with the Department of New York, Veterans of Foreign Wars. Members, employees and their spouses or domestic partners will receive reduced pricing on tuition and fees while pursuing associate and bachelor degrees at Excelsior College. For more information on the partnership, go to <http://www.excelsior.edu/nyvfw>

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Excelsior College Veterans' Center website. The browser address bar shows the URL <https://my.excelsior.edu/group/veterans-center/home>. The page has a purple header with the text "Welcome Veterans" and social media icons. A left sidebar lists navigation options: Home, Achievements, College Orientation, Discussion Board, Inspirational Videos, Mentorship Program, and Resources. The main content area features the heading "Welcome to the Excelsior Veterans Center" and a "Send Comment" button. Below this is a "Veteran Graduates" section with a photo of graduates. The right sidebar contains "Financial Aid Information", "Military Admissions Counselors", and "VA Suicide Hotline" details.



VFW National Home for Children In the SOUP for a 6th Minivan

We're less than 200,000 points away from our sixth (yes, sixth!) minivan through the Campbell's Labels for Education Program. Help get us there by sending your UPCs from eligible products to the National Home at 3573 S. Waverly Road, Eaton Rapids, MI 48827. Visit the Labels for Education website for the most recent list of eligible products: <http://www.labelsforeducation.com/Earn-Points/Participating-Products>



The Traveling Vietnam Wall

On Thursday, July 26, 2012, we were at the opening ceremonies at VFW Post 369 in Mexico, New York for the Vietnam Traveling Wall. It was a warm and rainy day. We all got drenched.

As you know, The "American Veterans' Traveling Tribute Vietnam Wall" is a mobile version of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. Although it is much smaller, the traveling structure features all of

the names inscribed in the permanent memorial. The wall was on display at the Edick Hamlink VFW Post in Mexico until Sunday evening, and attracted hundreds of visitors, including many veterans who say the tribute helps keep the history of the war fresh in the public's mind.

The program is run solely on donations and sponsorship. The wall is now on its way downstate to its next stop in East Meadow.



Pictured R-L are: Dave Rice, Commander Oswego Post 5885; Past Oswego County Council Commander Lawrence Goins, Post 8534 Lacona; Quartermaster Williamstown Post 136, Joseph Bruggerman; Oswego County Council Commander Al Johnston, Post 8534 Lacona; 5th District Commander, Ron Sakonyi, Constantia Post 7325; and 5th District Ladies Auxiliary President Post 7325 Constantia, Sandy Sakonyi.

VFW National Home for Children Applauds Star Donor Organizations from the Department of New York

Eaton Rapids, Michigan – With deep gratitude, the VFW National Home for Children honors our 2012 Star Donor Organizations. Nearly 600 organizations from across the United States and the Department of Europe earned the title of Star Donor this year.

“Our Star Donor Organizations contributed more than \$775,000 to the National Home last year, which is a tremendous help to the military and veteran families we serve,” said National Home Executive Director Patrice Green. “We are grateful for the outstanding commitment these organizations have shown to the National Home.”

The National Home’s Star Donor Organization program recognizes organizations for their generous support of the VFW National Home for Children. All levels of the VFW and their Auxiliaries, Military Order of the Cootie and their Auxiliaries and non-VFW organizations that contribute \$500 or more to the National Home during our fiscal year earn this recognition. Star Donor Organizations are recognized at the following giving levels:

- Bronze Star Donor \$500- \$999
- Silver Star Donor \$1,000- \$1,999
- Gold Star Donor \$2,000- \$4,999
- Platinum Star Donor \$5,000 or more

More information on the Star Donor Organization’s program can be found on the VFW National Home for Children’s website or by calling 866-483-9642. Contact: Veronica LaDuke with any questions or concerns at 517-663-7012.

From the Department of New York, 23 organizations were honored:

VFW Dept. of New York Ladies Auxiliary – Gold Star Donor

VFW Aux. 369 Silver Star Donor

VFW Aux. 7393 Silver Star Donor

VFW Post 153 Silver Star Donor

VFW Post 6470 Silver Star Donor

VFW Post 7227 Silver Star Donor

VFW Post 8495 Silver Star Donor

MOC PT 69 NY Bronze Star Donor

VFW Aux. 5253 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Aux. 7062 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Aux. 8495 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 1231 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 1323 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 1386 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 369 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 4823 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 5444 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 5492 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 6398 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 6703 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 672 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 7765 Bronze Star Donor

VFW Post 9483 Bronze Star Donor



News from VFW Post 1545

On June 8th, the Post held its 4th annual Golf Outing to benefit the Post Building Fund at Christman’s Mountain Course. The food was excellent, the weather was perfect and a great time was had by all.

On June 9th, Post members were out in force on Route 23 passing out handheld American flags in honor of Flag Day on the 14th. On Flag Day we held our traditional retirement of the flag ceremony at the Post at noon. Special thanks to Carmella at the Windham Post Office for being the collection point where residents could drop off their old and tattered flags. It was of great interest to note the abundance of retired flags this year, indicating a lot more folks are flying the flag of our nation. Let’s keep it up until every residence and business flies

the flag, 24/7/365.

For the fourth year in a row, VFW Post 1545 won the trophy for the best organizational float in Windham’s July 4th parade. This year’s theme was Sgt. James F. Carty, the namesake of our Post and announcing the 85th anniversary of the creation of VFW Post 1545 in Windham, which will be in March of 2013. The Post appreciates the efforts of Marc Farmilette, Bob Stefanko and Jim Scarey for creating and building this year’s float. We are already starting to plan a blowout party to honor the occasion of our anniversary.

Special thanks goes to Ryan’s Landscaping for restoring the top soil, plants, groundcover and decorative stone removed by Tropical Storm *Irene*, free of charge.

Ryan ensured that the work was done prior to our summer events. Another horticultural donation came from Kerns Nursery again this year. Bob Kerns has donated the flowers around our flag rotunda at the Post and also at the monument at WAJ school every year. Thank you Bob and Pat Kerns for your continued support and generosity.

The Ladies Auxiliary will be providing Bingo night at the Post on September 8, 2012 starting at 6:30 p.m. Come on out and enjoy the fun. You just may be a winner. Besides, word has it that the root beer floats are the BEST ever.

Chris Mattiace
Commander
734-5011

Waterford VFW Memorial Post 5800 A Day Out with Kids at the VA

Andy Walters, Commander of the Waterford Memorial VFW Post 5800, had an awesome experience by teaming up with The Waterford SACC (School-Aged Child Care) Summer Camp children and its Program Director, Nirisa Shrest, for a day at the Albany VA to visit some of our Veterans and The Waterford SACC Program Summer Camp had a field trip to visit with the veterans and provided a lunch that was catered by Testo's Restaurant and served to each veteran by the children.

After lunch the children participated in helping our Vets play Bingo. There were posters displayed and the children made American flags out of beads and safety pins for every Veteran. The Director of Volunteer Support said this was the first time there has ever been a visitation like this for the Veterans. The only time the Veterans get to see visiting children is around the holidays when families visit, but not all 'in-house veterans' have families to visit them.

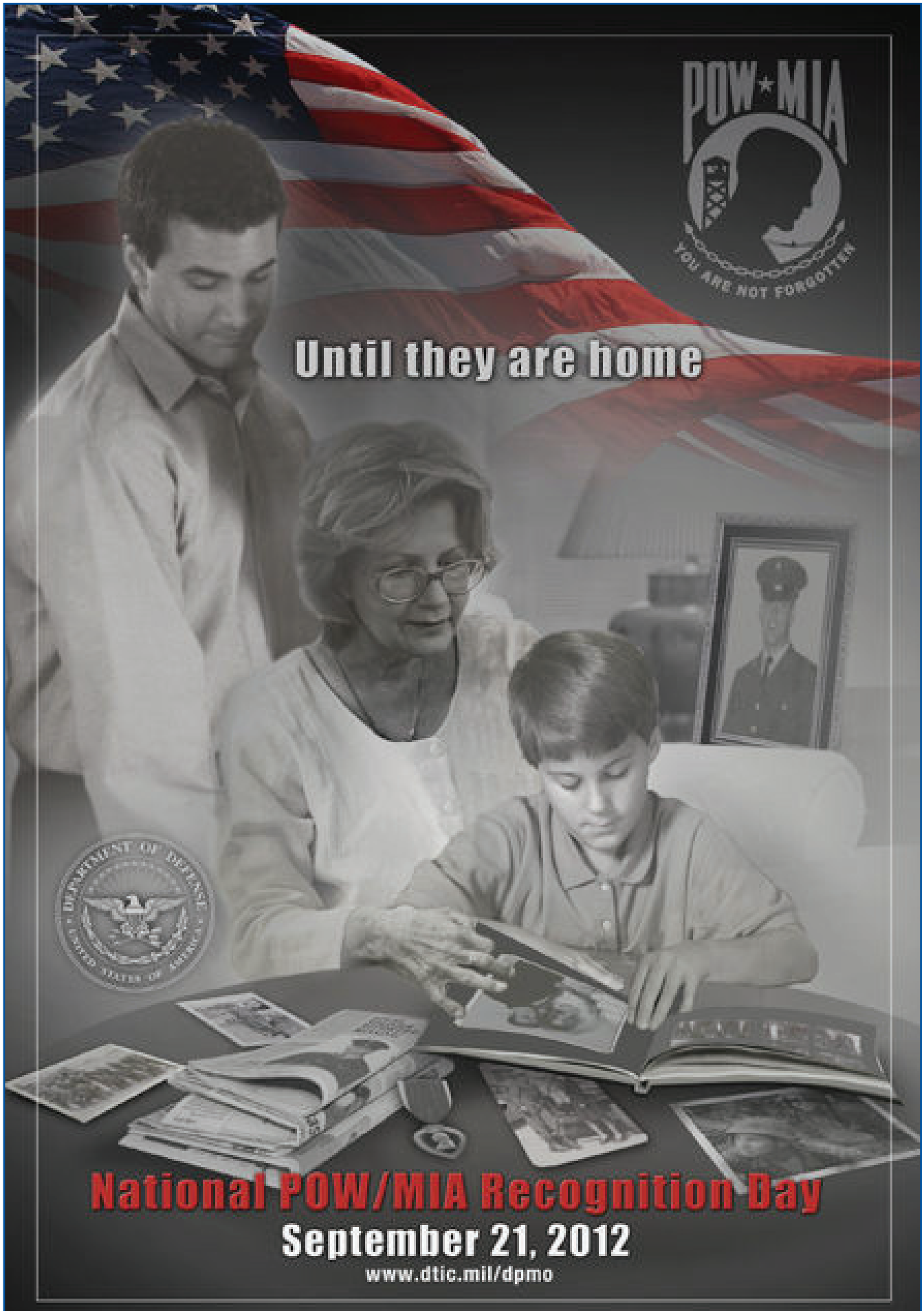
Commander Walters encourages any groups that may have an interest in making a visit to the Albany VA Center to call and make the arrangements as they are happy to have visitors.



Children's visitation to VA Hospital.



Commander Andy Walters, VFW Post 5800, visiting VA patients.



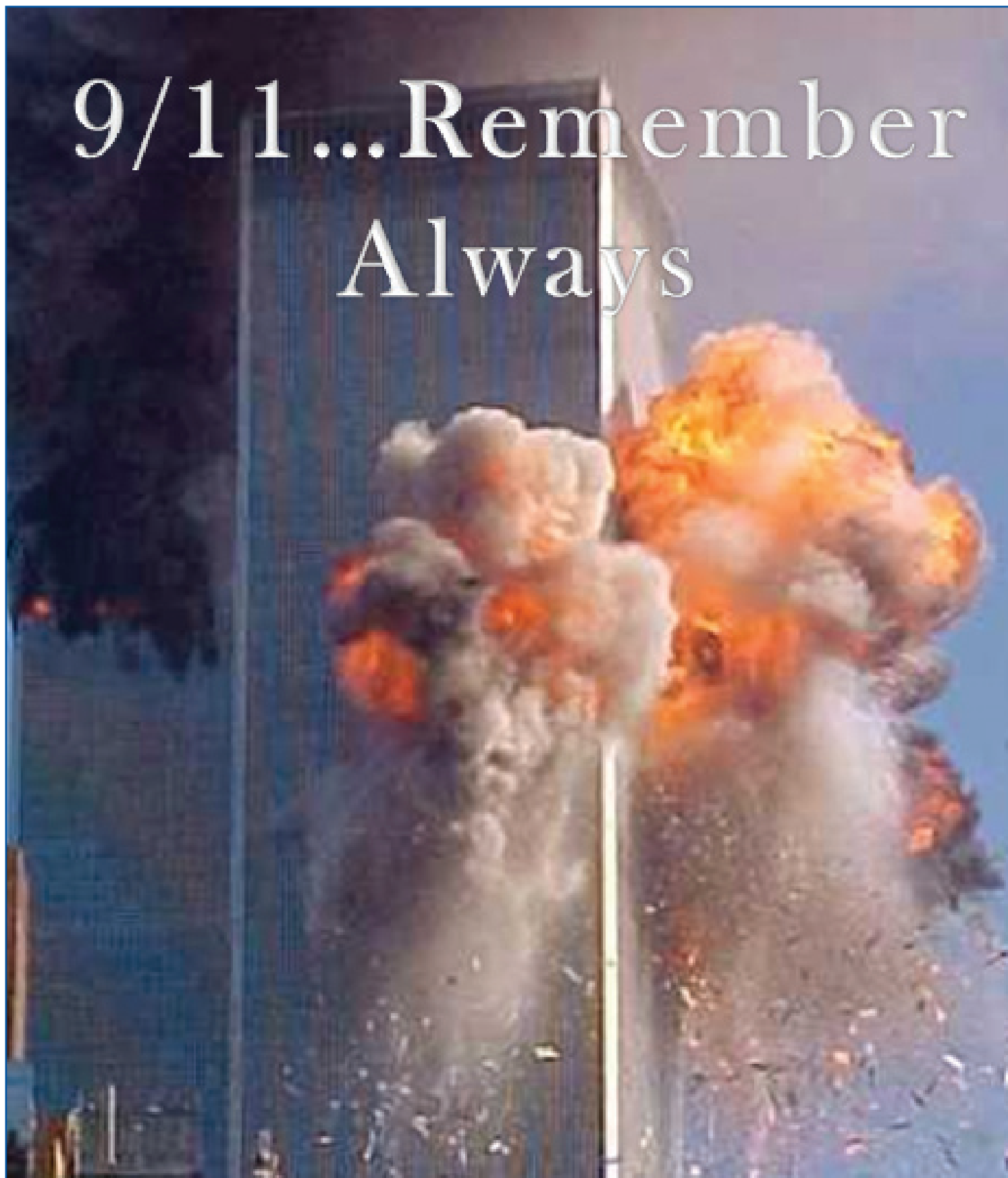
Until they are home



National POW/MIA Recognition Day
September 21, 2012

www.dtic.mil/dpmo

9/11...Remember Always



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