



Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the

The Camaraderie

SERVING VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES, and the COMMUNITY



February 2017

Volume 16-2

Taking Care of Veterans for Seventy Years 1946~2016

THE COMMANDER'S COMMENTARY

By Post Commander Joseph Byrnes "Hoss"



Greetings! I always look at the article I wrote last year at this time, just to see how far we have come from year to year. Last year's starts out about the same as this one... I am again sitting at my desk at work and it really sucks when your real life interrupts your volunteer life. With that said, this is going to be my shortest article

since I have to get right back to work and finish a bunch of projects.

We are now into the second month of 2017 and it looks to be a thunderous one based on all the news reports and radio shows. I want to say this as it was put to me, the VFW does not belong to a political party. We have one political point of view and that is supporting veterans. Our group supports the US Constitution and we support the Office of the President of the United States, not the person sitting in the chair. So, please be careful when you are out and about in your daily activities. If you are handing out poppies or literature and have the uniform hat on and someone from the media should ask you your personal point of view on a topic, please be sure to remove your cover as you will be representing yourself and not speaking for the organization. It is better to be safe than sorry.

We are having a difficult time staffing the BINGO Program. I am taking over the scheduling side of the BINGO Program now, so if you have a free Thursday or Friday evening, please contact me at cmdr@post7327.org. I will be sending out a letter and email blast this week to all of our folks in the local Virginia area. It will include a complete listing of the volunteer jobs with a description of each so you will know what you are volunteering for each night. We need six volunteers to conduct BINGO operations each night. Please understand, I am not asking anyone to do this every week. We are looking for folks to give an evening once a month. Remember, this is how we take care of our veterans and without the BINGO Program it will be impossible to continue helping them and their families in the way that we do.

(Continued on page 2)

VFW Hosts New #ExploreVA Live Chat on Facebook

Ask questions directly with VA education and employment benefits experts

www.vfw.org

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States is once again teaming up with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for a Facebook chat, this time to provide veterans and their family members with a better understanding of VA's education and employment benefits. The #ExploreVA Facebook chat will take place Wednesday, Feb. 15, at 2 p.m. EST on the VFW's Facebook page.

VA subject matter experts will be on-hand during the live chat to provide answers and resources in response to participants' questions regarding the VA's many education and employment benefits. The event is open to all service members, veterans and their families and supporters, but participants must have a Facebook account in order to ask questions. Questions can be posted in the comments section of the VFW's post once the chat has commenced.

This event is part of an online event series entitled, #ExploreVA: From Service to Success, to showcase how veterans and their families are using VA benefits to earn degrees, start careers, buy homes, and stay healthy, among many other everyday life and transition topics. For more information and to receive email reminders about upcoming events, visit: Explore.VA.gov/events.

To learn more about the benefits and services that VA provides, visit explore.va.gov, to access basic information, get connected to helpful resources, and learn how and where to apply for VA benefits. Take the Benefits Navigator quiz at www.va.gov/benefits-navigator to learn what VA benefits you should explore.

Commander's Commentary—continued from page 1

Housekeeping: We are looking for a Comrade to run for the position of Three-Year Trustee. I am announcing this now so that at the next General Membership meeting I will be able to accept names for the position. If we get more than one member to volunteer, then we will hold elections in March. If only one person steps up, then we will install him or her at the February meeting. As required, we will be establishing a Nominating Committee to prepare for the April 2017 elections at the Post. If you are interested in holding an elected position within the Post, please plan on attending the next General Membership meeting when we will announce the committee members.

We will be having our annual Americanism Awards Ceremony February 25, 2017. This ceremony will honor the winning student entrants in our VFW Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen Scholarship contests, our Teacher of the Year, Public Service of the Year, and citizens and business recognition awards. The Ceremony will be conducted at the Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Company Event Hall, 7011 Backlick Road, Springfield, VA. The ceremony will begin at 11:00 am. Please plan on attending. We have invited both our Federal and State Representatives to this event.

I look forward to seeing you at the Post or at Bingo. By the way, if anyone asks you about VFW Post 7327, let them know we are open for business and our business is taking care of veterans!

Commander Joseph Byrnes "Hoss"

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Post Chaplain Wayne Yancey

Hello Comrades, Members of the Auxiliary and Friends of Post 7327

Last month I reported that Comrade Ted Scott had been diagnosed with Pancreatic Cancer and had been taking chemo therapy since December 9. I also reported that the chemo had really done a number on his heart and he had experienced congestive heart failure on Christmas Eve. It saddens me to report that Ted lost his battle with cancer and passed on January 9, 2017 surrounded by his family. He was born on January 8, 1946. Ted served twenty-three years in the Army Corps of Engineers and earned eligibility for membership in the VFW through service in Vietnam. Ted worked for the American Trucking Association for 26 years after retiring from the Army. He served in various positions on the Executive Committee and was an active worker at Bingo, usually selling "pull-tabs". Thanks to the Scott family for allowing us to say farewell to our fallen Comrade with a VFW Service in his honor which was conducted shortly before the Memorial Service on Thursday, January 26, 2017.

Rudy Gartner is still struggling with recent eye surgery. He experienced a set-back recently when his dog was attacked by two other dogs while Rudy was walking him. He said he is feeling better now but was sore for a while.

It was great to see Mike Kephart back on his feet at the most recent Executive Committee meeting. Mike said he still has some limitations but is doing well.

Please keep the above Comrades and their families in your thoughts and prayers as they go through these difficult times.

Our next VA Hospital visit is scheduled for Tuesday evening, February 21, 2017. Visits were recently changed from the first Tuesday every other month to the third Tuesday. We will still leave the Post Home at 6:00 pm and will return at approximately 9:00 pm. Members of the Post and Auxiliary are invited and encouraged to join us. Usually we conduct Bingo for between 25 and 30 residents of the hospital and give away \$1.00 vouchers to the local canteen valued in total at approximately \$100.00.

As always if I can be of service to anyone please don't hesitate to contact me using the information provided below.

Home: 703-3719-7660, Cellular; 703-350-8409
E Mail – W.Yancey @Cox.Net

Message from Your Auxiliary President

By Auxiliary President Barbara Major

As you might know, the VFW Auxiliary is one of the nation's oldest service organizations. For more than 100 years, we have been serving veterans, the military, and their families in countless ways. Through our programs we help veterans in need, preserve our nation's patriotic traditions, and educate youth. Last year's numbers speak for themselves.



Under our Veterans & Family Support Program the VFW Auxiliaries provided \$4.4 million in monetary aid to veterans, active-duty military, and their families in all 50 states. In addition, thousands of Auxiliaries nationwide participated in or sponsored events or projects for homeless vets. The amount spent by Auxiliaries on all Hospital projects came to \$4.0 million, while the number of hours served in VA centers, hospitals, nursing homes, and veterans homes was more than 878,000.

Veterans & Family Support and Hospital are just two of our programs. The others are Legislative, Scholarships, Youth Activities, and Americanism. The numbers for 2016 in all of these programs are also impressive. Yes, we, and our fellow Auxiliaries, did a lot last year that we can be proud of and we should be. But there is still much more to do, and we can do it if the will is there and people step up to help. New ideas are always welcome!

Right now we need volunteers to help with our VFW Thursday and Friday night Bingo, which is the major source of funding for our activities. There are openings in all positions--Set Up, Callers, Pick 7, Pull Tabs, and Floor Workers. Please let Joe Byrnes, Gary Kelch, Marcia Lohr, or Linda Bond know if you can help.

Our next Auxiliary meeting will be on February 8 at 7pm. I'd love to see you there.

Who can join the VFW Auxiliary?

All of the people represented in the image below!

Ask someone to join today!



VFW Post & Auxiliary 7327

8350-F Terminal Road
Lorton, Virginia 22079
Phone: 703-541-3139
Fax: 703-541-0641

Website: www.post7327.org
Facebook: VFW Post 7327
Twitter: @VfwPost7327

Email: adjpost7327@va.vfwwebmail.com
Blog: www.vfwwebcom.org/va/Post7327

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3-Yr Trustee: Vacant
2-Yr Trustee: Clarence McNeil
1-Yr Trustee: Gary Kelch
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Auxiliary Officers

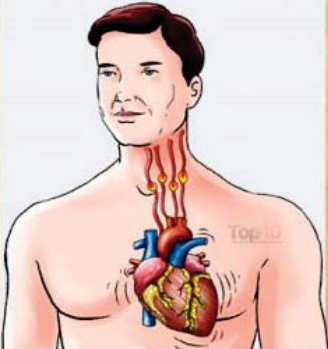
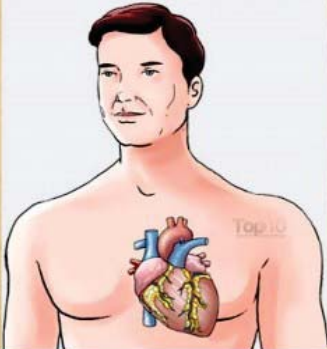
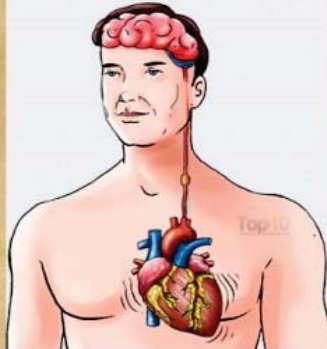
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Guard: Janne Best 703-321-7349
1-Yr Trustee: Linda Bond 703-407-3106
2-Yr Trustee: JoAnne Kelch 703-644-8485
3-Yr Trustee: Valerie Murrell
Patriotic Instructor: Joyce Engel

The Camaraderie newsletter is published by Springfield, Virginia Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7327, a community based 501c19 not-for-profit Congressionally Chartered Veterans Organization. Mailed for educational outreach and information purposes to our members, volunteers and friends. The newsletter is distributed to over 700 individuals. We have served our community since 1946, providing support to Veterans, their families, active duty military and community based organizations.

February is American Heart Month

Knowing the warning signs of these three challenging and possibly deadly events can help you and your loved ones react rapidly and get help right away. Not all heart attacks and strokes present the same symptoms, sometimes symptoms may go away and return. Cardiac arrests show warning signs days and weeks before the events take place. Heart attack symptoms in women may vary from those present in men. Become familiar with the symptoms and call 911 immediately if you or your loved one is experiencing one or more of the symptoms listed below.

YOU MUST KNOW THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN

HEART ATTACK	CARDIAC ARREST	STROKE
 <p>A heart attack is a circulation disorder.</p> <p>S I N G O</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHEST PAIN (ANGINA) • BODY ACHES • SHORTNESS OF BREATH • COLD SWEATS 	 <p>A cardiac arrest is an "electrical" disorder.</p> <p>S I N G O</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS • BLACKOUT • CHEST PAIN • EXTREME PALPITATION 	 <p>A stroke is a brain disorder.</p> <p>S I N G O</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MENTAL CONFUSION • DISRUPTED SPEECH • INABILITY TO WALK • BLURRED VISION

www.safecare.com

B I N G O

Early Birds - 7:00 pm
Regular Bingo - 7:45 pm

Every Thursday and Friday Night! 7:00 pm

Three Progressive Jackpot Games Each Night!!


TWO \$500.00 JACKPOTS Each Night!

At the Springfield Volunteer Fire Company
7011 Backlick Road

Springfield Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 7327

Lucky Seven!
Pull Tabs!

Join us for an Evening of Fun!



DODGE **Safford OF SPRINGFIELD** **Jeep**
www.saffordauto.com

Errett "Sonny" Thomas, Life Member and Past All State Post Commander of VFW Post 7327, is a Sales Liaison with Safford Dodge Jeep of Springfield. He invites you to come and have a look at the great selection of Dodge & Jeep Vehicles.

A donation of \$100 will be made to the Post or Auxiliary in the name of any VFW Post or Auxiliary Member for every new or used vehicle purchased. Just mention Sonny's name or this ad. Please bring in your current membership card with you.

Call Sonny at 703-629-4513.
Safford Dodge Jeep, 7611 Loisdale Road, Springfield, Virginia 22150

Service Officer's Corner

Francis W. Konieczny, Post Service Officer

Help for Military Caregivers

This is Part 2 of a 2-Part Series on Military Caregivers.

Military caregivers aren't that different from their civilian counterparts. More often than not, they experience the same frustrations and, in some cases, an exacerbated sense that they are truly forgotten by others. Especially the military. One thing I think we can all agree on; military caregivers sacrifice greatly to care for their loved one. These individuals themselves often suffer from bad health, employment difficulties, depression, deteriorating family relationships, and financial challenges. More often than not, they are not prepared for their new responsibilities. Generally, caregiving has gotten a bad name. Caregivers provide a range of support and assistance that includes helping those they are caring for to eat, bathe, and walk; assisting them with paying bills, buying groceries, and completing chores around the house; and importantly, for persons with mental health or cognitive difficulties, helping them cope with or manage stressful situations. Clearly, some days are more difficult than others. And it rarely seems to end.

In an article, published by the *Washington Post*, Tracy Grant wrote eloquently about being a caregiver to her terminally ill husband. She writes: "In addition to everyday challenges, there is often a lack of infrastructure to make sure that essentials, such as transportation to doctors and subsequent medical tests are provided. For some, caregiving lasts years rather than months and there's very little time off for the caregiver."



In 2014, Rajeev Ramchand of the Rand Corporation actually placed a dollar amount on care provided by health attendants, writing that ". . . were the country to replace caregivers' time, the total cost would be more than \$10 billion for pre-9/11 and more than \$3 billion for post-9/11 service members and veterans." Mr. Ramchand also came to the conclusion that support programs are often uncoordinated or do not sufficiently meet the needs of the (military) caregiver.

That same year, Senator Patty Murray's Military and Veteran Caregiver Services Improvement Act:

- Addressed veterans of all eras eligible for the full range of caregiver support services;
- Addressed veterans in the VA caregiver program eligible to transfer Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to their dependents in recognition of the fact that a spouse, who may have been unemployed or underemployed previously, may now be required to become the primary source of income for the family. Injured veterans should not be penalized because their injury occurred early in their service. This provision exempts the veteran from the length of service requirement that would currently bar them from transferring benefits.
- Expands eligibility for the VA caregivers program by including a wider array of needs which may require caregiving; placing greater emphasis on mental health injuries; removing restrictions on who is eligible to become a caregiver.
- Expands services available to caregivers by making caregivers eligible for VA child care programs, or providing a stipend to offset the cost of child care, and providing caregiver financial advice, and legal counseling. This addresses some of the currently unmet, needs of family caregivers.
- Improves DoD's Special Compensation for Assistance with Activities of Daily Living by:
 - Creating a national interagency working group to coordinate caregiver policy and services;
 - Allows the federal government to meet the unique needs of employees who are caregivers with flexible work arrangements so they can stay employed while caring for the veteran.
 - Reflects many of the findings and recommendations of Mr. Rajeev Ramchand.

Portions of this article were sourced from the following:

The Washington Post, Thursday, September 13, 2016 by Tracy Grant.

Rand Corporation's *Hidden Heroes: America's Military Caregivers Study to Improve and Expand the VA Caregiver Program* (funded by the Elizabeth Dole Foundation).

Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1

If you or someone you know is at risk for suicide please reach out to the military and veteran crisis line at

1 (800) 273-8255 press 1,

or if you feel like you just need someone to talk to reach out to vets4warriors at www.vets4warriors.com

These resources are available to active duty military, veterans, and their family members.



Veterans of Foreign Wars of the
United States

Web Site:
www.post7327.org

The Friendliest VFW Post in Virginia

Web Site: www.post7327.org
e-mail: cmdr@post7327.org
703-541-3139 Phone



Upcoming Events and Activities

February 8—Auxiliary Membership Meeting, 7 pm

February 20—President's Day

February 21—VA Hospital Visit, Meet at Post Home at 6:00pm

February 22—General Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm

February 25—Award Ceremony, 11:00 am,

Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Department

February 26—March 2—VFW Legislative Conference DC

Come early to meetings and join us for drinks and camaraderie!

**BINGO - EVERY THURSDAY AND FRIDAY evening beginning at 7:00 pm at
Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Department**

Post Hours of Operation

Monday / Tuesday – Closed (except for meetings)

Wednesday / Thursday—10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Friday – 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Saturday / Sunday – 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

The Post may be open other than these hours as events require and personnel are available.