



Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the

The Camaraderie

SERVING VETERANS, THEIR FAMILIES, and the COMMUNITY



March 2017

Volume 16-3

Taking Care of Veterans for Seventy Years 1946~2016

THE COMMANDER'S COMMENTARY

By Post Commander Joseph Byrnes "Hoss"



Hello from the from my desk in the basement, or as I like to call it, my cave. Well, it seems that I was just doing this a few days ago. Newsletters are always fun in that I love passing along all the different things going on around the Post and bringing you up to date on what we are doing with Bingo and the property. There

are a few things that I will not be addressing here, but will be sending out in a member only correspondence in the next few days.

The good news is that there is an end in sight for winter, and spring is right around the corner. St. Patrick's Day is a Friday this year, so this should make it a fun BINGO night. If you're not volunteering, stop by and play. Who knows, the luck might rub off on you.

We just finished the Awards Ceremony this past week and it was outstanding to see all our awardees present. The winners did an outstanding job representing their individual entries. I was also very happy to see that Department Commander Tom Gimble, District 10 Commander Bob Dugas, and Past District 10 Auxiliary President Betty Gimble could attend. I would also like to acknowledge that Congressional members for the 8th, 10th, and 11th district were invited to attend or send their representatives. Congresswoman Barbara Comstock from the 10th and Congressman Gerry Connolly from the 11th both sent representatives. Congressmen Connolly presented each awardee with a copy of the official congressional record acknowledging their accomplishments while Congresswomen Comstock presented each with an award from her office. We also invited all our state representatives, but they were unable to attend due to the Virginia General Assembly being in session. I would personally like to congratulate Comrade Gary Kelch and the Americanism Committee for all their support and help with this function. If it was not for Comrade Kelch's leadership and guidance this function would not have gone so smoothly. Thank you again for all you and Joanne do for the Post, it is appreciated more than you know.

(Continued on page 2)

New Veterans Benefits Office in Springfield

The new Virginia Department of Veteran Services (VDVS) Benefits office in Springfield will greatly assist the region's veterans in accessing the federal and state benefits they've earned through their service to our nation. The new office is part of Virginia's efforts to expand veterans' services in the Northern Virginia Service Area

The office will serve the Cities of Pentagon, Henderson Hall-Fort Myers, Fort Belvoir, Arlington County, Alexandria-Fairfax Counties, Springfield-Franconia, Lorton, Loudoun, Fredericksburg and surrounding areas.

Benefit Services Include:

- Health Benefits
- Disability Compensation & Pensions
- Education
- Employment
- Home Loan Guarantees
- Hunting & Fishing Licenses
- Real Estate Tax Exemption
- Veterans ID Card
- Virginia SWaM Program—Small, Women-owned, and Minority Owned Business
- SDVOSB Designation—Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small-Business

About the Springfield VDVS Office:

Location: 6564 Loisdale Ct., Suite 301
Springfield, VA 22150

Phone Number: 703-417-9090

Hours of Service: Monday-Friday 8am-4:30pm,
Veterans seen from 9am-3:30pm

To learn more about the Springfield Benefits office visit the VDVS website www.vdvs.virginia.gov.

Commander's Commentary—continued from page 1

As we move further to the close of our year we look towards our membership statistics. Each year we look at our Annual Members and look to them to renew their membership. As we switched a few years back, the membership of the Post is no longer on a calendar year, but is on a twelve (12) month plan and starts from the day the you were approved by the General Membership. So please be aware of your expiration dates and please renew. In the past I pushed this so that the Post would be recognized for 100% membership. This is not the case this year. Our goal is always to be 100%, but not just for the Post. Your membership in the VFW means far more to the veterans in need than it does for our Post. Each year the Commander in Chief reports to the Congress and he speaks for the 1,234,985 members worldwide on issues that support combat and non-combat veterans. **His voice is only as strong as the members whom he represents.** 1.2 million voices have a lot of pull when it comes to elected individuals and we need to keep that number strong.

I will be seeking a volunteer to chair the Nominations Committee this year as we will need to fill many seats due to personal and professional commitments. So, if you are interested in running for any of the elected positions. Commander, Sr Vice Commander, Jr Vice Commander, Quartermaster, Chaplain, and 3 year Trustee; please contact me cmdr@post7327.org and I will announce your name in the next newsletter and we will hold elections on April.

If you have not received a request to volunteer for Bingo than please send me your email and I will be happy to personally request your help. I have recently taken over the scheduling for BINGO and this month we need six (6) Volunteers each Thursday and Friday night. This month we have five (5) weeks in March and that means we will need sixty(60) volunteers to step up. If you are able, please contact me cmdr@post7327.org, use BINGO as the subject, and I will get right back to you and will be happy to schedule you for as much or as little time as you wish to work. Bingo starts at 7pm and we normally go until 10pm but we can work out times around individual schedules. Also, parents or grandparents who have high school children that have not met their community service requirements for this year, have I got a solution for you! Drop me a line and I will be happy to get your kids the required hours in one or two nights on Thursday or Friday and we do offer to feed everyone that works. All kidding aside, any help you can offer will be appreciated.

We are going into our 71st year of supporting veterans and the community. It is a great feeling knowing that we can keep doing this well into the future with your help and support.

Remember, if anyone asks you about our Post let them know we are open for business and our business is taking care of veterans.

Joseph Byrnes "Hoss"

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER *Post Chaplain Wayne Yancey*

Hello Comrades, Members of the Auxiliary and Friends of the Post,
I hope everyone was able to enjoy this past beautiful, holiday weekend we just had. It sure was nice.

I spoke with Rudy Gartner about a week ago and he is doing well. In fact he plans on being at the General Membership meeting next week. Rudy had extensive eye surgery about two months ago and then had a setback when two dogs attacked his dog while he was walking him.

Mike Kephart is also doing well and is traveling again.

I learned today that Hayward Thomas is in Walter Reed Medical Center. I called the hospital tonight but have not been able to contact him as of this writing. I will continue to try.

We conducted a successful VA Hospital Visit last night. Thanks to Comrade Roscoe Newsome for joining me. Twenty-two residents enjoyed an evening of bingo and we made sure everyone left "a winner". Hospital visits are conducted every other month on the third Tuesday evening. The next visit is already scheduled for April 17, 2017. We will leave the Post Home at 6:00 pm and will be back by 9:00 pm.

Please let me know if I can be of service to anyone.

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

Message from Your Auxiliary President

By Auxiliary President Barbara Major

The warm February weather may be confusing to our backyard birds and early Spring flowers, but our commitment to serving veterans, active military, and their families is clear and strong. Anything we in the Auxiliary can do to help, we will do whenever possible.



Our focus this March is on nominating our officers for the coming year, 2017-2018. Elections will be held in April, and officers assume their duties after the Department Convention in June. Any member in good standing is eligible for office. Elected officers include President, Senior Vice President, Junior Vice President, Treasurer, Chaplain, Conductress, Guard, and Trustee. In the two years that I have been President, I have met and worked with a remarkable group of dedicated members on all levels. I have found the experience very rewarding on many levels. I strongly encourage anyone interested in running for office and wanting more information, please let me know (bmajor129@gmail.com).

Some future Auxiliary activities in the works are Buddy Poppy distributions in May and the Springfield 5K Race in June. More to come on both events. Stay tuned.

Our next Auxiliary meeting is March 8, 7 PM. I hope to see you there

Fairfax County Young Marines were on hand at Bingo to share valentines with our Bingo patrons in February.



VFW Post & Auxiliary 7327

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Treasurer: Linda Byrnes 703-732-7539

Chaplain: Floy Lipscomb 803-271-3081

Conductress: Barbara Bucklin 703-971-8299

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.

Military Exchanges plan to offer online access to veterans by Nov. 11

Excerpted from MilitaryTimes.com, February, 2017, Karen Jowers author

The military exchanges have the green light to open their online doors to veterans by Nov. 11, an idea initially proposed by a top exchange official nearly three years ago.

Defense Department officials notified the congressional oversight committees Jan. 11 of their intent to open up the military exchange online shopping benefit to **all honorably discharged veterans**. On Jan. 18, a memorandum went out with guidance for the military departments to implement the program by Nov. 11. **The new shopping privileges will apply only to online shopping, not to brick-and-mortar stores.** Newly eligible veterans -- DoD estimates there are 15 million of them -- wouldn't be able to buy uniforms, alcohol or tobacco products.

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service, or AAFES, and Navy Exchange Service Command, or NEXCOM, have online shopping websites, but authorized shoppers can buy from either site, regardless of branch of service.

How It Will Work

As they do with other authorized customers, the exchanges will use data provided by the Defense Manpower Data Center to verify veteran eligibility for online shopping privileges. Veterans whose records are incomplete or don't appear in the Veterans Affairs Department database will need to register through VA, according to a letter to congressional committees with oversight over DoD and VA issues by Peter Levine, former acting undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness.

The exchange services will provide registration information on their online sites, and the AAFES call center will help veterans navigate the process.

Veterans with honorable discharges will be authorized to shop online at any of the military exchange sites regardless of service branch, but they won't be able to receive a DoD identification card through the program, or gain access to DoD installations and other DoD property where exchanges are located.

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
www.saffordauto.com

Jeep

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

Respite Care

Respite Care

Let's talk briefly about something called "respite care." Respite care is a term used by professionals who work with and counsel caregivers on ways to care of themselves. This is important because it defines time away from your caregiver responsibilities. The term means taking time for you. Respite can be as simple as having one of your wounded warrior's friends come over to watch a movie or sporting event or to take him or her fishing. It can mean taking your soldier or veteran to an adult day care program or a nursing home for a short period of time. Your first reaction may be that you can never get away from being a caregiver, which is probably true. You can, however, find ways to lessen your caregiving burdens by turning them over to others for a short period of time.

Types of Respite Programs

Respite programs are not the same from community to community or program to program, so exploring what's available in your community is critical. First, identify the type of respite most appropriate for you and your service member and then find out what's available in your community. Once you have zeroed in on what you need and the type of respite program most appropriate, secure recommendations from others who have used the program, evaluate costs, interview program staff, and then select the one best for you and your warrior. As you start your exploration process, you'll find there are two broad categories of respite programs: in-home respite and out-of-home respite.

In-Home Respite

In-home respite is provided in your home, which may be easier for many families because your wounded warrior is comfortable in your home and won't have to adjust to another setting. Your home already has the equipment needed to care for the wounded warrior, plus you don't have to transport equipment to another location. In-home respite programs can be provided by an agency or organization, such as a social service or human services organization, private or nonprofit homemaker service, or home health agency, all of which have trained staff. You can also contract individually with someone you know or who has a business that provides in-home respite. If you hire someone individually, it's a good idea to secure recommendations and do a background check.

Out-of-Home Respite

Out-of-home respite programs are just that—respite provided at another location rather than in your home. These types of respite programs include a camp experience, a short-term period in a hospital setting or nursing home, volunteer programs located in churches or senior centers, or care in an adult day care setting.

The most common form of out-of-home respite is adult day care or adult day services, which typically provide care daily except for weekends in a facility specially designed to provide care to adults or older disabled children. Some adult day care centers provide health services, therapeutic services, and social activities designed for different types of illnesses or conditions. Some programs are strictly social or recreational and focus on engaging participants in activities and provide a meal.

In some instances, you may need overnight or short-term respite due to your health needs, family obligations, or your service member's needs. Some local hospitals (including VA hospitals) or nursing homes provide short-term respite. When considering an out-of-home respite program, recognize it may take time for some care receivers to adjust to a new environment and routine especially if they are used to a calm and consistent routine. For more details about various types of respite programs, read the fact sheet, [ABCs of Respite: A Consumer Guide for Family Caregivers](#) provided by ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center at www.archrespite.org.



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](http://vets4warriors.com) 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



The Friendliest VFW Post in Virginia

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



*Volunteers do not necessarily have the
time; they just have the heart."*

~ Elizabeth Andrew

Upcoming Events and Activities

February 26—March 2—VFW Legislative Conference DC

March 8—Auxiliary Membership Meeting, 7 pm

March 12—Daylight Savings Time Begins

March 17—St. Patrick's Day

March 28—General Membership Meeting, 7:30 pm

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.