



United We Stand



Indiana

COMBAT

Veteran

Volume 64 Issue 1

Fall 2020

Elected at the School of Instruction

Former Post, District QM assumes state's finances

Leslie Ackerman was elected as the VFW Dept. of Indiana's Quartermaster in August 2019 at the School of Instruction. Leslie's background includes seven years as a Post Quartermaster and three years as the District 5 Quartermaster. She has been involved with the VFW for over 20 years. Leslie



is a Life member of VFW Post 2689 in Huntington, Indiana where she lives.

She became eligible for the VFW with her service in the U.S. Army in Korea from 1983 to 1984. Leslie served as a 98-J, U.S. Army Electronic Intelligence Interceptor/Analyst.

Leslie is currently in the Quartermaster's office two days per week and as needed for other items of importance. She is originally from Cayuga in New York and she met her husband while serving in Texas. Her primary job as Quartermaster is to oversee the Post and District Bonds, Buddy Poppies and the quarterly Audits.

Leslie Ackerman, VFW Post 2689, Huntington, was elected to the position of State Quartermaster at the Aug. 10 "School of Instruction". The position was left open when Brent Mize resigned due to health issues.

Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen essay deadline reminder

The deadline for the annual Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen essay contests is quickly approaching. The students must have their completed entry form with the (audio and/or written) essay submitted to a local participating VFW Post by Saturday, Oct. 31, 2020.

Each corresponding deadline for Post, District and Department to have their entries to the next level is Nov. 15, 2020, for completion of Post judging; Dec. 15, 2020, for completion of District judging; Jan. 10, 2021, for completion of Department judging and the Department winners are due to National Headquarters by Jan. 15, 2021.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

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October 2020

Greetings Comrades:

I hope this newsletter finds you in good health.

By this date, all our Posts have been working on Voice of Democracy (VOD) and Patriot's Pen (PP) programs with the deadline coming up in the next couple of weeks. I understand that it is extremely difficult getting into schools with the COVID-19 looming. But I also know that you can get the job done.

Our Fall Conference is October 23 to 25 at Marriott Inn East in Indianapolis. I hope to see everyone there.

God Bless our troops here and abroad, pray for their safety, and God Bless the United States of America.

Thanks,

*Dave Capshaw*State Commander
VFW Dept. of Indiana

From the Dept. Sr. Vice Commander . . .

By Dick Lineberry

Greetings fellow VFW comrades!

The end of summer is here, no more shorts, flip flops and pontoon rides. Fall is here with all its glorious colors and cold weather. I know many of us are looking forward to 2020 moving on and getting to 2021. This year has certainly tested our organization, but I believe we have done an outstanding job. We were able to hold our Summer Convention and C of A at Marriott East, and despite everything going on, we had a good turnout.

This proves the VFW is always moving forward. It was great to be able to get together with our fellow comrades and see them in person. Now is the time when we need to look forward and to reflect on what has happened so far. With everything going on, many of us are feeling isolated and even our Posts feel like they are out there on their own. It almost feels like we are on our own little island. Our Posts should never feel like they are on an island. There is a lot of support available at VFW Headquarters, with Becky Murphy, Leslie Ackerman, and Gloria Faulk always willing to assist Posts.

You also have your District Commanders who stand ready to assist any Post. You also have your State Officers willing to assist in any way, shape, or form. We are always here to answer any questions and help in any way we can. The point is that no Post or member should ever feel like they are on their own to have to figure things out. Part of getting out of that island feeling is getting behind Commander Dave's motto "Veterans Serving Veterans". Get out in the community in any capacity and let them know that the VFW is still here.

Take part in activities that your community has going on. If you want one of your State Officers there, please let us know. If you let us know what is going on in your communities, we would be more than happy to attend. You only need to ASK.

On September 20, the New Haven VFW had a joint Veterans Outreach program with the VA. The first one ever done by VANINHCS. A huge success! See article, we even made front page of the Ft. Wayne Journal Gazette! Past State Commander Rodney Funk showed up and was so impressed, that he booked the VA to do one for the Huntington Post on October 24. This is a great asset to have at our disposal for recruitment, we picked up three new members, and community involvement!

Let us get out there and show our communities what the VFW has to offer!

Yours in Comradeship,

Dick Lineberry

Dept. Sr. Vice Commander

Veterans Day – November 11

Veterans Day is an opportunity to publicly commemorate the contributions of living veterans. Armistice Day officially received its name in America in 1926 through a congressional resolution. It became a national holiday 12 years later by similar congressional action.

If World War I had been "the war to end all wars," November 11 might be still called Armistice Day. Realizing that peace was equally preserved by veterans of World War II and Korea, Congress decided to make the day an occasion to honor all those who have served America. In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11 as Veterans Day. (Historically, the first Veterans Day parade was held in 1953 in Emporia, Kansas.)

A law passed in 1968 changed the national commemoration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. It soon became apparent, however, that November 11 was a date of historic significance to many Americans. Therefore, in 1978 Congress returned the observance to its traditional date.

Served as Indiana VFW State Commander 2004-2005

Jack R. Mason, Sr. dies at 89 years of age

Jack R. Mason, Sr. 89, of Vincennes, IN, died October 8, 2020, at the Bridge-Pointe Health Campus.

He was born on February 15, 1931 in Knox County, IN, and was the son of Sterling Royce and Edna Fern (Pickle) Mason. His parents; his wife, Ruth Jeanette (Arnold) Mason; and his brothers, Terry Mason, and Franklin Mason, preceded him in death.



Jack R. Mason, Sr.

Jack served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. After four years, he joined the U.S. Army and served 21 years, including a tour in Vietnam. There he received a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star Medal, with an Oak Leaf Cluster.

He joined the American Legion, 40 & 8, and the VFW, where he was a lifetime member. From 2004 – 2005 he served as the Indiana State Commander in the VFW. A 63-year member of the Masonic Lodge, his membership was eventually transferred to the Pike Masonic Lodge No. 121, F & AM, in Petersburg, IN. He was a member of the Eagles for over 30 years. Jack had enjoyed scuba diving, golf, and playing Texas Hold-‘Em. An avid St. Louis Cardinals fan, he also enjoyed watching Jeff Gordon in NASCAR.

Surviving are his children, Jack Mason, Jr. and his wife, Sheryl, of Vincennes, IN, Mary Ellen Runyon and her husband, Mike, of Denison, TX, and Carol Schwartzlose and her husband, Larry, of Madisonville, KY; his companion, Ada Mae Carie of Vincennes, IN; a sister-in-law, Gloria Mason of Vincennes, IN; 11 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; 10 great-great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Jack was at Goodwin-Sievers Funeral Home in Vincennes, IN.

Fall Conference set for October 23-25 at Marriott

The Indiana VFW Fall Conference is scheduled for October 23-25 at the Indianapolis Marriott East Hotel. There are apparently still plenty of hotel rooms (please call the hotel to make reservations).

The tentative schedule includes the C of A meeting at 7 p.m. Friday (uniform is the State shirt) with the business session beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday (uniform Blue Jacket, White Shirt, Grey Pants and Tie), and a Mixer at 6:30 p.m.

The Mixer is \$27 per person. It includes: Mini Sweet and Sour Meatballs, Wings with sauces; Potato Wedges, Pizzas and Fruit Cups. Freshly brewed coffee, iced tea, and a cash bar.

There will be no assigned seating and no plated meals. Appetizers will be served from 7 to 8 p.m. Each ticket will come with 2 drink tickets for the bar.

Complete the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry

All veterans who served in eligible locations should include their information in the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pits Registry.

Participation in the registry is particularly important as it will allow VA to track burn pit exposure and draw inferences regarding associated adverse health effects. Exposure to burn pits may be associated with respiratory conditions such as asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD).

Recently, VA stated that veterans with underlying respiratory conditions may be at greater risk for developing complications related to COVID-19.

From the Dept. Jr. Vice Commander . . .

By Richard Leirer
Dept. Jr. Vice Commander

The Post Commander job is without a doubt the hardest volunteer job in the VFW! But it can also be the most rewarding job ever, of any line of work. The simple act of helping a Veteran in need, whether that need is financial, physical, or psychological doesn't matter. It is such a great feeling knowing you have helped a fellow Veteran survive whatever the problem was.

So, hang in there Post Commanders. I know it's really tough right now but better days are ahead of us. This pandemic will end some day and things will get back to the *new normal*, whatever that *new normal* is? A good Post Commander and a good Auxiliary President are worth their weight in gold, no matter how bad things are, they will be there and work hard to make things better for the Post and your community.

Remember the Post is the "patriotic heartbeat of the community". I know most of you are starting to be inspected or have your inspection scheduled, remember this is not a bad thing. The inspection is designed to help the Post catch problems before they get out of hand. It is a good time to seek advice from the inspector. Normally they are members who have been Post or District or even Past State Commanders and will be able to help you!

If you can identify problems now it may save your Post from suspension or even being shut down. We just closed a Post that in 2018 was a thriving, well attended, money in the bank, many activities – an All-American Post. This Post did not close because of the pandemic. It was basically closed before the pandemic shut down. This Post closed because of bad leadership; it takes good Post leadership that is dedicated to working hard for the Post.

My Post, VFW 10003 in Carmel, has just dedicated a new Post sign and a new set of flagpoles. The Indiana Guard Reserve posted the colors and directed the ceremony. I believe we are probably the only Post with all six branches of service.

Appointed at the School of Instruction

Former Post and District Commander is Adjutant

Rebecca Murphy, a former VFW Post 1282 Commander and District 10 Commander has taken over as VFW Dept. of Indiana Adjutant. Rebecca served in the U.S. Marine Corps and was an Administrative Chief.

Her primary responsibility, as State Adjutant, as she says is, "putting out fires". She said that she thought long and hard about the time and responsibility of the position and simply wanted to help.

She also serves as the District 10 Adjutant. Rebecca is in the office Monday through Friday around 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. On Wednesday she leaves a little early. If you have a question, don't hesitate to call her.

She said in an interview that she would do the best she can do. "I think consistency in the job will help quite a bit", she stated. She originally hails from New Jersey.



News from the District 11 Commander . . .

Comrades,

With Marion County and the 11th District having some of the toughest restrictions during the pandemic we of the 11th District have continued to serve. Having many events to help our communities. Post 98 and 261 had freedom fests and invited the community in to let them know we are still here. Post 7119 sponsored a food drive and car show to help HVAC. Post 1587 held their suicide awareness walk. Post 1120 celebrated their 75th anniversary. Posts 2839 held a flag day ceremony that included flag retirement. The Post's canteen may not be fully open, but we are still here in the community supporting them and completing the VFW mission. Many of the Posts have made face masks and donated to various places.



Some of the other events that have occurred.

Post 7119 and Post 261 held POW/MIA ceremonies, Post 261 had a Golf outing to raise money for the Navel Sea Cadets and Warren Central Jr. ROTC, Post 2839 held a dinner.

We have deadlines coming up for Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen and District 11 is reaching out to the teachers and schools to ensure the students will have the opportunity to participate in these

programs.

I was asked by the State Commander to have the District at 100% by the end of December. We will give it our best shot.

The Line officers and I have been continuously making the rounds of the Posts to answer questions and be a sounding board when needed.

There has been a lot of cancellations this year and District 11 continues to help where we can.

Patrick Mann

District 11 Commander

Requesting "Conditional" donation

Ceremonial rifles, ammunition, military equipment

Department Adjutants and Quartermasters are asked to remind all Post officers to refer to the revised information located at vfw.org where they will need to log in to the "My VFW" page and select the "VFW Training and Support" link, then "Member & Officer Training, Forms and Templates" where you'll have access to "Training Guides & Standard Operating Procedures" and then click on "Ceremonial Rifles, Ammunition & Military Equipment" when requesting a "conditional" donation of any government military equipment, ceremonial rifles or ammunition.

Before contacting the governmental agency, a formal written request is to be addressed and mailed to the Adjutant General at VFW National Headquarters, and must be completed and signed by the current *Post Commander*, *Post Adjutant* or *Post Quartermaster*, one of whom needs to be the contact person.

Also, to be included is that contact person's mailing address and phone number, not the Post address. Address the request to the Adjutant General, VFW National Headquarters, 406 West 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111.

Include the proper information as outlined in the "Ceremonial Rifles, Ammunition & Military Equipment" pages on the website. It is requested that a Post not go through their Department Headquarters (but send them a courtesy copy). This only slows down the processing and creates unnecessary paperwork for the Department personnel.

News from the District 6 Commander . . .

Comrades,

Welcome one and all to the turbulent 2020-2021 VFW Year.

WOW, how things are different in this COVID-19 pandemic year. Masking and distancing at meetings -- so hard to do when you are among your comrades. Department Meetings cancelled or reduced in scope to just a day to limit exposure.

When will it come to an end; oh, it will end, but will we be the District that we were before the breakout of the virus? Many Posts are restricting attendance or not opening except with very limited hours and as a result paying the light bill etc., is becoming an issue as we are straining our savings accounts to keep up.

On a more pleasant note however, we have had two productive District meetings, our first at Brownsburg, Post 6128 and our second at Rockville, Post 1752 and both were productive with attendance improving. I want to personally thank all those who were in attendance. And, and let us keep up the good work.

As a reminder please visit the State web site often to ensure that you have the most current information in relation to our various programs. That is all for now -- See You at The Fall Conference.

Andy Whitt

District 6 Commander

News from the District 10 Commander . . .

Hello Comrades,

My name is Jim Hankins the 10th District Commander. I hope this finds everyone well.

We have got our year off to a good start. The 10th District inspections are 100% and Buddy Poppies are ordered. We will use up what Poppies we have until the new Poppies come in.

We have many challenges facing us in these difficult times with the COVID-19. We need to work together more now than ever.

Jim Hankins

10th District Commander

Former District 7 Commander and Quartermaster

Charles A. "Charlie" Turner dies September 19

Charles A. "Charlie" Turner, 66, of Monroe City, Indiana, died September 19, 2020 at Willow Manor Nursing Home.

He was born January 20, 1954 in Lucerne, France to Charles and Ernestine (Sipes) Turner. Charles retired after 20 years from the Navy as a Petty Officer First Class serving on the USS Nassau and the USS Teddy Roosevelt. After retiring from the Navy, he worked at Vincennes Industrial Supply in which he retired from there too. A member of the VFW, he served as Past District Commander and Quartermaster. Charles was an avid Chicago Bears fan and St. Louis Cardinals fan.

Surviving are his daughter Stacy Rothwell and her husband Larry of Virginia Beach, VA; his grandchildren Carson and Grace Rothwell; a brother Timothy Turner of Amelia, VA; a sister in-law Lois Lanning of Vincennes; a brother in-law Ray Foster of Chesterfield, VA; and his niece and nephews Samantha Turner, Jeff Lanning, David Foster, Brian Lanning, and Danny Foster.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife Connie (Lanning) Turner who died November 29, 2019; his son Michael Turner; and his sister and brothers Cynthia Foster, Rick Turner, and Steven Turner.

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**2121 Lake Ave
Fort Wayne IN 46805-51001700 E 38th St
Marion IN 46953-4589

In Reply Refer To: 610/610A

September 1, 2020

Dear Veteran or Beneficiary Travel recipient,

We would like to inform you of changes that have been made to the Beneficiary Travel claim process that will decrease processing time and increase speed of payment. Starting October 5, any new travel reimbursement claims for Beneficiary Travel for VA Northern Indiana Healthcare System Veterans should be submitted through a new web-based portal. The system replaces the kiosk method and eliminates hard copy submissions and in-person claim submissions.

The new Beneficiary Travel Self-Service System (BTSSS) online system will launch October 5 through the Access VA website. The system offers Veterans and beneficiaries the following advantages:

- More convenience and ease in submitting claims 24 hours a day, 7 days a week,
- Timely processing and payment of travel reimbursements,
- Self-help tools to find answers to questions, and
- Capability to track a claim and your complete claims history.

This process will be more technology based, so VA Northern Indiana will be ready to assist Veterans in this transition.

Before logging in to submit a claim, Veterans and family members will need a DS Logon account issued by the Department of Defense (DoD). A DS Logon is an ID that enables Veterans and caregivers to access VA and DoD sites with one username and password. For VA Northern Indiana Veterans that are unsure if they have a DS Logon account or need help creating one, they can call Don McCullough at 800-360-8387 ext. 71327 for assistance.

To submit a claim or get information about a DS Logon, visit <<https://access.va.gov/accessva>>. Select the description that fits you best (i.e. Veteran, family member, etc) and then choose Veteran Travel Claim Entry or BTSSS. At that point, a DS Logon will be required.

If you need any assistance or more information about BTSSS please contact the VA Northern Indiana Beneficiary Travel Department at 800-360-8387. Once connected to the call center, ask for Beneficiary Travel and they can connect you. During appointments, Veterans can also ask front desk staff for assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael E. Hershman".

Michael E. Hershman, MHA, FACHE
Executive Director

For Indiana Veterans

Drive-thru clinic available for flu vaccine

Getting a flu vaccine is more important than ever this year to minimize the risk of illness and possible hospitalization. Hand washing, face coverings and social distancing are all important in eliminating infections.

Veteran Health Indiana is providing free flu shots to Veterans through a series of Drive-thru Flu Clinics or at scheduled patient appointments (such as for labs, primary care, nursing, specialty, or behavioral health).

Special Drive Thru Clinics are open from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 12 to 2 p.m. at the schedule below. Bring your VA card and wear a short sleeve shirt on the following days: Bloomington VA Clinic, 2100 S. Liberty Dr., Suite B, Bloomington, IN 47403.

October 20 or 27 and November 3, 10 or 17 Indy West VA Clinic, 3850 Shore Dr., Suite 203, Indianapolis, IN 46254.

October 23 or 30 and November 6, 13 or 20 Martinsville VA Clinic, 2200 John R. Wooden Dr., Martinsville, IN 46151

October 19 and November 2 or 16 Shelbyville VA Clinic, 30 W. Rampart St., Shelbyville.

October 26 and November 9 Terre Haute VA Clinic, 380 W. Honey Creek Dr., Terre Haute.

October 21 or 28 and November 4 or 18 Wakeman VA Clinic, 3791 10th St., Building 1010, Edinburg, IN.

October 22 and November 5 or 19

West Lafayette VA Clinic, 3851 N. River Rd., West Lafayette, IN 47906

October 29 and November 12 Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center, 1481 W. 10th St., Indianapolis, IN -- Parking Lot A (along West 10th St.) -- Follow flu vaccine signs to white tent.

Monday through Friday hours: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. -- Available through November 20; Saturday hours: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. -- Available through October 24.

New Veteran patients should contact Veteran Health Indiana's Health Benefits Unit office at 317-988- 4301 to enroll in VA healthcare.

Pearl Harbor Day, December 7 . . .

On the morning of December 7, 1941, Japanese bombers staged a surprise attack on U.S. military and naval forces in Hawaii. In a devastating defeat, the United States suffered 3,435 casualties and loss of or severe damage to 188 planes, 8 battleships, 3 light cruisers, and 4 miscellaneous vessels. Japanese losses were less than 100 personnel, 29 planes, and 5 midget submarines.

The day after the attack, before a joint session of Congress, President Roosevelt asked Congress for a declaration of war against Japan. President Roosevelt's message conveyed the national outrage over the Pearl Harbor attack by pronouncing December 7, 1941 "a date which will live in infamy."

FDR expressed outrage in Japan and confidence in the "inevitable triumph" of the United States. On December 8, 1941, the United States declared war against Japan; on December 11 Germany and Italy declared war against the United States.

VA can assist Veterans resolve community care debts

VA's Office of Community Care (OCC) contact center can help veterans fix issues with credit reports or debt collection actions that are the result of an authorized VA community care claim. Once a veteran contacts VA's OCC contact center, with their information regarding debt collection, staff will work one-on-one with the veteran to research and resolve collection-specific issues. Contact VA Office of Community Care.

Communications is key to organizations like VFW

First Indiana Combat Veteran since Spring 2019

Newsletters come in many sizes and styles. With this issue, we are hopeful to produce a quality product which will be available on the VFW Department of Indiana's website. Newsletters are only successful if those individuals who read them also provide news and photos to place in each issue.

Although I had sent out an e-mail to all of the District Commanders and everyone else who helps lead the Indiana VFW, I knew that at the beginning it would be slow and people would have to be reminded several times to provide information to be placed in the newsletter. For several years, we have been producing two copies a year, one in the Spring and one in the fall.

When Commander Capshaw asked me to help out in this area, I agreed because this is what I did for over 25 years and I felt I could be beneficial and help the State VFW to serve its members.

To succeed, we need your help. If we put this out two or three times a year, we need information from as many people as we can get.

For those of you who do not know me, my name is Steve Milbourn. I joined the VFW while serving in Vietnam in the 101st Airborne Division in 1966 and 1967 at Phan Rang. When I returned to Indianapolis in 1967, I was an At-Large member of National Headquarters, I believe. About three years later I accepted a job in Columbus, Ohio and transferred to a Post there. I was active enough to be an All-State Commander twice and in 1985 became an All-American Commander.

After moving back to the Indianapolis area, I became a member of New Whiteland VFW Post 6978. I was not active due to the job I had working from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday. I did get down on occasion and have a beer. My wife retired in 2004 and we sold our home and moved to Arkansas for retirement.

I was a member of VFW Post 1674. It had 20 members and it wasn't long before all the members received a post card saying they were going to shut us down. I couldn't get to the meeting but met with the District Commander in advance and signed a sheet of paper that I would help resurrect the Post. The Post had not had a meeting in nearly two years and the only person I knew was the Commander, who did not attend the meeting. None of those in attendance except the District Commander had ever met me. They elected me as Commander. I received the word the next day. When I moved back to Greenwood in 2012, the membership was at 165 and I had become an All-State Commander (Captain) twice; and an All-American Post Commander (Co-Captain); and an All-American District Commander (both All-American's honors were in the same year).

My younger brother and younger sister both became ill about two years apart. My wife and I moved back to Greenwood to be nearer to them. They both passed about three years later. In 2014-2015 I became an All-American Post Quartermaster while at Greenwood VFW Post 5864. I am now in my sixth year and final year as Post Commander.

I have also held numerous other Post, District and State positions through my time. In addition, I have served as the Post's Service Officer and helped over 100 members and other military folks file a claim. Since I never went to school to train as a Veteran's Service Officer, I do the research and provide them with information. It took me 11 years to get to 100%, but I did it myself. This was before there was a rush for everyone to file a claim. I am also retired from that, other than providing information to individuals of what they need to do.

Overall, I enjoy everything I do, but as everyone knows there are always "certain people" who will drive you to drinking.

If you have something you think we might want, call me and I can tell you what needs to be done to get it in print. Thanks.

Steve Milbourn
VFW Post 5864
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