



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

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Newsletter – August 2017

Well, here we are, already into month three of our newsletter.

“Commander’s Call”: Last month, I had the pleasure of attending the VFW National Convention in New Orleans, LA. Along with Dan Farley, Allen Rundall and Frank Fogner, we attended a number of business sessions and seminars.

It was a great experience and a chance to “re-charge” the batteries when you get to see firsthand the impact this great organization has on the veteran community. The VFW was established in 1899 and has been caring for veterans for the last 118 years. I am extremely proud to be a member and honored to be your commander this year. But I need your help to bring our post along. Please consider giving an hour or two of your time each month to help us help others. Just contact me and let me know how you can help. VFW – NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

Meet Your Senior Vice-Commander – WALT DUNCAN

Walt has been a member of the VFW since 1973 and a Life Member since 1987. He holds a unique distinction in that he served as the VFW District 5 Commander, Department of Europe while in Germany. He spent 9 ½ years in Germany in the Army and another 14 years as a civilian. Walt joined the Army in 1959 and retired as a SFC (E-7). He attended basic training at Ft. Jackson SC, went to jump school at Ft. Bragg and AIT at Aberdeen Proving Grounds MD, 7th Army NCO Academy (Graduating 3rd in his class) and numerous other Army training schools. He is a veteran of two tours to Vietnam. Besides Germany, Walt had duty assignments at Ft. Polk La, Ft. Benning GA and Ft. Myers VA. Most of his time in or working for the Army he was in Ordinance or Engineering with a side of Instructor duty and a Special Assignment or two. Walt and wife Christa have been married for 55 years and have four children, 14 grand-children and

18 great-grand-children. Walt is extremely proud of his membership in our post and works hard to make it a better place for veterans.

WE NEED YOUR HELP: We are in the need for a couple of people to cook for our Thursday Night 'Taco Night'. Due to recent ailments of our normal volunteers, we need more help!!! If you are interested in cooking one or more nights a month on a Thursday, please contact any member of the House Committee, Leo Cyr or Commander Camera. This only involves 2 to 2 ½ hours of your time and you will be trained in exactly what you need to do. You will have other volunteer help. **WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!!**

DID YOU SERVE AT CAMP LEJEUNE BETWEEN 1 AUGUST 1953 and 31 DECEMBER 1987??? – If so, the VA has now offered potential benefits if you are suffering from any of the following conditions:

Adult Leukemia, Aplastic Anemia and other Myelodysplastic Syndromes, Bladder Cancer, Kidney Cancer, Liver Cancer, Multiple Myeloma, Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma, or Parkinson's Disease.

You need to contact the VA and see if you qualify for VA Disability Compensation benefits.

Burial/Interment Rights

This month ends our series on burials/interment. This month tells you what you are entitled to as a veteran being buried/interred in a non-government cemetery. This article is considerably shorter than the previous two:

FIRST OF ALL....Besides Arlington and the US National Cemetery's, there are "State Veterans Cemetery's" and 'Military Base Cemetery's'. To be buried/interred at one of these, you need to pre-coordinate with them for eligibility requirements and their rules.

VA benefits you receive from the above, or burial/interment at a private/public cemetery are:

...An inscribed headstone or marker, or medallion to affix to headstone or marker, if using privately purchased headstone/marker.

...A burial allowance that partially covers burial expenses (must be requested through the VA)

...A Presidential Memorial Certificate (for veteran only and must be requested through the VA)

...An American flag to be draped over casket (veteran only and must be requested through the VA)

Any military honors desired for the veteran must be coordinated through your funeral parlor and VA or local military installation.

If the deceased veteran is/was US Navy, the Navy still allows for 'burials at sea' and this must be coordinated through the Navy and is for cremated ashes only.

...The Post and Auxiliary had a very successful “Christmas in July” dinner and party with over 120 feasting on turkey dinner with all the trimmings. Thanks to all who made it such a success.

...The Post’s next big event will be the “Eclipse Party on August 21st. Details still being worked out. Keep an eye on the Post Facebook and Web Pages.

DID YOU KNOW: Your **Department VFW (SC)** has all the information you need to access your military records either electronically or by mail back to you? If you go to SCVFW and on the HOME PAGE go to the right-side column. There is a click-on for DD-214’s. This gives you access to the eVetRecords customized form or SF 180 which is the source for applying for; DD-214’s, Separation Documents, Service Personnel Records, and Medical Records. There is a per-page charge for records if you are not the veteran requesting the information.

NOTE: Most records are paper-based and not electronically available. This means whatever you ask for will most-likely be sent to you in the mail.

ALL military records prior to 1953 are public record and anyone can request them if they have the proper information. There is a per-page charge.

Veteran records generated after 1953; ONLY a veteran, or the next of kin of a deceased veteran can ask for military records. Next of kin consists of; surviving spouse if NOT re-married, the veteran’s father, mother, son, daughter, sister or brother. This is done using the forms provided using eVetRecords.

NOTE: Records become public after 62 years. This means that next year 1953 changes to 1954, etc, etc.

What I have provided above is just the basic information. You can get everything you need by going to SCVFW and look for the connecting links. There is an amazing amount of information available to veterans on this web-site. All you have to do is use it.

...There is an amazing amount of veteran information on the VFW Home Page. All you have to do is type in VFW.org in any search engine and start looking. You can also create your own account that gives you pretty much unlimited access to everything VFW.org has to offer. Once in VFW.org, go to the ‘create an account’ task bar and fill-in the requested info. Very simple!

THIS JUST IN: The VA Choice program has just been extended for six (6) months if you are a user of this program.

If any of you readers has any ideas for something that is veteran related and you want it put in this newsletter. Please send it to me for review/approval by myself and Commander Camera.

DON’T FORGET to bring all your family and friends to the Post Brunch on Sunday 13 August starting at 9AM (0900 for you military folks). Cost is \$7.00 per person.

POST MEETING: Saturday, 12 August at 11AM. Come see what your post is all about!!!

I have to make one correction to our post's 'State Appointed Officers' Margo Sheridan is the Safety & Life Saving Awards Chairperson for SC., not Student Veteran Affairs.

Bill La Monte
Editor
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