



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

Post 10804

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NEWSLETTER – March 2019

HAVING PROBLEMS? NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE? ...The “VETERANS CRISIS LINE” is open 24/7. Just call 1-800-273-8255 and PRESS 1. It takes an average of eight (8) seconds for your call to be answered. You are NOT alone!!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: Aubri Ann Marron, Thomas Gault, and Kerry Meng. All including Quankeko Long, Raymond Guglielmini and Barry Richardson (last month inductees) received New Member packets. Congratulations to Barry Richardson for his volunteer work at the Veterans Welcome Home and Resource Center since becoming a Post 10804 member.

COMMANDERS CALL:

We had a great meeting on Feb 9th and looking forward to another on March 9th as we drive toward the end of the “VFW year”. The Department of South Carolina installs its new officers in June and we will begin the process of nominating and electing our officers at our March 9th meeting. If you are interested in an elected or appointed office, please let us know ASAP. Your Post needs people with various talents to lead us into the future. What have you done for fellow veterans lately? Nominations begin on the 9th.

We'll proudly march in the N. Myrtle Beach St Patty's parade on Saturday morning, March 16th. We'll discuss final details at our Post meeting and will set up the “Assembly Area” in the parking lot at the VFW, organize our vehicles, and head over to the parade area at 0745 hrs.

As always, I'm asking all of you to reach out to fellow veterans and talk to them about becoming members of the world's largest combat veterans organization. We all need to work to keep this great organization going strong and that means growing our membership. “NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS”.

Have a great month of March and I look forward to seeing you at your Post.

Nick Camera

Commander, Post 10804

THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS HAPPENING WITH THE POST & AUXILIARY IN MARCH. GET A POST MARCH CALENDAR SO YOU DON'T MISS A THING!!!!

There are a couple of 'veteran issues' happening now that you might not be aware of, they are:

The Agent Orange Act has expired....With three presumptive conditions related to Agent Orange NOT being added to the list. They are bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinson's disease). It is now up to the VA to use its own authority in determining if these conditions will be added.

The VA Office of the Inspector General...Published a report saying that in FY 2017, VBA staff DID NOT properly process approximately 49% of veterans claims for post-traumatic stress disorder related to military sexual trauma (MST). To correct the problem the VA is:
...Updating MST training, focusing on quality and accuracy of MST claims. They are reviewing every MST claim filed between October 2016 and June 2018.
...They are ensuring every MST claim be handled by specialized claims processors who are trained in MST related claims and who handle them on a regular basis.
...Ensure claims are decided correctly by having a second-level review.
...Schedule a 'special review' sometime during 2019.

Disability Claims Processing...Even though there has been a slight increase of over 125 days in processing the number of claims for disability ratings. The VBA stated the average number of days to process a claim was 99 days (a 14 day improvement in FY 2018). Additional manpower resources have been added for 2019 (February 2019 is start of new appeals process).

Veterans Welcome Home & Resource Center (NMB)...YOUR Post supports this operation and the things they do. So far this year, the center has helped 95 veterans at a cost of \$3,634.

Veterans Resource Center (Florence)...So far in 2019 they have provided veterans with \$1,200 in financial assistance.

Membership...YOUR Post has 557 members. So far the retention level for annual memberships is 91.65%. YOUR Post needs to get 59 annual members to renew by June. If you are one of this 59. You do not have to wait until June to renew and your membership will be good until June 2020. Here's a thought – Sign up for a "Life Membership". Then you don't have to worry about annual dues.

P.S. I signed up a new member last month. How about you??

Our Post Ambassador of 1st Impressions and Good Cheer, Lew Ogonowski, is to be congratulated for his starting and organizing our Monday morning golf program, as well as all the other things he does for our Post. If you're interested in playing Monday golf, contact Lew.

Post Elections...At this month's meeting, the Post will start taking nominations for the elected positions within the Post. Are YOU interested? Be at this month's meeting (March 9th, 11AM).

VA BENEFITS CLAIM APPEALS PROCESS....Last year I wrote about a plan to revise the VA claims appeal process. Last month the VA approved the new process. Here's the basics of the changes. You have three (3) new options if you disagree with the VA Rating you received. They are:

1. You can request a 'higher-level' review from a more experienced person.
2. Submit a supplemental claim, with additional evidence.
3. Appeal directly to the Board of Veterans Appeals.

This has been a four (4) year process of negotiation between the VFW and Congress, along with the VA and other veterans' organizations. The intent, to reduce to a timely manner the time that disputes are resolved. This, to replace the multi-year waits you now endure before the adjudication of your appeals case.

The VFW will monitor the implementation and work with the VA to resolve any issues that may come up.

If you have not been working with a VFW Service Officer during your claims process. You need to contact a 'highly trained' and 'accredited' VFW Service Officer.

(<https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/appeals.asp>)

DOD to Begin Water Contamination Study: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in conjunction with the Department of Defense, announced this week that it will begin a formal review of water contamination on military bases in the coming months and is expected to [continue](#) through 2020. This initial study will specifically look at the levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in 10 affected locations. PFAS are chemicals that were used in firefighting foam on bases and are also present in many household products. PFAS have been linked to various cancers and developmental delays for babies and children. This study comes in the wake of a Pentagon report released last year that found dozens of DOD installations and surrounding communities had PFAS contaminated groundwater and well water. Sites being reviewed during the study include: Naval Air Warfare Center Warminster, Francis S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base, Shepherd Field Air National Guard Base, Peterson Air Force Base, Eielson Air Force Base, Barnes Air National Guard Base, Reese Technology Center, Stewart Air National Guard Base, New Castle Air National Guard Base, and Fairchild Air Force Base. Go to DOD.gov to learn more about the Pentagon review of groundwater contamination.

NOTE: If any of you were ever stationed at, or lived near any of these installations. It might be to you/your family's benefit to contact the VA or a VFW Service Officer. It could be to your benefit for YOU to stay on top of this issue.

Make sure you check-out the MARCH Calendar for all the good things happening at YOUR post.

Bill La Monte
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