



The Swamp Fox

VFW Post 4667 Newsletter

July 2007

Commander	Turk Johnson
Sr. Vice Commander	Bill Baldwin
Jr. Vice Commander	James Brown
Quartermaster	William Sword
Adjutant	Cecil Carter
Chaplain	Joe Ellis
Judge Advocate	J. D. Baldwin
Surgeon	John Long
Trustees	Cecil Carter
	Hugh Slagle
	Claude Heath



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Lifetime Membership Fees

<u>Attained Age</u>	<u>Fee</u>
Through 30	\$425.00
31-40	\$410.00
41-50	\$375.00
51-60	\$335.00
61-70	\$290.00
71-80	\$225.00
81 and over	\$170.00

See Bill Sword for details

COMMANDERS CORNER

Greetings, Fellow Comrades:

This is the beginning of the year 2007-2008 for our VFW Post and as you elected me your Commander, I hope I can fulfill all your expectations. Your assistance will be needed to make this a successful year. I will be asking each of you for your assistance from time-to-time.

First, I would like to thank all the officers for the success of our Post this past year and special thanks for the leadership of our past Commander Jim Haulsee. May we continue with some of the projects started this past year and conclude them successfully.

I want to thank all that helped with the Memorial Day Celebration and will look forward to your input for our celebration in 2008. We realize this was our first attempt and know there are several things we need to do differently and would like your input. We need to thank individually all our comrades and non-Post members for their support. We especially need to thank Mayor David Helms and the Civitan Club.

Having just attended the 85th Annual State Convention in Richmond and seeing all the participation of the individual Districts and Post we need to make ourselves more visible and receive the recognition for the things that we do in our Post and community.

The Past National Commander-in-Chief, John Gwizdak, gave a very moving speech that I wish each of you could have heard. One of the points he made was we need not to be a past but a pest to keep our Post active.

Comrades, we need to keep the fight going for the rights of all veterans. We think we are only a small chip in the whole of things but must realize it takes many chips to make and influence our Congressmen and Senators to preserve our rights.

We will be appointing committees to carry out the many activities of our Post and will welcome any volunteers, whether you would like to chair a committee or just be a working Comrade on a specific committee. Let us the officers hear from you.

Comrades, we don't realize that we need to work to preserve veterans rights not only for the present but also for all future veterans who will be or our sacrificing their lives so we can live in a free country.

We ask for your prayers and your continued support.

Respectfully your Commander – Turk Johnson

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Angie Mucha
Gary Elliot

Mike Mucha
Judith Coe

Jeffrey Stamper
Douglas Green

Michael Dalton
James Buchanan

TAPS

With sincere sadness and regret that we report that the below comrades who have departed our ranks and gone before us to join that last great encampment of our Supreme Commander. We extend our heartfelt condolences to their loved ones.

02-06 (L) Hellberg, John W.	75 Langford Rd.	Travelers Rest, SC	29690
02-07 (L) Webb, Hobert N.	104 Deerfield Lane	Marion	24354
02-08 (L) Russell, William T.	1245 Matson Drive	Marion	24354
02-11 (L) Blankenship, Carlton	1262 Culbert Drive	Marion	24354
03-04 (L) Davis, Burley L.	482 Pugh Mountain Rd.	Marion	24354
03-08 Conner, Ralph E.	905 Village Way N.	Blacksburg, VA	24060
03-28 (L) Tate, John C.	308 College St.	Marion	24354
03-29 Gilbert, William E.	748 Henry St.	Marion	24354
03-30 (L) Guy, Ivan R.	1104 Grubmore Rd.	Marion	24354
04-01 Sebastian, Andrew B.	740 Stoney Battery Rd.	Marion	24354
04-08 (L) Ferguson, Alfred W.	PO Box 127	Marion	24354
04-18 (L) Cox, Fred W.	4981 Stoney Fork Rd.	Wytheville	24382
04-26 Price, Dean R.	1235 Ray St.	Kernersville, NC	27284
05-22 (L) Blevins, Rage G.	789 Skyview Dr.	Chilhowie	24319
05-23 Able, Cecil F.	PO Box 1325	Chilhowie	24319

DONATIONS

Atkins Elementary School	4 th Grade Trip	\$475.00
Chilhowie Little League	Sponsor Team	\$375.00
Marion Senior High School	Dug Out Club	\$300.00
Northwood Senior High School	After Prom Events	\$350.00
Northwood Senior High School	FBLA	\$425.00
Rich Valley Elementary School	4 th Grade Trip	\$475.00
Settlers Museum	In Honor of Barbara O'Neil	\$500.00
Sugar Grove Combined School	4 th Grade Trip	\$475.00
Smyth County School Board	Wee Read Program	\$600.00
Marion Senior High School	Special Education Trip	\$400.00
Marion Little League	Sale Buddy Poppies	\$1,000.00
American Cancer Society	Relay for Life	\$250.00
Boy Scout Troop #1004	Donation	\$250.00
Brutal Inc. Wrestling Club	Donation	\$300.00
Chilhowie Senior High School	Base Ball Program	\$250.00
Chilhowie Senior High School	Project Graduation	\$400.00
Cub Scout Pack #1004	Cub Pack Sponsor Moose	\$250.00
American Cancer Society	Relay for Life	\$250.00
March of Dimes	Walk America	\$1,000.00
Marion AAU Basketball	AAU Basketball	\$300.00
Marion Primary School	2 nd Grade Trip to Dollywood	\$400.00
Marion Senior High School	Destination Imagination	\$400.00
American Red Cross	Donation	\$500.00
Habitat for Humanity	Donation	\$1,000.00

Marion Primary School	1 st Grade Fishing	\$250.00
Chilhowie Elementary School	5 th Grade Dinner Dance	\$275.00
Boy Scout Troop #93	Display Flags in Town	\$800.00
S.C.A.L.E.	Literacy Program	\$400.00
Saltville Elementary School	Pre-K Trip	\$250.00
Town of Marion	July 4 th Fireworks	\$300.00
Smyth Bland Regional Library	Reading Program	\$400.00

NEWS FROM THE AUXILIARY

The Ladies Auxiliary had their election in May for the incoming year. Your new officers are:

Cora Lee Catron	President
Louise Hampton	Senior Vice
Sarah Perry	Junior Vice
Lena Wyatt	Treasurer
Lorraine Heath	Chaplain
Lila Johnson	Conductress
Penny Johnson	Guard

We now meet on the 1st Thursday of the month at 6 PM. We meet the same night as the men. We have fellowship from 6 to 7 PM then our meeting. Hope to see you all there.

Ladies, Life Members that haven't paid your cancer insurance please mail it in.

We are now collecting our 2008 dues please mail all payments to the treasurer:

Lena Wyatt
702 Railroad Drive
Marion, Virginia 24354

Any questions call 783-2826 or 783-5557.

Dues are \$19.00 a year, that includes the cancer insurance.

MEMORIAL DAY CELEBRATIONS A HUGE SUCCESS

Our first annual Memorial Day celebration was nothing less than spectacular. This celebration was to ***Honor those brave service men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice to preserve our Freedom.***

With the help of ***Many*** VFW Post members, community members, and local businesses, Smyth's counties first annual Memorial Day celebration consisting of a parade through downtown Marion, a Memorial Service at the VFW Memorial and a community barbeque with live entertainment was a day to remember.

The Memorial Committee, consisting of both VFW members and local community members, would like to thank all those who contributed time, money, or services. From the volunteers who helped set up for the Memorial Service and barbeque at the VFW, those who stood in the hot sun directing parking, those who spent many hours preparing the fine meal, those who help with the parade coordination, to those who helped with clean-up, ***We Thank You All For Your Help!***



The following letter as received from the Town of Marion.

June 20, 2007

Members of V.F.W. Post 4667
861 Goolsby St.
P.O. Box 767
Marion, VA 24354

Dear Members:

Wow! What a success! I am so pleased that the Town of Marion was invited to partner with your group in the *very successful and rewarding experience* of the first annual Memorial Day Parade and services on May 28, 2007. It was a very meaningful opportunity for the citizens of our area.

I wish for your group much success in your future endeavors and look forward to the second Annual Memorial Day Program in the Town of Marion.

Sincerely,

David P. Helms, Mayor
Town of Marion

WANTED

Names of Spanish-American War Veterans. If anyone reading this newsletter knows the name of a Spanish-American War Veteran, please call Marshall Guy at 783-6626.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

College scholarships for 2007 were awarded as follows:

Brittney D. Ellis	\$2,000.00	University of Mary Washington College
Bradford Seth M. Shuler	\$2,000.00	Emory & Henry College
Douglas Fender II	\$2,000.00	Roanoke College
Amanda B. Walters	\$1,000.00	Wytheville Community College
Leah Carolyn Blevins	\$1,000.00	Virginia Highlands Community College

ANNUAL VFW POST4667 ROY ERNEST MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The date, place and time has not been determined. However, we are anticipating a greater tournament than last year.

Please keep in touch with the VFW at 276-783-7971 for information updates.

TOLL FREE NUMBERS FOR CONTACTING VA

The VA provides toll-free 800 phone service for Veterans to obtain information about benefits.

VA Benefits: 1-800-827-1000

Burial

Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA)

Death Pension

Dependency Indemnity Compensation

Direct Deposit

Directions to VA benefits Regional Offices

Disability Compensation

Disability Pension

Education

Home Loan Guaranty

Life Insurance

Medical Care

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment

Education (GI Bill): 1-888-442-4551

Health Care Benefits: 1-877-222-8387

Income Verification and Means Testing: 1-800-929-8387

Life Insurance: 1-800-669-8477

Mammography Helpline: 1-888-492-7844

Special Issues - Gulf War/Agent Orange/Project Shad/Mustard Agents and Lewisite/Ionizing Radiation:
1-800-749-8387

Status of Headstones and Markers: 1-800-697-6947

Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD): 1-800-829-4833

VA Medical Centers Extending Hours

Change Benefits New Combat Veterans, Older Vets

WASHINGTON -- In order to provide more health care for more veterans, especially mental health services, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson has directed the 153 medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to keep their doors open longer.

"Illness doesn't follow a 9-to-5 schedule," Nicholson said. "I'm directing our medical centers to provide extended hours to ensure we're there for the veterans who have earned our care."

Although the extra hours apply to many hospital-based programs and services, Nicholson said his latest decision was based upon a desire to ensure VA's more than 9,000 mental health professionals are available when veterans need them.

VA operates the largest integrated health care system in the country and the nation's largest mental health program. About 5.5 million veterans are expected to seek health care from VA's nationwide system this year, accounting for about 800,000 hospitalizations and 60 million outpatient visits.

In recent months, Nicholson has announced a number of initiatives to improve mental health care for returning combat veterans, including the hiring of suicide prevention coordinators for each medical center, 100 new adjustment counselors for VA's 207 Vet Centers, and 100 new medical center employees to serve as advocates for the severely wounded.

VA's mental health experts will gather in Washington in July for a four-day conference reassessing the Department's programs for veterans, especially veterans from the conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan.

VA PROSECUTES DEFRAUDERS OF VETERANS

Continuing a long-standing campaign to identify and prosecute those who defraud veterans of their rightful benefits, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently highlighted several successes by its Inspector General in investigating people who mishandle the finances of veterans and family members unable to manage their own affairs.

"VA is committed to protecting our veterans, especially our most vulnerable veterans. We will investigate and help bring charges against anyone suspected of defrauding veterans of the disability compensation or any other assistance they have earned," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson. "Fiduciary fraud is a heinous crime. We will bring the full force of law against offenders."

Among recent cases successfully prosecuted as a result of investigations by VA's Office of the Inspector General:

- Los Angeles resident Anne Chavis pleaded guilty to perjury and forgery in embezzling \$1 million from veterans who were too disabled to handle their own financial matters. She is awaiting sentencing.
- The daughter and son-in-law of an elderly Alaskan veteran with Alzheimer's disease diverted about \$500,000 from the veteran to make personal purchases while failing to pay the veteran's bills. Phyllis Talas was sentenced to 60 months' probation, and Frank Talas to six months' incarceration and 36 months' probation.
- A Washington state woman overseeing her niece's VA benefits pleaded guilty to misappropriating funds and was sentenced to 36 months of probation. Christina May diverted to her personal use funds from VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation awarded to her under-age niece.

From January 2005 through April 5 this year, VA's Office of Inspector General investigated 61 cases of alleged fiduciary fraud. Twenty-seven people were indicted on related charges, of whom 19 have been convicted so far. Resulting penalties have included \$1.9 million in court-ordered restitution for veterans or their estates, 191 months' imprisonment and 838 months of probation.

To report suspected fraud involving veterans benefits, other crimes, fraud, waste or mismanagement in the VA, please contact the Office of Inspector General Hotline at 1-800-488-8244 or email at vaoighotline@va.gov.

VFW Wants Movement on New G.I. Bill Proposal; National Commander Urges Members to Petition U.S. Senate

WASHINGTON, June 12, 2007--The national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is asking his entire membership to contact their U.S. senators and urge them to support S. 22, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2007.

The bill, which was introduced in January by Sen. Jim Webb (D-Va.), would mirror the original World War II G.I. Bill by providing modern-day educational benefits such as full tuition, books, room and board, and a monthly stipend for living expenses. The bill would also eliminate the \$1,200 enrollment fee for active-duty troops, extend the “use or lose” window from 10 to 15 years, and include Guardsmen and Reservists who are activated for a 24-month aggregate period.

VFW Commander-in-Chief Gary Kurpius said “Now is the time for Senator Webb’s bill to move forward towards passage. I applaud the support of the 16 senators who have already signed on as co-sponsors, and I am now urging the full VFW membership of 2.4 million to contact their U.S. senators and demand they do likewise.”

Kurpius said this new generation of servicemen and women will one day lead our nation politically, socially and economically, just like the World War II generation, who were directly responsible for the nation's tremendous era of growth and prosperity during the second half of the 20th century. He said providing that same opportunity of higher education to those who selflessly put their country first is about doing what’s right for the troops and their families.

“The Montgomery G.I. Bill was enacted two decades ago, but now we’re involved in the longest combat operation with an all-volunteer force in our nation’s history. Our troops have earned a new G.I. Bill that is based on 21st century realities,” he said. “There’s no room for partisan politics and no middle ground when it comes to supporting our troops — you either do or you don’t.”

Nicholson Praises SBA’s Patriot Express Loans

Vets a “Great Resource” for Business, Secretary Says

WASHINGTON -- With nearly a quarter of newly discharged veterans considering starting their own businesses, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson praised a new Small Business Administration venture to make business ownership easier for all veterans.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has unveiled a program called “Patriot Express” that offers a wide variety of assistance to veterans interested in setting up or expanding their own small businesses. “America’s veterans are a great resource for the private sector,” Nicholson said. “I commend Administrator Steve Preston of the Small Business Administration for his initiative in helping veterans transition back into the private sector.”

Assistance under the new SBA program for veterans ranges from help writing a business plan and managing a business, to obtaining financing and learning how to export goods. Participants may also qualify for loans between 2.25 percent and 4.75 percent over the prime interest rate.

Patriot Express is open to veterans, reservists and National Guard members, current spouses of eligible personnel, the surviving spouses of service members who die on active duty, or spouses of veterans who die from a service-connected disability.

Expanding veterans' eligibility to SBA's Patriot Express program was a key recommendation of a presidential task force on the needs of returning veterans that Nicholson chaired. Nicholson delivered the panel's report to the White House on April 23.

More information about the SBA program is available at the Small Business Administration's Patriot Express website: <http://www.sba.gov/patriotexpress>.

DISCHARGE DOCUMENTS (DD-214) NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans or their next of kin to gain access to their DD-214 online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov/>.

My HealthVet

My HealthVet (www.myhealth.va.gov) is the gateway to veteran health benefits and services. It provides access to:

- trusted health information
- links to Federal and VA benefits and resources
- the Personal Health Journal
- online VA prescription refill

In the future, MHV registrants will be able to view appointments, copay balances, and key portions of their VA medical records online, and much more! My HealthVet is a powerful tool to help you better understand and manage your health.

VFW MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

For all you've done for our great country, you deserve the best. VFW strives to offer quality products with competitive pricing. Your VFW membership entitles you to a range of benefits and special offers such as insurance, hotel discounts, Internet service and much more.

Whether you are single, starting a family or an empty-nester, we have something for everyone.

Here are just some of your VFW membership benefits:

- ✓ Free Honor Roll Listing
- ✓ Personal assistance securing government benefits and entitlements for veterans.
- ✓ Discounts on prescriptions, hotel and car rentals
- ✓ Eligible for membership in the [Pentagon Federal Credit Union](#)
- ✓ VFW Real Estate and Mortgage Services
- ✓ Dell Discount Computers

- ✓ Subscription to VFW Magazine
- ✓ Multiple group-rate insurance programs
- ✓ \$1,000/\$1,500 Personal Accident Insurance
- ✓ Vehicle Insurance Plan
- ✓ Long-Term Care
- ✓ Cancer Insurance
- ✓ Medicare Advantage, Supplement and Prescription Drug Plans
- ✓ Senior Term Life
- ✓ Pet Insurance

For more extensive information about membership benefits and VFW insurance programs click on the related link on right.

All products and plans subject to restrictions and availability. See www.vfw.org for further information about these benefits

VFW Post 4667 and the Ladies Auxiliary meets the first Thursday of each month at our Post Home on Goolsby Street. Our fellowship and meal begins at 6:15 PM with the business meeting starting at 7:00 PM. All members are encouraged to attend meetings to learn about the VFW, keep informed on local veteran's affairs, learn how we can help our community, and enjoy fellowship.

The Swamp Fox is published in March, July, and December. We welcome letters or recommended articles to be included. Letters and/or articles must be signed and include the writer's address and telephone number for verification purposes. Due to space limitations, letters should be brief and pertain to VFW activities, military news, or items of interest to veterans. Address letters to: FRANCIS MARION POST 4667, Attn: Editor - Swamp Fox, P.O. Box 767, Marion, VA 24354.

The Swamp Fox is available at: www.vfwpost4667.org. Comrade John Harmon of Computer Solutions voluntarily maintains the Post web site. All comments or recommendation pertaining to the site should be addressed to john.harmon@jharmon.com

***For an organization to be a success,
it takes a team effort ---
Be part of the team and participate...***

FRANCIS MARION POST 4667

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. Inc.

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276-783-7971

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JULY 2007