The Swamp Fox

VFW Post 4667 Newsletter

March 2005

Commander
Sr. Vice Commander
Jr. Vice Commander
Quartermaster
Adjutant
Chaplain
Judge Advocate
Surgeon
Trustees

James Haulsee Porter Heath William Falke William Sword Cecil Carter Bill Baldwin John Thompson Edward Kuhn Cecil Carter Roger Haulsee Roy R. McNeil



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Lifetime Membership Fees

Attained Age	Fee			
Through 30	\$245.00			
31-40	\$235.00			
41-50	\$215.00			
51-60	\$195.00			
61-70	\$165.00			
71-80	\$125.00			
81 and over	\$85.00			
See Bill Sword for details				

COMMANDERS CORNER

My fellow comrades: It's hard to believe that we're already this far into the VFW year, which ends in June. I guess time does fly when you're having fun! We really must continue to try to recruit as many new members as we can and get others to pay their dues as soon as possible. Our post has been a 100% post in the past, and I know that we can achieve that mark again this year! With the determination of all our members to be a 100% post, I know the hard work you have put forth will pay off!

As many of you are aware, the officers of Post 4667 recently met with the State Commander Tom Hines, State Senior-Vice Commander Dan Boyer and Chief-of-Staff Rex Farris. The purpose of this meeting was to bring forth some issues, questions, concerns and differences of opinion that many of us have felt with both the State and National organization. You've heard the old expression that "the squeaky wheel always gets the grease". Well, I don't believe we had been squeaky loudly enough to get anyone's attention. A problem has to be known before it can be fixed. I feel we had a successful meeting and believe we got a few things fixed. Only time will tell about other things. I do know this - - we managed to get their attention and at least let them know some concerns of our members.

Again, thanks for all the hard work that you do. Our post is only successful if we all work together to accomplish our goals. Let's all try to get a new member this month!

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Harry C. Anderson	James R. Bishop	John R. Boyd	Robert M. Cantor
Jennifer L. Clark	Randall W. Cline	William S. Coe	John F. Copenhaver
Billy Cornett	Jim S. Crewey	Robert L. Fenner	Graham E. Heninger
Stacie L. Kinser	Raymond C. LaBer	Marc G. McClellan	Barry M. Ratihn
Henry B. Robinson Jr.	Robert A. Ross	Cecil M. Shreeves	John R. Shupe
Roy D. Sullivan	Robert S. Tilson	William E. Tuell	Ronald D. Vernon

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.

12-03-04	Peters, Carson E. Sr.	204 Camp Rd.	Sugar Grove
12-06-04 L	Strickland, Edwin E.	PO Box 1024	Marion
12-08-04 L	Davis, Robert L.	PO Box 880	Sugar Grove
12-12-04	Hendrix, Robert R.	309 Woods Landing	Damascus
12-14-04	Sanders, Fielden O.	1136 Chatham Hill Rd.	Marion
12-14-04 L	Williams, William G.	PO Box 557	Marion
12-18-04	Bishop, James T.	PO Box 219	Chilhowie
01-01-05	Dolinger, Garnie A.	110 President's Place	Marion
01-05-05	Winesett, Charles E.	35287 Marblestone Dr.	Glade Spring
02-11-05 L	Kirk, James F.	833 Matson Dr.	Marion

RIFLE SQUAD AND FUNERAL DETAIL

From January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2004 the Rifle Squad and Funeral Detail has participated in 53 funerals (27 VFW members and 26 Non-members), 20 Color Guard details, volunteered 1,984 man-hours, and driven 19,488 miles.

We sincerely thank the members of the Rifle Squad and Funeral Detail for giving of their time to pay tribute to our fellow veterans who have honorably served their country. Regardless of weather conditions these fine men have always been there to honor those who have served. (Member name/attendance for 2004)

Curtis Anderson	1	Major Bowen	57	Jimmy Coe	43
Richard Dolinger	22	Joe Ellis	12	Roy Gullion	5
James Hampton	3	Claude Harris	21	James Haulsee	29
Claude Heath	6	Porter Heath	57	Robert Hill	11
Turk Johnson	30	Robert Jones	2	Haskin Kinser	41
Edward Kuhn	23	Otis Long	34	Cecil Pafford	53
Ed Pennington	18	Roy Pennington	20	Odell Sheets	7
Abe Slemp	18	Charles Thomas	2	Benjamin Umbarger	32
Max Waak	17	David Lamie	17		

For the year the Post lost 35 members (15 Life and 20 Annual) one of whom, R. H. Harrington, was a Charter member.

DONATIONS

Chilhowie High School	Junior/Senior Prom	\$250.00
Chilhowie AAU Basketball	Girls age 11 to 12	\$200.00
Chilhowie AAU Basketball	Boys age 13 to 15	\$200.00
Chilhowie Middle School	Basketball uniforms	\$400.00
Mt. Roger Shelter Home		\$500.00
Marion Weekday Religious Education		\$1,000.00
Kenan Branson	Radford University	\$1,000.00
The Lincoln Theatre	Robert E. Lee Restoration	\$500.00
Chilhowie Elementary School	PTO Donation	\$300.00
Chilhowie High School	Touchdown Club	\$325.00
Salvation Army	Humanitarian Aid	\$1,500.00
Marion Little League	Buddy Poppy Sales	\$1,000.00
Sugar Grove Combined School	РТО	\$300.00
VFW Auxiliary	Satellite Clinic	\$569.12
	Voice-of-Democracy	
First Place	Whitney E. Lundy	\$300.00
Second Place	J. C. Reynolds	\$200.00
Third Place	Page Hambrick	\$100.00
Marion Senior High School	Sponsor	\$200.00
Chilhowie Senior High School	Sponsor	\$200.00
	Patriot's Pen	
First Place	Kasey E. Blevins	\$200.00

Second Place	Chandler Hopkins	\$150.00
Third Place	Brinden Lee Udomratanaavasi	\$100.00
Marion Middle School	Sponsor	\$200.00

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

Travis Mitchell from Tazewell Senior High School won first place in the VFW 9th District and he also won first place in the state.

LEARN ABOUT YOUR VETERANS BENEFITS

Hosted by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services. Four supermarkets scheduled in 2005! All supermarkets will run from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

April 21 – South Boston: Volunteer Fire Department Support Center

June 23 – Norton: Holiday Inn Hotel Norton

August 24 - Wytheville: Wytheville Community Center

October 20 – Warsaw: Rappahannock Community College, Warsaw Campus

Visit the Virginia Department of Veterans Services at www.dvs.virginia.gov or call (804) 786-0286 to learn more.

THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

The Library of Virginia is seeking your help in telling the stories of Virginians who served their country at home and abroad during the America's 20th century wars and military actions.

Help the Library of Virginia preserve your story for future generations and honor those Virginians who have served our nation by donating materials to the Library concerning their service. We ask for your help in preserving and making available the permanent records of those who fought and both those who supported the war effort and protested these wars.

History begins with you. Those who fought in America's 20th century wars have a rich and vital story, as do those who opposed these wars or served as conscientious objectors. Your records will join the extensive records already available at the Library documenting the lives of Virginians across four centuries. These items will be made available to visitors, students, scholars, and researchers.

"Veterans have an important story to tell. Now as many veterans and their families age, their stores and the stories of those who stayed behind to work at home or in wartime industry, are in danger of being lost. It's not unusual for us to hear from Library patrons that letters and memorabilia were discarded upon the death of family members," said State Archivist Conley L. Edwards III. "We want Virginians to know that those family letters, diaries, scrapbooks, ration books, discharges and photographs would all have a welcome and honored place at the Library of Virginia."

Please contact the Library of Virginia at 804-692-3795 if you would like to discuss donating any warrelated materials. You may also contact Janice M. Hathcock at 604-692-3592 or at jhathcock@lva.lib.va.us.

WALK AND WALL ADDED TO VFW VETERANS MEMORIAL

During the fall months a walk and a wall were added to the back of the VFW Veterans Memorial. This walk and wall enhances the appearance of the Memorial and also will prevent water from running under the Memorial. During the spring months we plan to plant flowers and miniature Boxwoods in front of the Memorial.

As of now we have 1481 names on the Memorial. There is room on the front side of the Memorial for an additional 2500 names. If you have not submitted you name for the Memorial, please give it some sincere consideration. Also if you know of anyone who was a veteran from the Revolution War down to the War in Iraq and would to submit their name for the Memorial, you can pick up applications from the VFW, McNeil Furniture Co., used the one enclosed in this issue of the Swamp Fox, or call 783-7971 and we will mail you applications. We are making plans for a Memorial Day program to be held on May 29, 2005 and we would like to have as many names as possible on the Memorial for the first annual Memorial Day program. – Marshall Guy, Chairman, VFW Veterans Memorial Committee



RAC-MOAA LEGISLATIVE ALERT #1 – VIRGINIA VETERANS SERVICES

There are two issues being considered by the Virginia General Assembly which are critical to the welfare of Virginia's veterans. We need your help <u>NOW</u> to ensure passage of this meritorious legislation:

House Bill 2851 (Patron: Delegate Cox): This bill provides funding for the state Department of Veterans Services to hire additional Claims Agents for processing disability and assistance claims from Virginia's veterans. With 786,000 veterans, Virginia has only <u>16</u> claims agents on the payroll - that's only one agent for every 49,000+ veterans. This situation has caused an insurmountable backlog of unprocessed claims, and is a source of frustration and hopelessness for many veterans in our state. Funds already budgeted or

proposed will fund eight (8) additional claims agents which are not enough. HB 2851 authorizes additional funding for six (6) more claims agents to bring the total number of claims agents to thirty (30), or roughly one claims agent for every 26,200 veterans - it's not ideal, but it is a big improvement over the current situation.

House Bill 2850 (Patron: Delegate Cox): The Richmond Veterans Care Center being constructed on the grounds of Maguire VA Medical Center, was approved and funded as a 240-bed facility. Due to a change in VA healthcare delivery practices (allowing only one bed per room vice two beds per room) it is now being built as a 160-bed facility. The cost for adding back the 80 deleted beds is \$8 million dollars with the state's share being \$2.8 million. Having state funds available now, enhances Virginia's chances to obtain federal matching funds. This bill authorizes the Governor to apply for the matching federal funds and also authorizes a Treasury loan of \$2.8 million for the Care Center augmentation once the federal funds are approved.

Of the 25 members of the House Appropriations Committee, 11 are already co-patrons of HB 2851 and HB 2850, which indicates a healthy chance for passage and a favorable recommendation to the full House. However, on the Senate Finance Committee, there is only one (1) co-patron of HB 2851 and HB 2850 (Sen. Stosch) out of the 14 members of the committee - <u>not good</u>. Therefore, we need to focus our legislative efforts on the members of the Senate Finance Committee. Also, don't forget to thank Senator Stosch (district12@sov.state.va.us) for his support.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Please e-mail the **Finance Committee Chairman** and any of the following state Senators from **your** district, asking for their co-patronage of Delegate Cox's <u>HB 2851</u> and <u>HB 2850</u>, and Senator Ruff's Budget Amendments <u>Item 90#2s</u> and <u>Item C-4 #1s</u>:

Senator Chichester (chairman) district28@sov.state.va.us Wampler district40@sov.state.va.us

Here is a proposed message you can use (or substitute your own message):

Dear Senator _____:

I am writing to ask you to co-patron Delegate Cox's legislation: HB 2851 to provide six (6) additional Claims Agents for the Department of Veterans Services; and HB 2850 to authorize the Governor to apply for matching federal funds and a Treasury loan of \$2.8 million, for adding 80 beds to the Richmond Veterans Care Center. I also ask you to co-patron Senator Ruff's companion budget amendments Item 90#2s and Item C-4#1s, which support the bills authored by Delegate Cox.

Virginia has a population of 786,000 veterans, but currently, only one Veterans Services claims agent for every 49,000+ veterans (16 agents total - we had 75 agents in 1989). This situation has created an insurmountable backlog of claims and is a source of frustration and hopelessness for many of Virginia's veterans. Currently authorized or programmed funds will restore the number of agents to 24 which is still insufficient. The Cox and Ruff initiatives will add six (6) additional agents (30 total) to reduce the veteran/agent ratio to 1:26,200 - not ideal, but a much-belated step in the right direction (North Carolina, with a larger veterans population of over 792,000 has a state-funded veteran/agent ratio of 1:20,859 (36 agents) plus 96 county-funded agents, which reduces the ration to 1:5,915).

Last year, ground was broken for the much-needed, 240-bed Richmond Veterans Care Center; however, due to a change in VA healthcare delivery practices and increased project costs, the number of beds for the facility has been reduced to 160. This shortfall of beds will not allow the Richmond Care Center to

adequately service the veteran population it was intended to accommodate. The cost for adding back the 80 deleted beds is \$8 million dollars with the state's share being \$2.8 million. Having state funds available now, enhances Virginia's chances to obtain federal matching funds for the augmentation.

As Virginia's veterans population ages and the on-going War on Terrorism returns more combat-wounded and disabled veterans to the Commonwealth, the need for responsive veterans services and facilities will increase. Since 1989, we have allowed state veterans services to atrophy to a dysfunctional level. Therefore, it is imperative that you co-patron this essential legislation - our veterans deserve nothing less.

<u>NOTE</u>: It is most effective if the senator you contact is the senator of the district where you reside. Therefore, be sure to put your name and home address at the bottom of the e-mail so the senator knows you are a constituent.

The toll-free number in Richmond to contact your Senator/Delegate is 1-800-889-0229.

J. A. Baumgarten, CDR, SC, USN (Ret), President and Director of Member Services, Richmond Area Chapter - MOAA

VFW POST 4667 WORKERS APPRECIATION DINNER

Each year the Post hosts a dinner for those that have helped our Post. Whether it has been as part of the honor guard, rifle detail, bingo workers, workers at the monthly meetings, or those who helped crush cans. Anyone that has helped the Post is invited to our annual workers appreciation dinner on May 13, 2005 at 6:00 PM at the Post home.

So the post can get some idea on the number of meals that they will need, if you plan on attending please call the Commander's office at 783-7971.

POST TO ASSIST MEMBERS MAKING CLAIMS AGAINST VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

Post 6267 offers a service to its members who wish to file a claim against the Veterans Administration for their service-connected disabilities.

The Service Officer will provide whatever assistance is necessary to file claims for those members who believe that they have a disability or disabilities that are service connected. We will provide advice to the member on what the initial claim letter should contain or write the letter should that be the member's wish. The Claims Officer will both request and represent the member at a hearing at the VA should the member request such a hearing. We will also argue the member's claim before the Board of Veteran's Appeals if requested by the member.

Should the member still be unsuccessful at this stage of the process, Post 6267 will assist the member in selecting an attorney to argue the member's claim before the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans' Claims and all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court if appropriate.

The service will be similar to those offered by such veterans organization as the Disabled American Veterans, but our work will be done by an attorney who is also a veteran and a volunteer. Assistance provided by other veterans' organizations is generally by well-intended members untrained in the claims process or paid non-attorney employees of that organization. Therefore we believe that our service will be of a higher quality.

If you desire this service, please notify the Service Officer at either (276) 781-0146 or mohawk23@smyth.net.

VETERANS' RIGHTS

Although the DVA will pay \$300 toward the burial expenses of certain deceased veterans, you family's request for the money is probably going to be denied if the cause of death is not service-connected. This is another good reason to get that claim in to the VA if you suspect that any medical or mental problems that you might be experiencing are related to an experience in the military. Death for service-connected reasons will get the survivors up to \$2,000.00.

I know a widow who was recently had her request for burial expenses turned down in spite of her husband repeatedly telling her that he felt that his lung problems were generated by exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam. He didn't take the time to pursue a claim against the VA and we all recognize that the VA doesn't write a letter to ask you if you have any service-connected disabilities.

We know that the VA authorizes monthly benefits to surviving spouses, children, and parents of veterans who die for service-connected reasons. The veteran must have been at least thirty percent disabled and the death must have resulted from the same disabilities. Therefore, your family stands to lose much more than the \$300 or \$2,000 in burial and funeral expenses if you don't pursue any disability claims that you might have.

If it's any solace to you, every veteran with a discharge that is not dishonorable is entitled to burial in a National Cemetery and/or a government-provided headstone or marker identifying him/her as a veteran. Also any veteran who dies in a Veterans' Hospital, VA nursing home, or any state hospital or state run nursing home is entitled to at least the \$300 in burial expenses.

Again, if the cause of a veteran's death is service-connected, the VA will pay up to \$2,000.00 in funeral and burial expenses. Let's say it again. If you fell that you deserve a service-connected disability, get your claim in and provide a timely Notice of Disagreement every time the VA turns you down. Not very exciting but it needs to be said. – Mark Bellamy, Service Officer, 781-0146.

SCHOLARSHIPS

VFW Post 4667 will again award six scholarships this year. There will three - \$2,000.00 scholarships warded to students attending a 4-year college or university and three - \$1,000.00 scholarships awarded to students attending a community college.

Applications may be picked up at VFW Post 4667; McNeil Furniture Co. at 227 East Main St., Marion, VA, 24354, use the enclosed application, or at any Smyth County High School Guidance Office. You may also request an application from VFW Post 4667, P. O. Box 767, Marion, VA., 24354, and one will be mailed to you.

Any high school senior is eligible to submit an application. Families of VFW members will receive priority. Application return deadline is May 2, 2005.

You can tear out and use the application on the following pages if needed.

VFW POST 4667 APPLICATION SCHOLARSHIP COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED WILL BE REGARDED AS CONFIDENTIAL

DIRECTIONS:	The information is to be furnished by the applicant. Then give the application to a guidance counselor for completion. The guidance counselor should add a complete secondary record of grades and standard test scores, with a letter of recommendation from the guidance counselor or principal, and mail to the address on page 1. Applications must be received by May 2, 2005.
1.	NAME OF STUDENT
2.	ADDRESS
3.	TELEPHONE NUMBER
4.	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER
5.	PARENT'S NAME
6.	PARENTS ADDRESS
7.	SCHOOL Now Attending and School Address
8.	DATE OF BIRTH
9.	NUMBER OF Younger Brothers Number of Older Brothers
10.	NUMBER OF Younger Sisters Number of Older Sisters
11.	NUMBER of older Sisters and Brothers who are enrolled in college
12.	Brothers or Sisters who have completed college
13.	Occupation of older Brother & Sisters
14.	Occupation of Father
15.	Occupation of Mother
16.	Name of College of University you Plan to attend
17.	Have you been accepted? Yes No
18.	If not have you applied? Yes No

19.	Total College or university expenses for the first year \$
20.	Amount you and/or parents or guardian can provide for first year \$
21.	Amount from other sources – scholarships, grants (specify) and value of each
22.	Amount needed to attend \$
23.	From what sources or sources do you expect to obtain the additional money, needed
24.	Would you be willing to borrow the funds needed if you do not obtain this scholarship? Yes or No
25.	If you are male 18 years or older have you registered for selective service? Yes or No Are you willing to serve in the Armed Forces of the United States in time of an emergency? Yes or No
26.	You may use additional paper if more space is needed to answer the following questions.
27.	Write a paragraph stating your future plans.
28.	Write a paragraph telling why you feel you need a scholarship.
29.	List your participation in high school and community organizations and activities.
30.	Have you been the recipient of other honors or awards? If yes give details.
31.	Please give your relation to a member of VFW Post 4667 or Veteran and their name (Living or Deceased)

VFW Post 4667 Memorial Name Application

To be eligible for a name to be placed on the memorial, the service member must be currently in or have honorably served in the U.S. military.

Print in capital letters (blue or black ink only) the name of the service member *exactly as it is to appear on the memorial*. Nicknames may be used.

First Na	ame or N	ickname								
Middle	Name, Iı	nitial or I	Nicknam	e	[<u> </u>				, ,
Last Na	me									
Branch	of Service	e:	Da	ites of Se	rvice: _					
Conflict	s Served	In (i.e. W	WII, Kor	ean War,	, Vietnam	, etc):				
Countrie	es Assign	ed:								
If Still L	Living, Pl	ace of Re	sidence: _							
Name o	f Person	Submitti	ing Appli	ication						
Name:	_									
Address	ddress: City/State/Zip									
Phone N	umber: _									
authoriz <i>bear res</i>	e VFW P	ost 4667 <i>ty for the</i>	to place t	he above	indicated	l name on	the Post	memoria	l. I unde	nilitary. I rstand that I nemorial no
Signatur	re of pers	on applyi	ng:				_ Date:			
	by/date:	VFV	V USE O	NLY BE	LOW T	HIS LIN	E			
Fee Paic	1 (\$50.00)) (Cash		(Check #/a	mount			
Donatio	n:		Cash		(Check #/a	mount			

(Please Turn Application Over)

(Application Continued)

In order to ensure that only the names of U.S. military veterans are placed on the memorial, we are requiring verification that the person whose name is placed on the memorial is currently in or has *served honorably* in the U.S. military. *It is the responsibility of the person applying to provide an adequate form of verification so that eligibility can be determined*. Some examples of acceptable forms of verification are: DD-214 (Discharge papers), veteran's organization membership card (i.e. VFW, American Legion, etc.), photograph of service member in uniform with other service members, photo of service members name on a monument or memorial.

You must attach a form of eligibility to this application. Applications without a form of verification will not be processed.

All payments by check should be made out to "VFW Post 4667" and on the memo line please indicate "VFW Memorial".

Donations to help with the construction and maintenance of the memorial are welcomed. All donations to the project are tax deductible. You can indicate the amount of donation on the front of this form or mail your donation to the VFW. Please indicate on the check memo line "VFW Memorial Donation".

Please mail completed applications or donations to:

VFW Post 4667 Attn: VFW Memorial PO Box 767 Marion, VA 24354 VFW Post 4667 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 voluntarily maintains the Post web site. All comments or recommendation pertaining to the site should be addressed to john@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. P.O. Box 767 Marion, VA 24354 276-783-7971

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POST NEWSLETTER

THE SWAMP FOX

MARCH 2005