



The Scuttlebutt

WE ARE ONE!!

July - September 2019

Commander's Comments



A couple of weeks ago, the Catholic Church commemorated the Feast of the Holy Eucharist, or the Solemnity of the Corpus Christi. This blessed day recognized by Catholics, remembers how Jesus Christ gave of Himself, when He offered up his body and blood thru the transubstantiation of bread and wine, for the salvation of others.

I went to mass at a different church that Sunday, and although I have been there a few times, I don't recall even hearing this priest say mass, or give a homily. He was quite exuberant in his speaking, and certainly not quite traditional, however his words stuck with me and as I left mass, he certainly made me think.



Now some of you reading this are saying "where is the Commander going with this article", "why is he talking religion", "not everyone is Christian or Catholic", etc. Well, this is not about religion, it's about giving of oneself for the well being of others. That is what Jesus Christ did...He gave of Himself.

I am not using the above reference to preach the gospel to you, I am using it as a reference to recognize the vast amount of "giving of oneself" that has taken place over the past few months. Starting with our annual Memorial Day ceremonies in Strongsville and North Royalton, we recognized how much our fallen military brothers and sisters of all wars gave of themselves to defend our country and democracy throughout the world. I also witnessed the constant giving by the members of our post, who show up early to cook breakfast on Memorial Day for the officers and Honor Guard, before we all go off to perform such ceremonies.

Only a few days later, I witnessed an absolute astonishing display of "giving" during the final preparations, set-up, display, and dismantling of the Ohio Flags of Honor hosted by our post. There was a tremendous amount of effort put forth to make this event happen and I couldn't be any prouder of so many of you who came to help, to participate, or even just observe. What an incredible display of "community!"

When I showed up at The Commons on Friday morning, I didn't know what level of volunteers to expect. If there were only a few people, the set-up would take hours and hours and there would be a lot of sore backs and tired legs.

Well, 3345 and friends went above and beyond again and made this task far easier than we could have expected. It simply amazed me to see how many of you gave of yourselves that morning to make this happen. Young, old, handicapped, male, female...you came, you helped, and you gave of yourselves!

continued on page 2

Sponsored by Ohio VFW Charities

With picture perfect weather, the opening ceremony began right on time at 1800. As I stood before everyone as the master of ceremonies, fortunately I was on a raised platform and as I scanned from left to right, it was all I could do to hold back my emotions to see such incredible support. What a proud weekend for VFW Post 3345, Strongsville, and the Ohio Flags of Honor! Of all the incredible moments I have experienced over the past 6+ years as Commander of VFW 3345, this was by far my proudest moment. I was so proud that we made this happen and that the results were outstanding. According to Gino Zimmer, Gold Star father and President of the organization, this was the most organized, the best attended, and the most financially successful event they have ever had. THANK YOU for all of your support!

As many of you know, I am running for political office in Strongsville. This is not a political plug for me, nor a campaign message, but a message to answer the question that many of you have asked. Why do you want to do this?

My answer is this, it's because I am being drawn to it. Not forced, not coerced by anyone or anything, but drawn in a way that I can't explain. For many years, I have been interested in politics. I do not have a degree in political science, nor do I consider myself a subject matter expert in the political arena, but I have always been driven to be in situations or positions where I can make a difference. I am not one to stand back and let others do everything, I have never accepted status quo as part of my life, and I don't like to complain about things without doing something about it. I try each and every day to make a positive difference, from a simple handshake or a kind word to a friend or a stranger, to making decisions that may have a positive impact on someone or something for years to come. I strive to "give of myself" as much as I can, and this current quest for Strongsville City Council is a shot I simply must take. I have always lived by the motto of NHL Hockey Hall of Famer Wayne Gretzky "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take". Win or lose, if I don't take the shot, I'll never know what is meant to be.

Now on to post news.

We, as the VFW have just finished up our membership year and the new Department of Ohio Commander, Dan Faulkner has taken over. Although our post did a wonderful job with its volunteer hours, donations, and as I referenced numerous times above, gave of ourselves, we did not qualify for All-State or All-American. This was not due to the lack of effort, but mainly due to membership levels. Although our membership is strong, the Department and National Commanders set the criteria each year for membership retention and recruitment, and sometimes they are very difficult levels to achieve. Retention seems to be our biggest challenge. Frequently, qualifying individuals come in, join our post but then quickly fade off into the sunset. I am not sure why, but I can only imagine it's because they truly don't know what we are all about. It's our duty as officers and members to ensure that our new members feel welcome, become informed, and learn how close our 3345 family is.

Once again, we will be hosting our 7th Annual Community Day on Saturday, September 7th. We will push hard once again to make this event a success and show Strongsville and the surrounding communities how proud we are of our post and to be part of the fabric that binds our community together.

Just a heads up, that my annual Wine & Dine event will be held on Saturday, October 5th. We will enjoy ourselves with a selection of tapas style foods, paired with a wine, while dancing to the sounds of Ron Howard and Cruisin. So, dust off your tuxedo and top hat and get ready for a little formal fun.

Well, I have to get this article off, because as always, I am holding things up, but I wish each and every one of you a safe and happy summer and look forward to seeing you in our canteen or at upcoming functions.

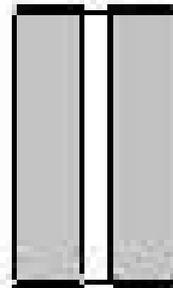
As always, I ask that you are granted "fair winds and following seas", and may God bless you, your family, and continue to bless the United States of America.

Sincerely,
Tim Zvoncheck
Commander

Senior Vice Commander



In this proud land we grew up strong
We were wanted all along
I was taught to fight, taught to win
I never thought I could fail
No fight left, or so it seems
I am a man whose dreams have all deserted
I've changed my face, I've changed my name
But no one wants you when you lose
Don't give up
'cos you have friends
Don't give up
You're not beaten yet
Don't give up
I know you can make it good



(Peter Gabriel – “**Don't Give Up**”, beautifully accompanied by Kate Bush)

Current VA statistics from a 2018 study spanning the years 2005 - 2016 show nearly 21 veterans, active duty service members and members from the National Guard commit suicide every day. That equates to just over 7,500 veterans per year deciding to take their own lives. (And while not specifically looking at Veteran statistics, a recent study on Ohio suicide rates indicated a 24% increase in suicides between 2008 and 2017 here in our own state.)

Veterans appear to be 1.5 times more likely to commit suicide than non-veterans. And female veterans have been nearly 2 times as likely to commit suicide than non-veteran females during the period of the study. This is alarming, and we as a nation, as the organization of the VFW, and as concerned citizens need to figure out how to help our comrades in arms, friends, family members and neighbors.

Those aged 55-74 have the highest rate at 58.1% of all veteran suicide deaths; however, the suicide rate for veterans ages 18-34 has increased significantly between 2013 and 2015 – rising from 40.4 to 45 deaths per 100,000.

One of the challenges we face in trying to address this crisis is we train our service members to be tough (“I was taught to fight, taught to win. I never thought I could fail.”). Many of them see asking for help as a sign of weakness. However, that couldn't be further from the truth! We all have tremendous worth and were put on this earth for a reason. Whether that's to be a son/daughter, father/mother, brother/sister, friend, soldier, doctor, plumber – whatever – there is value in the lives we possess. Seeking help to keep those lives going strong exhibits great appreciation for the gift of life that has been bestowed upon us all. We need to reduce whatever stigma there is about mental health – people shouldn't feel ashamed or embarrassed when they don't feel emotionally right, just like if they had cancer, diabetes or some other medical condition that needs to be addressed, they need to seek treatment. It's absolutely understandable to want and need help sometimes – especially for veterans after being placed in some of the circumstances that service to your country can subject you to.

The VFW has partnered with an international organization's campaign to help bring mental health concerns and disorders out of the darkness and be addressed so that those suffering can be helped. It is the Campaign to Change Direction, established by the Give an Hour organization. It is built around knowing the five signs of emotional suffering, and then offering help to those who exhibit these signs.



On September 14, 2019, the VFW and Give an Hour are holding the Fourth Annual A Day to Change Direction (<https://www.changedirection.org/day-to-change-direction/>), a national day of service and action to change the dialog on mental health for veterans and their communities. Our annual Community Day on September 7th will provide our Post's opportunity to help spread the word and share with our members and community the importance of recognizing the five signs and making mental health no longer something to be dismissed.

No one should have to deal with these challenges alone, not when we have such a strong community – not only here within the Post, but also the Strongsville area and Cuyahoga County as well. On top of that, there is the VA and many other organizations established to help those who need it - but people need to know about these resources, and we need to be aware of what to look for in those who need that help if they themselves can't or won't seek it. They are sometimes afraid or embarrassed to ask for it, but we need to find a way to offer them a guiding and reassuring hand along with the support they need and deserve.

To contact the Veterans Crisis Hotline, service members and/or their families can call 800-273-8255 and press 1. They can also text 838255 for assistance. Locally, the Cuyahoga County Veterans Services Commission has a 24-hour hotline for suicide prevention/mental health & addiction crisis services – available at 216-623-6888 or you can text “4HELP” to 741741 and a counselor will respond within 5 minutes.

If you have any thoughts or concerns that you're heading down a dark road, please “don't give up”! Call for help or just talk to a relative, friend or neighbor – sometimes just saying something out loud to another person can be the first step you need to take! We want to see you here, thriving and living the life you deserve. We know “you can make it good”, and we are all here to support you however we can – just ask!

Tad Brown
Senior Vice Commander

Membership Committee:

To bolster our membership here, not only in retention but growing through new memberships, we would like to begin a formal Membership Committee. Previously, we've had several of us call those members whose annual memberships are up for renewal each month, but never really had a focused plan to also recruit. Shame on me!

I plan to change that during this year and going forward by establishing a standing committee dedicated to growth and retention. We can plan membership drives throughout the year, establish calling schedules and encourage our annual members to convert to Life (and perhaps encourage some Life members to consider Legacy membership!).

On the Life conversion topic, don't forget – Post 3345 offers a tremendous opportunity to our members: If, after your first year here, you want to become a Life member, we will pay for half of the total cost! You're not going to find a better deal! So, anyone interested in being a part of our Membership Committee (or becoming a Life member!), please contact me as soon as possible so we can get to work on this vital aspect of our Post's future!

Tad Brown – srvcdr.vfw3345@wowway.biz or cell: 440.376.7491





Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
Strongsville Post 3345
17900 Strongsville Blvd.
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November 11, 2017

Post Newsletter Advertising Application

- Ad sizes available:** Business Card single, 3 1/2 x 1 1/2 \$100.00 Yr.
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- Includes:** 6 bi-monthly issues, plus 24/7 coverage on Post website
- Circulation:** Emailed to 1,300 Post members
- Graphics and Text:** All graphics and pictures must be in any of the following formats: Jpeg, Tiff, Gif or Bitmap. Text should be in MS Word. Submit ad design for approval. Newsletters and Calendars are produced in MS Publisher.
- Payments:** All payments are due before printing; future payments are due prior to the end of the 12-month cycle. Your cycle begins with the month your first ad is printed. Your ad cost is protected for at least three years. All checks should be made out to Strongsville VFW Post 3345 with "Newsletter" noted on the memo line.

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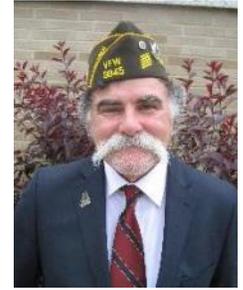
Contact information: Tad Brown, Sr. Vice Commander

Cell: 440-376-7491

Email: srvcdr.vfw3345@wowway.biz



Junior Vice Commander Dan Dallas



Hi everyone,

The Summer concerts are all booked and we've already enjoyed the first one with the Time Warp Band. Next up - Saturday 03 August CRUISIN and closing on Saturday 24 August is ACE MOLAR. All concerts start at 7 pm and end at 10 pm and are open to the public.

So, bring your friends and neighbors. Lets get the word out so we can pack the house. Also, let them know about our bus trip to Kelleys Island on Saturday 14 September.

We will have breakfast at the Post from 8am to 9am. bloody marys included. Its BYOB on the bus. You veteran bus riders know the drill and what a great time is in store. I can't post a price per seat as of yet, as I need a final count of riders. the more riders the cheaper the seats. Did I mention we are bringing in our own band.

I will have more detail posted in the Canteen by the sign up sheet. I'm going to say as of THIS date the seats will be in the \$50.00 range. Remember, all are invited! You need not be a member of the Post.

The Vets golf outing was a great success! Thank you to all the sponsors, volunteers and golfers. Hopefully, next year's golf outing will be just as successful.

Don't forget Friday is Queen of Hearts drawing. As I'm typing this the current game has only six cards left on the board! How low can it go! Well, that's all I have for now.

See you at the Post.....and always, Support our Troops!

Dan Dallas

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A Veteran, Serving Veterans!



Honor Guard Don Kennett



Summer has finally arrived. We have been busy with Memorial Day activities and the Flags-of-Honor in Strongsville along with the Vietnam Memorial in Olmsted Falls.

It has been asked the reason and the origination of the playing of Taps and I have included the history and its' meaning.

“The origins of “Taps,” the distinctive bugle melody played at U.S. military funerals and memorials and as a lights-out signal to soldiers at night, date back to the American Civil War. In July 1862, U.S. General Daniel Butterfield and his brigade were camped at Harrison’s Landing, Virginia, recuperating after the Seven Days Battles near Richmond.

Dissatisfied with the standard bugle call employed by the Army to indicate to troops it was time to go to sleep, and thinking the call should sound more melodious, Butterfield reworked an existing bugle call used to signal the end of the day. After he had his brigade bugler, Private Oliver Wilcox Norton, play it for the men, buglers from other units became interested in the 24-note tune and it quickly spread throughout the Army, and even caught on with the Confederates.

Not long after Butterfield created “Taps,” it was played for the first time at a military funeral, for a Union cannoner killed in action. The man’s commanding officer, Captain John Tidball, decided the bugle call would be safer than the traditional firing of three rifle volleys over the soldier’s grave, a move which could be confused by the nearby enemy as an attack. As for the name “Taps,” the most likely explanation is that it comes from the fact that prior to Butterfield’s bugle call, the lights-out call was followed by three drum beats, dubbed the “Drum Taps,” as well as “The Taps” and then simply “Taps.”

When Butterfield’s call replaced the drum beats, soldiers referred to it as “Taps,” although this was an unofficial moniker, according to “Taps” historian and bugle expert Jari Villanueva. He notes that Butterfield’s bugle call was officially known as “Extinguish Lights” in American military manuals until 1891. Since that time, “Taps” also has been a formally recognized part of U.S. military funerals.”

The above information was written by Elizabeth Nix as presented by the History Channel.

Calendar for: July – Aug. – Sept.

July 11th - Tour of Duty at Rittman
July 11th – Car Rally at Grace Church
July 13th – Honor Guard Meeting
July 17th – Strongsville Home Days Parade
Aug. 3rd – Honor Guard Meeting
Aug. 29th - Tour of Duty at Rittman
Aug. 3rd – Honor Guard Meeting
Sept. 7th– Honor Guard Meeting
Sept. 28th – VFW Founders Day Activity

Respectfully Submitted,
Don Kennett, Honor Guard Commander

TAPS



April, 2019: None

May, 2019: None

June, 2019: None



New Members

April, 2019

**James Lockyer
Mike Stoker
Michael Troy**

May, 2019

Harvey Jordan

June, 2019

**Ruben Barna
James Caferro
Nada Fleming
Mary Jo Grabe
Daniel Guilfoyle
Roger Gunter**

**Mike Rebetta
Robert Schrade
Donald Shaver
Kenneth Tomczak
Christ Zurawski**

Donations

April, 2019

VFW National Home For Children	\$250
Honor Flight Cleveland	\$750
St. Joseph Church Soul Run	\$100
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society	\$250
Strongsville Community Band	\$500
Strongsville Rotary	\$250
D-Day Conneaut	\$100
Joint Veterans Council Cuyahoga County (Program Ad)	\$100

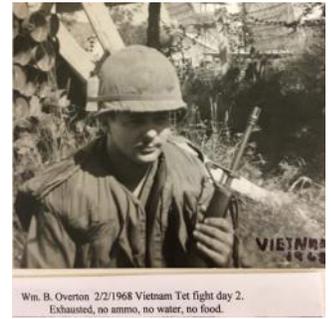
May, 2019

VFW National Home For Children	\$250.00
Honor Flight Cleveland	\$750.00
Strongsville City Club Rib Burn Off	\$500.00
Southwest General Hospice We Honor Veterans Program	\$200.00
Polish Legion of American Vets Memorial Golf Outing	\$100.00
Veteran-In-Need	\$300.00

June, 2019

VFW National Home For Children	\$250
Honor Flight Cleveland	\$1,250
City of Strongsville (Fireworks)	\$500
Strongsville Firefighters Assn. Golf Outing	\$125
Hanson House Golf Outing	\$500
Wounded Hero Fishing Event	\$750
Props and Pistons Festival	\$500

Service Officer Bill Overton



Hello VFW 3345 members and friends.

The Post has been very active in our community the past 3 months. We have assisted many veterans and their families in many ways, with filing claims, clothing, transportation and food items. We've also provided information pertaining to other veterans' benefits. We have been working with the Cleveland American Veterans' Association (CAVA). They are a nonprofit 501C3 organization dedicated to assisting local veterans and their families; there are benefits for veterans and their spouses and veteran's widows. Benefits could range from \$1200-\$2900 per month. For additional information, call 216-661-7753.

Blue Water Navy

President Trump signed the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act into law June 25, 2019, a move that will fast-track disability compensation for veterans with medical conditions related to the chemical herbicide Agent Orange.

According to Congress and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), an estimated 90,000 veterans may be eligible for benefits under the new law.

The legislation, H.R. 299, extends disability compensation to veterans who served off the coast of the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, within 12 nautical miles of the coast of Vietnam and Cambodia, along a line of demarcation spelled out in the law.

Those eligible include veterans with one or more of the presumptive diseases whose claims were previously denied. It also includes those with new claims.

The Bill also covers veterans who served in the Korean Demilitarized Zone between September 1, 1967, and August 31, 1971, as well as children with spina bifida born to veterans who served in Thailand between January 1962 and May 1975.

Department of Veterans Affairs Time Line Facts:

1812 – The Naval Home, a facility for disabled veterans, opens in Philadelphia.

1833 – Congress establishes the Bureau of Pensions to assist veterans.

1862 – During the Civil War, Congress passes a bill allowing the president to purchase land for national cemeteries. Between 1865 and 1870, 70 national cemeteries open for burial of Union soldiers.

God Bless Our Great Country, Keep Our Military Strong.

Bill Overton
Service Officer

Russ Tobel
Asst. Service Officer



Canteen Manager

Bill Sopko



Finally after a long and very wet spring summer has finally arrived so lay back, relax and enjoy the season.

After toiling around your house and working up a thirst, stop on in to your friendly canteen and enjoy a refreshing beverage or two, watch some Tribe games or just relax on the patio and enjoy your memorial. Outdoor concerts have started up again with some very talented groups to play for your listening pleasure. Grab the wife, husband, girl or boy friend, a neighbor or two, grab a lawn chair or blanket and relax to some entertaining music under the stars . Food and beverage will be available. Check the postings for dates and times.

Post and canteen rules are clearly listed in the canteen. It seems as of late we are starting to get complaints again about the profanity, rule #1, getting a little abused. Let's tighten up the tongue and keep the ship sailing smoothly. We are trying to retain members and attract new ones not turn them away. Thank you for your cooperation.

I want to thank Maria Gardens for their generous donations of flowers and shrubs. Also Home Depot for flowers, shrubs and mulch from a grant to help VFW and Legions posts spruce up their landscape. Both very veteran friendly. Also our corner car wash is still offering discounts using code 33453

Remember live, love and laugh. Have a safe summer. Pray for our troops and families. GOD BLESS THE U,S,A.

Happy trails . Dave and Bill

Interesting,

My doctor said I drink too much. I said how could he tell. He said my urine sample had an olive in it.

My wife says I talk to myself, I told her sometimes I need expert advice.



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House Committee Brent Newton



No House Committee Report this issue.

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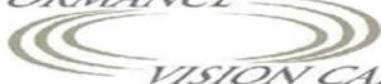
Main Office: 5610 Ridge Road, Parma, OH 44129
Phil Galaska – Men's Auxiliary – Office Phone: 440-882-3760 x495

Lakewood Office: 1386 Bonnieview, Lakewood, OH 44107

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Auxiliary

Mary Ann Almashie



Hi everyone. I would like to start my first newsletter article by thanking all the auxiliary members, for putting their trust in me to let me be the president of our organization. It's a huge responsibility that I take very seriously, and I hope we have a lot of fun this year while supporting our veterans. I would also like to thank all my elected officers for stepping into their positions. You all bring such a positive attitude and have great ideas to bring to the auxiliary. Bob DeHart, as outgoing president and to our outgoing officers, a huge Thank You for your dedication and support, not only to the Auxiliary but to the post.

I would like to take a moment to Thank everyone who has donated a portion of their Winners Takes All winning and/or who has gone out to get donations from retailers to help support future events baskets and giveaways. These types of donations are greatly appreciated and used to support our Auxiliary.

We have a great deal of events that will bring a lot of fun to the post this summer:

- The Auxiliary is currently serving dinner every Friday starting at 6:00pm. You can purchase a ½ lb. Hamburger, Cheeseburger, etc. (all with fries) for only \$6.00.

- Unfortunately, due to lack of ticket sale, we had to cancel this year's Margaritaville / Pig Roast. We will have the Margaritaville / Pig Roast back on next year's calendar.

- This year the Auxiliary is again collecting gently used golf supplies, (clubs, golf balls and other equipment) that will be sent to troops serving overseas. Items can be placed in the Canteen Office through August 1st. Note: Golf Bags cannot be donated, due to the shipping costs. If you have any questions, please see Margie Briller or me. Thank you in advance for your support.

- On Friday, August 16th, The Auxiliary will be having our annual golf outing and fundraiser at Valleaire Golf Course, Hinckley, Ohio. Check in will begin at 08:00 am with a 09:00 am shotgun start. Anyone who has attended one of these in the past can speak for how fun of a day it is. The cost is: One player is \$75.00, or a foursome is \$300.00. This includes 18 holes of golf, 2 carts, continental breakfast, lunch, and a steak dinner afterward with door prizes and monies awarded. Be sure to sign up to golf in the canteen, or if you'd like to volunteer please see Frank Zullo.

If you are not a golfer but still would like to support this event, consider a hole sponsorship. These holes are available at \$100 per hole. Sponsorship letters can be found in the Auxiliary mailbox. Last year, many Auxiliary members joined together at \$10 each to collectively sponsor holes. If you are interested, please see me for more details. If you have any questions regarding the golf outing, see Frank Zullo for details.

- In the near future, about 50-60 of our veterans from the VA hospital will be coming by bus to our Post. We will be providing dinner and having some bingo fun with our veterans. I have attended a few of the VA Bingos and you won't regret volunteering to help; we have a lot of fun with our veterans from the VA. If you would like to volunteer, please see Martha Chilkowski.

• On September 8th, we will be having our Tailgate Party (Browns vs Houston). More details to come. If you have not attended an Auxiliary meeting lately, we would love to see you come back. Our Auxiliary meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 7:00pm. Hope to see you there.

We are always in need of volunteers to help in our events or on our Auxiliary Post Work Parties, please consider helping. Please see the Post calendars for dates for the Post Work Parties.

This summer is full of Auxiliary fun and I hope you can attend, please see our email blasts for additional information on our events. If you are not on the email list for the Auxiliary, please contact Linda Tobel at vfwauxiliary3345@gmail.com.

Thank you for trusting in me to be your president. I promise I will do everything possible to continue to make Post 3345 Auxiliary the greatest Auxiliary in the state of Ohio.

Please continue to keep our veterans and their families in your thoughts and prayers.....

Regards,

Mary Ann Almashie
Auxiliary President

Cash for Lionel Trains

Call Bob at (440) 759-2573

Our Members. Our Friends. Our Heroes

James K. “Trapper” Adams

Interviewed by Linda Burger



Everyone has special days they celebrate – Birthdays, Anniversaries, Graduations. But for Jim “Trapper” Adams, there is one day that holds more meaning than any other.

“June 30th is my ‘Alive’ day,” he explained. “Every year since 1969, I, with my family and friends, celebrate the fact that I am, indeed, alive.”

On that date, Jim was involved in a horrific incident while serving in Vietnam. “We had just evacuated our wounded from a battle site and were retrieving those who didn’t make it,” Jim explained, in an almost matter of fact manner. “The copters were coming in and, somehow, a number of land mines were triggered. It was the third one that got me.”

In total, 8 soldiers were killed and 16 wounded, including 4 soldiers on the Medevac Copter.

“It’s really true, your life does flash before your eyes at a time like this, at least it did for me,” he added, with a semi-laugh. The extensive injuries Jim suffered led to months of surgeries and rehabilitation, including the need to re-learn to eat, talk and walk.

Jim was drafted shortly after graduating from West Tech High School, Cleveland in 1967. He had been working at Republic Steel when he received his “Greetings,” then received his basic training in Fort Knox, moving on to Advanced Infantry training at Fort Polk.

Jim joined Bravo Company, 1st/20th Infantry, 11th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal Division, in February, 1969 at Cam Ranh Bay, beginning what he refers to as “jungle school.”



“We were the largest division in ‘Nam, with about 30,000 men,” he recalled. “My role was as a mortar expert, setting them up during assaults and fire fights.” This required carrying the 35 lb. mortar tube, 2 bandoleers of ammunition and an M-16 as they slogged through rice paddies, jungles and other near impossible terrains.

Yet despite his injuries and the suffering he endured, Jim, who was awarded the Purple Heart, chooses most to talk of his fellow soldiers, speaking in awe and admiration for those who received the Bronze Star and others who, in his eyes and those of many others, are being remembered as heroes.

“It is almost impossible to suppress the memories of what we saw, and what we endured,” he reluctantly revealed. “Like so many other Vietnam vets, I still react when I hear fireworks, or even vehicle backfires.”

Jim has sought help and is “100% satisfied with the therapies offered at the VA.”



After his discharge in June, 1970, he attended both Cuyahoga Community College and Ashland University, majoring in Accounting and Finance.

Jim, also a proud 30-year Teamster, first worked with Levin Flooring, then Emory Worldwide, which was later bought out by UPS.

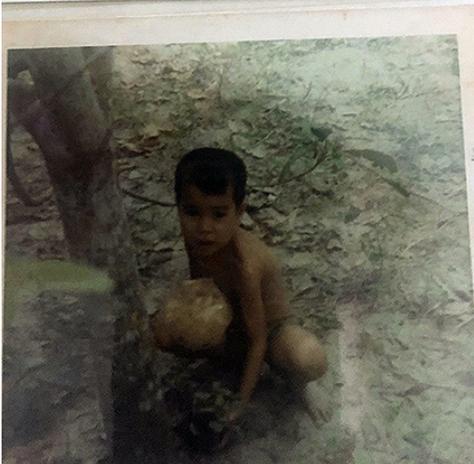


After retiring in 2010, he's filling his time with golf, after a five year absence due to a knee replacement. He also plays softball with the Huff & Puffers a senior league and, he proudly reports, the team has won the championship for the last three years!

Jim speaks even more proudly of his children – Jessica, who is a Foreign Service Diplomat in Washington, D.C., Heather, who resides in the Netherlands and Steve who recently moved from New York City back to the Cleveland area.

With his children, Jim has traveled to the Netherlands, Israel and St. Kitts.

Oh, yes, and his nickname – that came from a camping trip in high school when he “trapped” all the food that had been brought along, in a midnight binge fest!



An 8-year member of Post 3345, Jim has a very philosophical attitude toward what he's been through, toward politics and even life itself. “I have no animosity toward those who went to Canada, who protested the Vietnam War or even now, those who take a knee,” he explained. “It's up to each individual to follow their heart and their beliefs.”

Jim, for your bravery, your courage, your service to your fellow soldiers and our country, we at Strongsville VFW Post 3345 salute you and are honored to have you as a Member.

SCUTTLEBUTT PUBLISHING!

Newsletter publication: As a reminder, the Scuttlebutt newsletter and calendars have been switched to a quarterly electronic delivery - either as an email attachment we send to you, or by visiting the Post's website - www.vfw3345.com. Pictures from some events have been uploaded to the Post website, check out the fun. We are continually uploading pictures from various events held throughout the year so check it out frequently.

If you have pictures you would like to share, please email them to vfwpost3345_1@yahoo.com.

Please send your electronic contact information, and any updates to your home address, to svcdr.vfw3345@wowway.biz and we will make sure you are added to our email distribution list.

NOTE: If you include your birth month and day, we will also add you to the Birthday List. There is also a Birthday Book behind the bar in the Canteen, where your information can be added.

Share Your Celebrations!

You can now share the good news and celebrate a Birthday, Anniversary, Retirement, Graduation or other Special Event in the Scuttlebutt Newsletter! One-time, quarter page ads can be purchased for \$25 per issue. Photos and other images can be included - and we'll even help with the design.

Information can be submitted via email vfwpost3345_1@yahoo.com or by contacting Linda Burger at LWBurger@aol.com

Comments, suggestions and ideas for the Scuttlebutt are always welcome - just let us know!

Have a great summer!

Linda Burger
Scuttlebutt Editor

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July 12, 2019

1. **VFW Demands End to Widow's Tax:** The Senate recently passed the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 by a vote of 86-8. The bill, which must still be conferenced with the House of Representatives, provides \$750 billion in total defense spending, a 3.1 percent military pay raise, and reforms the Military Housing Privatization Initiative for military families, among many other enhancements. Sadly missing, however, was one bipartisan amendment that would have finally ended a dollar-for-dollar offset that continues to financially penalize some 65,000 military widows and widowers from simultaneously receiving Survivor Benefits Plan (SBP) payments from the Defense Department and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from the Department of Veterans Affairs. In an opinion editorial published Sunday in *The Hill*, VFW National Commander B.J. Lawrence called out the Senate for not including the amendment, saying that Congress is balancing “the budget on the back of the widows and orphans, which is a disgrace.” He said “surviving spouses and veterans [like VFW Life member Jeremy Kitzhaber] do not have the luxury of waiting for Congress to do its job. The VFW again calls on all of its members and advocates to demand Congress end this injustice now.”

2. **VA Orders Stay on Blue Water Navy and Korean DMZ Claims:** In a memorandum dated July 1, Secretary Wilkie stated that all Blue Water Navy claims, claims based on service in or near the Korean Demilitarized Zone, and claims for children of veterans with spina bifida will be held from being processed until Jan.1, 2020. The VFW encourages veterans and surviving spouses to file claims now. Contact a VFW Service Officer.

3. **House Defense Authorization Bill Would End Widow's Tax:** Today, the House passed H.R. 2500, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 (NDAA) that authorizes \$733 billion in defense spending, a 3.1 percent pay increase for all military personnel. The legislation includes a number of VFW-supported provisions that improve the quality of life for our service members and military families, to include the termination of the demeaning dollar-for-dollar offset of earned benefits for the surviving spouses of about 65,000 service members and veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice, known as the Widow's Tax; repeals the Feres Doctrine to ensure the Military Health System is held accountable for malpractice; provides \$9.2 million for construction and improvement of military family housing; authorizes a \$1,000 reimbursement increase for military spouses to obtain professional certifications and licenses after a PCS change; and authorizes financial assistance to civilian child care providers who care for the children of members who die in the line of duty. The VFW is also pleased the legislation would also direct DOD to review the service records of World War I minority service members who were appropriately recognized for their valorous service, but denied the highest service medal because of racial bias. The NDAA now heads to conference to resolve the differences between the Senate and House versions.

4. **Affordable Mortgages for Veterans Act Headed to the President:** On Tuesday, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1988, the Protecting Affordable Mortgages for Veterans Act of 2019. The legislation corrects an unintended consequence of a previous law that prohibits veterans from refinancing their home loans within the first six months to combat a tactic by predatory lenders known as “loan churning” in which veterans are convinced to refinance their home mortgages, and fees and other expenses are often added. Introduced by Rep. David Scott, (D-Ga.), and Rep. Lee Zeldin (R-N.Y.), H.R. 1988 would approve approximately 2,500 refinanced loans that were being processed when the law was implemented, but could not be completed because of a technical error. Last month, the Senate passed an identical bill, S. 1749, which was introduced by Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.), and Tom Tillis (R-N.C.). Since both bills are identical, H.R. 1988 now heads to the president's desk.

Continued on page 19

5. House Holds Hearing on Economic Opportunities for Women: This week the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a hearing to discuss the different ways women veterans are affected by different programs throughout VA. In some areas such as education and employment, women veterans are represented more favorably than non-veteran women and male veterans. However, there are areas where women veterans are underserved such as veteran homelessness programs. Women veterans have been the fastest growing population of veterans for years, and special attention must be paid to their specific needs.

To sign up new veterans' advocates, visit: <http://capwiz.com/vfw/mlm/signup.htm>.