

## Commander's Message



**State Commander  
Gary Adams  
US Navy, Post 1115**

Greetings everyone. I hope you are all squeezing the last bit of fun out of the summer, because me myself, I'm burning up. But I sure am having fun doing it. I've been to the beach a couple times, the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, and even New Orleans, and took a swamp tour on a high-speed air boat. Whoa Boy! But while all that has been going on we've all been working too. Especially You all.

I have crunched some numbers based on part of the MemStats from

this year, and Life membership we had at the end of last year. It appears that we are right on track to meet our 1st goal of 75% by September 29th I think we may have already broken that one with 81% if I'm right that is. Our next goal would be 90% by Dec 29th. I hope I'm right and I know you do too.

We have some 100th Anniversary celebrations coming up and I hope to see you there. First on Saturday the 26th of August we will be in Clarksville for an RSOI and then a celebration for 100 years. Then you are all invited to Roanoke for an RSOI on Friday night September 15th and then on the 16th we have our Fall Council meeting in the morning. You are welcome to attend, with a Centennial celebration to follow for lunch and into the afternoon. Then to end it with a bang we will have a 100th anniversary Cookout in Marion. It's going to be a great way to finish the summer season.

On October the 14th, Vicki and I will be hosting a Chicken-Stew/Homecoming at Grover King Post 1115 in Hillsville. The Grover King Post is an alcohol-free Post and I know that we

can all respect that for one night. We will have live music provided by the Granite City Rollers. We will have lots of food, but we ask that you register by Friday October the 6th to give us time to prepare. You can register online at [Gary, and Vicki's Homecoming / Chicken Stew at VFW 1115 Hillsville, VA Tickets, Sat, Oct 14, 2023 at 5:00 PM | Eventbrite](#) We are planning a Bonfire, Smores, Cornhole, and anything else we can think of. We have a lot of great help from the VFW, and the Auxiliary on this project and thanks to everyone it's going to be great. I am working with the Hampton Inn and I hope to get a block of rooms set aside for you at a discounted rate, but I am waiting to speak to the General Manager. If you want the number it is (276) 728-2345. It is located at 90 Farmers Market Dr, Hillsville, VA 24343. I know they have plenty of rooms right now. My other Hotel, Holiday Inn has none. But hopefully I will have more information later. Right now, with no discounts were looking in the \$200 a night range, but I'm trying.

I am having a great year thanks to all of you. I think it is because you understand that we must take care of the VFW's most important asset. The members. We must recruit, we must renew, we must convert to Life, and we must most importantly retain our members first or everything we do is in vain. Many thanks to the recruiting team for all the hours you spend away from home and your families, and many thanks to you members who recruit, convert, and retain every day, that no one knows about. You all are the engine that drives the machine. You that picks up the phone and calls another member, or takes her/him to the VA for an appointment, Thank You. Or maybe it's you who take a plate to an elderly member that can't make it to meetings or funerals anymore. Thank You. You make this organization great. From the bottom of my heart, Thank You all for allowing me to be your Commander. I am humbled. Yours in Comradeship.

Yours in Comradeship,  
Gary Adams  
State Commander



**SAVE THE DATE!**



Gary & Vicki's



# HOMECOMING



# CELEBRATION

**Join us for great food, live music,  
cornhole, bon fire, smores & more!**

October 14, 2023 at 5pm

Hillsville VFW

**This is a no alcohol event due to Hillsville  
VFW being a dry post.**

**SATURDAY 14th, OCTOBER, 2023**

**Click on the link below to RSVP**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/gary-and-vickis-homecoming-chicken-stew-at-vfw-1115-hillsville-va-tickets-694387149657?aff=oddtcreator>



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Please visit our website at

[www.vfwva.org](http://www.vfwva.org)

#### DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

##### Commander

Gary Adams

##### Surgeon

Charles Bush

##### Senior Vice Commander

Mitchell L. Rubenstein

##### Past Commander

Harold "Butch" Schupska

##### Junior Vice Commander

Doug Hoffman

##### Chaplain

James Goebel, III

##### Adjutant/ Quartermaster

Ed Mann

##### Chief of Staff

Tommy Hines

##### Judge Advocate

Mark Maggio

##### Inspector

Randy Coker

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Randy Coker

##### Managing Editor

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##### Copy Editors

Doc Crouch  
 Janet & Rick Raskin

## From the Editor's desk

I am excited to continue as your Newspaper editor for another great year. Please keep the Department of Virginia VFW informed of all your accomplishments by submitting your articles and pictures to me, for the Virginia Veterans Newspaper.



*Randy Coker*

Virginia Veteran is published tri-annually by the Department of Virginia, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the US and is available in electronic format on the Department website:

[www.vfwva.org](http://www.vfwva.org).

Articles may be submitted by email to:

[news@vfwva.org](mailto:news@vfwva.org) or [rwcoker1@gmail.com](mailto:rwcoker1@gmail.com)

*We reserve the right to edit all submitted articles for timeliness, clarity and syntax.*

*Note: Deadline for the next newspaper is:*

**October 23, 2023**

## Department of Virginia ascends into Portsmouth for Department Convention





# Flag Day, Nokesville School, June 14, 2023

By Mary Corkhill / Auxiliary 7589

On Flag Day, Auxiliary 7589 Chaplain Cookie Cullen and President Mary Corkhill attended four (4) first grade classes at Nokesville School for a presentation on flag etiquette.

We distributed the following:

- 120 Flags
- 120 Bookmarkers of the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem
- 120 R.A.P. Cards (Random Act of Patriotism)



MARY CORKHILL / AUXILIARY 7589



MARY CORKHILL / AUXILIARY 7589

**UNWAVERING SUPPORT**

**FOR UNCOMMON HEROES**

## Flag Education for Kids!

**This is to help you know how to take good care of the Flag of the United States of America!**

**Displaying the Flag:**

- On Same Staff: U.S. flag at very top, above any other flag.
- Grouped with other flags: U.S. flag goes to its own right.
- Flags of other nations are flown at same height.
- Marching with other flags: U.S. flag to marcher's right (observer's left).
- Decoration: Never use the flag for decoration. Use bunting with the blue on top, then white, then red.

**Half Staff** (Halfway up the flag pole):

- On special days, the flag may be flown at half-staff.
- On Memorial Day it is flown at half-staff until Noon and then raised.

**Saluting the U.S. Flag:**

- Everyone in uniform should use the military salute.
- Members of the armed forces and veterans who are present, but not in uniform, may use the military salute.
- **Everyone else should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart.**
- If you are wearing anything on your head, take it off with your right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.

**Don't do this!!!**

- Do not let the flag touch the ground.
- Do not fly flag upside down unless there is an emergency.
- Do not carry the flag flat, or carry things in it.
- Do not use the flag as clothing.
- Do not store the flag where it can get dirty.
- Do not use it as a cover.
- Do not fasten it or tie it back. Always allow it to fall free.
- Do not draw on or otherwise mark the flag.

**Flag Disposal:**  
*This should only be done with adult supervision!*

- The flag should be folded in its customary manner.
- It is important that the fire be fairly large and of sufficient intensity to ensure complete burning of the flag.
- Place the flag on the fire.
- The individual(s) can come to attention, salute the flag, recite the Pledge of Allegiance and have a brief period of silent reflection.
- After the flag is completely consumed, the fire should then be safely extinguished and the ashes buried.
- Please make sure you are conforming to local/state fire codes or ordinances.

[www.vfwauxiliary.org](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org)

VFW Post/Auxiliary \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact \_\_\_\_\_

*Before the Pledge of Allegiance is said,*

- Remove your hat
- Face the Flag
- Place your right hand over your heart

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*Before the National Anthem is played and/or sang, please*

- Remove your hat
- Face the Flag
- Place your right hand over your heart

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**THE NATIONAL ANTHEM**

O say, can you see  
By the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hailed  
At the twilight's last gleaming?  
Whose broad stripes  
And bright stars,  
Through the perilous fight,  
O'er the ramparts we watched,  
Were so gallantly streaming!

And the rocket's red glare,  
The bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night  
That our Flag was still there.

O say, does that  
Star-spangled banner yet wave  
O'er the land of the free and the  
Home of the brave?  
- Francis Scott Key

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**THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**I pledge allegiance  
to the Flag  
of the United States  
of America,  
And to the Republic  
For which it stands,  
One nation under God,  
Indivisible,  
With Liberty and Justice  
For all.**

- Francis Bellamy

## Floyd Veteran Organizations Hold Pints4Vets

By Katt Whittenberger , Post 7854

Floyd County's two veteran service organizations held the inaugural Pints4Vets fundraiser at Buffalo Mountain Brewery July 1.

"We were blown away by the incredible support in this community for veterans in need," said Greg Johnson, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7854 commander. "Local businesses and other members of the community didn't hesitate to step up and help us make our first major fundraiser incredibly successful. It is humbling how much trust is placed in us to help our brothers and sisters, and that when we speak up saying we need help to meet our mission the community will be there for us."

Organized by Floyd Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7854 and Floyd American Legion Post 127, the event brought together veterans, their families, locals, and tourists with one goal - supporting local veterans.

The event included games and activities for kids and adults, local artisan wares, and Virginia Veteran Services experts. Live music was provided by local musicians, and other highlights included a silent auction and the raffling of a donated Kawasaki KLX 250 dual sport motorcycle.

"My family had an amazing time," said Rebecca Osborne of Floyd County. "My father was a Major in the Air Force, and I know how much he cared about helping his fellow veterans. Seeing how much these organizations do to support our local veterans and their families who are in crisis is incredible; this was an easy way to show our appreciation for their efforts."

Event sponsors included REKKR Compass, Red Rooster Coffee, Roanoke Natural Foods Co-op, Yokohama Tire, Crooked Mountain, Whittenberger Wilds, RE/MAX Dominion, This Was a Tree, C. W. Harman & Son, MoD Salon, Bermann Firearm Company, Cocoa Mia, Floyd Country Store, and Buffalo Mountain Brewery. Floyd Sheriff's Office provided a presence to help visitors cross the street safely from the overflow parking areas.

The money raised by the event will be used by the two posts to broaden efforts to help local veterans in need, support local veteran-owned businesses, and assist veterans in gaining access to medical, mental health, and education resources.

For more information on either veteran service organization, visit VFW Post 7854 Floyd, VA or American Legion of Floyd County Virginia on Facebook.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

# City of Fairfax Independence Day Parade

VFW Post 8469 has been a proud participant in the City of Fairfax Independence Day Parade since its inception 57 years ago.

Our contingent consists of a color guard, a platoon-size marching unit, a float for members that cannot march and Auxiliary, reenactors and a B-25 Bomber fuselage from the Freedom Museum in Manassas, VA.

This represents the largest physical veterans presence in this very large parade, that has over 100 participating organizations.

This year we were awarded First Place for Adult Marching Unit.

Our history with the city goes back more than 75 years, supporting community youth groups, schools, first responders, other charitable organizations, and events like this.

This post does not have a canteen nor does it do charitable gaming. Rather, it focuses on service projects and continues to grow each year with an eclectic membership.



VFW Post 8469 Color Guard and Marching Unit on Main St, Fairfax VA (Photo by Bonnie Hobbs)



Post parade float used for members that cannot march, Auxiliary, and some children (Photo by Bonnie Hobbs)



## Platoon Size Marching Formation

The reaction from the crowd to a formation of veterans marching is palpable. We were warmly cheered and applauded the entire course of the parade! It is hard not to be moved by that.

## Growing Membership

We continue to grow our members from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Shown on left is Post Commander Mac McCarl and Medal of Honor recipient Ed Byers. On the right are Ron Evans and Marcus Kuiper who remain “in the fight” as defense contractors actively engaged in operational activities.







## Cookout at the Post

This is an annual event that we use as both community engagement and as a recruiting event, taking in two confirmed new members this time. Each year we complete the day with a group photo.

Joining us was Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid and Fairfax County Supervisor Pat Herryty, in whose district the post is located.

Total attendance was close to 200 members, Auxiliary, family, and friends as well as a contingent from VFW Post 5412 in nearby Burke.

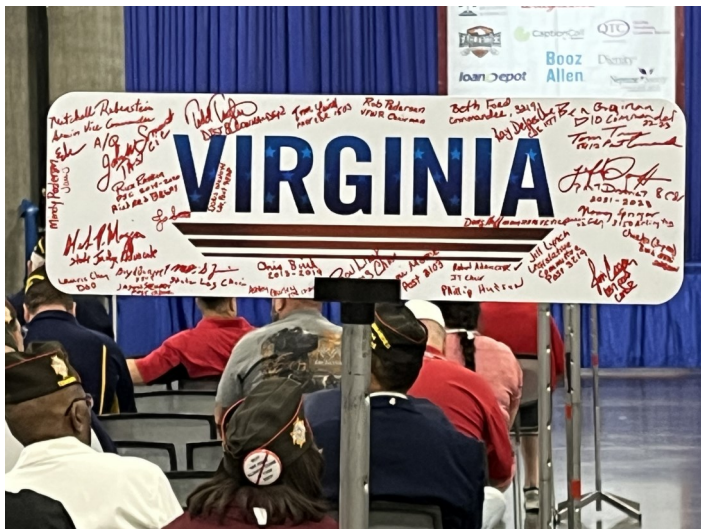
**[VFW Post 8469 is a proud and active post!](#)**



On Tuesday 25APR 2023, Officers from King George Post 12202 and Auxiliary presented 99-year-old WWII Veteran, Bronze Legacy Life Member and Post Charter Member Elmer Morris Jr with the Non-Commissioned Officers Association WWII Honor and Legacy Medallion. Elmer's wife Marcy Morris was also inducted into the Auxiliary.



PHOTOS BY PSC RICK RASKIN



Layla, the National Home's Buddy Poppy Child with State Commander Gary Adams. VFWVA donated \$220.00



PSC RICK RASKIN

CIC Tim Borland and All American State Commander Geoff Lyster



PSC RICK RASKIN

All Americans Ben Guinan, Geoff Lyster and Jeff Dombroff



JILL LYNCH / POST 3219

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough



JEFF CARROL / DEPT of GA

Past Chief John Hamilton received his triple crown award from CIC Tim Borland



PSC DOC CROUCH



VFW VA FACEBOOK

Community Service Post winner Chesapeake Post 2894



PSC RICK RASKIN

Auxiliary Department Guard Cara Buckley all decked out with poppies for the patriotic rally



Department of Virginia Commander Gary Adams with Commander in Chief Duane Sarmiento



SCVIC Al Lippardt with SVC VA Mitch Rubenstein



JVIC Carol Whitmore and State JVC Doug Hoffman



National Auxiliary President Carla Martinez with VA Auxiliary President Vicki Butler

## Auxiliary Patriotic Arts Contest 1st place winner is from Dale City Post 1503

Winners were announced at the 124th



Introducing the first-place winner of the 2022-2023 Young American Creative Patriotic Art Award: "Raising Future Leaders Through the Eyes of a Warrior" by Alice Barron!

Barron was sponsored by **VFW Auxiliary 1503 in the Department of Virginia**. Her work, done entirely in pencil, was inspired by the service of her father, a Marine. The home-schooled eleventh grader will receive a \$15,000 scholarship.

Congratulations to all of our 2022-2023 Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest winners and to each Department

## "Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!"

9-12 winner submitted by Auxiliary 7589

Our 2023 National Anthem Singing Contest winners were announced during National Convention.

The grade K-8 winner is Kinsey P. of the Department of Virginia!

The grades 9-12 winner is Jake M., also of the Department of Virginia!

Congratulations, Kinsey and Jake!

Click the link below to watch to their incredible renditions of the Star Spangled Banner:



## VFW Elects Duane Sarmiento as New National Commander

The New Jersey native is the first Filipino American elected to lead the 124 year old organization

**PHOENIX** — Duane Sarmiento of Gibbstown, New Jersey, was elected today as the new national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), a congressionally chartered veterans service organization comprised of approximately 1 million eligible combat veterans and military service members from all six branches of the armed forces.

“Today, I humbly stand here as a testament to the limitless potential of our great nation and a product of the American dream,” said Sarmiento during his acceptance speech. “As a kid from New Jersey, I never imagined I would be standing here to accept such a prestigious position in one of the most prestigious institutions in our country.”

Sarmiento’s election as the VFW’s 115th commander-in-chief occurred at the conclusion of the organization’s 124th National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona. The gathering was the first national convention held there since 2009. More than 10,000 members of the VFW and its Auxiliary converged on the city to conduct the business of the organization, recognize individuals and organizations for excellence and to elect new leadership for the 2023 – 2024 year.

Sarmiento, who is of mixed Filipino and Italian heritage, is the first person of color elected to lead the 124-year-old organization. He delivered remarks to those attending in person at the Phoenix Convention Center and watching via livestreaming video.

“As I look out into this sea of familiar faces, I am reminded of the shared experiences, the sacrifices and the bonds that have brought us together,” said Sarmiento, to the delegates in attendance from all 52 Departments, which includes Europe and Asia. “We come from different walks of life, but we share a common thread — a deep love for our country and an unwavering dedication to veterans.”

VFW membership eligibility requires honorable service in a war or expedition on foreign soil or in hostile waters. Sarmiento served in the United States Navy from 1988 to 1997, and the United States Naval Reserve from 2002 to 2006, earning his VFW eligibility by serving in Operations Desert Shield/Storm. In recognition of his service, he received the Navy Achievement Medal, Navy Combat Action Ribbon, Navy Good Conduct Medal, the Southwest Asia Service Medal with three campaign stars, the Saudi Arabian Medal for the Liberation of Kuwait, Kuwait Medal for the Liberation of Kuwait and numerous other medals and ribbons. In 2003, he earned the title of the Naval Reserve

Center Sailor of the Year at Fort Dix.

“Throughout my time in the Navy, I witnessed firsthand the power of teamwork and the unbreakable spirit that binds us together as veterans,” said Sarmiento. “Those formative years taught me so much about camaraderie and esprit de corps, it was only natural for me to join the ranks of the VFW, an organization that means so much to generations of veterans.”



Sarmiento joined the VFW in 1990 at Post 5579 in Gibbstown, New Jersey, where he maintains his Gold Legacy Life membership. He has served in elected and appointed positions at the Post, District and Department levels, culminating with his election as the VFW Department of New Jersey Commander from 2018 to 2019. On the national level, he served as the VFW Inspector General from 2019 to 2020, and served on

the National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee, General Resolutions Committee, and as Special Aide-de-Camp. He is a life member of the Military Order of the Cootie, at Ky-Yi Pup Tent #1 in Delaware.

“By embracing a leadership role within our organization, we can unlock its full potential, empowering the VFW to make an even greater impact on the lives of all veterans,” said Sarmiento. “So, no matter at what level – Post, District or Department – step up, take the lead and you can make a difference in the VFW.”

Though much of his speech was spent touting the programs, work and achievements of the VFW, Sarmiento took time to espouse the value of the members, showing his passion for the fraternal side of the organization.

“We have entrepreneurs who have built successful businesses, educators who have shaped young minds, and community leaders who have made a lasting impact. We have advocates who have fought tirelessly for the rights of veterans, and caregivers who have provided unwavering support to those in need,” said Sarmiento, who retired as a police officer and director of Veterans Affairs in Gloucester County, New Jersey. “I’m here to tell you the most valuable resources to the Veterans of Foreign Wars are you – the members.”

In addition to Sarmiento, other national officers elected were Al Lippardt, a Vietnam War veteran from the Department of Georgia, as Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief, and Carol Whitmore, an Iraq War veteran from the Department of Iowa, as Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief. The final day of the convention also saw Adjutant General Dan West and Quartermaster General Marc