



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS MASON DIXON POST 7234

FEBRUARY 2026

COMMANDER'S CORNER

Comrades, Members and Guests;

Often, I am approached and asked: "I would like to Volunteer. What do you need me to do?" My first response is: have you filled out our Volunteer Interest Form? Looking bewildered, I escort them to the Membership Information rack where these and other documents are located. After completing the form, it can be given to any Post Officer, Board Member or Canteen Manager. In no particular order, pressing areas of need include:



80th Anniversary of Mason-Dixon VFW Post 7234 (1946 – 2026). During the weekend of April 24 – 26, 2026, we will celebrate our 80th year of existence. This is quite an accomplishment for the largest Post in Delaware. Many Past Post Commanders, current Post Officers and Board Members are making plans for this three day event. We encourage and solicit input from all our Members. We will need many Volunteers to canvas individuals and local businesses seeking sponsorships, donations and selling advertising space in the Program. Underway already is an Essay Contest, T-Shirt Design Contest, 80th Anniversary Challenge Coin design, with a Lapel Pin and Hats to follow.

Other ideas in the works are a Time Capsule, Golf Outing, Sock Hop, and a specially brewed 80th Anniversary Craft Beer.

Help-A-Vet Committee. This Committee is desperately looking for Volunteer Members (VFW, Auxiliary, Mason-Dixon) to serve. This is one of our most important and rewarding Committees and offers instant gratification. It meets monthly. Their mission is simple: Help our Veterans. They arrange visits, phone calls, loan medical equipment, provide ramps at homes, and many other worthwhile endeavors. The Help-A-Vet Committee is putting together a tremendous Veterans Outreach Town Hall Event with dignitaries and expert Benefit counselors on Friday, April 10, 2026. See Past Post Commander Jim Jensen, Committee Chair, or Board Member Mike Tuckman for more information. They need you.

Community Outreach. There is an acute need for those who may be struggling. Our Post collects food (dry goods, non-perishables, canned goods, etc.) and clothing (men's, women's, children's winter coats, hats, gloves, shoes, etc.) in the entrance way for delivery to Veteran Thrift Stores. Also, frozen easy-to-make pasta casseroles in our freezer for delivery to churches and shelters. This is a ministry that we are proud to be a part of and look forward to our Members donating in record amounts. See Andrew Artemchuk for info.

Post Honor Guard. Simply the best in the state and region. Our incomparable Honor Guard presides at Ceremonies honoring our Fallen Comrades, and at other events honoring and remembering our Veterans and Nation. They represent our Post with Honor and Distinction. See our Post Honor Guard CPT John Gossart, or any Honor Guard Member for more information. They are always looking for a few good men, or women, to join their ranks.

Memorial Bricks. Yes, you may still order bricks. It is a beautiful way to remember and honor a loved one who served our nation. Their name and other information you choose can be engraved with precision. The cost is \$100 per brick. Please consider completing an order form (located on the bulletin board, or on our website) or see Fulton Loppatto. We also have a Memorial Brick Placement Team (John Gossart, Reilly Brothers (John & Marty), Dale Weese and Fulton Loppatto) who could use help with their thoughtful layout. New bricks will be placed in our Memorial Garden after the ground thaws.

VFW Post 7234 Golf Association. Yes, we have a Golf Association, and they are looking to recruit new Members. If interested, see their article later in this Newsletter. The VFW Post 7234 Golf Association generously donates to our Post and to other Veteran-based charitable causes. They are important Ambassadors for our Post outreach causes.

Sunday Speaker Series. This popular event returns after the Super Bowl. Our Junior Vice Commander, Phyllis Scully, has assembled an impressive array of talented speakers with topics of interest to our Members. The first is on Sunday, February 22 at 2 PM at the Post. The topic is PGA HOPE. More details about this event can be found in the Golf Association's article in this Newsletter. The Speaker Series continues on various Sundays through April.

Volunteer Orientation Session. Still a little hesitant to step forward? That is ok. I was too. But we have the remedy. In late spring, we will hold a Volunteer Orientation Session where your questions can be answered. The Session will last about an hour and go over responsibilities and areas needing help. In the end, you'll be able to choose the right fit for you. Keep an eye on our Website, Facebook Page, the Newsletter and Calendar for dates.

- Our non-negotiable edict continues to be to **Serve Veterans, Help Veterans and Honor Veterans.** I see this every time I visit the Post, and it is our north star.
- Monthly General Membership Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 7 PM. Put them on your calendar. Attend and have a say in how your Post operates. Enjoy comradeship with other Veterans, along with a free meal and beverage.
- The Post has a fairly extensive inventory of medical assistance equipment (including ramps) to loan out for those in need. Contact Tom St. Clair or Jeff Ringel for access.
- Your Post is operated 7 days a week by a dedicated core of Volunteers. Without them, our Post would be unrecognizable. Contact John Frye to offer your help.
- We visit our shut-in Veterans on a regular basis. Join us – the visits are worth it. Continue to check on Members you have not seen for a while. Every one of us is going through something. Let us offer our support, our time and our caring.
- **Note: Inclement Weather Post Closure Notifications will be made as early as possible and distributed on social media (Post Website, Post and Canteen Facebook Pages, and through mass email blast notifications to our Members).**

Your VFW Family wants to see you at the Post. We continue to ask for your patience in dealing with Post employees, volunteers, and staff members. We want you and your guests to have an enjoyable experience at the Post. Keep in mind that we are operated primarily by a small paid staff and augmented by many Volunteers. Each one is devoted to doing their best. Feel free to respectfully

complain when it is warranted, but better yet, fill out a Volunteer Interest Form and pitch in to make our Post, your Post, the best that it can be.

Please check in on our fellow Comrades who may be spending the cold winter months alone, or who may have recently lost a loved one. It can be a sad time for many. Let's lift their spirits with a phone call or an in-person visit. It puts into practice our edict to **Serve Our Veterans, Help Our Veterans and Honor Our Veterans – first, last, and always.**

- Post Commander Chad Myers.

AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

Welcome to the shortest month of the year. Even though it is short it can be jam-packed. This is Black History Month, Groundhog Day, President's Day, Valentines' Day and the Super Bowl (the day

after which should be a national holiday!). In keeping with the theme of shortest month, I will keep this newsletter short as well. The Post is participating in the Fire and Ice Festival on January 31. The Smoke Eaters of the Chicken Shack will be cooking chicken dinners for sale on the 31st. You can preorder your meals at the post. The cost is \$12 and includes chicken, two sides and a drink. The pick-up will be at John West Park in Ocean View between 11 and 4. Come out and support the Festival! All proceeds from the sale of the chicken dinners goes to the Post.



A lot of planning is going on for the 80th Anniversary of Post 7234. The Post is looking for a lot of Auxiliary participation. Please come to the meeting on February 2 at 10:00 a.m. to find out how you can participate in the planning and the activities on the weekend of April

24-26.

The Super Bowl does not have any local teams playing but still plan to come to the Post to enjoy watching the game with members and friends!

Are you someone who isn't a Florida Snowbird? If you're in town, please be sure to check out the Post calendar and enjoy the weekly activities and meals. Enjoy the camaraderie, eat good food, play Flip Five, Mingo, Texas Holdom, Mahjongg, Shuffleboard, Darts and Friendly Feud.

National President Lois Callahan has recognized the 15 Departments that qualified for the Bronze-Level Membership Award by reaching 95%-plus in paid membership by the November 30 deadline. Congratulations to the Department of Delaware which leads the country in highest paid membership

Delaware - 99.57%

Idaho - 98.76%
Alaska - 97.44%
Wisconsin - 97.00%
Florida - 96.92%

California - 96.79%

South Carolina - 96.43%
Hawaii - 96.25%
North Dakota - 96.18%
Georgia - 95.89%

South Dakota - 95.80%

Arizona - 95.61%
Montana - 95.42%
Texas - 95.31%
Missouri - 95.08%

for the year!

As of this writing, Auxiliary 7234 is at 105.02% paid membership! We keep growing in membership! Congratulations to Auxiliary 7234!



Kevin Conlon
Auxiliary 7234 President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Comrades and members,

It's been a quiet month in regard to maintenance issues at the Post.

The issues we have with the audio system have been addressed and is working fine. The snow that we had was handled professionally by the contractor we have on call, John and Marty Reilly were overseeing of the snow removal and salting of the parking lot.

The board and officers have been busy planning the 80th anniversary led by commander Chad Myers which will be in April. Also, we have Been planning HELP A VET led by our past commander Jim Jensen. Anybody interested in volunteering for the 80th anniversary committee or HELP A VET committee please let current Commander Chad Myers and past commander Jim Jensen know.

The VFW national grants have been submitted; we should know shortly what we were able to get. Our food donations have slowed down since Thanksgiving. We need food for our food bank that we support so please help out. Casseroles are doing wonderful and we're still handing them out to our churches that we SUPPORT.

Once again, as in past years, we are collecting COATS AND SWEATS FOR VETS, men or women, please drop them off in the plastic container in the Lobby at the Post.

Respectfully,
Board chairman,
Andrew Artemchuk

NEWS FROM JR VICE COMMANDER

Happy Winter Doldrums Everyone!

Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, and Teacher of the Year competitions were a great success this year. Our First Place Voice of Democracy winner, Emily Davis, was selected as the Second Place winner for District 4. Our First Place Patriot's Pen winner, Matthew Johnson, was the District 4 First Place winner, and will advance to the Department of Delaware. Our Teacher of The Year, Jenna Dean, is the District 4 Teacher of The Year, and will also advance to Department level. Congratulations to all!

Now that football season is over, after "The Big Game" of course, our speaker Series will begin. Our first presentation will be on February 22 at 2 pm, with PGA HOPE (Helping Our Patriots Everywhere). This is sure to be an exciting presentation about a great program aimed at helping Veterans, including those with disabilities, rehabilitate and reintegrate through golf.

In March, we will again be hosting the amazing journalist and author, Nancy Lynch; this time with her Vietnam Mailbag presentation. She will be accompanied by one of "her guys", Rick Lovekin, from whom she received frequent correspondence during his 1969-1970 Vietnam tour. Rick will share some combat experiences and a media presentation of images set to music of the era. Both Nancy and Rick will be available for questions after the program. Their presentation will be on March 15 at 2 pm.

On another note, nominations and elections for Officer and Board of Director positions are coming up soon. This is a great time to take a look at your talents and abilities, and think about how you can help VFW Post 7234 to continue being the best of the best. If you have considered holding an office, this is the time. There are so many of us, but few are stepping forward to keep the momentum going. Even if it's only one term, you can make a big difference.

I know Summer still taunts us in the distance, but we can get through this together!

Yours in Comradeship,

Phyllis Ryan Scully
Jr. Vice Commander

DECEASED MEMBERS



Our deepest sympathy goes out to the families who have lost loved ones. Eternal rest grant unto them O' Lord, may the perpetual light shine upon them, and may they rest in peace. Amen.

Please call Jeannette Twigg at 30-381-539-9981 for the VFW or Annie Berger at 302-539-9981 for the Auxiliary, if a member is sick or has passed away

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Greetings from Jeannette
The snowy path of January leads to February's gate....

Member News

Our prayers of healing go out to Willie Ventro, Marty Reilly, Keith Hnilicka, and all our members who are healing from colds, the flu, surgeries, and other winter ailments.

Something to Ponder

February isn't just the middle of winter—it's a special time for reflection and personal growth. Whether you're bundled up in the north or enjoying summer in the south, February brings its own unique energy. It's a month that gently nudges us to slow down, look inward, and reconnect with what matters most.

Spiritually, February is all about the heart. You'll see themes of love and kindness everywhere, from cultural celebrations to personal rituals and even the colors and gemstones we associate with this time. Even though February can feel chilly or challenging, it's really a month of hope and resilience. Nature reminds us to rest and recharge, just like the earth does in winter, so we're ready for the renewal that spring brings. Take this time to pause, reflect, and nurture your spirit—you'll be glad you did when the world starts to bloom again.



"While it is February, one can taste the full joys of anticipation. Spring stands at the gate with her finger on the latch." by Patience Strong

BENEFITS ADVISOR OUTREACH

VA Travel Pay Reimbursement

Find out if you're eligible for [travel pay reimbursement](#) through the Beneficiary Travel program. Eligible Veterans are repaid by VA for travel expenses to and from approved health care appointments.

COLA Increase

The 2026 Veterans disability compensation rates are in! Starting Jan. 1, 2026, all compensation benefit rates have been increased by 2.8% to match adjustments made to Social Security benefits. This increase impacts [disability benefits, clothing allowance, dependency and indemnity compensation \(DIC\), as well as other assistance programs](#).



VA expands radiology services in Delaware.

On October 25, the Wilmington VA Medical Center held a ribbon cutting for its new radiology suite at the Kent County VA Clinic, located at Blue Hen Mall Plaza at 655 South Bay Rd, Suite 3C, in Dover, Delaware.

Veterans in Delaware who live in Kent or Sussex County may no longer have to travel to the Wilmington VA or to a community provider for an X-ray or CT scan.

The addition of the 600-square-foot radiology suite gives better access to X-rays and computed tomography scans also known as CT scans. This expansion reflects a commitment to improving healthcare access for Veterans in the region.

Kent County VA Clinic Nurse Manager Saino Peal says she has already seen great satisfaction amongst local Veterans who have already come in for CT scans and X-rays.

"This radiology suite helps minimize any delays in care for our Veterans when it comes to CT scans and X-rays," said Peal. "Being a Veteran myself, it is gratifying to be part of a team that is advancing ease of access of care for our Veterans."

The new radiology services will complement the 29,000 square foot Dover VA Clinic's range of healthcare offerings, which include general health care, eye care, podiatry, physical therapy, behavioral health, women's health, blood work, and vaccinations.

"While CT scanners are typically found in larger VA facilities, we are proud to offer this advanced imaging capability at the Kent County VA Clinic," said Radiologist Chad Rabinowitz. "This will enable us to provide our patients with more comprehensive and timely diagnostic services by enhancing imaging access."

Wilmington VA remains committed to expanding world-class health care closer to home for all Veterans.

VA Limits apportionment of disability benefits.

Currently, in limited situations, VA may pay a portion of a beneficiary's monetary benefits directly to the beneficiary's dependent, referred to as an apportionment. VA has implemented a new ruling that will limit the circumstances in which compensation, pension, and dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) benefits are apportioned and will stop making need-based apportionments going forward.

This change serves to avoid conflicts with awards granted by state family courts. State family courts are usually more familiar with family circumstances and therefore better suited to make decisions regarding financial matters.

Understanding apportionments

An apportionment is when VA pays a portion of monetary benefits directly to dependents, rather than to the Veteran or beneficiary. A beneficiary must specifically request an apportionment by submitting an [apportionment claim](#).

Need-based apportionment claims are challenging for many reasons. These usually involve complex issues of family law. Additionally, claims for apportionment require a substantial amount of information, which is typically available to state courts, but not readily accessible by VA. This requires VA beneficiaries and dependents to be contacted multiple times by VA to gather this information and can be a lengthy process.

Because of their proximity, state courts have more expertise and authority in family law and therefore are better equipped to handle apportionment claims. VA apportionment decisions may conflict with the awards of better-situated state family courts which have the authority and expertise to make fully informed, accurate and economically appropriate awards.

Limitations on new apportionments

For these reasons, VA will no longer grant need-based apportionments of compensation, pension, and dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) awards in most circumstances.

VA will continue to make apportionments where a Veteran or surviving spouse is incarcerated and where an incompetent Veteran without a fiduciary is institutionalized at government expense. For example, if a Veteran is incarcerated at a federal penitentiary on felony charges, or institutionalized at a VA Medical Center, a portion of their benefits can be paid directly to their dependents if they are eligible.

Current apportionments

Dependents who currently receive an apportionment will not be affected by these changes. VA will continue apportionments currently being paid; however, adjustments to current need-based apportionments will not be made.

These changes will go into effect on Feb. 9, 2026.

Additional Information

Eligible Veterans and surviving spouses who wish to request apportionments under the stated exceptions can do so using VA Form 21-0788, "Information Regarding Apportionment of Beneficiary's Award." VA forms are available at <https://www.va.gov/find-forms>.

The rulemaking can be viewed in the Federal Register under [2026-00237](#).

In Comradeship,

H "Rich" Fales-Post Benefits Advisor
Cell# 301-325-3813
Email: richfales@gmail.com (NEW!)



HONOR GUARD NEWS

The Honor Guard had a quiet January with no funerals or ceremonies. During the month, we did pull maintenance on our 10 rifles. Also, during the month of January, two Honor Guard members were on injured reserves. Doc Hnilicka and Marty Reilly both had successful surgery and will be back with us soon! We are ready for the new year.



FACTS YOU MAY NOT KNOW:

The VFW Post 7234 Honor Guard was established in the late 1950s shortly after the Mason-Dixon Post 7234 was established. (see photo) It serves as a dedicated unit performing solemn precise military funeral honors and ceremonial duties.

Our Post is an Honor Guard.

There is a distinct difference between an Honor Guard and a Color Guard. Every Honor Guard is also a Color Guard. Color Guards are NOT Honor Guards as their duties and responsibilities are limited. Generally, a Color Guard will carry the colors, post the colors and march in parades.

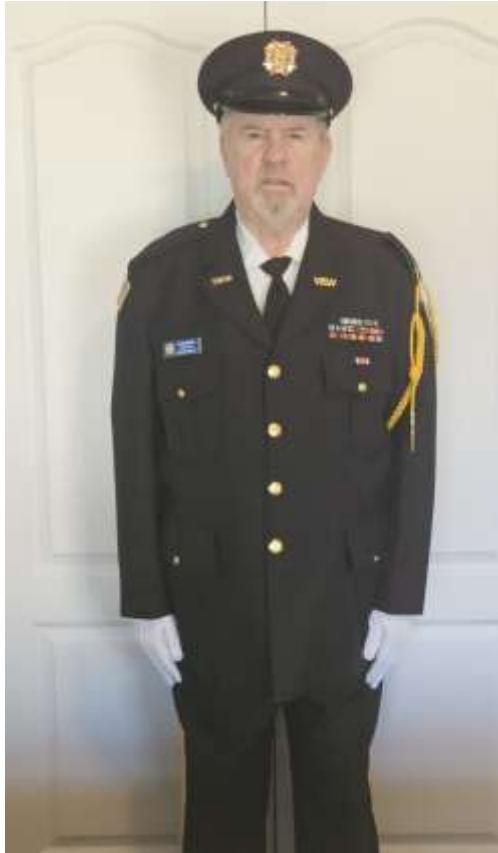
Our Post is an Honor Guard!!!

Honor Guards are known for their precision and attention to detail. They perform a variety of ceremonial duties, including:

- *Presenting and guarding the colors (national, state, and organizational flags)
- *Rendering honors, such as presenting arms, saluting, volley and taps at funerals or memorial services
- *Providing escort services for dignitaries or fallen comrades
- *Participating in parades, change of command ceremonies, and other official events
- *Posting and retiring colors

Each month our Post recognizes a member of our Honor Guard for his dedicated service to VFW Post 7234 and for his commitment to honor our deceased comrades. This month we recognize Honor Guard member Jay MacDonald

Jay is a lifetime member of our Post and joined our Post in 2022. Jay is a retired US Army Sergeant Major (SMG) and served from January 1973 to February 1997. During his years of active duty, Jay did tours in Turkey, Vietnam, South Korea, and Panama. Jay joined the Honor Guard “to honor those veterans who gave their all,” and because it is important that “we never forget the sacrifices of our veterans.” He joined also for comradery with his fellow veterans.



Mason Dixon VFW Post 7234 thanks and salutes Honor Guard member Jay MacDonald.

We are grateful to all our Post Honor Guard members for your dedication and service, and "salute" you for your representation of Mason Dixon VFW Post 7234.



HONOR GUARD 1971

**Bob Williams, ?, John Mitchell, Richard Loveland
Bob Retterman, Danny Steele**

**REMEMBER NOT EVERY COLOR GUARD IS AN HONOR GUARD
BUT EVERY HONOR GUARD IS A COLOR GUARD!**

To learn more about Mason Dixon VFW Post 7234 Honor Guard and our duties and responsibilities, please contact me.

**John F. Gossart, Jr.
Captain of the Honor Guard
240-304-8183
Judge800@yahoo.com
Or:
Mike Schiffer
Assistant, Captain of the Honor Guard
302-448-1877
Rschiffer0@gmail.com**

***The purpose of the Honor Guard is to provide funeral honors for our fallen comrades and guard national monuments. An Honor Guard may also serve as the 'guardians of the colors' "by displacing and escorting the national flag on ceremonial occasions at official functions."**

POST FLAG DUTY FOR FEBRUARY 2026

Thomas St Clair

Steve Kern

CANTEEN CORNER

February promises to be another busy, fun and exciting month at our Post. Along with our regular scheduled activities we have some special events this month. Feb. 8th will be our Super Bowl Party. Food and drink specials. Kitchen opens at 4:30.

Food Specials.

\$5 Menu. \$2 Miller/Coors/Lite draft

Cheesesteaks. \$2 Buds

Cheeseburgers. \$ 2 Pabsts

Hot Dogs. \$3 House Wines

Polish Sausage

&

Sauerkraut

Roast Beef Sandwich

Chicken Parm Sandwich

Drink Specials

\$2 Miller/Coors/Lite draft

\$2 Buds

\$ 2 Pabsts

\$3 House Wines

Friday Feb. 13 will be our Pre Valentines Day Dinner with music provided by Tommy V. Valentines evening Feb. 14 will be our famous Prime Rib Dinner with entertainment provided by Thin Ice. Sunday Feb 15 will be a 'Pre Bar Olympics Game Day." Darts, shuffleboard and cornhole will be available all day long to play. The official Bar Olympics will be held Sunday March 8. Sunday Feb. 22 will kick off our monthly guest speaker forum. This month will be Ian Madiniger, PGA Golf Pro from Plantation Lakes. He will discuss the PGA Hope Program.

Line Dancing will be held on Friday Feb. 6 and Feb. 20 from 1 - 3:30. Mingo will be held on Monday Feb.9 & 16 from 6 - 8 pm and the hugely successful Friendly Feud on Mon. Feb.23 6 - 8PM.

John Frye

Canteen Manager

Veterans Treatment Court

Delaware operates a specialized, statewide Veterans Treatment Court established in 2011. It functions as both a probation and diversion program to support veterans in the criminal justice system. The program serves veterans across all three Delaware counties.

"Veterans helping Veterans" That's a key part in the success of the Veterans Treatment Court in Sussex County and elsewhere. The mission of the court is to successfully rehabilitate veterans generally charged with non-violent crimes by diverting them away from the traditional criminal prosecution system into a voluntary treatment-focused court process. This program was started by Bill Gay a deceased VFW Post 7234 member. Currently Dave Smith and Jeff Ringel are the coordinators of this program working with the Judge to recruit Mentors and assign them to Mentees. Over 20 members of VFW Post 7234 have served as mentors for this program in the 12 years of its

existence and over 100 Mentees have graduated. This requires attending court once a month and communicating via phone at least once a week to coach and encourage the Mentee to stay on track with the program. Mentors generously donated hours of volunteer time that has resulted in an 85% success rate for the Mentees becoming productive members of society. Several Mentees return as Mentors and join our Post for fellowship and support. If you have any questions, please contact one of the Mentors: John Gossart, Jeff Ringel, Fulton Loppatto, Rich Fales, John Cangiano, Jim Costas.



FORE!!! Three holes of important information to share from the VFW Post 7234 Golf Association.

Hole #1:

The VFW Post 7234 Golf Association just completed another successful golf season of Fun, Fellowship and Fund Raising. Membership in our Golf Association is open to all members of VFW Post 7234, including Auxiliary Members. Guests are also welcome to join us for a fun day of golf followed by lunch and awards at The Post. Our weekly entry fee to play is \$5.00, with \$3.00 going toward prize money and \$2.00 going into our Charity Fund. Weekly prizes are awarded for closest to the pin and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place team finish. However, our group competes mostly for bragging rights. We play every Tuesday at The Salt Pond Golf Course, weather permitting. The Salt Pond provides our members and guests with carts and a reduced greens fee. Annual Golf Association membership dues are only \$10.00. with membership open to All VFW Post 7234 Members and Auxiliary Members whether they be male or female. Our official start to the 2026 season begins on **April 1, 2026**, and will run until November 1, 2026.

Hole #2:

Through our charity fund raising efforts, which includes our weekly player contributions and the proceeds from our Annual Charity Golf Tournament, this past season the VFW Post 7234 Golf Association was able to raise and donate a total of \$22,000 to various local veteran related causes. Our goal this year is to exceed that amount by \$10,000. We ask you to help us achieve that goal by either becoming a member of our league, playing golf in our tournament or by becoming a sponsor of the event. More information on the 2026 Tournament will be made available over the next couple of months.

Hole #3:

PGA HOPE PROGRAM PRESENTATION- FEBRUARY 22ND @ 2PM, AT THE POST

The VFW Golf Association is set to welcome guest speaker Ian Madinger, PGA Professional from Plantation Lakes Golf Community. Ian will introduce and discuss **PGA HOPE (Helping Our Veterans Everywhere)**. **PGA HOPE** is the flagship military program of **PGA REACH**, the charitable foundation of the **Professional Golf Association of America**. **PGA HOPE** uses the game of golf to support veterans and active-duty military by enhancing their physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being. During

the presentation, Ian will share details on how our Post Veterans can participate in an upcoming six-week **PGA HOPE** program, scheduled to take place later this spring at Plantation Lakes. The program includes professional golf instruction and golf equipment and is offered completely FREE OF CHARGE. No prior golf experience is required to participate. So, if you are looking to learn how to play golf for the first time or, pick up a few good tips to improve your game, this program is for you.

For more information on our 2026 Golf Tournament or on how you can become a member of the VFW Post 7234 Golf Association, please contact any of the following Golf Association Officers.

Ken Smith, President
Phone: 267-228-7285
Email: madriverken1946@gmail.com

Jim Burton, Vice President
Phone: 301-922-7964
Email: jrburton60@yahoo.com

Bill Sadtler, Treasurer
Phone: 301-461-5769
Email: sadtler@msn.com

Dave Holden, Secretary
Phone: 443-442-7272
Email: holdendavid@hotmail.com

Bill Mahon, Event Chairperson
Phone: 302-344-1955
Email: bmahon2180@gmail.com

BILL CLINTON HELPS A FORGOTTEN MARINE

Here's an uplifting story (slightly edited) you may not have seen about President Clinton and a new chapter for a homeless Marine veteran.



On a bitterly cold December evening in 1997, President Bill Clinton was leaving a holiday concert at the Kennedy Center when he noticed a homeless veteran sitting outside the entrance, shivering in a thin jacket and holding a cardboard sign that simply read "Marine - Desert Storm - Hungry." What happened next shocked everyone in the presidential motorcade—Clinton immediately stopped, took off his own overcoat, draped it around the stunned man's shoulders, and sat down on the freezing concrete beside him to talk.

The veteran, forty-two-year-old Marcus Williams, later recounted to reporters that the President didn't ask him what went wrong or lecture him about getting help. Instead, Clinton asked about his service, combat he'd seen, and whether anyone had properly thanked him for his sacrifice. Secret Service Agent Larry Cockell documented in his memoir that Clinton spent twenty-five minutes sitting on that sidewalk

in the bitter cold, and when Marcus mentioned he hadn't eaten in two days, the President sent an agent to get food from a nearby restaurant and insisted on staying until Marcus had finished eating.

What makes this story so incredibly moving is what Clinton said to Marcus before leaving, words that Marcus repeated to social workers, shelter staff, and eventually his own children years later when he'd gotten back on his feet: "Brother, this country failed you when you came home, and I'm sorry. But your story isn't over yet, and I'm going to make sure someone follows up to help you write the next chapter." True to his word, Clinton personally called the VA the next morning, and Marcus was enrolled in a comprehensive support program within forty-eight hours that included housing, job training, and mental health services.

Marcus Williams eventually became a veterans' advocate, and he told a Washington Post reporter in 2015: "The most powerful man in the world sat on frozen concrete with a forgotten Marine and made me feel like I still mattered. That's the moment I decided to fight my way back." (Tears are not embarrassing here.) He reminds us that dignity and hope can be restored with one genuine conversation, one warm coat, and the willingness to sit beside someone the world has walked past. In writing the history of Clinton's Presidency, this story should be included.

Looking forward to February, here are some dates to keep in mind, in addition to all the events on the Post calendar.

Feb. 2. Recognized as the 125th anniversary of the Army Nurse Corps, when nurses became a permanent part of the Army's medical department in 1901. Nurses achieved commissioned officer status in 1947 and men could qualify as Army nurses beginning in 1955. God bless them all.

Feb. 2. Groundhog Day (the Patriot are back in the Super Bowl).

Feb. 8. Date of the NFL Super Bowl. Patriots v. Seahawks this year.

Feb. 14. St. Valentine's Day (Don't forget the chocolate.)

Feb. 16. Presidents Day

Feb. 17. The beginning of the Luna (Chinese) New Year, celebrated by millions of people in some Asian countries and communities around the world.

Feb. 17. Mardi Gras (Laissez les bon temp rouler!)

Hope you enjoy every day in February, warm and healthy. And thanks to all who help veterans in need.

Jerry Hardiman

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



*Past Commander Jim Jensen along with former Jr. Vice Mike Tuckman
donated 20 turkeys on behalf of Post 7234 outreach to the Cheer center in Georgetown DE.*

Come in from the cold and
share a hot meal with us.
We are open from 10-12
Our generous friends from
the **VFW Post 7234** will be
here cooking and serving
hot subs.

St. Paul's By-the-Sea Outreach Ministries
Menu Thursday January 29

Meatball Parm Subs
with chips

A photograph of a meatball Parmesan sub sandwich on a wooden board. The sandwich is filled with meatballs, cheese, and sauce. There are also some chips on the board. A small icon of a person with a thumbs up is in the bottom left corner.

Made by our generous friends from
the Mason Dixon VFW 7234

VOD, PP, AND TEACHER AWARDS



80TH ANNIVERSARY ESSAY CONTEST

Mason-Dixon VFW Post 7234 of Ocean View, Delaware proudly celebrates its 80th Anniversary in April 2026. It honors decades of dedicated service to Veterans and our southern Delaware community neighbors. We are looking forward to a vibrant future and to our continuing mission of serving, helping and honoring Veterans while strengthening our community ties for decades to come. Every VFW Member has a story uniquely their own. We want to know yours, and we are offering a prize to hear it. The Themes:

- What has your Membership in VFW Post 7234 meant to you?
- How has the Post impacted your life?

SHARE YOUR STORY!

Entries can be a specific story, or your overall assessment of Mason-Dixon VFW Post 7234's impact on your life. It can be a few lines, or multiple pages.

HOW TO ENTER

- OPEN TO ALL VFW POST 7234 MEMBERS (VFW, AUXILIARY, MASON-DIXON)
- SUBMIT ALL ENTRIES TO vfwpost7234@gmail.com BY APRIL 10, 2026
- WINNING ENTRY WILL BE REVEALED DURING OUR 80TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND CELEBRATION (APRIL 24 – 26, 2026)

WHAT DOES THE WINNER(S) GET?

- \$250 CASH PRIZE
- YOUR SUBMISSION FEATURED IN OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
- YOUR ENTRY SUBMITTED TO THE COASTAL POINT NEWSPAPER FOR PUBLISHING

* NOTE: BY SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY, YOU GIVE THE MASON-DIXON VFW POST 7234 OFFICERS AND BOARD PERMISSION TO USE ALL, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, FOR ANY PROFESSIONAL AND FUTURE MARKETING MATERIALS DEEMED APPROPRIATE.

SPRING 2026 TEE SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST

Members of Mason-Dixon VFW Post 7234;

Show off your Creativity, Win a Cash (\$) Prize, Have Your Own Spring 2026 Apparel Design Sold at the Post!

COMPETITION GUIDELINES

1. Create a captivating design that reflects Mason-Dixon VFW Post 7234's relationship with the Community and our Veterans. Your design may incorporate the Post's 80th Anniversary recognition, but it is not required.
2. Designs can be in PNG, JPG, HEIC, PDF, or vector format.

3. A max of six (6) design colors allowed.
4. Deadline to submit one (or more) design(s) is February 4, 2026.
5. Top designs to be showcased at a monthly Membership Meeting with the Winning Design chosen by our Veteran Members.
6. Submit entries to: djensen1007@gmail.com with the Subject Line: “ Spring 2026 Tee Shirt Design Contest Entry “.
7. Software Applications such as Canva, Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, etc. are welcome and encouraged.
8. By submitting your Tee Shirt design, you give Mason-Dixon VFW Post 7234 express permission to use your design for professional and commercial purposes.
9. Questions? Contact the Tee Shirt Committee Chairs, Debbie Jensen or Bonnie Helm.

GOOD LUCK !!

SPRING 2026 TEE SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT FOR LOAN

Our Post maintains a large inventory of Medical items for loan. Items such as canes, walkers, wheel chairs, toilet seats, etc. Please contact Tom StClair for availability. Tomst48@aol.com.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Commander	Chad Myers
Sr. Vice Cmdr	Andy Artemchuk
Jr. Vice Cmdr	Phyllis Scully
Quartermaster	Chuck Guido
Adjutant	Fulton Loppatto
Chaplain	Jeannette Twigg
Judge Advocate	John Gossart Jr.
Surgeon	Richard Wagner
Officer of the Day	Jeff Ringel
Guard	Jay MacDonald
Benefits Advisor	Rich Fales
Honor Guard Capt	John Gossart Jr.
Trustee	Greg Albertson
Trustee	Rob Gill
Trustee	Paul Kerstanski

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman	Andy Artemchuk
President	Chad Myers
Vice President	Phyllis Scully
Treasurer	Chuck Guido
Secretary	Ken Weber
Board Member	Sharon Ruest
Board Member	Steve Kern
Board Member	Mike Tuckman
Board Member	Jeff Ringel
Board Member	Tom StClair
Board Member	Jay MacDonald

AUXILIARY TEAM

President	Kevin Conlon
Sr Vice Pres	Dale Weese
Jr Vice Pres	Sandra Magera
Secretary	Theo Loppatto
Treasurer	Roberta Walter
Chaplain	Annie Berger
Guard	Katherine Cole
Conductress	Connie Weber
Patriotic Ins	Peg Atkins
Trustee	Connie Weber
Trustee	Carol Weber
Trustee	Chuck Bologna

Veteran Claims Assistance

Our state Veterans Benefits Officer comes to our Post the 2nd Thursday of every month at 1:30PM; to make an appointment you can contact him at david.hilliard@va.gov or 302-994-2511 ext 37586

FOOD BANK

Please continue to drop off food items at the entry way. We continue to support our local families in need. Thank you for your donations.

**VFW POST 7234 HONOR GUARD
TO BECOME A MEMBER, PLEASE
CONTACT JOHN GOSSART
240-304-8183**

HELP A VET PROGRAM

**Veterans - Need Assistance, a friendly call, a visit, etc.
Contact our Post:
VFWpost7234@gmail.com**

Member Sick or Deceased

**Please call:
For VFW – Jeannette Twigg 302-539-9981
For Aux – Annie Berger 302-539-9981**

Assistance with VA Questions & Issues

**Please call:
Rich Fales (301)325-3813 or email me
richfales@gmail.com**

**To signup for our email List
For the Latest Updates and News
Please send your email to
vfwpost7234@gmail.com**