



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS MASON DIXON POST 7234 SEPTEMBER 2025

COMMANDER'S CORNER

Comrades and Auxiliary Members,



As the new Post Leadership is in its third month in their positions, I believe it is important for you to know the names of your new Post Officers, and of those who comprise your Board of Directors. Seek them out. Get to know them. Ask them what their responsibilities are. Challenge them to improve your Post. They have all stepped forward to **Serve Veterans, Help Veterans and Honor Veterans.** The list is also on social media.

VFW Post Officers

Chad Myers – Post Commander
Andrew Artemchuk – Senior Vice Commander
Phyllis Scully – Junior Vice Commander
Chuck Guido – Post Quartermaster
Jeannette Twigg – Post Chaplain
Fulton Loppatto – Post Adjutant
John Gossart Jr. – Post Judge Advocate
Dick Wagner – Post Surgeon
Rich Fales – Veterans Service Officer

VFW Board of Directors

Andrew Artemchuk – Board Chair
Chad Myers – Board President
Phyllis Scully – Board Vice President
Chuck Guido – Board Treasurer
Ken Weber – Board Secretary
Steve Kern – Board Member
Jay MacDonald – Board Member
Jeff Ringel – Board Member
Sharon Ruest – Board Member

Officer of the Day – Jeff Ringel

Tom StClair – Board Member

Post Guard – Jay MacDonald

Mike Tuckman – Board Member

John Gossart Jr. – Honor Guard CPT

*Jim Jensen: Non-Voting Board Member

*Kevin Conlon: Non-Voting Board Member

Post Trustees - Rob Gill, Greg Albertson, and Paul Kerstanski

Legislative Victory for Veterans: I am happy to report that finally, a New Agency will be the Veteran's Advocate for Services and Funding at the State and Federal Levels. In mid-August, more than 200 people crowded into American Legion Post 14 in Smyrna to witness Delaware Gov. Matt Meyer sign into law a measure **establishing a new Department of Veterans Affairs that will be led by a cabinet-level Secretary.** The new Department will serve more than 70,000 veterans across Delaware, bringing together services that are currently scattered across multiple agencies. The Department will be phased into existence, with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with other executive branch officials, developing a transition plan to operate separately by July 1, 2030. Initially, the bill would cost less than \$100,000 annually to be implemented. Supporters claim that Delaware is currently not receiving all the federal Veterans' funding it is due and that the state's investment in the agency will be more than offset by its ability to secure those dollars. State Rep. Jeff Hilovsky (R-Oak Orchard, Long Neck), a U.S. Air Force Veteran, joined State Rep. Bill Carson (D-Smyrna) as bill sponsors, which unanimously passed the General Assembly. Proponents of the bipartisan measure maintain it will result in Veterans receiving dedicated, focused leadership and advocacy at the highest levels of state government. "A cabinet-level position will streamline efforts to improve the services and programs available to Veterans, ensuring they receive the care and resources they deserve after serving their country," Rep. Hilovsky said. Army Veteran, State Rep. Danny Short (R-Seaford), also supported the bill as a lead sponsor. "The main issue is that Veterans in Delaware have not consistently had a top executive branch official representing them," he said, adding that the new Secretary will provide both a focal point for Veterans' concerns and enough authority and influence to resolve them.



Brigadier General Karen A. Berry has been nominated by Gov. Matt Meyer to serve as Delaware's first cabinet secretary of the recently established Department of Veterans Affairs, the governor's office announced on Aug. 25.

(editor's note: Karen is a member of our Post)

I continue to be thankful for the blessings our Post enjoys:

- 1. For Past Commander Jensen – and his on-stage recognition at the 2025 VFW National Convention for attaining All-American Post status for your very own Mason – Dixon VFW Post 7234**



- 2. For our Sunday Breakfast and Saturday Chicken Shack Crews – and another awesome year of serving our Veterans and the local community with a great meal at an affordable bargain price**
- 3. For Irv Hudson, WWII Veteran and Past Commander (multiple times) – and the upcoming celebration for his 100th Birthday on Friday, September 19th at the Post (please stop by to congratulate Irv)**



4. For the annual “Operation Seas the Day” events – one of which is the welcoming luncheon that our Post will host on Tuesday, September 2nd
5. For our Honor Guard – being requested to participate in the 80th Anniversary Ceremonies of VJ Day on September 2nd at Fort Miles in Cape Henlopen State Park
6. For the opportunity of solemn remembrance of the tragic events that unfolded on the morning of September 11, 2001 – we will mark the 24th anniversary with a Ceremony in the Post Parking Lot
7. For the opportunity to recognize and say thanks to our many unselfish Volunteers – at our annual Volunteer Recognition and Appreciation Dinner(s) on Friday, September 26th and Friday, October 3rd
8. For the variety and depth of opportunities our Post has, with over 4,000 combined VFW and Auxiliary Members - to Serve our Veterans, Help our Veterans and Honor our Veterans

Your Post is truly blessed. I look forward to seeing you around the Post.

Post Commander Myers

AUXILIARY PRESIDENT.

The Ocean City White Marlin tournament was a huge success this year. The winning White Marlin weighed in at 72 lbs., but the heaviest fish was the Blue Marlin weighing in at 929.5 lbs. The White Marlin paid \$3.9 Million to the winner while the blue Marlin paid \$1.2 Million. In this tournament, it is not the largest fish that is the overall winner, but the more unique, agile and elusive White Marlin. Congratulations to all! Not unlike the Blue Marlin, we are the largest VFW in Delaware, but we are also unique like the White Marlin. Being in a resort area offers us so many possibilities for fundraising and community outreach. The Chicken Shack, Youth Activities and Veteran Services allow us both year-round and seasonal opportunities. Being unique and sought after is what Post Auxiliary 7234 strives for every day. Let's keep Post 7234 Auxiliary #1!



The 2025 VFW National Convention in Columbus, Ohio, recognized and presented a National Award to Auxiliary Post 7234's Youth Program for the Most Outstanding Activity or Event of Youth Reading to Veterans and/or Veterans Reading to Youth. Congratulations to Cindy Weese and her committee for outstanding accomplishments with Youth Activities.

The Auxiliary will be handing out Poppys over Labor Day weekend (Saturday the 30th, Sunday the 31st and Monday the 1st) at Hockers Hardware and Super Center on Fred Hudson Road. Peg Atkins is always looking for volunteers to hand out Poppys. Come out to support, she can be reached at beavatkins@gmail.com Auxiliary members will be attending the Bethany Arts Festival on September 6 along with Post Veterans to hand out recruitment information and Poppys. Stop by to assist or just say hi!

Please come to the Post and retrieve a spaghetti casserole recipe and pan to make a casserole for the homeless. With the weather changing, now is a good time to participate in this assistance program. It is easy. Just obtain the ingredients, prepare and bake the casserole, freeze it and bring it to the Post for collection. The Post will deliver to local churches who provides them to the homeless. SEAs The Day kicks off Tuesday, September 2. Operation SEAs the Day is a non-profit organization that hosts an annual "Warrior Beach Week" event in Bethany Beach, Delaware, for wounded veterans and their families. This event aims to show appreciation for their service and sacrifice, providing a week of rest and relaxation. This is totally free for the veterans and their families. Look for the specific day and time for a parade honoring these veterans and their families in the local papers. The parade route is from Sea Colony to Freeman Stage. Let's line the route and show your support by Cheering and flying a USA Flag!

Labor Day is upon us! Known as the unofficial end of summer, it is a holiday that honors the accomplishments of American Laborers. Let's be sure to thank all those who work to make our lives better. A new school year is upon us. Let's all be on the lookout for students making their way to and from school, especially those waiting for buses, being cautious and patient with the school buses that are transporting the children who are our future.

See the picture below of the new tee shirt available at the Chicken Shack through Labor Day Saturday! Thanks to Brenda Hyer for all your hard work!



Back of Tee

Kevin Conlon
President
VFW Auxiliary Post #7234

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOTES

Andy Artemchuk is in the hospital having rehab after surgery. Waiting for an open rehab spot in Delaware to return home. Please keep him in your prayers and thoughts.

CHAPLAINS' CORNER

Hello Everyone,

The end of summer always brings a mix of emotions for me. I absolutely love soaking up the beautiful weather, spending quality time with family, enjoying outdoor adventures, and catching up at fun gatherings. What I don't enjoy are the crowds, traffic, and noise. But even with the crowds, I love the memories of summer, so for me it's bittersweet.

Member News

Our prayers go out to our member, Jim Panetta, as he recovers from surgery. We also want to keep Andy Artemchuk and Melissa Douglas in our thoughts and prayers as they continue to heal.

Something to Ponder

I decided to do some research on Bittersweet. The American Bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*) is a plant native to North America. It is known for its orange fruits, which are attractive to birds rather than its flowers. The small orange fruit splits open to reveal red seeds and remains on the plant from autumn through winter. All parts of the plant are considered poisonous with low toxicity if consumed. Historically, American Indians used the plant for medicinal purposes. Bittersweet got its name from early colonists who saw similarities to the English Nightshade vine, known for its contrasting traits. Like summer, it represents the mix of good and bad and everything in between—all a part of the bittersweet nature of embracing life.



https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=cesc, image by Smith, R.W.

Jeannette Twigg
Post Chaplain

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

SERVICE OFFICER OUTREACH

Sharing the story of the Purple Heart with future generations

July 16, 2025

Russell Vemon

Retired National Guard Veteran and Executive Director of the National Purple Heart Honor Mission

Editor's note: The sharing of any non-VA information does not constitute an endorsement of products and services on the part of VA. Veterans should verify the information with the organization offering.



Veterans are encouraged to be extra diligent as they provide personal information through registries. [Visit this VA News article to learn more about common scams targeting Veterans with high VA benefits, along with Purple Heart recipients and their dependents.](#)

When we speak about America's Purple Heart recipients, the phrase "Some gave all. All gave some," is often used. Few understand the true meaning of these six simple words like our nation's Purple Heart recipients.

From the fields of Lexington and Concord to the trenches of Europe, and the jungles of Vietnam to the sands of the Middle East, courageous Americans have answered the call of their country to serve a cause greater than themselves for nearly 250 years. For their physical scars and wounds, these great Americans have received a singular recognition, first conceived by the father of our nation, George Washington in 1782.

Over 1.8 million Americans have been awarded the Purple Heart, which traces its roots to the Badge of Military Merit. Behind each Purple Heart is a unique American story of valor. Unfortunately, there is no publicly available database of all those who have been wounded or killed in action while protecting the freedoms we cherish. The 1973 fire at the National

Personnel Records Center further complicated accurate accounting for those who earned this recognition that no one wants but is granted as a tribute from a grateful nation.

Together, we can change that. The National Purple Heart Honor Mission is ramping up efforts to enroll our nation's Purple Heart Heroes into the [Roll of Honor](#), a publicly accessible, online catalogue of our heroes managed by the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New York. The idea behind the Roll of Honor is simple: Record as many stories of valor as possible from those who have served and sacrificed for our freedom and their families to inspire future generations of Americans to greatness.

Inclusion in the Roll of Honor is open to all Purple Heart recipients, regardless of branch or time of service. Family members can also create profiles for their loved ones. To be enrolled, one simply completes the [registration form](#), including providing the relevant award documentation (DD-214 or DD-215, Purple Heart Certificate, General or Permanent Orders listing the Award, or a WD-AGO 53-550). Applicants to the roll are also encouraged to provide a photo to be associated with their profile.

Since its creation, more than 200,000 entries have been added to the Roll of Honor. But we have a long way to go. As a publicly available catalogue of Purple Heart recipients and their stories, the Roll of Honor helps all of us draw inspiration from our Purple Heart recipients. Their stories offer us an opportunity to unite behind the courage and fortitude that make our nation, and its armed forces, the best in the world.

The Purple Heart is worn humbly and proudly by so many, not because it is a symbol of their own sacrifice but a testament to those who did not make it home. It reminds us that freedom isn't free.

Our Purple Heart recipients are deserving of our gratitude and our commitment to honor their service and sacrifice. By working together, we can ensure those who have sacrificed our freedom receive the recognition they deserve.

For more information about the Roll of Honor or the National Purple Heart Honor Mission, log on to www.PurpleHeartMission.org.

Surviving spouses and VA home loans

July 24, 2025

Annie Sutton and Valery Behr
Office of Communications, VA Loan Guaranty Service

In the wake of those whose lives are sacrificed too soon in service to our nation, surviving spouses. Many of these military wives and husbands stand graveside holding a flag along with the hands of children wondering how they will pick up the pieces of a life that is shattered. Each year, our Nation pauses on April 5 to honor the strength and resilience of these Gold Star Spouses. For VA, that includes reminding them of potential benefits such as the VA-guaranteed home loan to purchase or refinance a home.

Using their surviving spouse VA home loan benefit, eligible surviving wives or husbands can apply for a VA-guaranteed home loan to purchase or refinance a home and, in choosing this route, they remove many of the financial barriers they would encounter with traditional mortgage loans.

Advantages of a VA-guaranteed home loan

In addition to overcoming barriers that make opening the door to a new home more likely, there are other advantages to the VA home loan, including:

- Typically, there is no down payment requirement.
- No private mortgage insurance (PMI) premiums or mortgage insurance premiums (MIP).
- Competitively low interest rates compared to other loan programs.
- No VA funding fee for eligible surviving spouses, which means very competitive to other loan products in terms of costs and fees.
- No loan limit if the eligible surviving spouse has full entitlement and can meet the lender's financial guidelines.
- Potential to own more than one property at a time if the eligible surviving spouse has adequate entitlement, financially qualifies, occupies the property and follows all VA loan guidelines.
- May be used to purchase an existing home or residential condominium, build a new home, refinance the current home, or purchase up to a four-unit residence.
- Loss mitigation options help keep VA mortgage foreclosure rates at industry lows.

Determining eligibility for the VA home loan benefit

Before surviving spouses apply for a VA-guaranteed home loan, they must first [apply for a Certificate of Eligibility \(COE\)](#). Those who are eligible for a COE must meet at least one of the following guidelines.

They are the:

- Unmarried surviving spouse of a Veteran who died as a result of service or service-connected causes, or
- Surviving spouse of a Veteran who died while on active duty or from service-connected causes, who remarries on or after age 57 and on or after Dec. 16, 2003, or

- Spouse of an active-duty service member who is listed as MIA or a POW for at least 90 days. Eligibility under this MIA/POW provision is limited to one-time use only.
- Surviving spouse of a Veteran who had been rated totally disabled but who died from non-service-connected causes that meet certain conditions, or
- Surviving spouse who is eligible for or in receipt of certain types of Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC).

How to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

Surviving spouses must prove their eligibility by ordering a COE. The COE can be obtained electronically by lenders or by [mailing a completed VA Form 26-1817 to VA](#). Applications are oftentimes approved within just a few days.

Choose a VA-approved mortgage lender.

The first step after determining eligibility is to choose a mortgage lender. Many borrowers don't realize that it's ok to take time to "interview" a few lenders to determine which one is the right fit. It's possible to compare lenders based on years of experience, number of VA loans closed, timeliness of funding, interest rates and even customer ratings available online. Once the right lender has been selected, it can be beneficial to obtain an optional loan pre-approval before shopping for homes with a real estate professional.

Select a real estate professional.

There are many real estate professionals who have the experience to help surviving spouses use their VA home loan benefit. Choosing a military-friendly broker or agent who understands the VA home loan application process can make all the difference in the homebuying experience. Finding the right agency or brokerage is just as important as locking in a good VA mortgage lender. Communication is key to getting to the loan closing table.

Knowledge is power.

Sometimes, industry professionals may direct surviving spouses to use other loan products. It's important to remember that the VA home loan is the only home loan that offers zero down payment for eligible qualified borrowers and no private monthly mortgage insurance.

To help real estate professionals or mortgage lenders understand why the VA home loan is a good choice for current and former military homebuyers, here are a few statistics from fiscal year 2024:

- VA guaranteed more than 416,000 loans (totaling \$155.4 billion), including almost 300,000 purchase loans, totaling \$111.3 billion.
- VA vastly improved the home loan appraisal process, making it the gold standard in the industry:
- The average completion time for appraisals was just 6.8 business days, and 91% of VA appraisals met or exceeded the sales price.
- When Veterans requested a Reconsideration of Value (after Notice of Value was issued), VA processed more than 3,000, and more than 45% resulted in an increase in the value.
- The time to close a loan averaged just 31 days.

Links for more information on VA Home Loan Program

- [Home Loan Benefits.](#)
- [VA Home Loan Overview.](#)
- [Your Road to Buying a VA Home.](#)
- [VA Home Loans Make Homeownership Achievable.](#)

In Comradeship,

H “Rich” Fales-Post Service Officer

Cell# 301-325-3813

Email: richfales@gmail.com (NEW!)



HONOR GUARD NEWS



The month of August was a quiet month for the Post Honor Guard. We did render a Flag Ceremony and Service at the Post for deceased Comrade Gary Lee Liddiard, Air Force. During the service and ceremony, the flag was unfolded, folded, and presented to widow Linda Liddiard. Taps were played. Honor Guard members Marty Stieffler, Dale Weese, Charlie Plis, and Captain John Gossart participated in the service.



A training was held for the Honor Guard during August for funeral service flag folding. Eleven Honor Guard members participated.

The Honor Guard looks forward to the return of member Ed Krussey in September. Welcome back, ED!!

FACTS YOU MAY NOT KNOW:

Each branch of the service has one active-duty Honor Guard.

Army – The Old Guard (3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment)

Navy - The U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard

Marine Corps – U.S. Marine Corps Ceremonial Guard Company, Marine Barracks, WDC

Air Force – U.S. Air Force Honor Guard

Coast Guard – U. S. Coast Guard Ceremonial Honor Guard

The recently formed Space Force does not have an Honor Guard. The High Frontier Honor Guard from Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, CO, is the de facto Honor Guard unit for the United States Space Force.

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



Jeff joined our Post in 2019 after moving to the area. "A neighbor brought me to the Post, and I joined immediately".

Jeff was a Cobra pilot for the U.S. Marine Corps and served from 1984-1991. He was stationed at New River Air Station, Jacksonville, NC. He served in two shipborne deployments before being assigned as the Air Officer/Forward Air Controller for the 1st Battalion 8th Marines 2nd Marine Division. In November 1990, 1/8/2 was deployed to Saudi Arabia and was one of the front-line units to proceed through the minefields and berms during Dessert Storm. The 1/8/2 remained in country from November 1980 through April 1981. Jeff notes that during his deployment, his first child, his son, was born, and it happened on Jeff's birthday!

When asked why he joined the Honor Guard, Jeff said the following:

"I first learned of the Honor Guard after attending my first Post meeting. As one of the younger members of the Post and having a lot of drill experience from my four years at the Naval Academy, I felt it was my duty to support the Honor Guard. The Honor Guard's Volley and Taps is the last recognition of a Veteran's contributions, sacrifices, and service. It is my belief that every Veteran has earned and deserves this recognition. It is also important that we Veterans remember our fallen brothers and sisters and honor their service because no one knows better than we the experiences they may have had. If we, as Veterans, don't take the time to honor our fellow Veterans, why should anyone else take the time?

Jeff is a Quilt of Valor recipient.

Mason Dixon VFW Post 7234 thanks and salutes Honor Guard member JEFF RINGEL.

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

**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."

CANTEEN CORNER

Well, we made it through a very busy but exciting summer here at the Post. I would like to thank everyone who helped make it possible, our bartenders, kitchen staff, volunteers and our patrons, thank you all.

September kicks off with our Labor Day weekend. Let us not forget this special day as we honor the American worker and their contributions to the country's strength, prosperity and well-being.

We again have the honor of hosting Operation Sea's the Day on Tuesday Sept.2. Bethany Beach honors our wounded warriors by hosting them and their families for a, well deserved week of rest and relaxation. We also will also host Womenade Day on Monday Sept.8. We are proud to be part of this charity as they work to end domestic abuse against women and children.

Our volunteer Appreciation Dinners will be held on Sept. 26 and Oct. 3, Doors open at 5pm. Mingle and social hour and hors d' oeuvres from 5 - 6. Announcements from 6 - 6:15, dinner served from 6:15 - 7:30. Entertainment from 7 - 10pm. Please make sure you sign up and get your ticket by Sept.15.

Entertainment plays a key role here at the Post. Music on the deck will continue Sunday afternoons through September. Hours will slightly change to 4 - 7 pm to highlight our spectacular sunsets. Another time change will be with our Saturday nite bands. Times will change from 6 - 10 to 6 - 9, starting Saturday Sept 6 with Short Term Memory.

Attention all Eagles, Ravens and Commander fans, football season is upon us. The Post will provide food and snacks at the beginning of the 1 o'clock game. It will be ready to eat at that time. You are under no obligation to bring a covered dish. If you would like to bring food for yourself or your group, please do, you are more than welcome. Just come in, enjoy food provided by Post, eat when you want, enjoy the games and have your favorite cocktail.

The Bull & Oyster Roast will be held on Saturday Oct. 4. Tickets will go on sale Monday Sept. 1. Each member can purchase three guest tickets. Tickets are \$50 which includes AYCE, pit beef, shrimp, oysters, oyster stew, sausage and peppers, baked beans and potato salad. Tickets also include domestic draft beer (Miller & Coors lite). While we're talking about upcoming events mark Friday Nov. 7 on your calendar for the 2nd annual Nite at the Races.. Stay tuned for upcoming info.

Saving best for last it is our dear friend Irv Hudsons 100th birthday on Friday Sept 19. Come out and help Irv celebrate. Festivities will begin at 3pm. Happy birthday IRV!!!!

John Frye
Canteen Manager

IMPORTANT DATES IN SEPTEMBER



There are several important dates in September to remember, some solemn like 9/11, and some to celebrate like the anniversary of the establishment of the VFW in 1899 after the Spanish-American War. Here's a list from my files.

September 1 is Labor Day, a day set aside to recognize and honor all workers. In 1894, Congress designated the first Monday in September as Labor Day and established it as a federal legal holiday. President Grover Cleveland signed the measure into law and we continue to enjoy it today, not forgetting the main purpose.

September 2 is the anniversary of the formal surrender of Japan in World War II on board the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay in 1945. The surrender was originally announced on August 4, which is considered "V-J Day."

September 11 is now called Patriot Day and National Day of Services and Remembrance. It is set aside to remember and honor all those who died or were injured on this day, "9/11" in 2001, in the Islamic terrorist attacks in the United States. There will be ceremonies in New York, at the Pentagon in Virginia and Shanksville, PA. and moments of silence elsewhere to remember. Never forget.

September 14. On this day in 1814, in the dawn's early light, Francis Scott Key wrote the "Star Spangled Banner" while watching the British attack on Fort McHenry during the War of 1812 (then in its third year). The Fort guarded the southern entrance to Baltimore harbor and was named for James McHenry, who had been Secretary of War for George Washington and John Adams when they were Presidents.

After the lyrics of the inspired song were set to music, it was sung at many events. However, it didn't officially become our National Anthem until 1931. There were suggestions over the years that other patriotic songs would be better, because of sentiment or because they're easier to sing, like "America" ("My Country 'Tis of Thee, Sweet Land of Liberty . . ."), an 1832 song by Rev. Samuel Francis Smith, or "America the Beautiful," written by Katherine Lee Bates in 1895. But somehow, the "Star Spangled Banner," tough or impossible as it is to most people to hit the high notes, has become well-established as our Anthem. Always proclaiming the hope that our flag still waves over the land of the free and the home of the brave. They're really serious about it in Massachusetts. It's against the law in that state to dance to the Anthem. Have to be careful at Red Sox and Patriots games.

September 17 is Constitution and Citizenship Day. On this day in 1787, the Constitutional Convention approved the Constitution of the United States. The first ten amendments, the “Bill of Rights,” were not ratified until later by the states and did not become effective until December 15, 1791. I think most people, with the exception of lawyers and Constitution scholars, are more familiar with the first five amendments than the other provisions, until one of them makes news in a court case. But I also think that most will be familiar with the stirring preamble: “We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, ensure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.” [Emphasis added.] And many will recall the solemn oath taken years ago “to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. . .” I don’t remember any time limit on that oath.

September 18 is the 77th birthday of the U.S. Air Force, established in 1947. All their prior years as the Army Air Corps are part of their proud history of service.

- **September 20** is National POW/MIA Recognition Day. We will remember the more than 80,000 American service personnel still missing from previous conflicts: WWII (74,104), Korean War (7400) and Vietnam War (1244). The remains of an estimated 38,000 are considered recoverable
- **September 22**, as the days of 2025 dwindle down, Autumn, beautiful Autumn, begins. Also, the Jewish celebration of Roshanah begins at sundown.
- **September 29** is Gold Star Mothers and Families Day, those who will always be honored and supported. As mentioned, it is also the 126th birthday of the VFW. There should be a cake with 126 candles and a fire extinguisher.

Together with these and all the events on the Post calendar, I hope everyone enjoys every day in September.

Jerry Hardiman

NOTICE TO ALL MASON DIXON MEMBERS

(THIS NOTICE IS FOR MASON DIXON MEMBERS ONLY,
(DOES NOT APPLY TO VFW OR AUXILIARY MEMBERS))

REMINDERS AND CHANGES TO THE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL PRACTICES

REMINDERS

AS YOU MAY RECALL IN AUGUST 2022 THE POLICY WAS CHANGED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS THAT NO ADVANCED PERSONAL NOTICES TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP WOULD BE SENT OUT.

THE POLICY CHANGES ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE MEMBER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THEIR MEMBERSHIP CURRENT AND IN GOOD STANDING, NOT THE POST.

THE POLICY ALSO STATES THAT MASON DIXON MEMBERSHIP CARDS WILL NOT BE MAILED. MEMBERSHIP CARDS ARE TO BE PICKED UP AT THE POST (AT THE BAR).

NEW CHANGE EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2025

THE MASON DIXON MEMBERSHIP POLICY STATES:

“ALL RENEWALS FOR EXPIRING MEMBERSHIP MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE POST NO LATER THAN 60 DAYS FOLLOWING THE END OF THE MEMBERSHIP TERM. NO RENEWAL WILL BE PROCESSED AFTER MARCH 1, FOLLOWING THE PREVIOUS MEMBERSHIP YEAR. RENEWALS RECEIVED AFTER SUCH DATE WILL BE RETURNED WITHOUT ACTION AND MEMBERSHIP WILL BE TERMINATED.” THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR! DO NOT LET YOUR MASON DIXON MEMBERSHIP LAPSE!!

SINCE THE EFFECTIVE DATE (08/01/2022) OF THE POLICY CHANGES, TOTAL POST MEMBERSHIP HAS GROWN TO OVER 4,600 MEMBERS. THIS IS A 1,100 MEMBER INCREASE IN LESS THAN THREE YEARS! DESPITE THE PROVISION ABOVE REGARDING RENEWALS, THE BOARD HAS ALLOWED VETERAN MASON DIXON MEMBERS TO RENEW THEIR MEMBERSHIPS EVEN IF SUBMITTED LATE. VETERAN MEMBERS WERE PERMITTED TO RE-APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP. THIS PRACTICE WILL CEASE EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2025.

THE BOARD RECENTLY UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO CHANGE THIS PRACTICE.

BEGINNING AUGUST 1, 2025, VETERAN MASON DIXON MEMBERS WILL BE PERMITTED TO RENEW ONLY ONCE AFTER THEIR FIRST LATE RENEWAL. VETERAN MASON DIXON MEMBERS WHO HAVE ALREADY RE-APPLIED PRIOR TO THE EFFECTIVE DATE WILL BE GIVEN ONE MORE OPPORTUNITY. THIS IS BEING ALLOWED ONLY BECAUSE THE BOARD VOTE JUST OCCURRED AND THE CHANGE HAD NOT BEEN COMMUNICATED UNTIL NOW.

IN ADDITION, THE LATE VETERAN (ONLY) RE-APPLICATION MUST BE ACCOMPANIED NOT ONLY BY THE \$150 DUES, BUT ALSO A \$25 PENALTY FEE (FOR BEING LATE). THEREAFTER, IF THE VETERAN MASON DIXON MEMBER DOES NOT TIMELY PAY THEIR DUES AGAIN, THE VETERAN MASON DIXON MEMBER'S MEMBERSHIP WILL BE PERMANENTLY TERMINATED.

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
Service Officer	Rich Fales
Honor Guard Capt	John Gossart Jr.
Trustee	Greg Albertson
Trustee	Rob Gill
Trustee	Paul Kerstanski

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman	Andy Artemchuk
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Conductress	Connie Weber
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Trustee	Connie Weber
Trustee	Carol Weber
Trustee	Chuck Bologna

Veteran Claims Assistance

Our state Veterans Service 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