

IPSWICH POST 1093  VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

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JANUARY, 2010 POST NEWSLETTER

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Here we are into a new year and, as I know all of you have experienced, time just seems to fly. It only seems like yesterday that I graduated from Marine Corps Boot Camp in the early 50's. I was one of those Hollywood Marines from San Diego, California. The Hollywood image soon wore off after I joined my infantry unit at Camp Pendleton. Marines from the conflict in Korea had recently returned to Camp



Pendleton and believe me they did not make it easy for the new boots. However, it was because of those returning combat veterans that I learned well and early on those skills, devotion, loyalty and comradeship that would guide me throughout my 22 plus year career with the Marine Corps as well as the following 33 years to date as a civilian. Marines have always and will always take care of their own..

In many ways, the Veterans of Foreign Wars is a lot like my beloved Corps. We exist to not only reach out to the community, but to be there for our Comrades by taking care of their widows, orphans, fighting for their benefits, well being, and providing appropriate honors to those who leave us for the heavens above. We visit the sick and shut in, assist the needy and offer educational and financial assistance to our next generation of Veterans. We assist, help and mentor our younger Comrades so they too can overcome the baggage of war, we tutor and help them rise to positions of leadership within our Post, District and National organizations. This is what the Veterans of Foreign Wars is all about and I charge each and every one of us not to forget this as we embark on another year of service and comradeship.

Bill Duke, Commander

POST MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

IN AN EFFORT TO SAVE MONIES ON POSTAGE AND MUCH TIME AND EFFORT, THE MONTHLY POST NEWSLETTER WILL BE AVAILABLE ONLY ON OUR POST WEB SITE www.vfwp1093.com HOWEVER, IF YOU DO NOT HAVE COMPUTER ACCESS AND STILL DESIRE TO RECEIVE OUR NEWSLETTER, PLEASE LET US KNOW AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAIL ONE TO YOU. **TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER SEND US A POST CARD, LETTER OR GIVE US A PHONE CALL. TO INDICATE SO. IF WE DO NOT HEAR FROM YOU, WE WILL ASSUME THAT YOU HAVE COMPUTER ACCESS OR DO NOT DESIRE TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE IT.** OUR ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER IS AS FOLLOWS:

William Duke, Commander

Call: 978 356-1561 (Commander's Home Phone)

VFW Post 1093, Post Office Box 281, Ipswich, MA 01938

ADJUTANT'S MESSAGE:

Relax, this isn't going to be a regular part of the monthly newsletter, but I would like to add my best wishes for a New Year of success, good health, wealth, comradeship and the fulfillment of all the desires and motives that induced you to serve your country with honor. Also I want to note that while putting the Newsletter together has been a rewarding experience, a better, more current and informative means of communication now exists.....the Post 1093 web site. Chad Freeman (Jr. Vice Commander) and Ed Marsh (Judge Advocate) have done an outstanding job and we have a web presence second-to-none. You can access the Post web site at <http://www.vfwpost1093.com> ---- and once you have visited this page you will want to bookmark it. There is a huge amount of valuable information here and you will find that it is a handy resource. Check it out. NOW !!!!

George Lewis, Adjutant

NOTES FROM THE DECEMBER POST MEETING

There were no new applications. Chaplain Hurley reported the deaths of comrades Emile Saulnier, Dave Carleton, Harry Georgeopoulos, Lawrence Adams and Charles LeBlanc. Comrades Joe Parks and Bernie Richardson were reported as being confined by poor health. Voice of Democracy Chair Bob Metz reported that there was one entry being sponsored by the Post. Reporting for the Programs and Events Committee Chad Freeman noted a tentative date of July 24th for the 2010 Iraq/Afghanistan vet's program. Commander Duke noted a good turnout for the Veterans Day parade and commented on increased community support. Scholarship Chair Jake Burridge with committee member Ed Marsh spoke relative to the selection of recipients of Post 1093 academic scholarships and distributed preliminary material to be used for the selection of scholarship recipients. Comrades Burridge and Marsh were applauded for their work in preparing the material. Comrade Bob Metz spoke concerning an opportunity for the Post to provide and honor guard at an upcoming Ipswich High School basketball campaign. It was the consensus of the attending members that we should provide support and participate as requested. Commander Duke reported on a presentation ceremony held at post quarters when town resident and Army Veteran James Mederos was presented with his WWII medals as requested by his family and expressed his appreciation to those post members who attended. The Post voted to purchase additional grave markers and similar items that were needed. It was voted that the Post would contribute \$500 to Ipswich Caring. Commander Duke reported that he is assembling names of long-term post members who would receive longevity pins and certificates and expects to present the completed items to the post at the January meeting. The commander also noted that he had sent certificates of appreciation to Dianne Linqvist, Jeanne Freeman and Jennifer Gallant in recognition of their assistance at our Veterans Day events. The commander reported that he had received a donation to the Post of a Franklin Mint reproduction of the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington Cemetery. The donor did not want to be recognized. Collection boxes for the Ipswich Food Pantry have been located in the lounge area. It was also noted that VFW participation in the Wreaths Across America program had been reported in the Ipswich Chronicle.

**JOIN THE
VFW COMMUNITY**



He stayed in Ramadi

Leading the fight is U S Marine Gunnery Sgt. Michael Burghardt, known as 'Iron Mike' or just 'Gunny'. He is on his third tour in Iraq . He had become a legend in the bomb disposal world after winning the Bronze Star for disabling 64 IEDs and destroying 1,548 pieces of ordnance during his second tour. Then, on September 19, he got blown up... He had arrived at a chaotic scene after a bomb had killed four US Marines.. He chose not to wear the bulky bomb protection suit. 'You can't react to any sniper fire and you get tunnel-vision,' he explains. So, protected by just a helmet and standard-issue flak jacket, he began what bomb disposal officers term 'the longest walk', stepping gingerly into a 5 foot deep and 8 foot wide crater.

The earth shifted slightly and he saw a Senao base station with a wire leading from it. He cut the wire and used his 7 inch knife to probe the ground. 'I found a piece of red detonating cord



between my legs,' he says. 'That's when I knew I was screwed.' Realizing he had been sucked into a trap, Sgt Burghardt, 35, yelled at everyone to stay back. At that moment, an insurgent, probably watching through binoculars, pressed a button on his mobile phone to detonate the secondary device below the sergeant's feet 'A chill went up the back of my neck and then the bomb exploded,' he recalls. 'As I was in the air I remember thinking, 'I don't believe they got me...' I was just ticked off they were able to do it. Then I was lying on the road, not able to feel anything from the waist down.'

His fellow Marines cut off his trousers to see how badly he was hurt. None could believe his legs were still there 'My dad's a Vietnam vet who's paralyzed from the waist down,' says Sgt Burghardt. 'I was lying there thinking I didn't want to be in a wheelchair next to my dad and for him to see me like that... They started to cut away my pants and I felt a real sharp pain and blood trickling down. Then I wiggled my toes and I thought, 'Good, I'm in business.' As a stretcher was brought over, adrenaline and anger kicked in. 'I decided to walk to the helicopter. I wasn't going to let my team-mates see me being carried away on a stretcher.' He stood and gave the insurgents who had blown him up a one-fingered salute. 'I flipped them one.. It was like, 'OK, I lost that round but I'll be back next week.'

Copies of a photograph depicting his defiance, taken by Jeff Bundy for the Omaha World-Herald, adorn the walls of homes across America and that of Col John Gronski, the brigade commander in Ramadi, who has hailed the image as an exemplar of the warrior spirit.

Sgt Burghardt's injuries - burns and wounds to his legs and buttocks - kept him off duty for nearly a month and could have earned him a ticket home. But, like his father - who was awarded a Bronze Star and three Purple Hearts for being wounded in action in Vietnam - he stayed in Ramadi to engage in the battle against insurgents who are forever coming up with more ingenious ways of killing Americans.

Operation Just Cause -- Twenty Years Ago

Operation Just Cause, a joint operation to oust dictator Manuel Noriega from power and restore democracy to Panama. The battle commenced twenty years ago on **December 20, 1989**.

Manuel Noriega ruled Panama through fear. For a decade, he took part in drug trafficking, money laundering, government coups and rigged elections. He crushed any uprisings against his rule. At the beginning of 1989, President George H.W. Bush deployed extra troops to Panama, and the Army began planning to oust Noriega. In early October, Panamanian officers staged a coup that Noriega brutally put down. Soon after, his Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) killed an American Marine and abducted a naval officer and his wife, beating him and molesting her.



Noriega's days were numbered. American forces struck hard and fast in the early hours of December 20, securing airports, attacking strategic locations and searching for Noriega. Although a joint operation, the Army provided the bulk of troops, including elements of the XVIII Airborne Corps, the 82nd Airborne Division, the 7th Infantry Division, the 75th Ranger Regiment, a Joint Special Operations Task Force, and units from the 5th Infantry Division. Smaller units included the 1138th Military Police

Company of the Missouri Army National Guard, the 193rd Infantry Brigade, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment and the 59th Engineer Company (Sappers).

The dictator was captured and democracy restored. Operation Just Cause was a success. The Army proved that its training and equipment for fighting large scale conflicts could also be used for smaller actions. It was the Army's biggest fight since the Vietnam War and the largest airborne action since World War II. Today, Noriega remains in a U.S. prison. The photo shows Army Rangers firing on La Comandancia in Panama City.

WE PARTICIPATE: *from an email by the commander to post members;*

The event at the High School when our Post provided an honor guard at an Ipswich High School basketball game to honor the Dudek family went very well. We had members from all four Veteran Posts who participated. I wish to express a "well done and thank you" to all who attended and/or participated. Ed Marsh and Bob Metz put this all together. You can view a video and photos of the event at our Post Web Site www.vfwpost1093.com and www.ipswichveterans.info We have also received emails from a number of school officials and others thanking the veterans for their honors and participation. It is this type of event that helps cement community support for our veterans. Thank you.

Bill Duke, Commander

And from Comrade Ed Marsh, who works diligently as a Boys Basketball Booster:
"Wonderful turnout last evening from all the groups. Dudek family and school both very appreciative. Nice job gentlemen! "

MORE ABOUT PARTICIPATION: As you know we are required to report semi-annually listing Post members community activities and service. If we are going to accurately report our participation it is necessary that the Adjutant receive a report of YOUR activities. Comrades Pete Wilson and Ed Marsh deserve Honorable Mention for their reporting; Pete for his activities and post functions with the Patriot Riders and Ed for his outstanding commitment to youth sports and many other community activities. Commander Duke's community involvement, Buddy Bernard's support for community events, Jake Burrige's visits to the infirm, Chad Freeman's concern with veterans support, Rich Barbato's long-distance support for veteran's issues, Ed Bryant's search for service academy applicants, Bob Metz's Voice of Democracy efforts, etc., etc. can and should be added to our record and counting their time "by observation and interview" enabled us to report over 1,300 hours of community service in our last report. *Any post member who represents Post 1093, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and engages in an activity that honors Americanism or is of benefit to the community, is requested to please report that service to the Adjutant.* John Amirault reported speaking before a class at school.....wonderful,.....what can we report about YOUR activities?

TAPS

IN MEMORY OF OUR DEPARTED COMRADES - MAY THEY REST IN PEACE



O God, Father of us all, we offer this final earthly tribute to our beloved comrades who have passed on.

Emile Saulnier - Lawrence Adams - Charles LeBlanc

<http://www.vfwstore.org/>



Here is your source for authentic VFW merchandise.....casual clothing, flags and accessories, patriotic products and much more. These items make great gifts.

Comrades who do not have access to a computer (and the Ipswich Library has them available at no cost) contact the Commander or the Adjutant for assistance. We are here to serve.

VA Aggressively Working Claims Backlog:

The popular TV program 60 minutes on January 3rd ran a segment critical of the Dept. of Vets Affairs. This is the official VFW response:

WASHINGTON, January 4, 2010- The national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. said the most important takeaway from [last night's 60 Minutes piece on the Department of Veterans Affairs](#) was that the VA is aggressively working to overcome a claims backlog that is currently delaying benefits payments to hundreds of thousands of disabled military veterans.

"The backlog is something the VFW is very concerned about," said Thomas J. Tradewell Sr., a combat-wounded Vietnam veteran from Sussex, Wis.

"We understand the frustration that veterans and their families experience from delayed, rejected or improperly adjudicated claims, but we also know there are no quick fixes," he said. "That's why the VFW will continue to work with VA leadership and Congress to find a permanent solution, because we know the backlog will only continue to rise as the veterans' population ages, as more become eligible from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere, as presumptive illnesses and programs are expanded, and as more veterans learn about the government programs and benefits available to them."

YOUR VFW ON CAPITOL HILL

Considering the current concerns that veterans have regarding legislative and administration actions, and the direct effect these actions have on veterans' services you should be aware of how your VFW monitors and works to have a positive effect on our behalf. The following is from an official VFW website.

The location of our office in Washington D.C., allows the VFW to monitor Congress and to administer our [Veterans' Services](#) program. The VFW has more than 100 trained service officers to assist any veteran, or their dependents, obtain federal or state entitlements.

VFW [service officers](#) also assist veterans seeking education benefits, disability compensation, pension eligibility and other veterans' needs. Field representatives regularly inspect VA healthcare facilities, regional offices and national cemeteries. In addition, civil service and employment specialists monitor laws concerning veterans' preference in federal employment and represent veterans in grievances regarding employment in the federal, state and private sectors. A recent addition to the Washington D.C., office is the Tactical Assessment Center, a 24-hour help line for veterans with questions or concerns about VA entitlements. (1-800-vfw-1899 1-800-vfw-1899)

VFW's [National Legislative Service](#) office monitors all legislation affecting veterans. It alerts VFW membership to key veterans' legislation under consideration and actively lobbies Congress and the administration on veterans' issues. It often assists congressional staffs in preparing veterans' legislation.

VFW's [National Security and Foreign Affairs](#) office monitors national security and foreign affairs issues.

