**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS BLAZING STAR POST #1574**

**17 CANNON AVENUE**

**STATEN ISLAND, NY 10314**

**Website. http://blazingstarvfwpost1574.org/wp**

**June 2016**

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| BLAZING STAR POST 1574 CONTACT NUMBERSAl Porto, Commander - 718-578-1242, albert.porto38@gmail.comPaul Dietrich, Quartermaster - 718-698-5269, paul@the-dietrichs.comWilliam Alcock, Adjutant - 718-698-1923 |

**Calendar Events**

Calendar of Events for 2016:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Event**  | **Location**  | **Time** | **Remarks** |
| 4 June Saturday | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 |  |
| 9 July Saturday | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 |  |
| 6 August Saturday | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 |  |
| 7 September | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 |  |
| 5 October | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 |  |
| 2 November | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 |  |
| 7 December | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 |  |

**Membership**

1. Consider Life Membership. You save money over the long run and eliminate the need to renew yearly. Below are the membership rates for Life membership and Installment Plan Life Membership.

**Age attained             Payment in Full             Installment Plan Option
 on Dec. 31st                       Total:                   Initial Fee:        11 payments of:**

Through Age 30               $425.00                $45.00                $38.64

31-40                                  $410.00                $45.00                $37.27

41-50                                  $375.00                $45.00                $34.09

51-60                                  $335.00                $45.00                $30.45

61-70                                  $290.00                $45.00                $26.36

71-80                                  $225.00                $45.00                $20.45

81 and over                        $170.00                $45.00                $15.45

2. Welcome new member Richard Briones!

3. Dues Renewal Reminder:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Eans, Ernest | Current Until | 5/5/2016 |
| Leunes, Peter | Current Until | 6/17/2016 |
| Robinson, James A | Current Until | 4/8/2016 |

3. A twice-vetoed measure to expand eligibility for state pension credits to additional veterans has at last cleared Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s desk.

Cuomo signed late Tuesday the [**legislation**](http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?default_fld=&leg_video=&bn=A09531&term=2015&Summary=Y&Actions=Y&Committee%26nbspVotes=Y&Floor%26nbspVotes=Y&Memo=Y&Text=Y), which allows honorably discharged service members with five years of existing public pension credit to purchase three years of credit for their military service. Current state law allows veterans who served in only certain conflicts, including World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, to purchase pension credits. The new law strikes out the specific conflicts to expand eligibility to all veterans who work in the public sector.

4. A special thank you to all who participated in the Memorial Day Poppy Drive!

**Service Officer**

1. Veterans are encouraged to enroll in the VA health care so they are on record should they ever need it.  No cost to apply.  Apply on line at [www.va.gov/healtheligibility/vfw](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CAlbert%5CDocuments%5CVFW%5CNewsletters%202011%5Cwww.va.gov%5Chealtheligibility%5Cvfw) or call 1-877-222-8387.

2. Tri-Care Dental. Tri-Care dental isn't free. You must enroll to be covered. Tri-Care dental web site, www.trdp.org
Delta Dental Tel #. 888-838-8737. The Tri-Care number for NY, is 1-877-874-2273.

3. DD Form 214 website. http://vetrecs.archives.gov. If you need assistance, contact the post service officer, Paul Dietrich.

4. Survivor Outreach Services. The website has a lot of information for those left behind when a service member or veteran passes. <http://www.sos.army.mil/> or <http://www.westpointmwr.com/acs/survivor_outreach_services.html>

5. To someone going through a difficult time, one simple act has the power to make a difference. Reach out to veterans and service members in your life today – let them know they’re not alone. Find out how you can make a difference <http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/ThePowerof1.aspx>.

6. NY State Creates Mobile App for Veterans to Access Services. There's a new mobile app designed to help New York's veterans access state and federal services. Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced the creation of the application Thursday. It's compatible with Apple and Android products and has help for veterans looking for information on health care, jobs and benefits. The program also locates the closest state veterans' affairs office. Cuomo says the app is an example of how technology can be used to improve the delivery of state services and programs. The program was developed by the state's Division of Veterans' Affairs.

7. Four new agent orange conditions are being considered for agent orange eligibility. As of yet these are not approved but under consideration: Bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, parkinson disease and high blood pressure. These are under consideration but as of this time, no definitive answers if they will be included as presumptive. On a more positive note all VA patients suffering from hepatitis C are now eligible to receive care and medication to treat the virus. This will be a major expansion of the treatment of Hep C patients from only those patients in the most advanced states of the illness to all with Hep C.

**Employment and Education**

1. Looking for a job? Need quality employees? USE VETJOBS! [**www.vetjobs.com**](http://svarialce.vfwemail.org:81/CT00004002MzA1OTA1NDk%3D.HTML?D=2011-08-26)

2. Vets looking for jobs, the website: 100000jobsmission.com. Go there to apply and search for available jobs specifically held for veterans.

3. New initiative called the We can't wait program plan helps ex GIs get civilian credentials/licenses for skills learned in the military. For info: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/veterans_report_5-31-2012.pdf>

Bottom of Form

5. Job info. Seeking Video grapher / Editor. Experience required. Working knowledge of Panasonic AG-HMC 150 Camera. Proficient in use of Final Cut Pro editing. Must have a vehicle. Forward contact info and resume to SIVidher@Aol.com.

6. MTA NYC Transit has two opportunities.  These include:

 Manager, Transit Demand Analysis in Operations Planning - will have an integral role in for the Second Avenue Subway expansion project. The candidate will develop plans for permanent service changes dues to new subway expansions; monitor service changes due to ridership patterns; and identify long-term service changes to accommodate reconstruction projects and their impacts.

 Director, AFC Equipment Installation Support - will manage and provide direction in the implementation of standard design elements to optimize the efficiency and effectiveness of the station control area environment; including fare control configuration utilizing customer interaction and flow patterns. Day-to-day responsibilities include planning & coordinating field surveys for incorporation into as built drawings for the installation of all Automated Fare Collection (AFC) equipment. Manage the inspection of all AFC equipment installations, including Turnstiles, MetroCard Vending Machines, ADA Farecard Access Systems, railings & gates.

7. Jaguar Land Rover Launches U.S. Retail Network Veterans Employment Program Ahead of 2016 Invictus Games

<http://www.wdrb.com/story/31749676/jaguar-land-rover-launches-us-retail-network-employment-program-ahead-of-2016-invictus-games> And there are some great Facebook pictures at <https://www.facebook.com/invictuslondon/>

 We have expanded our Veterans recruiting effort and have developed the Jaguar Land Rover Veterans Careers Program. Check out the website. <http://www.jlrvets.com> and APPLY ONLINE Veterans hired by JLR locations will attend a 3 week "Level 2" technician training program in Atlanta, GA. **After hire, the paid training is scheduled and attendance is within the first 30 to 60 days.** The first class started Monday April 4th and those participants are a retired Navy FC Chief, two USMC Technicians and a retired AF MSG. We have two new recruiters helping with the expansion, Both former Army recruiters. All Applicants must apply online to get the Training benefit guarantee and the SnapOn tool discount.   Let me know if you have any questions!

**Carol Hestand, Navy Veteran,** Senior Technical Recruiter Jaguar Land Rover Veterans Careers **CALIBRE**

Carolyn.hestand@calibresys.com **T:** 571.403.3335  |  Fax**:** 703.600.4335

General

1. Staten Island University Hospital's Military Appreciation Program. This program entitles active duty members and veterans free parking 12 times per year at the SIUH parking lot. Call 718-226-4325 for an application.

2. The Defense POW/MIA Office announced the identification of remains belonging to the following personnel. Returned

home are:

* **Fireman 2nd Class James B. Boring**, 21, **Navy Fireman 3rd Class Edwin C. Hopkins**, 18, and **Ensign Lewis B. Pride Jr.**, 23, had been missing since Dec. 7, 1941, when the battleship USS Oklahoma they were aboard suffered multiple torpedo hits and capsized as it was moored off Ford Island in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
* **Army Sgt. 1st Class James P. Shunney**, was lost fighting in North Korea on Nov. 2, 1950. He was assigned to Company I, 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division.
* **Navy Ensign William M. Finnegan**, 44, **Ensign John C. England**, 20, and **Chief Petty Officer Albert E. Hayden**, 44, had been missing since Dec. 7, 1941, when the battleship USS Oklahoma they were aboard suffered multiple torpedo hits and capsized as it was moored off Ford Island in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
* **Army Sgt. Billy J. Williams**, 20, 2nd Reconnaissance Company, 2nd Infantry Division, his company was attacked by Chinese forces in the vicinity of Chuam-ni, North Korea. He was declared missing in action after the battle. It would be later learned he had been captured, but died in captivity in April 1951.
* **Navy Chief Storekeeper Herbert J. Hoard**, 36, and **Seaman 2nd Class Dale F. Pearce**, 21, had been missing since Dec. 7, 1941, when the battleship USS Oklahoma they were aboard suffered multiple torpedo hits and capsized as it was moored off Ford Island in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
* **Marine Pfc. Elmer L. Mathies Jr.**, 21, died Nov. 20, 1943, while fighting the Japanese on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. He was assigned to Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines, 2nd Marine Division.
* **Army Capt. Elwood J. Euart**, 38, died Oct. 26, 1942, died trying to rescue some soldiers who were trapped in a transport ship that struck two mines as it was entering Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides. He was assigned to the 103rd Field Artillery Battalion, 43rd Infantry Division.
* **Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Donald L. Beals**, 21, was a P-47 Thunderbolt pilot who died April 17, 1945, while on a combat mission near Dresden, Germany. He was assigned to the 494th Fighter Squadron, 48th Fighter Group, 9th Air Force.
* **Navy Seaman 2nd Class Challis R. James**, **Fireman 1st Class Frank E. Nicoles**, 25, **Warrant Officer Daryl H. Goggin**, 34, and **Chaplain (Lt. j.g.) Aloysius H. Schmitt**, 32, had been missing since Dec. 7, 1941, when the battleship USS Oklahoma they were aboard suffered multiple torpedo hits and capsized as it was moored off Ford Island in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.
* **Army Sgt. 1st Class Richard Davis**, who was lost fighting in North Korea on Nov. 2, 1950. It would be later learned he was captured but died in captivity. He was assigned to Company K, 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division.
* **Navy Lt. Cmdr. Frederick P. Crosby**, 31, was piloting an RF-8A Photo Crusader on a combat mission in North Vietnam when his aircraft was hit by enemy fire and crashed in Thanh Hoa Province on June 1, 1965. He was assigned to Light Photograph Squadron 63.
* **Army Pvt. Earl J. Keating, 28**, and **Pvt. John H. Klopp**, 25, On Dec. 5, 1942, Keating and Klopp died repulsing a Japanese attack in present-day Papua New Guinea. Both were subsequently buried, but their graves couldn’t be located after the war. Both were assigned to Anti-Tank Company, 126th Infantry Regiment, 32nd Infantry Division.
* **Navy Motor Machinist's Mate 1st Class John E. Anderson**, 24, On June 6, 1944, Anderson was stationed aboard a Landing Craft Tank that after offloading its men and equipment during the D-Day invasion on Omaha Beach was destroyed by enemy fire.
* **Army Pvt. John P. Sersha**, 20, On Sept. 27, 1944, during Operation Market Garden, Sersha was one of three “Bazooka Men” sent out with a platoon to assault German positions near Groesbeek, Netherlands. None of the three men returned. Sersha was assigned to Company F, 325th Glider Infantry Regiment.
* **Air Force 1st Lt. Donald W. Bruch Jr.**, 24, On April 29, 1966, Bruch was piloting an F-105D Thunderchief toward a target in North Vietnam when his aircraft was struck by enemy anti-aircraft artillery. He was assigned to the 333rd Tactical Fighter Squadron, 355th Tactical Fighter Wing.
* **Marine Pfc. James B. Johnson**, 19, died Nov. 20, 1943, while fighting the Japanese on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. He was assigned to Company K, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marines, 2nd Marine Division.

3. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency is seeking the public’s help to find and encourage more MIA families to donate a DNA sample to help speed the identification process of recovered remains. Currently, 89 percent of the Korean War’s 7,800 MIAs have a family reference sample on file, 84 percent for the Cold War’s 126 MIAs, and 81 percent of the Vietnam War’s 1,600 missing. But for World War II, it’s a dismal 4 percent of the 73,500 who are still missing. Each military service and the State Department has a service casualty office that can explain how to donate.

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| Army: 800-892-2490 | Navy: 800-443-9298 | State Department: 202-485-6106 |
| Marine Corps: 800-847-1597 | Air Force: 800-531-5501 |  |

4. Free parking for veterans at Richmond County Medical Center. Veterans can park for free in the visitors parking lot where tokens are required. Stop at the main reception desk or security post, show proof you are a veteran (drivers license with vet on it, retired ID card, VA card or similar) and they will give you a free token for the parking lot. Get it on the way in as the reception/info desk is not manned all night. Use the token to exit the lot. Saves you $4 per visit.

6. VFW essay contest themes for 2016-2017 are as follows: Voice of Democracy - “MY RESPONSIBILITY TO AMERICA” Patriot’s Pen - “THE AMERICA I BELIEVE IN”

The student entry deadline for 2016-2017 will be November 1, 2016 for both contests.

**7. ARMED FORCES *INVITATIONAL* Striped Bass Tournament $100,000.00 GRAND PRIZE HEAVIEST STRIPED BASS 50 LBS. OR OVER Let’s give back to our veterans, the best way we know how, TAKE THEM FISHING! Friday, June 10, 2016, 8:00am – 4:00pm Captains Meeting - Breakfast – 6:30 – 8:00am Dinner Buffet and Awards 4:00pm – 6:00pm. Calcutta’s will be available!** Weigh-in will be held at Atlantis Marina and Yacht Club - 180 Mansion Ave., Staten Island, NY 10308 4pm Awards Ceremony will be held at Marina Café - 154 Mansion Ave., Staten Island, NY 10308 4-6 pm **For information on how to sponsor a team/boat please email** **situnaclub@gmail.com** **or for more information please call: Guy (Bill) Ahearn - (917) 751-7840**

8. House Veterans’ Affairs Health Subcommittee Passes Stefanik Veterans Caregiver Initiative

Washington, D.C. – Following her testimony before the House Veterans’ Affairs Health Subcommittee last week, today the Subcommittee unanimously passed her bill, H.R. 3989 -- the *Support Our Military Caregivers Act.* Congresswoman Stefanik introduced this bipartisan legislation in November of last year. “I was proud to introduce this important legislation after meeting with a constituent from Alexandria Bay who is a caregiver facing the burden of the VA backlog,” said Congresswoman Stefanik. “Over the last 15 years of war, our servicemembers have bravely served our nation and their families have sacrificed an immeasurable amount -- so it is vital that we ensure they receive the best possible care. This is especially true for our military caregivers -- loved ones of our servicemembers who selflessly care for our heroes behind the scenes. Military caregivers are silent heroes in our communities and deserve the respect and benefits proportionate to their significant contributions.” The Family Caregiver Program, mandated by Congress in 2010, was designed to help support family members caring for seriously-wounded veterans in the post-9/11 era.  Major features of the program include providing medical support for caregivers, who often suffer from health problems as they focus on the veteran's well-being, and providing stipends to compensate caregivers' time. This program is currently experiencing delays in approval of benefits. Caregivers who are denied eligibility for the program or believe the Veteran's rating is not appropriate may appeal such decisions with the VA Medical Centers (VAMC) with the assistance of VA Caregiver Support Coordinators. VA officials originally estimated that approximately 4,000 family caregivers would be approved for the program by this time.  However, there were 15,600 approved with another 14,800 applications remaining. This unanticipated deluge has overwhelmed staff allocated for the program, causing a backlog. For example, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that some VA facilities were not returning caregiver phone calls. To further complicate the problem, family caregivers who have been denied program benefits are now filing appeals, leaving the VA with two issues:

* The inability to process the flood of caregiver applications; and
* An expanding backlog of appeals filed by frustrated caregivers

Whether the decisions received by appealing veterans are favorable or not, they should be timely, fair, impartial and accurate. While proposals by the VA Department will help, it appears that a substantial transformation of processes and clinical reviews are still needed to significantly reduce the amount of time veterans wait for decisions on their appeals.  Immediate and effective relief is required as continued delays will only increase as the number of mounting appeals.

Congresswoman Stefanik’s bill, the Support Our Military Caregivers Act, would ensure that new or modified processes and systems are veteran-centric, outcomes-based and continually improved through the use of best practices. This would be done by directing the Department of Veterans Affairs to contract with a third party in order to streamline claims and reduce the Caregiver backlog. During the markup, Congressman Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to  strengthen the bill, confirming that the VA was the final decision making authority  and that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) must conduct a second review of the program. The amendment was adopted.

9. The Korean War Veterans Memorial wall of Remembrance act of 2015 will require the names of those 36,574 Americans killed in Korea from 1950-53 to be added on a wall of remembrance. The wall will be built with private funds for that purpose. Contact Senator Schemer at 518-431-4070 to urge him to push for further action in the senate. (HR 1475)

**Items of Interest**

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| **Bob Hope, Honorary Veteran****One day comedian Bob Hope got a suggestion from a sponsor: broadcast his popular radio program from March Field, an Army air base at Riverside, California. “Why should we drag the whole show down there?” Hope asked. But he consented, and on May 6, 1941, he performed for hundreds of cheering troops. That one show changed his life. He couldn’t get out of his mind the appreciative response of the young recruits. Seven months later, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Throughout the rest of World War II, with only two exceptions, Hope aired his shows from U.S. military installations. He went wherever the soldiers were fighting—Europe, North Africa, the Pacific. “When the time for recognition of service to the nation in wartime comes to be considered, Bob Hope should be high on the list,” John Steinbeck wrote in a newspaper column. “He gets laughter wherever he goes from men who need laughter.”****After the war Hope became one of America’s most popular entertainers. (And one of its most successful immigrants. His family had emigrated from England when he was a boy, coming through Ellis Island.) He never forgot the troops. For more than half a century, through the Cold War, Korean War, Vietnam War, Persian Gulf War, and times of peace, he led tours around the globe to perform for soldiers. “I wouldn’t trade it for my entire career,” he said. “Until you’ve actually seen them in action, you have no conception of their courage.” Millions watched his televised Christmas shows for the troops. Hope received all kinds of awards for service to country, including the Congressional Gold Medal and Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 1997, six years before his death, Congress made him an “Honorary Veteran,” the first time it had ever bestowed such a tribute. Hope said it was the greatest honor he had ever received.**  |