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

**17 CANNON AVENUE**

**STATEN ISLAND, NY 10314**

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

**December 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 2017:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Event  | Location  | Time | Remarks |
| 4 January | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 |  |
| 1 February | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 |  |
| 1 March | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 |  |
| 5 April | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 |  |
| 3 May  | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 |  |
| 7 June | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 |  |
| 1 July | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 5 August  | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 9 September | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 7 October | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 4 November | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 2 December | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |

**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. Dues Renewal Reminder:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Leunes, Peter | Current Until | 6/17/2016 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Guerra, Eugene D | Current Until | 12/31/2016 |
| Palmieri, Mario A | Current Until | 12/31/2016 |
| Smith, Gerald F | Current Until | 12/31/2016 |
| Squicciarini, John | Current Until | 12/31/2016 |
| Tolas, Raymond | Current Until | 12/31/2016 |
| Treadaway, Ann M | Current Until | 12/31/2016 |
|  |  |  |
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**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. Online Health Care Application.** Providing health care to our Nation’s Veterans is a vital service of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), one that must persistently improve.  Through the MyVA transformation, VA is rebuilding trust with Veterans and the American people; modernizing service delivery; and setting the course for long-term, VA excellence, all

while continuing to expand access to high-quality care.  Through improvement efforts, many of the steps Veterans must take to receive health care were reviewed and found that enhancements were necessary in the initial application to better the Veteran experience by removing barriers that hinder access. The VA will soon launch a new online health care application on[www.vets.gov](https://www.vets.gov/).  Previously, Veterans could apply for health care online, but the user experience was often frustrating. Beginning June 30, 2016, Veterans applying for health care will be directed to the health care application on [www.vets.gov](https://www.vets.gov/).  Veterans and other stakeholders will still have access to VA Form 10-10EZ, which was originally

available through the Veterans On-line Application; however, going forward, those applying for health care eligibility will use the online application or call 877-222-VETS (8387). Please take a moment to review the new [online form](http://www.vets.gov/healthcare/apply/), and, as of June 30, 2016, begin referring Veterans interested in applying for health care eligibility to the new site.  To learn more about applying for health benefits, please visit VA’s Health Benefits [webpage](http://www.va.gov/HEALTHBENEFITS/apply/index.asp).

8. New Veterans Representative on Staten Island. BP Oddo recently announced that Matthew Basile, a Community Outreach Specialist from the NYC Department of Veterans' Services, will be working out of Borough Hall to assist Veterans several days a week. He will also be working in a space at the College of Staten Island, assisting both student-veterans and Veterans who do not attend the college. As a Community Outreach Specialist, Mr. Basile's job entails interacting with Staten Island's Veterans and their families in order to connect them with employment services, educational benefits, financial services and business opportunities. A Navy Veteran, Mr. Basile made multiple deployments across Eastern Europe and the Middle East. After he finished his active duty service, he owned a small

business that catered to military personnel in the Virginia Beach Area. In this capacity, Mr. Basile was awarded numerous government contracts that made him proficient in working with both the Veteran community and the federal government's procurement system. Later, he attended the College of Staten Island, where he served as a student-veteran mentor, assisting college students with their benefits and academic careers. Mr. Basile's office is located in Borough Hall, Room G-15 and at CSI Campus Center, Room 216. Those interested in meeting with him can set up an appointment by calling ***(646) 799-2743*** or emailing ***mbasile@veterans.nyc.gov***.

**9. VA Online Scheduling System to go Live in January.** Veterans will initially be able to schedule primary care appointments by using a new app. And in the future VA officials plan to add optometry, audiology and mental-health.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs plans in January to begin online scheduling of medical appointments nationwide.

With the program, the VA will schedule primary-care appointments for more than 6 million patients through an app on their phones, tablets or computers. VA officials also plan to add appointments for optometry, audiology and mental-health.

Neil Evans, MD, chief of the office of connected care for the Veterans Health Administration said the move will be “a huge step forward” for the VA.  “I think this is really, really, really important for us to be able to offer.” Kathleen Frisbee, executive director for connected health at the VA’s office of connected care, added that the new software will open in the agency’s health system for more public inspection as patients view open appointments and choose which times are best for them with the click of a computer mouse.  “I mean, we are exposing our availability to the world,” Frisbee said.

Initially VA developers planned to offer online requests for appointments rather than actual scheduling. But vets who use the VA’s online portal, called MyHealtheVet, advocated for actual do-it-yourself online scheduling, Evans said.  In fact, online scheduling was the most requested item of vets using the VA’s online portal. The portal software cost $3.2 million, and runs on technology infrastructure from Agilex Technologies, now Accenture Federal Services, and the VA’s internal development.

**10.** [**Vets.gov**](http://vets.gov/)**Connects Veterans to Services.** In November 2015, [Vets.gov](http://naus.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT02MDg4MzgxJnA9MSZ1PTEwMjg4NDU0MzMmbGk9MzkzNjI2MjY/index.html) was released as a new way to connect to some of the Department of Veterans Affairs' most popular services and transactions.  Over the past year, [Vets.gov](http://vets.gov/) has evolved to include new self-service functionality and tools.  [Vets.gov](http://vets.gov/) includes 39 product features that improve veteran online access to benefits including health care, education, employment and disability benefits.  The goal for [Vets.gov](http://vets.gov/) is to become the single, one-stop place to go to interact with VA.  New content and functionality will be added to the website week by week.  You can track that progress via a [public dashboard](http://naus.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT02MDg4MzgxJnA9MSZ1PTEwMjg4NDU0MzMmbGk9MzkzNjI2Mjc/index.html).

11. Marlene Roll, **Assistant VSO, Veterans of Foreign Wars**

Office days: Tuesday – Fridays, Ph: 716.857.3348, Fax: 716.857.3484

<http://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/32858/myva311-one-number-call-reach-va/>

Please be advised that this email address is not checked on a daily basis.

If you need *immediate*response, please call 716.857.3403.

**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. The VFW National Headquarters has a job opening as described below:

JOB TITLE: Director, Membership

JOB LOCATION: Kansas City, MO

JOB TYPE: Full Time

COMPENSATION: Salary starting at $87,750; plus benefits including health, dental, vision plans, 401k, retirement plan, life insurance

Bottom of Form

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:

**Marine Pfc. Nicholas J. Cancilla**, 18, Company B, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines, 2nd Marine Division, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Cancilla died on the first day of battle, Nov. 20, 1943.

**Army Pfc. William V. Giovanniello**, 22, Company F, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, when his unit was forced into a fighting withdrawal from Chorwon, South Korea. He was declared missing in action on April 25, 1951.

**Army Cpl. Wayne Minard**, 19, Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, fighting a delaying action south to Kunu-ri, North Korea. He would be reported missing in action on Nov. 26, 1950..

**Marine Pfc. Ben H. Gore**, 20, Special Weapons Group, 2nd Defense Battalion, Fleet Marine Force, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Gore died of his wounds on Nov. 25, 1943.

**Army Pfc. Daniel Hunt** Company A, 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, in the vicinity of Hill 1030, conducting operations in an area referred to as Heartbreak Ridge. He would be reported killed in action, body not recovered on Sept. 28, 1951.

**Army Pfc. William W. Cowan**, 19, Company M, 3rd Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, On Feb. 12, 1951 he was reported missing in action after his unit attacked a road block set up by enemy forces near Hoengsong, South Korea. It would be later learned he had been captured but died in captivity in a POW camp in North Korea.

**Marine Corps Pfc.Wilbur C. Mattern**, 23, Company M, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Mattern died on the second day of the battle, Nov. 21, 1943.

**Army Sgt. 1st Class Robert R. Cummings**, Company K, 3rd Battalion, 187th Airborne Infantry Regimental Combat Team. His unit was attacked by an estimated 200,000 Chinese soldiers near the Yalu River in North Korea. He would be declared missing in action on Nov. 29, 1950.

**Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Frederick W. Langhorst**, 24, On July 17, 1945, Langhorst was assigned to the 1330 Army Air Force Base Unit, Air Transport Command, and was the co-pilot of a C-109 aircraft with three other crew members on a routine cargo transport mission from Jorhat, India, to Hsinching, China, when it crashed in a remote area. An extensive search of the area failed to identify the crash site and the crew was declared deceased on July 18, 1946, and their remains designated non-recoverable.

**Army Pfc. Daniel Hunt,** 18, Company A, 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, fighting in Korean border area often referred to as Heartbreak Ridge. Hunt was reported missing in action after a series of battles.

**Army Cpl. Vernon D. Presswood,** 19, Heavy Mortar Company, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, which was assembled into the 31st Regimental Combat Team and deployed east of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea, when it was engaged by overwhelming numbers of Chinese forces. Presswood was reported missing in action as of Dec. 2, 1950. **Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Robert E. Moessner.** On April 18, 1944, Moessner was the bombardier of a B-24 aircraft out of Kwelin, China, when it was shot down near Hong Kong. Of the 12 crewmembers aboard, only two would survive the crash landing in shallow water

**Army Sgt. 1st Class Harold P. Haugland,** Company D, 15th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion, 7th Infantry Division, which was assembled into the 31st Regimental Combat Team and deployed east of the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea, when it was engaged by overwhelming numbers of Chinese forces. Haugland was reported missing in action as of Dec. 2, 1950..

**Navy Fireman 1st Class Jim H. Johnston,** 23, USS Oklahoma, which was moored off Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, when Japanese aircraft attacked his ship on Dec. 7, 1941. Johnston was one of 429 crewmen to be killed in the attack.

**Army Master Sgt. Joseph Durakovich** Company G, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division. His unit was attacked by the Chinese forces while establishing a defensive position in Pongmyong-ni east of Kuni-ri, North Korea, on Nov. 28, 1950. After the battle, Durakovich could not be accounted for and was reported missing in action.

**Army Cpl. Louis A. Damewood** Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, operating near Hoengsong, South Korea. He was declared missing after his unit attacked an opposition road block on Feb. 13, 1951.

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. To all, our adopted unit currently serving in Afghanistan received the two packages we sent them. They are "super grateful". Thanks to all for the donations which made this possible.  Nothing like receiving something from home when you are far away and missing everyone. Let's make Christmas memorable for them. Donations needed for deployed unit care packages such as coffee, small health and beauty items, nuts, dried fruit, hard candy etc. CPT Daisy Chambers or SFC Jenna Polk, 691st FST, AOB-South/Camp Brown, APO AE 09355

7.


8. If you are available on Thursday the 8th, get on the bus at the Elks before 10 am so we can push the council to pass the school tax reduction for veterans.  Please bring your covers.

**Items of Interest**

**Retired Tottenville HS principal sells model train collection to help Marines in need**



Michael Marotta shows one of his locomotives to his son. (Marotta family photo)

By [Diane C. Lore | lore@siadvance.com](http://connect.silive.com/user/dlore/posts.html) Staten Island Advance
[comments](http://www.silive.com/news/index.ssf/2016/11/retired_tottenville_hs_princip.html#comments)

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Retired Tottenville High School Principal Michael Marotta, a former U.S. Marine, wanted to do something to help active-duty Marines who may find themselves in dire financial straits, especially around the holidays. So Marotta, a Dongan Hills resident, sold his beloved train set Marotta, who grew up in Tompkinsville, had been collecting model trains all his life, but decided he could do more good if he used the money to set up a non-profit foundation to give Marines a hand.

"I meet these young Marines, young men and women, and I personally feel I have a debt to them," said Marotta, 76, who joined the Marines in 1962 and served in the Reserves until 1970. "I want to be there for them.

Retired Tottenville High School Principal Michael Marotta as he looked when hed joined the Marines in 1962. He later served in the Reserves until 1970. Marotta said he got the idea for the foundation earlier this year after he and members of the Staten Island detachment of the Marine Corps League, based in Sunnyside, took up a collection for a former Marine whose van was stolen with all his possessions inside. The incident got him looking to do more for Marines in similar circumstances. For years he displayed his collection of model trains on rows of wooden shelves in his basement. He also kept a working model railroad display for his three sons as they grew up.

"It was a pretty big set, about 500 pieces," he said, with some of the earliest and rare pieces made of cast iron, that dated back to the turn of the 20th century. "I've always been fascinated by trains, and I was a pretty serious collector, but I thought if I sold my collection, I could do some good with it," Marotta said. The nationwide sale, coordinated through a Danbury, Conn., auction house, netted him a cool $100,000. Marotta used the proceeds as seed money to start "The Aiding Marines Foundation," 501-C non-profit that offers grants of up to $5,000 to Leathernecks in financial difficulty. "We're looking to help any Marine who has a medical problem, a legal problem, whether from a natural disaster or something else, who needs a quick infusion of cash to get back on his or her feet," Marotta said.

The foundation is now run by family members, including his son Joseph, who joined the Marines in 1992 and served for six years. "We are keeping the red tape to a minimum," said Marotta, whose older brother, Pat, was also a Marine. "All they have to do is get collaboration of their need either from their commanding officer, chaplain, or a social agency, and we'll shoot them out a check the next day."

Michael Marotta spent most of his 36 years in education at Tottenville High School, where he was appointed assistant principal in 1972 and principal in 1992. He retired in 1999. Marotta started his 36-year career in education as a science teacher at Dreyfus Intermediate School (I.S. 49) in Stapleton, and went on to teach chemistry at Tottenville High School. He was appointed assistant principal at Tottenville in 1972 and principal in 1992. He retired from Tottenville in 1999. He taught science education at St. John's University for several years after he retired. Currently he is treasurer of the Staten Island retirees chapter of Council of Supervisors and Administrators, and a member of the union's recently formed veterans group. For more information about Marotta's Aiding Marines Family Foundation, go to http://www.aidingmarinesfamilyfoundation.org/