
VFW POST 604 NEWS

April 2011

V.F.W. Mission Statement

The purpose of this corporation (VFW) shall be fraternal, patriotic, historical, charitable, and educational; to preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members; to assist worthy comrades; to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead, and to assist their widows and orphans; to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States of America, and fidelity to its institutions of American freedom, and to preserve and defend the United States from all her enemies, whomsoever.

Commander's Corner

Greetings to the members of VFW Post 604. It has been another month since I last gave you an update on what we are doing at the Post. At our last Post meeting on March 15th, the officers and Post members set the date of April 19 for our opening date. It has been long in coming but it is just about here. We are getting our cable TV installed and the connection for our internet has been set for this month. We have just a few small things to finish and we are all working hard and long to make sure we are ready. After the Post is open, we will set a day to celebrate and have our Grand Opening (stay tuned).

There are several members that have stepped up beyond the call of duty and have given their all for the Post. I am working on a way to recognize them and show our appreciation for all they have done. I can't thank these people enough for the hard work and dedication they have shown to keep VFW Post 604 from disappearing. They kept the faith and would not give up. These men and women deserve our thanks and gratitude for all they have done without even having a Post to work out of. May God bless them all. Thank you.

Commander - Joe Hardin



Post 604 Ladies Auxiliary

Hello every one. This winter we have had some of our members in the hospital and also on the sick-list. Maybe the spring weather will make us feel better.

We have seen some new and old faces that have not been there for awhile. Participation and dedication to our community by playing Post 604 Ladies Auxiliary Bingo and making donations does help our organization and community.

Comrades and Sisters, we are capable of incredible feats. Our members are some of the most passionate people in this country. There is an undercurrent of strength and resilience that is unique to our organizations. I believe with all my heart that this stems from our understanding of how priceless our freedom is. You either fought for that freedom with your own two hands, or you watched someone you loved dearly fight for it. The sacrifices that come with both are a part of who we are as members of the VFW, Ladies Auxiliary, and Men's Auxiliary. Can you imagine what our country would be like if this strength and resilience didn't exist? Every life you touch, every child you teach, every deed you do is a part of this pulsing, living thing called patriotism.

Keep all our Vets in our prayers.

Janet Williams, President VFW Ladies Auxiliary

Post & Auxiliary Elections

Annual Office elections for V.F.W. Post 604, Ladies Auxiliary, and Men's Auxiliary are upcoming. Nominations for our 2011 – 2012 Officers will close on April 19, 2011 with voting during our monthly meetings.

For list of the offices open to nomination, see the March 2011 Newsletter.

Department of Veterans Affairs

Claim Decision Lesson

VA adjudication is not perfect. If made stricter, more deserving claimants would be denied. If more relaxed, more undeserving claimants would succeed.

The VA is charged to resolve borderline cases in favor of veteran claimants, but they are also charged with proper stewardship of federal funds. Not an easy balance. Sometimes you win, and sometimes you lose.

We've seen how to apply for veterans benefits, and how to file a timely appeal if denied. We've seen how cases denied years ago have been successfully reopened and approved, and how appeals have reversed hasty initial denials. Let's also learn from a good claim that was denied, appealed, denied again, and now not pursued.

Frank Lissonier was an Air Force sergeant stationed in Turkey during the Cold War. He wore a headset for 12 hours a day and monitored electronic intercept signals. The Soviets used the not-so sophisticated counter-intelligence technique of randomly blasting out loud noise on their telemetry frequencies. You can imagine what happened to Frank's hearing. He was reassigned to an Air Force administrative position due to his hearing loss, similar to a "Seventy-one Lima" in the Army. Frank filed for hearing loss and tinnitus (ringing in the ears) as service connected disabilities. The VA Indianapolis Regional Office denied his claim due to the administrative occupational code on his separation form (DD 214). He filed a timely appeal with the Board of Veterans Appeals, and asked for a personal hearing before a member of the Board in Indianapolis. An Indianapolis VA representative telephoned Frank to ask if he would accept a video teleconference (VTC) in lieu of a personal hearing. The wait for an in-person hearing was described as about a year, and the video option was offered the next month. (We now know that this "It will take a long time to get your case before a traveling member of the BVA, but if you accept a VTC your case appeal can be processed quicker" stuff is a ploy, but we then assumed almost all VA employees had veterans interests at heart. In short, Frank and I were gullible. All they wanted was to close a case.)

Frank had even obtained a buddy statement supporting his claim while waiting for the hearing. His case seemed straightforward, and Frank presents himself well. Frank and I discussed it, and he decided to try the video teleconference.

The appeals board member turned Frank down after the VTC. The written denial only cited the same evidence Indianapolis had considered and made no reference to the new buddy statement. [The decision WAS relatively quick, though!] We asked for

reconsideration on the basis that not all the evidence – specifically the buddy statement – had been considered, one of the reconsideration bases listed by an addendum to the appeals decision. The response to our request to reconsider was written and signed by the same member who had turned Frank down. I guess he decided he had not made a mistake.

Frank had 120 days to choose whether to take his case to the U.S. Court of Veterans Appeals for Veterans Claims. He chose not to spend the money required for filing fees and legal representation. [Frank had a good job and decent income. Low income veterans can apply for waiver of U.S. Court of Veterans Appeals for Veterans Claims filing fees. They can also apply for free legal representation before the Court from The Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program.] I can understand Frank's decision. His relatively mild degree of hearing loss would have likely resulted in a 0 percent rating, and his tinnitus 10 percent. His compensation would have been \$112 a month [\$123 in 2011], whereas his expense to take another chance at winning could have been thousands of dollars. A final decision would have taken years, and Frank wanted to get on with his life. I felt stupid for encouraging him to file the original claim.

Based on a scientific sample of one, don't accept the video teleconference hearing option

John Tilford - Post Service Officer

Vet to Vet

Vet to Vet is peer-to-peer support to veterans of all eras, including those who are now returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. It is essential for Veterans to be able to safely, and confidentially, talk about issues such as PTSD, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, family issues, bipolar disorder, and many other disorders and reoccurring illnesses. The importance of the Vet to Vet peer support is that these Veterans will trust and talk to a fellow Veteran in most cases before they will a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, or VA doctor. Peers offer each other an understanding that comes from having experienced a similar situation or problem. Vet to Vet is endorsed by the VA and the facilitators are trained by the VA.

Vet to Vet Bloomington meets every Monday 7pm at the Ivy Tech main Campus 200 Daniels Way room A118.

See <http://www.vetvetbloomington.com/>



Laurens B. Strain - VFW Post 604

APRIL 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Bingo (Eagles) - 1430
3	4 * Vet to Vet - 1900	5	6	7 Bingo (Eagles) - 1730	8	9 Bingo (Eagles) - 1430
10 * Vet to Vet - 1900	11	12	13	14 Bingo (Eagles) - 1730	15	16 Bingo (Eagles) - 1430
17	18 * Vet to Vet - 1900	19 POST 604 RE-OPENS Men's Aux Mtg - 1800 Ladies Aux Mtg - 1900 (Eagles) V.F.W. Mtg - 1900	20	21 Bingo (Eagles) - 1730	22	23 Bingo (Eagles) - 1430
24	25 * Vet to Vet - 1900	26	27	28 Bingo (Eagles) - 1730	29	30 Bingo (Eagles) - 1430

(* For Vet-to-Vet Held at IVY Tech, 200 Daniels Way room A118 - Check website <http://www.vetovetbloomington.com/> to confirm location)

Telephone Numbers

Post 604 - Canteen (812) 339-2375

PPT License # 122238

Raffle License # 122237

Bingo License # 121844

Post Officers

VFW Post 604			Men's Auxiliary to VFW Post 604			Ladies Auxiliary to VFW Post 604		
Commander	Joe Hardin	(812) 334-8479	President	Mike Pipher	(812) 334-0748	President	E. Janet Williams	(812) 876-3676
Senior Vice Commander	Tony Halliday	(812) 369-0866	Senior Vice President	Joe Crawford	(812) 330-1343	Senior Vice President	Millie Briles	(812) 336-8409
Junior Vice Commander	Bill Halliday	(812) 360-4862	Junior Vice President	Mark Sink	(812) 336-4566	Junior Vice President	Mary Figg	(812) 876-4971
Quartermaster	Mark Dammer	(812) 824-3367	Treasurer	Mike Griffith	(812) 349-2563	Treasurer	Patty Pate	(812) 339-6045
Adjutant	Bob Lanning	(812) 327-7953	Secretary	Mike Griffith	(812) 349-2563	Secretary	Kathy Hardin	(812) 334-8479
Chaplin	Roy Smith	(812) 797-4654	Chaplin	Eric Sink	(812) 336-4566	Chaplin	Joyce Grubb	(812) 336-6447
Service Officer	John Tilford	(812) 336-5574				Patriotic Instructor	Wilma Hays	(812) 332-5329
1 Year House Committee	John Martin	(812) 339-1113						
2 Year House Committee	Cathi Johnson	(812) 876-5745						
3 Year House Committee	Leonard L Heldman	(812) 361-9129						

Laurens B. Strain V.F.W. Post 604
2404 W Industrial Park Drive
Bloomington, IN 47404-2690

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
BLOOMINGTON IN 47401
PERMIT No. 205

"Oldest Post in the State"

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Phone: (812)-339-2375

GRAND REOPENING

Tuesday APRIL 19, 2011