

VFW POST 604 NEWS

WWW.VFW-604.ORG

September 2016

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

Hi everyone! It's hard to believe there are only 4 months left in this year. They say time passes quickly when you are busy and having fun. I know we have been busy and I hope everyone has been having fun.

It looks like all of our updates to the Post will come together at the end of the month. Our parking lot will be repaired and striped. The stairs for the deck will be put in. The east side and front of our building will be sided. The siding is being donated by the Men's Auxiliary. Thanks guys.

All of our Friday night dinners and Texas Holdem are doing great. I want to send my thanks to all of the volunteers who spend lots of time and effort to make it all happen.

The 50th anniversary of the Vietnam war ([see pictures on right](#)) was held at the courthouse and was put together by Mary Elftman, our Monroe County Veterans Service Officer. There was a good turnout and the weather was great. I want to thank everyone who participated in the ceremony. Great job! If you want to see the entire program, you can see it on Catstv.net. Go to catstv.net Home page and click on Community Videos. Then click on Vietnam Commemoration Ceremony.

We are starting our program for school kids and Teacher of the Year. If you know any student that would like to participate, call the Post for more information. There is a lot of scholarship money to be earned.

As always our membership is the heart of our Post. So please take the time to pay your dues. If you want you can bring them to the Post and we can enter them online in a matter of minutes.

Hope to see you all at the Post soon.

Commander - Joe Hardin



Viet Nam 50th Anniversary pictures

TAPS

Charles L. "Chuck" Welsh

Chuck was a Navy Veterans serving on the USS Lake Champlain, 1961-1964

With each passing day, things will become easier. This is to let you know that there is tremendous support behind you today. Chuck will be missed by all the Men and Women of VFW Post604 and the 7th District.

James C. Arnold, Chaplain

VFW Post 604

Past VFW 7th District Commander

VFW Auxiliary

I'd like to wish Leonard Heldman a very "Happy Birthday". Thank you for being you. It takes a special person to put up with a crew like you have. Some of us are trying a lot of times.

Hope by the time you get this newsletter, the projects will have been started and almost completed, if weather permits. The parking lot is going to be paved, stairs on deck and new siding on out building. Thanks to the Post and out Men's auxiliary.

Dates to Remember

Sept 2—check house committee article
Sept 9—Fish all you can eat \$7.00
Sept 16-- Steak and trimmings \$11.00
Sept 17—District meeting at Fort Branch
Sept 18—Tenderloins and extras \$5.00
Sept 20—Meeting night
Sept 23—Chopped steak and gravy \$7.00
Sept 30—Check house committee article
All dinners come with sides and desserts

50/50 Winners

July 24 – has not been claimed
July 29 Kathy Haney
Aug 5 – Sandi Taylor
Aug 12 – Les Martin
Congratulations to the winners and ato those who donate, Thank you. The next 50/50 will be for Halloween treat bags for kids.
God bless our Veterans near and far, Please keep them safe and God bless America.
My prayers for those who have lost loved ones. Bless all those who ill, hope you get well soon.
And finally Happy Birthday to all those that have a birthday ion September.

Dorothy White
President VFW Auxiliary
812-345-9025



*****NOTICE*****

The post has two electric mobile chairs and wheel chairs for the handicapped for loan to any member or family of any member. Contact Cmdr Joe Hardin for details.

WOW!!!-----9th MONTH OF THE YEAR---ALREADY !!!

LABOR DAY-MONDAY-Sept 5th--The Post will open at Noon just like normal with our **Jumbo Hot Dogs** all day long as well as our great bartender-which actually, all of our volunteers are **GREAT!!!**

So lets start the long weekend with the **1st Friday of the Month Dinner Special (Sept 2nd)** where we will be having **PULLED PORK SANDWICH** with **Corn on the COB & Potato Salad** plus **Dessert--all for \$6.50**

NASCAR SUNDAY—Sept 18th brought to you by the Mens Auxiliary which means **Gigantic Hand-Dipped Breaded Tenderloins**. These NASCAR Sundays are really a fun time but the season is getting shorter. You need to try it—c'mon out!! Can't beat the price—a whole whopping **\$5.00**. Post will Open at Noon—Close around 6:00 ish—probably later though!!



Then, just a few reminders for ya—**Texas Hold-em Tournament** every **Thursday**, starts at **7:00 p.m.** It would be a shame to forget about the Men's Aux. presenting their **FISH DINNER!!!** on **Sept. 9th—Friday**-have you tried this dinner yet?? **\$7.00** all you can eat!! It is **GREAT**—just like the cooks!! Then we go to our **3rd Friday of the Month STEAK NIGHT (16th)!!** 8 oz. Ribeye with Baked Potato and Salad and Dessert all for just **\$11**. Hey!! Post Commander cooks this one for ya!!—Joe & his crew do a great job!!! We have a **5th Friday** in the month (**Sept 30th**)—so the **Tim & Tim Boys** are going to whip up some **Chicken & Noodles** (Tim D. tells us that these Noodles are going to be **SUPERB!!**)with Mashed Potatoes & Corn along with Desserts all for?????—you guessed it--**\$6.50**. Oh yes, there is a **4th Friday in the Month** but we need you to check out **The Auxiliary** news article for that dinner special!!!! **IT'S GOOD!!!!**

All in all it looks like a great September to us, so you need to try one or all of the above events and let us know what you think—**OK??**

House Committee

Laurens B. Strain – VFW Post 604

September 2016

Closed Sunday	Open 1200 - 2200 Monday	Open 1600 - 2200 Tuesday	Open 1600 - 2200 Wednesday	Open 1600 - 2200 Thursday	Open 1600 - 2200 Friday	Open 1000 - 2200 Saturday
				 1 Starts at 7pm * Vet to Vet – 1800	 2 Serving Dinner 1800 – 2000 Commander's Drawing 1900	3
4	5 HOT DOG MONDAY Labor Day Open @ Noon	6	7	8  Starts at 7pm * Vet to Vet – 1800	9  Serving Dinner 1800 - 2000 Commander's Drawing 1900	10
11	12 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon	13	14	15  Starts at 7pm * Vet to Vet – 1800	16  Serving Dinner 1800 - 2000 Commander's Drawing 1900	17
18  Post Open at Noon	19 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon	20 Meetings V.F.W. – 1800 V.F.W. Aux – 1800 Men's Aux – 1800	21	22  Starts at 7pm * Vet to Vet – 1800	23  Serving Dinner 1800 - 2000 Commander's Drawing 1900	24
25	26 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon	27	28	29  Starts at 7pm * Vet to Vet – 1800	30 Serving Dinner 1800 - 2000 Chicken & Noodles dinner with mashed potatoes and corn Commander's Drawing 1900	

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

Telephone Number (812) 339-2375

Charity Game Night License # 141029

Raffle License # 141031

Maybe You Can Help

There's a widow's appeal I'm working on which requires evidence I don't have. Maybe you or some veteran you know can help by providing a personal statement.

The widow married the Vietnam-era veteran years after his military service. I met him twice when working on his claim for service connection for his severe diabetes type 2 and ischemic heart disease before he died. This vet had to pause and rest to finish signing his name to the VA application form. Both of these disabilities would have been 'automatically service connected' because of being on the VA's list of presumptive disabilities due to exposure to Agent Orange had this veteran been assigned to Vietnam during the war. He was not. He was assigned to an Army base near – as he wrote on the back of a photograph – "Cow Pong", a village in Thailand.

The diabetes and heart disease killed him. I helped the widow claim his death was service connected. Claim denied because of his not being assigned to Vietnam and lack of any documentation of his airplane stopping in Vietnam on the way to Thailand as he described to me. Requests to the air carriers at that time have not been productive, nor have inquiries to the Thailand veterans groups.

The VA is reluctant to approve service connected death or compensation claims due to chemical defoliant exposure in Thailand. The cases that have been approved share two things: 1) use of the VA-acceptable phrase 'herbicide exposure' instead of 'Agent Orange', and 2) some sort of documentation that the veteran worked on, or was regularly exposed to, herbicides on the perimeter of a Thailand base. Guards and dog handlers are good military occupations for these types of claims. Photographs of the veteran in MP uniform standing next to the guard shack at the gate of his Thailand base (obviously on the perimeter) are great.

However, there is a glimmer of hope for indirect evidence of this veteran's exposure to herbicides in Thailand, and it's right on his DD-214. The widow does not know what he did that he should not have done, or didn't do that he should have, but her husband had several weeks of 'bad time' in Thailand. Now very few, if any, of our comrades in Post 604 are directly familiar with 'bad time', but you've heard stories from the guys down at the pool hall. The service member gets in enough trouble to be disciplined with hard labor and/or confinement. Each such day does not count – is 'bad time' – toward completion of the period of enlistment. A Marine who enlisted for four years with 60 days bad time on his record would actually be on active duty for four years and 60 days.

The base near "Cow Pong" was surely too small to have an actual brig. Therefore, our veteran with bad time would have been on hard labor during those several weeks. The men I saw on hard labor on Monkey Mountain east of Da Nang worked out on the perimeter. They dug out or broke off, hand fires. Nobody wanted carried, and burned the brush left behind after defoliant herbicides killed the plants. All day, in the hot sun, inhaling the dust from the dried plants and the smoke from the to do that work, it had to be done, and those assigned to

hard labor did it.

If you, or anyone you know, would provide a personal statement that service members on hard labor in Southeast Asia (especially in Thailand) around 1969-1970 cleared out the dead plants on base perimeters, it could be a big help to a local widow. Please let me know if you can help.

Is it weird that a veteran's bad behavior 46 years ago might indirectly benefit his widow now? Yes, but not as weird as a series of VA appeal hearings in 1976 and 1977. At that time the 'G.I. Bill' educational benefits had a ten year delimiting date (deadline) counting from date of separation from active duty, the first day the veteran was eligible. Veterans who were discharged for going AWOL to avoid Vietnam had been given other-than-honorable (OTH) discharges. The 1976 blanket amnesty upgraded those discharges to under honorable conditions. These OTH veterans who applied for VA educational benefits before 1976 were almost always denied. In rare cases they were approved by the VA in spite of the OTH discharge on bases such as showing that their AWOL was really to see their dying mother. In those cases their delimiting date remained ten years after their separation date. Other OTH vets called the VA in the early 1970s and asked if they were eligible and were accurately told they were not and didn't bother to apply. If they applied for educational benefits after the 1976 amnesty upgrades, they were approved but their delimiting date was very close to expiring. Here comes the weird part: if the OTH veteran did not apply before 1976 because of what he was told by the VA, but he could demonstrate during a personal hearing that what he did to deserve the OTH discharge was so bad that the VA would have confirmed his ineligibility had he applied, he got a ten year delimiting date alright, but counting from the date when he first became eligible based on the 1976 amnesty upgrade date for his discharge. You read that right. Not so bad upgraded vet who applied after 1976 = a few years of benefits, horrible upgraded vet who applied after 1976 = almost a full ten. So the veterans would say things during these hearings like, "Yeah, I made a break for it and went AWOL to avoid Vietnam, but I beat up the guard and robbed a liquor store on the way out just for fun!" and they'd get rewarded with years more educational benefits.

That's when I was first exposed to VA case law, which seems to be another name for Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky*.

John Tilford – Service Officer

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VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS



ESTABLISHED SEPTEMBER 29, 1899

