
VFW POST 604 NEWS

WWW.VFW-604.ORG

May 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

VFW Members! If you didn't make it to our meeting on April 19th, I want to let everyone know that the nominations and elections went well. We have our new slate of officers for Post 604 and they were sworn in. They will not be taking office until the State Commander takes office at the State Convention.

We have some good news that some of you may not know about. The teacher our Post submitted for Teacher of the Year was chosen at the District level and was forwarded on to the State level. When the judging for the State level was completed, he was chosen as the Middle School Teacher of the Year. He has now been submitted to the National level and we are all wishing him great success at that level. His name is David Terwilliger from Jackson Creek Middle School. David also served 4 years in the Marines and then 16 more years in the US Army.

On April 2nd, my wife Kathy and I attended the awards ceremony at the Dept. of Aerospace Studies at IU for the Air Force ROTC Detachment 215 in Bloomington. I presented the award to Cadet Christopher Dever. (See pictures on page 4) The cadet met all the criteria for the award and had demonstrated superior performance during the past year.

Make sure your calendar is marked for our Memorial Day service at Valhalla on Monday, May 30th, starting at 10:00am. The Post will be serving lunch afterwards. We had a great turnout last year so don't forget to get there early.

Mark your calendars also for Saturday, May 28th, at 10:00am. We will be putting flags on the graves at Clear Creek Cemetery. We will have breakfast afterwards at the Post. Last year we had a great turnout and finished in about an hour.

Commander - Joe Hardin

Post 604 Men's Auxiliary

Does everyone realize we are entering the 5th month of 2016 already? If these months don't slow down a bit it could become a *new year* when we wake up tomorrow.....Wow!!!!

Everything here at Post 604 is going great. Our Friday night dinners are growing each week. Can you say "Sold-Out." Thursday night poker is still going strong. We had 80 qualified for the Tournament of Champions this year. NASCAR Sundays are always big and lots of fun. Next NASCAR Sunday is May 15th.

Your officers for 2016 are as follows:

President: Tim Haney

1st Vice President: Mike Pipher

2nd Vice President: Joe Crawford

Treasure/Secretary: Steve Lang

Chaplin: Mark Taylor

Trustees: 1 year Dennis Knoy; 2 year Greg Johnson; and 3 year Tim Dittimore.

Come see what you've been missing and bring a friend.

Tim Haney, President VFW Men's Auxiliary

NOTICE: On Saturday, May 21st, we will be having a benefit pancake breakfast at the Post at 9:00am. This is for the Indiana Fury Baseball Team. This is a group of 15-16 year old kids here in Bloomington. Come out and help us support the Indiana Fury team

VFW Auxiliary

Well it's getting pretty outside, the trees and flowers are blooming, the mushrooms are popping up and the mowers are buzzing along with the bees. I am so happy that we have summer to look forward to.

Just a reminder, if you haven't paid your 2015-16 dues by June 30th you will no longer be a member of the VFW Auxiliary. So if you haven't, please get the dues paid.

Since the fourth Friday this month is Memorial Day weekend, we will not be having our regular Friday night dinner.

It has been brought to my attention that the rumor is going around that if you are not an officer of the Auxiliary you don't have to come to the meetings. Well I'm telling now that if you are a member in good standing, you are welcome and requested to come to our meetings. We need you here at the post for our meetings. At this point, we are still looking for officers. The meetings only last an hour to an hour and a half, so please come.

Here's hoping this article finds you and yours well. God bless our Veterans both near and far and their families.

Julia Curtis
President VFW Auxiliary
812-822-0028

TAPS

Lowell E. Bohall

"A time like this is difficult for so many people. May it comfort you to know that there is support with you at all times from friends and loved ones."

Lowell will be missed by all the Men and Women of VFW Post 604 and the 7th District.

James C. Arnold. Chaplin
VFW Post 604
Past VFW 7th District Commander

BUSY BUSY MAY!!!

1st Friday of the Month Dinner Special (May 6th) where we will be featuring **Beef Stroganoff** with **Mashed Potatoes** and **Corn & Rolls**. Noodle Doodles with a fork and desserts and of course it just cost **\$6.00!!** Serving starts at 6 pm and we go until it's gone!! By the way, last month our Cubed Steak Dinner—**just wow!!**—you really missed a superb meal—definitely doing that one again!!

NASCAR Sunday this month will be **May 15th**. We do know that those **Gigantic Hand-Dipped Breaded Tenderloin Sandwiches** will be on the ready!! These guys serve between 60 to 80 Tenderloins on NASCAR Sundays—so with a few more members giving it try for **\$5.00** we could push that number over **100!!** We help them—They help us—and its all for the good of your **VFW Post 604!!!**

3rd Friday of the Month STEAK NIGHT (20th)!! 8 oz. Ribeye with Baked Potato and Salad and Dessert all for just **\$11**. This dinner—this price—only right here at your **VFW Post 604!**--That's right—just **\$11**. **Texas Hold-em Tournament** every **Thursday**, starts at **7:00 p.m.**

Lets not forget the Men's Aux. presenting their **FISH DINNER!!!** on **May 13th—2nd Friday of the Month** starting at 6:00 p.m.---all you can eat for **\$7.00!!** Then we have the **4th Friday of the Month—May 27th** where we will have **Pork B-B-Que Sandwich** with Potato Salad & Dessert for \$5.00

Now we come to **May 30th (Memorial Day-Monday)**, after attending the ceremonies at Valhalla come on out to the Post for our traditional **Free Ham & Beans with Cornbread**. We will open at **10:00 a.m.** and will serve all day until around 6:00 p.m. Make plans to stop by and see your Post—renew your membership---eat good food—have a good time!!!

House Committee

NOTICE: On Saturday May 14th we will be hosting a benefit breakfast from 7 to 10 am at the post. Proceeds from breakfast will be used to sponsor about 15 young men and women of the Calvary Baptist church group summer outing.

Laurens B. Strain – VFW Post 604

May 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	2 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon	3	4	5 	6 Serving Dinner 1800 – 2000  Commander's Drawing 1900	7
8	9 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon	10	11	12  Starts at 7pm 1921 – Post 604 Chartered * Vet to Vet – 1800	13 Serving Dinner 1800 - 2000  Commander's Drawing 1900	14 BENEFIT BREAKFAST CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH YOUTH 7 TO 10 am
15  Open Noon 'til Victory 	16 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon	17 Meetings V.F.W. – 1800 V.F.W. Aux – 1800 Men's Aux – 1800	18	19  Starts at 7pm * Vet to Vet – 1800	20 Serving Dinner 1800 - 2000  Commander's Drawing 1900	21 BENEFIT PANCAKE BREAKFAST FURY BASEBALL TEAM 9:00 am
22	23 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon	24	25	26  Starts at 7pm * Vet to Vet – 1800	27 Commander's Drawing 1900	28
29 	30 MEMORIAL DAY FREE HAM AND BEANS FOLLOWING CEREMONIES AT VALHALLA Post open at 10am	31				

(* 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 # 137924

Raffle License # 137923

Mamie-itis

I was a brand-new veteran's benefits counselor (VBC) GS-962-7 in 1975. Several Indianapolis Regional Office VBCs with years of experience helped train me. Mamie was one. Let's not worry about her last name, even though I'm sure she passed away decades ago.

Mamie was the widow of a WWII veteran. So was Helen Troy, mother of Mike Troy, double gold medal winner in the 1960 Rome Olympics in swimming. (Helen once stayed with Polly to help watch our two small children during one of my many Reserve annual trainings. I asked her to bring her gold medal to show us when she first stopped by the house. Mike had given her one of his two. Helen had raised two sons after her husband's passing. Mike thought she deserved it.) So that was the VA regional office workforce in the mid-1970s: a few remaining WWII veterans (You may recall an earlier article about Infantry Airborne Mel Biddle and his Medal of Honor), a group of WWII widows (Mamie, Helen), a group of Korean era veterans, a new wave of Vietnam veterans, and a few others who seemed out of place. (It would seem that these days the 'out of place' crowd has taken over the VA.)

Mamie had worked for the VA for decades and was still a GS-9, the full working level of a VBC. Most of us rotated between working in the 'toll-free' telephone area (which then consisted of a bunch of cubicles in a windowless area on the first floor with each 'cube' surrounding a VBC, a telephone with headset, a small library of reference materials, coffee or soft drink, and half-eaten snacks), the 'walk-in' area (regular office desks separated by screens near the walk-in entrance to the regional office – the receptionist's nick name was 'The Dragon Lady'), and upstairs on the third floor attached to an adjudication team to assist in perfecting claims (adjudicators were not supposed to contact claimants in person or by telephone). I noticed that Mamie spent more time on extra kinds of duties, such as answering correspondence and carrying special cases through processing, and less in actual contact with the veterans. The VA was a sort of folksy federal agency and took pride in protecting some employees. (This was in contrast to the IRS which I had just transferred from to return to Indiana. In the IRS you succeeded or were fired. Four years later I returned to the IRS.)

Mamie showed me how to research benefits questions, how to answer letters, the way to the nearby White Castle, and other critical things.

I suddenly realized one day, after about three years of working for the VA, how often Mamie cheerfully complained (not really complaining, sort of bragging) to anyone who would listen about how often her daily stack of cases included a real problem case, the kind that take hours to straighten out, that demanded dedicated time of a senior VA employee to coordinate corrective action, that resulted in other VA employees taking over the remainder of Mamie's stack of claim folders.

Now, to this day, I have the greatest respect for Mamie's dedication. She was also sharp regarding what needed to be done. She was fearless in asking managers to drop what they were doing to assign one of their adjudicators to work her current crisis case.

However, even as slow as I am, on that realization day I started to question how it could be that these disaster cases always seemed to be Mamie's. We all had problem cases. We all worked them. But she seemed to have them much more frequently than the rest of us and they always seemed more complex.

My conclusion was that Mamie was the 'carrier', sort of like, you know, Typhoid-Problem-Case Mamie. Mamie must have been

making an average of a case per day into a crisis case. Maybe it was her way of displaying her expertise, maybe in pursuit of a good performance evaluation and/or performance award, maybe a way to get the rest of her workload assigned to others or delayed, or maybe working such cases made her feel important.

But nobody – nooooo-body – could be that unlucky.

Since that time I've recognized other Mamies in other offices. At times I've started down that path and, with sudden and embarrassing recognition, caught myself. At other times I've been in a position to talk to other 'Mamies' (including one First Sergeant) about their work. The speech goes something like this, "Yes, that (veteran, taxpayer, customer, soldier) is really lucky to have you dedicating all your effort to correcting their problem, no matter how long it takes or how difficult it is. You are a real bulldog, and an expert one at that. However, have you considered how unlucky are the other (claimants, taxpayers, customers, soldiers) for whom you are responsible and who are having their cases delayed while you work only on that one problem case? Maybe their cases are simple and could be fixed quickly. Maybe their problems are even more severe and need attention as soon as possible. Assess your workload. Determine how difficult the cases are and how time critical. Get the serious cases to those who can get them done. Sure, include yourself. Either quickly crank out the simple ones or give them to the new employees for training. Don't – for whatever reason – cheat the lower people in the stack because you get hung up on one case. Routine cases become problem cases with age."

Well, here we are, waiting with widows and veterans for years for their VA appeal cases to be resolved. I wonder if the 'Spirit of Mamie' lives on.

John Tilford – Service Officer



Joe Hardin presenting award to Christopher Dever

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

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