

VFW POST 604 NEWS

WWW.VFW-604.ORG

November 2015

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

Hello! Fall has finally arrived and the holidays are just around the corner. That means the end of the year is upon us again and it is time for me to start reminding everyone about their dues. We made 100% membership last year and that keeps our Post alive and strong. So check your cards and see when your dues expire.

Don't forget that November 11th is Veterans Day. There will be a program at the courthouse. We will also serve lunch at the VFW following the program. Lunch will consist of ham & beans, corn bread, fried potatoes and this year we are adding chili as well.

There will be a few changes coming up in December so please keep an eye on our calendar when it comes out in the newsletter. These will be small changes due to the holidays - nothing permanent.

Don't forget it is time for all of us to do our civic duty and vote in the upcoming elections. It is very important that we go to the polls and vote for the candidate of our choice. We all must take this very seriously and pick the ones that will be best for our Country. ❖

Commander - Joe Hardin

VETERANS DAY FACTS

- In 1954, President Eisenhower officially changed the name of the holiday from Armistice Day to Veterans Day.
- In 1968, the Uniform Holidays Bill was passed by Congress, which moved the celebration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. The law went into effect in 1971, but in 1975 President Ford returned Veterans Day to November 11, due to the important historical significance of the date.
- Britain, France, Australia and Canada also commemorate the veterans of World Wars I and II on or near November 11th: Canada has Remembrance Day, while Britain has Remembrance Sunday (the second Sunday of November). In Europe, Britain and the Commonwealth countries it is common to observe two minutes of silence at 11 a.m. every November 11. ❖

Post 604 Men's Auxiliary

OOOTAY!!!

Things round here are really jumpin'. These Friday night dinners have really grown. We are real close to standing room only. I know our commander really appreciates the new following. We have been trying for several years to get a full house.

Speaking of full house - poker on Thursday is still running strong. *Every Thursday @ 7:00 and the first Sunday @ 1:00.

The next NASCAR Sunday is November 22nd - also it's the Championship Race. Well start serving tenderloins at 12:30, race coverage scheduled to start at 3PM. We have enough TVs we can watch the race and football. If you like NASCAR, this is a great place to come watch and eat. If you are a Colts fan, this is a great place to come watch and eat. So in other words come get yourself some, ya hear!

The 1st Friday in November Kathy's fixin' boneless pork chops, dressing, and smashed taters. 2nd Friday is the All-U-Can Eat fish, fries, and slaw. 3rd Friday is steak night with baked potatoes and salad.

I know you hear or read this each month. Thank you to our volunteers and thanks to our special girls for desserts. ❖

Tim Haney, President VFW Men's Auxiliary



VFW Auxiliary

Here we are, November already and we are approaching the holidays.

The first November holiday is Veterans Day and as most of you may already know, we will be participating in a Veterans Day program at the courthouse in downtown Bloomington. I am in need of people to hold flags and carry wreaths during the ceremonies, so if you can possibly be there for the celebration it would be wonderful, and your help would be appreciated. Please call if you can help. We need to honor our veterans.

Also, since we will not be having our Auxiliary dinners in November or December, we will be having other events such as a Christmas party for the children and a lunch for the National Auxiliary President in January. We always have events pop up that may not get into the newsletter. It would be nice to see more of you in the club.

This also leads me to tell you of a project the Post is sponsoring in November. We will be issuing receipts for all register purchases at the bar. The Auxiliary will have a jar to put these receipts in. The Men's Auxiliary and the Post will also have jars for their receipts. At the end of the month all receipts from each jar will be totaled up individually and 10% of the total will be donated to the local non-profit organization chosen by the respective club. The Auxiliary has chosen Hoosier Hills Food Bank for our non-profit. They will need it for the holidays. Speaking of donations, we are donating \$250.00 to the Kiwanis Club to help blind children, the Boy's Club, and more local charities.

With the good work we do at the club, we are able to meet all of our obligations, help with donations to charities, and local veterans. With the participation of more members, we could do so much more. Don't hesitate to come in and involve yourself, we can always use help. Call me if you can help on Veteran's day.

If you are ill, I wish you a speedy recovery. If you've lost a loved one, you have our sympathy. May God bless our troops, both at home and in harm's way and may God bless America. ❖

Julia Curtis
President VFW Auxiliary
812-822-0028

TAPS

Albert Eugene "Gene" Adams

With each passing day, things will become easier. This is to let you know that there is tremendous support behind you today.

Gene will be missed by all the men and women of VFW Post 604 and the 7th District.

NOVEMBER RECEIPTS!!!!

Weird title for a news article isn't it?? Well Post 604 wants to donate some money and we would like **YOUR** help in doing so. The Post has chosen Boys & Girls Club for their charity. The VFW Auxiliary has chosen Hoosier Hills Food Bank for their charity and the Men's Auxiliary has chosen Boy Scout Troop 148 for their charity. So how do **YOU** fit in?? Every time in November when you purchase something at the Post you will be given a **Register Receipt**. There will be jugs labeled with each charity—**YOU** pick the jug that you want to put your receipt in and at the end of the month---the Post will match 10 cents for every \$1 in receipts. So one charity may get \$100 while another may get \$300—it all depends on what **YOU** do with your receipt!! Clear enough?? Well, maybe not, but we anticipate a combined net donation amount of \$500 to \$600 spread between the three charities. If you get our drift---it's up to **YOU!!**

The Big Bird Day is coming at us and the Post will be closed on that Thursday (Nov. 26th) so everyone can enjoy the holiday. However, on the other hand the Post will most definitely be **OPEN** on **Wednesday Nov. 11th—VETERAN'S DAY**—Open at 11:00 am, so when the ceremonies are finished at the court house you can come out to the Post for **FREE Ham & Beans & Fixings**.

1st Friday of the Month Dinner Special this month will be on **Friday Nov 6th** and since the weather is a little colder we will be featuring our **Boneless Pork Chop with Mashed Potatoes & Gravy** and lets do **Dressing** too (hee-hee we got Mary B to do the dressing for us)—**Fried Biscuits** sound good also. Then we will throw in some **Dessert** ---all home cooked and still only **\$6.00!!!!!!** Serving at 6:00 p.m. and go until we run out!! We had this meal last year and its goood plus it's made by one of our finest cooks—Kathy Haney!!

Moving on to **NASCAR SUNDAY. Nov. 22nd** Ford EcoBoost 400 and the Men's Auxiliary will be serving their **Gigantic Hand-Dipped Breaded Tenderloins**. Men's Auxiliary Fish Dinner on the 2nd Friday of the month (**Nov 13th**)-all you can eat!!

Other items of interest are Meineke's **FREE OIL CHANGE** on Veterans Day. Plus let's not forget our **BIG OLE HOT DOGS** each Monday all day long. And then we have the 3rd Friday of the Month (**Nov 20th**) **STEAK NIGHT!!** 8 oz. Ribeye with Baked Potato and Salad and Dessert all for just **\$11**. Yep! That's right—just **\$11**

THANK-YOU to Dorothy White and her ghouls who decorated the Post for Halloween. You guys did a great job and its just another reason our volunteers make Post 604 such a great place. Now we need to call Terminix for that giant Black Spider!! Geez!!

Hey! we would like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday—Be Safe—**Don't Forget NOV. 11th** ❖

House Committee

Laurens B. Strain – VFW Post 604

November 2015

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 1:00 pm	2 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon	3	4	5  Starts at 7pm * Vet to Vet – 1800	6 Serving Dinner 1800 – 2000 Boneless Pork Chop Dinner Commander's Drawing 1900	7
8	9 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon	10	11  Open at 11:00 AM	12  Starts at 7pm * Vet to Vet – 1800	13 Serving Dinner 1800 - 2000  Commander's Drawing 1900	14
15	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
22  Open @ Noon	23 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon	24	25	26  HAPPY THANKSGIVING! CLOSED	27 Commander's Drawing 1900	28
29	30 HOT DOG MONDAY Open @ Noon					

(* 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

Appeals

There is good news and bad news at each step of the Department of Veterans Affairs appeal process. I'll slide my opinions in during the following description of the several steps of the VA appeal system.

Over 95% of VA appeals result from a claimant disagreement with a Veterans Benefits Administration decision. The VBA administers the VA service connected compensation, non-service connected pension (and death pension for survivors), and educational benefit programs. Since Vicky St. Myers of the Monroe County Veterans Affairs Department is so much sharper than I am on the current VA procedures for initial claims, about all I do these days is help claimants with appeals.

Good news: any decision the VA makes can be appealed. More good news: VA appeals are free until the US Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims level and the Court's fees can be waived in cases of financial hardship. Good news if you are on top of it: the claimant has one year from the date of the VA decision to file an appeal. Bad news if you weren't: if the claimant misses the one year deadline by even one day his or her appeal right is dead. After the one year period, the claimant can request that the VA reopen their consideration of the issue denied, but it's a request. The VA, not the claimant, is in the driver's seat. To reopen, the claimant has to either provide information not already considered which is pertinent to the case and not redundant with information already considered, or show that the VA violated one or more of their own regulations. These things happen. The denied veteran may finally locate a buddy who saw him hurt while on active duty years after the denial and obtain a statement. The VA does make mistakes. BUT, the claimant has many more rights if they initiate their appeal less than a year after the decision. An appeal must be started with a "notice of disagreement" sent to the same office which made the decision. Sort of bad news: the VA now requires the use of a form for this purpose, the two page VA Form 21-0958. Previously a signed note specifying what decision you were unhappy with was sufficient.

The VA gets the notice of disagreement and reacts. They may be slow - strike that, they will be slow - but they have to react. (The appeal backlog has had a low priority with the VA for several years but, allegedly, it's now one of their "emphasis" issues.) Even if in your notice of disagreement you said exactly what level of appeal you wished, the VA will ignore that and ask. They will encourage you to use the lowest level possible in order to save themselves (and maybe you) time and trouble: the Decision Review Officer (DRO). The DRO idea started about the turn of the century and sounded good. Part of the pitch was, and

remains, that if the claimant is not happy with the DOR decision, he or she can still go to the traditional appeal process. An experienced VA employee could, with the claimant's permission, review the case before the appeal went formal. The hope was that the simple mistakes could be fixed when discovered and that the hopeless cases could be explained as such to the claimants. 'Didn't really work out that way. In the Indianapolis regional office, the DRO's didn't seem to have the guts to reverse even obviously wrong denials. In the Louisville regional office, the DRO's became "helpers" for the claimants, helping to prepare their cases for the formal appeal process even though they, themselves, didn't resolve very many cases. In Indy (this is over ten years ago) the DRO's were a waste of time, and all that wasted time just delayed starting the appeal in the couple of years high stack of appeal cases. In Louisville (five years ago) the DRO's were part of a team: claimant, representative, DRO. Who the heck knows how DRO's are really going to work today or tomorrow? The only time I would ever recommend the DRO process is if the VA denial is so obviously wrong that a sharp chimpanzee could see it and you and your representative fully expect a quick fix AND are willing to risk a delayed start in a traditional appeal to get one.

If the claimant does not go with the "short-cut" DRO, the VA goes directly to the traditional appeal procedure and issues a Statement of the Case. The Statement of the Case (SOC) is a lengthy document of which only about a half-page of text on the last of typically twelve pages has any real meaning, describing in black and white why they decided as they did. This is what you and your representative need to know. This is the VA laying their cards on the table. The VA hopes the legal "boiler plate" language and the sheer size of the SOC and number and complexity of the accompanying forms in the package will frighten unhappy claimants into dropping their appeal. Quite often it does. One of the included forms is the VA Form 9, the formal appeal form.

Continued next month ...

John Tilford – Service Officer



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