

LEADER MAGAZINE

“In The Eye
Of A Hurricane”

Helene Relief Efforts

Also in This Issue

KIA PFC Don McDuffie Returned Home

Cootie Christmas In The Mountains

HELPING YOU NAVIGATE A SEA

OF INFORMATION



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Features:

On The Cover: Hurricane relief efforts are still under way.
Pictured at right, Post 1142 Aux. Sec'y, Hope Raney, & Aux. Pres., Maebelle Nace,
deliver donated handmade quilts to the families of WNC.

More pictures page 13/14.



DISASTER RELIEF REPORT FORM CAN BE FOUND ON VFW NC WEBSITE BANNER. SCAN THE QR CODE, OR GO TO VFWNC.COM

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- Back Cover: Richard King, United Healthcare**



The Leader Magazine



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CONTRIBUTIONS:

We would love to share your stories, pictures and events, at post and district level,
for comrades & auxiliary. Send correspondence to leaderinfo@vfwnc.com
Submission of articles and photos implies the right to edit and publish all or in part.
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DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S CORNER



Greetings! As we approach the halfway point of this year, I look back at what we have accomplished, in awe of the support and collaboration that is occurring, all over the State and the country. The outpouring of support, contributions, efforts, and networking, that has been demonstrated with hurricane Helene relief has been truly amazing. There are simply too many to mention. Please know that however big or small the contributions from all over the VFW community, they are all huge in the eyes of the recipients! We salute you all for your caring and for still serving! YOU make us great and are truly appreciated! Thank you!

On another note, I have become acutely aware that we have a systemic challenge throughout our organization, and one that our Commander in Chief has been campaigning to resolve since I first met him. Just because we have always done it that way, does not mean it is the right way to do it today, and change must occur where needed. Everything in our lives has been affected by change, regardless of our age or heritage. There can be no denying this fact. What I have seen, is that we seem to want to hold onto the past methods and processes only because we are not willing to exert the efforts to make it better. **Complacency kills!** It is the enemy within and will eat us alive if we do not accommodate change and modernization. *We cannot hold onto the ways of the past, and must embrace new attitudes, activities, and technologies if we are to survive and thrive.* Anyone who tells you differently could not be further from the truth.

We are accepting this at the Headquarters level and doing everything we can to pass that information and access down. I'm counting on everyone of you to accept the challenge and do what is needed to accomplish the mission. If anyone can ... WE CAN! We are, after all, the "A-Team".

An example of "but we have always done it that way" that I will share with you is the need to put your words into writing to stop the fighting. Here's what I mean... After receiving several various complaints from posts, usually concerning a difference of opinion in process, personnel, opinions, etc., and after asking only a few questions of each complaint, I learned not a single organization had supporting minutes, house committee SOP's, canteen SOP's, memorandum of understanding, or bylaws to support either side and their claims. The he said she said days are hereby officially over!

Every committee needs to have a record of their meetings. Every post or auxiliary meeting needs to have a record of their meetings. All motions and their outcomes need to be documented and if there is an understanding between the Post and the Auxiliary about how a certain event or series of events are to be handled, with volunteers, distribution of funds, set up, clean up, etc., then I suggest you reduce it to writing for all parties to sign off on and agree. If its not in writing, there will be fighting.

I recently sat in to mediate a situation, and after both sides exclaimed "But we've been doing it this way for years," and neither could support their position with any notes, minutes, motions or other such agreements, we all agreed that they would go back to their members, present the case, ask for motions to support their desires, and proceed accordingly. Problem solved and no more finger point and accusations! We cannot accomplish our missions, attract new members, and work in harmony if we cannot take time to do the simplest of things, and that is not document our intentions.

Every successful business has a business plan, board meetings have minutes, policies and procedures are published and shared. Every one of which is IN WRITING! You never went anywhere in the military without written orders. You never received any pay without a proper voucher. You did everything based on written orders of some form. Let's get back to our recipe for success!

We have one of the strongest group of members in the country and we can all be proud of our accomplishments over the past decades. Let's renew our commitment to excellence and become the best we can be. Be the example of how we coach into compliance rather than beating into submission.

Respectfully,
Annie Cummings

Remains of NC Soldier KIA McDuffie Identified, Returned Home

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced that U.S. Army Pvt. 1st Class Clem D. McDuffie, 18, of Hamlet, NC, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for August 26, 2024. In the winter of 1950, McDuffie was a member of Item Company, 3rd Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. He was reported killed in action on Nov. 30 after his unit was attacked by the Chinese People's Volunteer Army as they attempted to withdraw near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea. U.S. U.S. forces were unable to return to the area to search for remains as the loss area was in enemy held territory, and the U.S. Army issued a finding of Non-Recoverability on Jan. 16, 1956.

In 1954 the United Nations Command, the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (D.P.R.K. or North Korea) and the Chinese Peoples Voluntary Forces exchanged the remains of fallen service personnel in an effort called OPERATION GLORY. All unidentified remains were interred in the National Military Cemetery the Pacific AKA the Punchbowl in Honolulu, Hawaii.

On March 29, 2021, the DPAA disinterred from the NMCP remains reportedly from the Chosin Reservoir Area and began further identification efforts (Phase 3). With advanced technology in DNA Donald was accounted for August 26, 2024, and his family was notified. McDuffie's name is recorded

on the Courts of the Missing at the Punchbowl, along with the others who are still missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

Six Soldiers From Carolina Killed in War

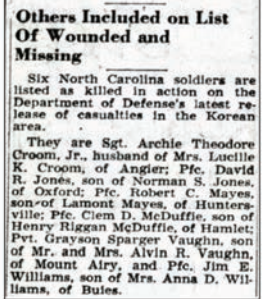
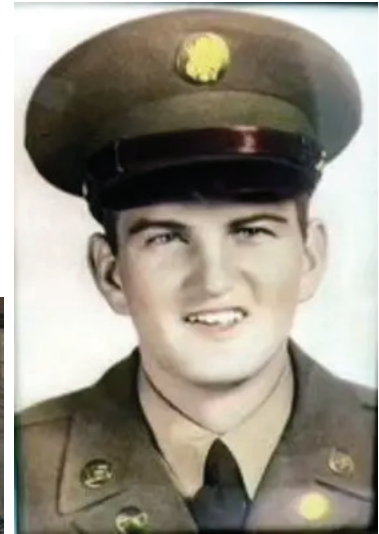
Others Included on List Of Wounded and Missing

Six North Carolina soldiers are listed as killed in action on the Department of Defense's latest release of casualties in the Korean area.

They are Sgt. Archie Theodore Croom, Jr., husband of Mrs. Luellie K. Croom, of Angier; Pfc. David R. Jones, son of Norman S. Jones, of Oxford; Pfc. Robert C. Mayes, son of Lamont Mayes, of Huntersville; Pfc. Clem D. McDuffie, son of Henry Riggan McDuffie, of Hamlet; Pvt. Grayson Sparger Vaughn, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alvin R. Vaughn, of Mount Airy, and Pfc. Jim E. Williams, son of Mrs. Anna D. Williams, of Bules.

On November 30, 74 years to the day he was killed, Pvt 1st Class, Don McDuffie, was interred at his home church, Marks Creek Presbyterian. Donald never had children of his own, but his name was passed on by his brother Arthur,

to his son, who served 30 years in the US Army and attained the rank of Colonel. Col. McDuffie read some of the letters from Don while deployed. The Soldiers Creed was also read aloud. The flag was presented to brother Major US Army Retired J. Vann McDuffie. Rolling Thunder & Patriot Guard escorted the hearse. Dept. Cdr. Cummings, Sr, Vice Beard, Jr. Vice Biggs, PDC Woods, Dept. QM Hutt, Dist 6 Cr Brown, were among those in attendance. Honor Guard was AMVETS. Military Pallbearers, 21 Gun Salute & TAPS by 82nd Airborne Division, Ft. Liberty.



All pictures in left column & dogtags by Jerry D. Andrews Photography.

All others by Publisher Heather Dean- Woods

FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The VFW have numerous talking points that are being pushed in Washington, DC. Some of those points are the Guard VA Benefits Act. H.R. 1139(Don't Feed The Sharks)

H.R.4157 Not Just a Number Act. It deals with Benefits and Suicide Prevention.

H.R. 3933 TAP Promotion Act. This bill will insure that accredited personnel would be available so that the transition from active duty to civilian would be smoother while applying for benefits.

H.R. 8371 Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act This bill will increase the access to home and community-based care programs for veterans and their caregivers.

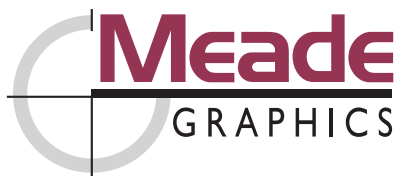
Please continue to reach out to your Representatives about these bills that are being pushed on behalf of veterans. If you don't know who your Representative is please send me an email at Dolphustroy@gmail.com. Soon we will back on Capitol Hill from March 2 -6, 2025 lobbying on behalf of our veterans. We need your help in this fight. When it's time to go to Raleigh, NC when they come back into session let's have a huge number there to show our support also.



Voice of Democracy/ Patriots Pen Winners from Post 2771



Auxiliary President Janice Ford and VFW Commander Richard Jones present the Voice of Democracy 2024 post winner Marissa Doyle and Patriots Pen 2024 post winner Gordon Lin.



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Commander
Annie Cummings



Sr. Vice Commander
Edward Beard



Jr. Vice Commander
Mickey Biggs



Quartermaster
Jenn Hutt



Adjutant
Alecia Judd



Chaplain
Dolphus Troy



Judge Advocate
Josh Holt



Inspector
Bud Stauffer



Surgeon
Dave Martin



Chief of Staff
Tab Brown



Asst. Quartermaster
Charlie Cable



Aide De Camp
David Long

Not Pictured: Victor Letourneaut, National Council Representative

DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICERS



Tab Brown
252-933-2040



Michisa Zahorski
919-616-1223



Cindy Hathaway
336-631-5457



Brad Blackburn
910-740-2285

DISTRICT COMMANDERS



1. Graham Leaver
6060



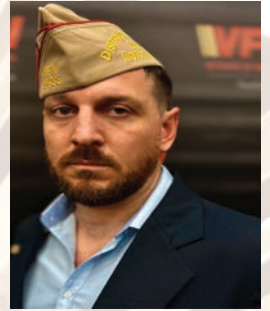
2. Robert Bock
9841



3. Jimmy Baugham
3702



4. David Burger
9960



5. Nicolas Conrad
9983



6. Christopher Brown
1920



7. Robert Kennedy
9103



8. Jerry Moser
670



9. Craig Armstrong
7318



10. John Marion
2972



11. Eric Brown
5352



12. Bobbi Sheets
6365



13. Nathaniel Drisker
1160



14. Art Gordon
4066



15. Kevin Ross
7946



16. David Collins
9116



17. Robert Morrow
7339

- 1- Currituck, Pasquotank, Chowan, Gates, Hertford, Bertie, Martin, Washington, Tyrel, Dare, Perquimans and Camden
 2-Hyde, Beaufort, Pitt, Greene, Lenoir and Wayne
 3 - Northampton, Halifax, Warren, Franklin, Nash, Edgecombe and Wilson
 4 - Pamlico, Craven, Carteret, Jones, Onslow, Pender, Duplin and Sampson
 5- Bladen, Columbus, Brunswick, New Hanover and Topsail Island
 6- Caswel, Person, Granville, Vance, Durham, Alamance and Orange
 7- Chatham, Wake, Johnston and Harnett.
 8- Cumberland, Robeson and Hoke.
 9- Montgomery, Moore, Le, Anson, Richmond and Scotland.

10 - Rockingham, Guilford, Davidson, and Randolph.

11 - Surry, Yadkin, Stokes, Forsyth and Davie.

12 -Rowan, Cabarrus and Stanly.

13 - Gaston, Mecklenburg, Union, and the Kings Mountain 9811

14 - Burke, Lincoln, Catawba, Alexander, Iredel, Cleveland and Rutherford, except Kings Mtn Post 9811.

15 - Avery, Watauga, Ashe, Alleghany, Wilkes, Caldwell and Mitchell. District 16 - Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, Polk, Yancey and McDowel.

17 - Haywood, Transylvania, Cherokee, Graham, Clay, Macon, Jackson and Swain.

DEPARTMENT AUXILIARY OFFICERS

Greetings Brothers & Sisters,

Wishing you and your family a very happy holiday season full of love and fellowship. Thank you so much for the undying support given to our Veterans and their families in Western NC. So many people and communities were affected and the support shown has been extraordinary. There is still more work to be done, and we are ready and willing to continue the support.

The Department of NC Auxiliaries is comprised of over 6,234 members covering 73 Auxiliaries in our 17 districts. We are the families of Veterans that have served in combat, and we understand that without the Veterans of Foreign Wars organization there would be no Auxiliary. This year Commander Annie and I vowed that we would keep our relationship strong so this means the relationship between the VFW and the Auxiliary will also be strong. Communication is the key and I employ Post Commanders and Auxiliary Presidents to keep the lines of communication open and do not be afraid to talk to each other. Personality conflicts will always be there so there are going to be times when you must refer back to your Bylaws and Standing Rules to help you make decisions.

We are 5 months into the 2024-2025 year, and I hope that you are proud of all the work that has been done on both the VFW and the Auxiliary sides of the house. Department goals were set, and we are on target for accomplishing each of them, believe it or not. It has been said that "without a vision the people will perish"- this does not apply to the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Each year the new Commander and the new President presents their vision which should coincide with the organization's mission. Learn the mission and practice it. Please continue to do the work of helping our Veterans and their families and do not get distracted based on minor issues that can easily be resolved. **Remember we are "Serving Those Who Have Served With Love".**

Loyally Serving Our Veterans,
Sandra Jeffries, President 2024-2025
VFW Auxiliary Department of NC



President
Sandra Jeffries



Senior Vice
Anna Holm



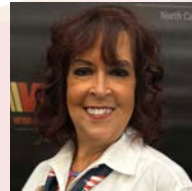
Junior Vice
Lin Moore



Chaplain
Wendy Rachels



Conductor/Secretary
Tracy Armstrong



Treasurer
Sandra Johnson-Leu



Guard
Theresa Billips

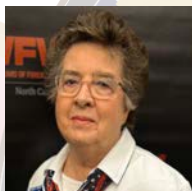


Chief of Staff
Julia Stancil-Warren

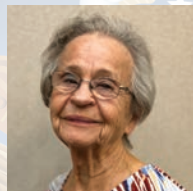
District Presidents



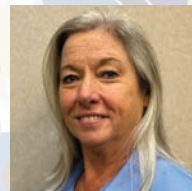
Brittany Phillips
District 1



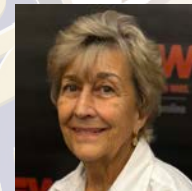
Violet Saviak
District 2



Mary Lewis
District 3



Eileen Lazevnick
District 4



Deborah Crowder
District 5



Emily Ball
District 6



Tina Szafarski
District 7



Mary Zanders
District 8



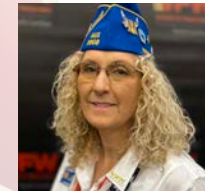
Angi Hardy
District 9



Carsonia Whitmore
District 10



Nancy Raborne
District 11



Theresa Billips
District 12



Becky Rowe
District 13



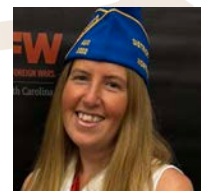
Linda Owen
District 14



Sherry Brooks
District 15



Joyce Preston
District 16



Niki Paganelli
District 17

Annual Memorial Held For USS Cole Sailor



-Salisbury, NC

Seventeen sailors aboard the USS Cole were killed on October 12, 2000, in a suicide bombing by al-Qaeda. One of those, Mess Management Specialist, Lakeina M. Francis, was from Goldsboro, N.C.

She enlisted in the Navy on April 11, 2000 and attended Basic Training in Great Lakes, Illinois. Francis then went to Gulfport, Mississippi, to Mess Management specialist school. She reported to USS Cole (DDG-67) on September 27. Fifteen days later she was killed in the line of duty. She was 19 years old.

Naval History and Heritage Command website states that Mess Management Specialist Seaman Francis was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, and Navy Unit Commendation. She is interred at the Salisbury National Cemetery.

Salisbury Post 3006 has placed a wreath annually in honor of Seaman Francis. This year, Post Commander, Jim Fox, and Post Chaplain, Harold Andrews, led the service. Special remarks were made by Department Commander, Annie Cummings. Department Adjutant, Alecia Judd, laid flowers. Past NC Department Commander, Tim Woods, was stationed on the USS Duluth, and his ship was one of those that responded to the attack. Since moving to NC 15 years ago, he has attended the annual event. He and Commander Cummings laid the wreath.



By Leader Publisher, Heather Dean- Woods



Veterans Honored with Quilts of Valor

Blue Ridge Post 1142 in North Wilkesboro, recently saw three of its veterans wrapped in Quilts of Valor at their November Coffee Call. They were presented by Libby Whittington, shown at left.

(Middle L-R) Jim Parker, Army, & wife, Deborah, Kim Flora, Army, & wife Linda, & Ed Benton, Air Force & wife Gail.

(Far Right) A close up of Jim's quilt.



Pictures from Linda Flora, 1142 Auxiliary





**MONEY BACK TOWARD YOUR
PART B MONTHLY PREMIUM**

**VISION ALLOWANCE FOR
GLASSES OR CONTACTS**

**DENTAL ALLOWANCE FOR
MOST DENTAL TREATMENTS**

**GYM MEMBERSHIP
(YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD
FOR PT)**



**ENROLLEES IN VA HEALTHCARE, TRICARE, OR CHAMPVA AND HAVE
MEDICARE PART A & PART B SHOULD CONTACT ME TO SCHEDULE A
BRIEFING. LET ME KNOW WHAT TIME FORMATION WILL BE.**

I CALL THESE ADDITIONAL BENEFITS, "OPERATION GIVEBACK."

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Chris Brown



Bridging The Gap!

THE VISION

Bridging the gap between our generations of veterans. Foster a sense of camaraderie & belonging for our younger generations. Empower them to become future leaders in the Dept of NC.

The mission of the VFW & Dept of NC must continue & the torch must be passed to the generations following.



Expanding
our horizons
and Bridging the Gap
for the future!

Positively representing the VFW & the Dept of NC in a myriad of settings through actions and demeanor.



MY PLEDGE

I will work, I will save, I will sacrifice, I will endure, I will fight cheerfully & do my utmost as if the issue of the whole struggle depended on me alone.

Pvt. Martin Treptow of WWI

Birthdays & Anniversaries



Warren H. Brown, 103
WWII US Army
November 11



Happy Anniversary
Ryan & Leslie Rogers



Jeff Shermaan
USMC
Post 7383



Russ Chambers
US Army
Post 9010



James Cline III
USMC
Post 10346



Ginger Kennedy
Post 9103



Josh Holt
US Army
Post



Happy Anniversary
Heather Dean & Tim Woods

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Heroes of the Hurricane



Above: Waynesville; Below: North Wilkesboro

*Nat'l CIC,
Al Lipphardt,
Visited Hurricane
Affected Areas*



TO MAKE A DONATION TO
THE VFW OR HURRICANE HELENE
RELIEF SCAN QR CODE



Nat'l Guard Chopper in Banner Elk
dropping off supplies



Cdr Cummings & Past Cdr Woods
shop for supplies in N. Wilkesboro
before heading up the mtn.



WNC Posts became drop off sites for the communities

Right: First Dude, Bill Cummings, Chaplain Dolphus Troy, & Dept. Auxiliary Pres., Sandra Jeffries, help load supplies for other posts.
Far Right: Jenn Hutt, Dept. QM, Mark Garduno, Nat'l QM, & Dept. Inspector, Bud Stauffer, unload supplies.



Heroes of the Hurricane



Above: Dist. 15 Cdr, Kevin Ross, & Dept. QM Jenn Hutt, with a delivery of water.



Above: The sheer scale of destruction is hard to fathom if you haven't seen it personally. Now that the initial efforts of food and shelter have been provided, the dangers of digging out begin, & will continue for years. **Left:** Dist. 5 Cdr., Nick Conrad, wields a chainsaw, as does another comrade (below) in front of a downed shed.



Above: Dept. Chaplain, Dolphus Troy, & Dept. Special Aide-De-Camp, David Long, met up with others at Post 1142 in Wilkes, to help with one of the many trips (right) loading supplies to take to Western North Carolina.



Left: Our veterans worked closely with Fire/EMT & Police Depts to make sure the donations went where needed. **Below Left:** Dept. Inspector, Bud Stauffer, hooking a chain to a tractor bucket to pull a bridge out of a creek. **Below:** 5202 Cdr. Cahill & members with Past Dept. Cdr. Woods, Dist. 15 Aux. Sr. Vice, Heather Woods, with Texas Past Dept. Cdr. Lynn & Karen Toomer who brought up donations from Texas, including his campaign shirts for Nat'l Jr. Vice CIC.



Photos From The Dept of NC, and VFW Leader Magazine Publisher Heather Dear-Woods

Cootie Christmas In The Mountains

On Dec 21st, The Military Order of the Cooties & Dept. of North Carolina hosted a gift giving to the families in Western NC that were affected by Hurricane Helene. The 3 locations were Asheville Post #891, Hendersonville Post #5206 & Waynesville Post #5202. Santa was in attendance, along with Department Officers. Along with toys, each child got a stocking with coloring books, presidential rulers, crayons & gift cards.

Chris Brown, District 6 Commander took the project lead. With the help of many others, post members, and a sponsorship from the Department, a wonderful time was had, and the magic of Christmas was delivered right on time. Photos by Heather Dean-Woods, & Rachele Brown & Sam Cahill.

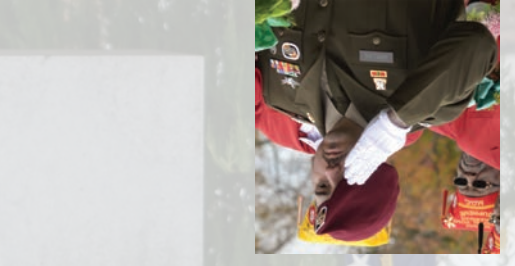


Military Order of the Cootie

89th Annual Tomb Trek at the Cross of Argonne in Arlington



Photos by Heather Dean-Woods, Publisher



Gary Szafarski

USA(Ret)

Candidate for Junior Vice Commander

2025 – 2026

- *Post Quartermaster*
- *Post Trustee*
- *All-State Post Commander*
- *District Trustee*
- *All-American Dist. Commander*
- *Hospitality Committee*



A proven leader with over 35 years military experience, I believe together, we can work to sustain the great work accomplished by our Veteran leaders and move forward to ensure the VFW is a place for members to enjoy, build relationships and mentor the next generation of Veterans. The VFW is not going away and with our support, hard work, dedication and spirit, we can address the issues that face many of us today, including Veteran suicide awareness, a difficult subject to discuss.. As an organization, VFW members must be courageous and willing to tackle this challenging topic, facing many of our Comrades. Since 2020, Veteran suicides have increased by 11.6%. This is an unacceptable figure that we must help curtail by becoming more involved in our communities, reaching out to younger Veterans and providing necessary support. Remember, we are all in this together and no one, does more for Veterans!

80th Anniversary of Philippines Liberation



After the 123rd VFW National Convention in Phoenix, AZ. Past Dept Commander of the Pacific Alex Fores invited me to attend the 80th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Philippines ceremony where General McArthur made his famous landing in Palo, the island of Leyte.

On Oct 19, 2024, I attended a VIP banquet, Meeting local government officials such as Ambassador of Japan, Ambassador of Australia, Governor of Leyte & the Mayor of Palo. The banquet introduced to guest some local foods, juices & wine. Also had multiple traditional Philippine dances.

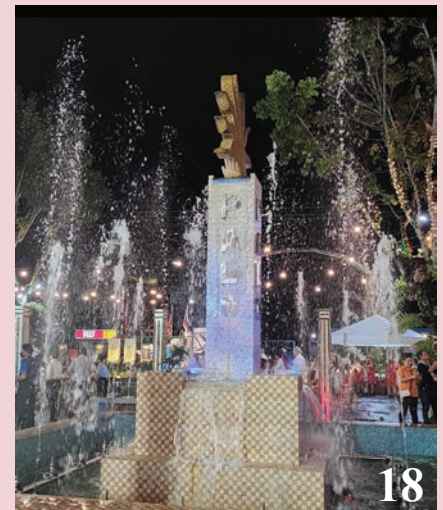
Oct 20th was the ceremony of the landings. Was able to meet the Philippines Secretary of National Defense & their Speaker of the House. The ceremony was a great

event. Witnessing some Philippine traditional dancing, wreath laying & a new plaque dedication ceremony from the Australian Merchant Navy & U.S. Army Small Ships organization.

It was a great honor to attend such an event; I met some new friends from Australia & within the Dept of the Pacific & multiple VFW Post within the Philippines.



Story and pictures submitted by District 6 Commander Chris Brown.



MY NAME IS JAMIE

Mari-Lou Wong-Chong and Jamie

November 1, 2024

Reprinted with permission Cape Fear Voices/ Teen Scene

Publishers note: While we strive to make sure our veterans know they are supported and loved, especially on Veterans day, this story strikes a more sober tone of a problem among many of those who served this country. I felt it fitting to include Jamie's story. May we never miss an opportunity to serve those who served us.

Have you ever thought how it feels to be homeless? To have no home of your own, to live on the streets, under the bridges, in a car, in a condemn room, in cardboard boxes?

Today, homelessness is near epidemic proportions in some areas of the United States.

In our own back yard, the Brunswick County, at any given night, there are at least 86 individuals who do not have safe permanent housing. Contrary to much belief, 80% of the homeless are families with children. Amidst the growing affluence in Brunswick County, homelessness is increasingly a significant challenge.

Let me put you in the shoes of a homeless person to fully appreciate the things a homeless person goes through. After which I hope that you will find in your heart to take action to help make a difference. Any way you can.

This is a true story written in his own handwriting by a homeless veteran who I met and helped while I was working for the VA Hospital in Pittsburgh.

"My name is Jamie. I am in what are supposed to be my "golden years." I am made up of a ball of mass confusion and very low self-esteem. I have been unstable for the past 10 years and have been homeless 3-4 times all over the United States. I have lived in bridges and literally froze to a point of hypothermia.

I started from Long Beach, California. I got robbed of the last \$80 I had. It took me 3 days to get to Las Vegas. I hitchhiked. I then went to Utah. I got a job and stayed there for a year. I lost my job. I hitch hiked for miles and miles with my pit bull, the only bright thing in my life. I ended up in North Carolina. I met a very nice girl, got married and had 2 kids. I tried very hard to make a life for myself and family. But after 8 years, my family left me. I could not provide for them. Housing has become too expensive and could not afford a decent home. Once again, I had become homeless. I wondered all over the United States leading a life of no direction. It is a very scary world to be all-alone.

I suffer from manic depression, severe nervous disorder, agoraphobia and chronic loss of memory. This was a result of my horrible experience in the Vietnam War. I have not been diagnosed properly and I have gotten very little help emotionally and financial by the country I have served so unselfishly.

I do not remember how I ended up in Pittsburgh. A very kind person referred me to the Veterans Hospital where they diagnosed me properly and help me to slowly put my life together. After all these years, my life has begun to change for the better. I see the light at the end of the tunnel. I am grateful to the help of all the people around me. That is just a very small gleams of the life of a homeless."

Homelessness cannot be ignored. We cannot ignore the fact that even in our very own Brunswick County we have many Jamie's among us. The homeless may not be as clean or as well dressed like you and me, but they are people. They have a heart, a soul, and are children of God just like you and me. I therefore challenge you to help out our less fortunate brothers and sisters by finding it within your heart to help out in any way you can to make a difference in their lives.

Cape Fear Voices (CFV) is a nonprofit organization that promotes creativity through its online publication, which showcases the literary and artistic works of adults and teens. Founded in 2004 by Gerald Decker, CFV started publication in the Cape Fear area in 2020. We have actively promoted journalism and audio/visual production in several area schools.

The North Brunswick Chamber of Commerce awarded us the "Nonprofit of the Year, 2024." Currently, we are expanding our program by adding a tri-county audio/visual program for our selected students called WTSI for W-Teen-Scene-Inc.

Read more at <https://cfvts.org/>

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Our Cape Fear Voices Awards Banquet will be held on April 12, at Blossoms Event Center at Magnolia Greens Golf Course. Don't miss this important event. Come and see what our teens have been doing this past year and how they have grown in their skills. Our theme this year is "Tomorrow's Voices Today."

Sponsorship opportunities for the Awards Banquet are now available. Contact Gerald Decker at editorteenscene@gmail.com for additional information.

The Banquet will feature a "Sponsors Table" where your marketing information will be available to banquet attendees.

Wreaths Across America



ROLLING THUNDER placed 8,604 wreaths at Sandhills State Veterans Cemetery.



Post 7794, Elkin



Post 10346, Hamptonville



Post 7946, West Jefferson



Post 12196, Leland



District 6

VETERANS

KNOW YOUR BENEFITS AFTER THE PACT ACT.

Sponsored by Veterans Creative Arts Program and Leland Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 12196 and Auxiliary



ALL VETERANS AND IMMEDIATE FAMILY ARE INVITED.

VCAP WILL ALSO DISCUSS THE CURRENT AND FUTURE PROGRAMS OF THE VETERANS CREATIVE ARTS PROGRAM SUCH AS:

- ART
- WRITING
- PHOTOGRAPHY
- TAI-CHI
- DANCE

VFWPOST 12196.ORG

910-408-1934

Presenters include:

- Brandon Blackburn-Asst. Dept/ Service Officer,VFW NC
- Anita Hartsell-Senior Veterans Service Officer, Brunswick County
- Cameron Batanides-President, Veterans Creative Arts Program



Topics to discuss include:

The PACT Act and your VA benefits

Expanded VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances.

VA updates Disability Rating Schedule for digestive system.

Precedent decision of the US Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

The Federal Circuit conclusion that pain alone can serve as a functional impairment.

WHEN: JANUARY 11, 2025

WHERE: CUTLER CROSSING COMMUNITY CENTER (1120 East Cutler Crossing #204,Leland,NC 28451)

TIME 9-11 AM

National Wreaths Across America Day was held Saturday, 14 December. More than two million volunteers and supporters gathered to Remember, Honor and Teach at more than 4,600 participating locations in all 50 states, at sea and abroad. Here are pictures submitted from NC Posts.

Veterans Day in Denton



2024 Fall Council



**Photos:
Heather
Dean-
Woods
Leader
Publisher**

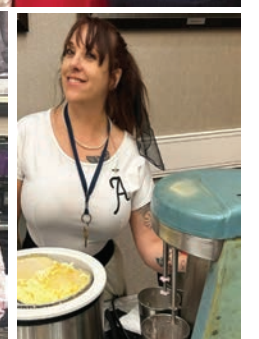


of Administration

Greensboro, NC



Photos:
Heather Dean-Woods Leader Publisher



Veterans Day at Sparta Post 7034



Bruce Wayne Osborne Post held their Veterans Day event at Veterans Memorial Park in Sparta. Among those in attendance was the last living WWII Veteran in Alleghany County, Luther Morrow, at left. Below, Post Auxiliary President, Diana Hubbard and Post Commander, Mark Parker, spoke at the event. *Submitted by: Heather Rodriguez*



Post 1160 Mecklenburg



Top Left Photo: District 13 Commander Nathaniel "Jake" Drisker receiving a Veteran's Day Meal donated by Elizabeth Pritchard and her father for a Veteran that is incapacitated who is being taken care of by her mother. The Veterans of Foreign Wars always speaks about Community Service, well Elizabeth and her family have been donating to District 13 for around seven years to veterans in need. The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Thank You! **Photo Top Right:** On November 11, 2024 Mecklenburg VFW Post 1160 opened their doors to veterans in the community for a special Veteran's Day Breakfast. It was a great turnout because of its dedicated members and various companies from their community which donated items to make it a success. Post Commander Darryl Hamilton presented remarks on why a Veteran's Service Matters. District 13 Commander Nathaniel "Jake" Drisker was also onsite assisting with the preparation of the meal. Submitted by Cdr. Drisker

Post 5202 Waynesville



5202 Honor Guard played TAPS, then a Flag Retirement Ceremony was part of the event.

Submitted by Cdr Cahill

Christmas Around The Posts

Submitted Via Facebook & Instagram



National Home Santa



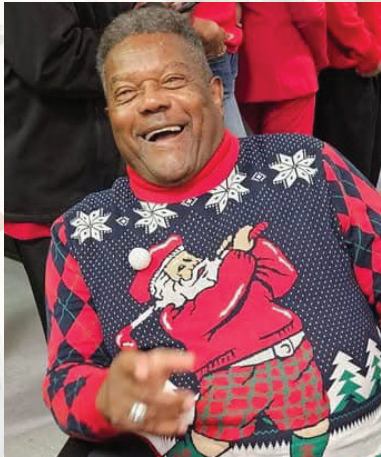
9010 Breakfast With Santa



Auxiliary President Janice Ford and Auxiliary Chaplain Margaret Wade visited the NC Veterans home in Kinston, with over 100 Christmas cards.



9010 Christmas Bingo



6018 Christmas Party



6060 Christmas Party



Post 2123

Ms Claus & The Grinch made sure that all the sailors & marines at Camp Lejeune had a stocking



ANGEL PLATOON

Mr. Warren H. Brown,

November 11, 1921- December 10, 2024

Warren Harding Brown, a World War II veteran, was 103. Warren proudly served his country in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. He was drafted into the Army just after Pearl Harbor and served with the 445th Signal Corps, spending time in Burma and North Africa. He rose to the rank of staff sergeant. Named after Warren Harding, the 29th President of the United States, he was born in New York City's Harlem Hospital, the second of nine children, his birthday fittingly fell on Veteran's Day.



Mr. Raymond Alvin Hayes, Sr.

May 30, 1942- January 5, 2025

**US Navy Veteran
Post 1142 N. Wilkesboro**



Mrs. Patricia Ann Anderson Brooks,

July 10, 1938- November 4, 2024

Pat was a Lifetime Member of VFW Post 1142 Auxiliary for over 22 years. She served as Auxiliary President for 8 years and was NC President of the Year many times. Pat served as a local and district officer for 20 years. She was dedicated to helping veterans in any way she could. Pat and her husband Joe interviewed local veterans and their families in Wilkes County and compiled their stories into 2 books.



From The Publisher

Well, family, this issue is packed to the gills, even with four extra pages. Truthfully there could be more, as many posts a day I see on social media and get in my inbox of the service you continue to provide for our communities, especially those affected by Hurricane Helene in September. Those communities are still struggling, and you have not wavered in relief efforts, from deliveries of quilts that 1142 Auxiliary in North Wilkesboro, or the Cooties statewide planning of Christmas parties for kids across affected mountain areas, to the adoptions of whole families in need of presents, and food.

I want to thank the comrades and auxiliaries alike, for keeping your Department publication running wide open by your support and continued submissions. We will be submitting our magazine to the NC Society of Historians, who, since 1941 have presented annual awards for journalistic excellence, and of which I have won several awards from over the decades. I feel that your stories fit the bill, and I want you to have the recognition you deserve.

Happy Holidays, and here's to 2025.

Heather Dean-Woods
Leader Publisher

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Commemorate your Post's
anniversary in Buddy Poppy style! As your Post celebrates 25, 50 or 75 years, order special silver-, gold- or diamond-colored Poppies for distribution throughout this monumental year.

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25th silver 50th gold 75th diamond

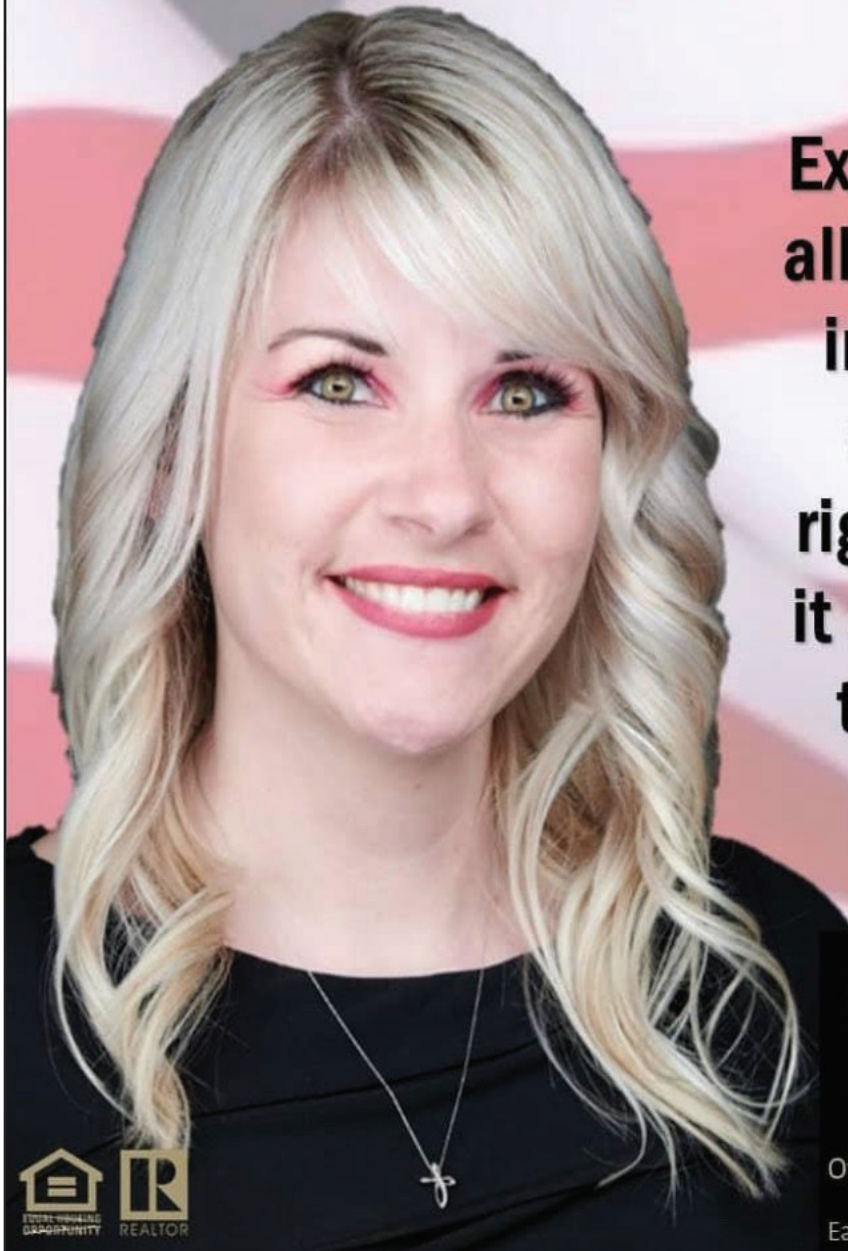
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I'm Richard A King, a licensed sales agent in Cumberland County North Carolina. When it comes to Medicare, it's important to consider all of your options. What works well for your neighbor may not be the best fit for you. I know the ins and outs of Medicare, and I'm ready to answer your questions and help you find a plan that fits your needs. **Take advantage of my knowledge and experience to:**

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- Get help comparing plans
- Receive one-on-one service
- Make enrolling in a plan easier

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