

The John Lyon Gazette

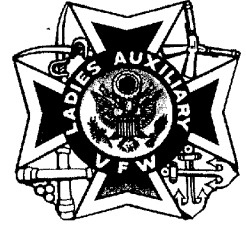
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Veterans of Foreign Wars
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Independence Day, 4 July 1998



Saturday, 4th of July: Backyard Steak Cookout at Post 3150, 12 – 5. See inside.

From the Commander

July brings us once again to focus on the Declaration of Independence and the ensuing Revolutionary War. The Minutemen who mustered at Lexington and Concord; the brave few who withstood charges on Breed's Hill (not Bunker); and those that suffered not only the war but the terrible elements and starvation through the campaign at Valley Forge knew the purpose of this endeavor. There were numerous other battles and campaigns: Ticonderoga, Saratoga (which brought us our French allies), Trenton, Princeton, Brooklyn, Cowpens, and yes, of course, Yorktown. But the most challenging battle of all was the one held in the minds and hearts of those brave men and women who would challenge a strong oppressor and in defiance of that oppressor seek freedom not only for themselves personally, but for all Americans and their posterity. We of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States have maintained the spirited ideals of those brave and courageous men and women and I have no doubt that on our nation's Independence Day that each and every one of us will reflect back on the sacrifices of not only the famous who held high positions but also on those who were in the trenches. May God bless them all!

I am pleased to report that I was honored to represent John Lyon Post at the departmental convention in June. Accompanying me were the Senior Vice Commander M.C. Agresti, Adjutant J. Gary Wagner, One Year Trustee Bob Wasserman, and the Head of the House Committee Eric Anderson. There was also a large contingent from our Ladies Auxiliary headed up by the President Cathy Kerns. My congratulations to President Kerns and Auxiliary not only to their banner but also to taking second place in their Buddy Poppy display. There is no better example of resolve and determination on the part of our Ladies Auxiliary than shown this past year. Congratulations.

For the information of all comrades your new departmental officers are as follows.

Commander: John E. Saunders
Sr. Vice CDR: Paul T. Moore
Jr. Vice CDR: Early Ray Chappell
ADJ/QM: Robert J. "Bob" Klausung
Advocate: James E. Tucker
Surgeon: Larry F. Mattera
Chaplain: Robert E. Gordon

Let us all pull together to make it a banner year for all of our posts, our districts and our department. We need to focus not only on membership, but our involvement in our communities, our youth activities, our environment and most importantly of all, our support of the Veterans who have given so much and have asked so little.

Yours in Comradeship,



C.D. "Doc" Crouch

P.S.: The Korean War Memorial Ceremony will be held on Monday 27 July 1998 vice Sunday 26 July 1998.

FROM THE AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

It was exactly one year ago that I first addressed the Ladies of Auxiliary #3150 as your new President. At that time I told you I was honored to serve as your President and that I would try to do my best to continue to maintain the ideals and traditions that have continuously made our Auxiliary strong and effective. I indicated that it was my sincerest wish that we do this together to make 1997-1998 an exceptional year, and, Ladies, all I can say now is **THANK YOU!** It is because of each of you that our Ladies Auxiliary did, in fact, have its best year ever. Six of us just returned from the Department of Virginia's annual convention where **Auxiliary #3150 was honored with seven awards in addition to the coveted Banner and a ribbon for Second Place in the Buddy Poppy Display Contest.** As I said in last month's newsletter we were all in this together and we all should take a moment to congratulate ourselves on a job well done. Ceil, Jeannie, Joy, Cathy, and Marcie joined me in accepting the certificates on behalf of each of you, and I can't even begin to express the pride we took in representing such a wonderful group of very special Ladies.

Now we begin a new year, and as was the case last year, we have another exciting and challenging year before us. Last year I made a special point to note that those of you who live out of town or cannot come to the Post Home are still a very integral part of our Auxiliary and your input is valuable and appreciated. To my great delight, many of you responded with letters of encouragement and moral support. I will be counting on you again for your continued support as I believe it really made the difference for all of us here. Many of our projects in the 1997-1998 year were greatly enhanced and successful because of your ideas and contributions.

Once again, our Secretary, Jeannie Gibadlo, is preparing an address roster of all of our current members that we are planning on mailing to each of you in early August. If anyone would prefer that her address and/or phone number not be included, please contact me immediately at (703) 979-5268. We received a lot of positive feedback when we did this last year, so we're making the alpha roster a permanent feature. If any of you have had a recent change of address, please let us know.

This newsletter is our primary way of communicating with you. As your President, it is my responsibility to keep all of the members of the Auxiliary abreast of what is happening both within the Auxiliary as well as the District and the Department. I also try to let you know of activities and events that are scheduled here at the Post. I am very interested in hearing from you to ascertain if you find your Ladies newsletter informative and helpful. If you have any suggestions or ideas as to how we may improve this channel of communication to you, would you please take a moment to share your ideas with me? You can write to me either at the Post or at my home, or for those of you who have access to a computer, I can be reached by e-mail at ckerns@ibm.net.

Please do not forget that the 4th of July is a special day when we need to take a moment to realize just how much was sacrificed by those who went before us to insure our freedom and to guarantee our continued independence. Please enjoy your holiday and remember to fly your American flag! Happy Birthday to those of you who celebrate your special day this month and special thoughts and prayers to those of you who have been ill or have recently suffered the loss of a loved one.


Cathy Kerns
President

From the Senior Vice Commander:

This year, 1998 - 99 marks the centennial year of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. The new VFW membership year begins in July. Let's endeavor to make this an All-American year for the Post in recognition of the many enhancements we've enjoyed at the Post of late.

Annual members will soon see renewal notices in their mailboxes. Please renew early or consider Life Membership. We will have an Early Bird event this year. And, please, if every member asks another person to become a member, there's no limit to the community activities in which we, at John Lyon, can participate.

Life membership rates are:

Through age 30	\$245.00
31 - 40	\$235.00
41 - 50	\$215.00
51 - 60	\$195.00
61 - 70	\$165.00
71 - 80	\$125.00
81 and above	\$ 85.00

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Survivor Benefit Plan

One Time Opportunity for Military Retirees: Recent legislation makes it possible to dis-enroll from the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP). Under the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 1998, persons who have been retired from the military service for more than two years may elect to dis-enroll from SBP during the one year period 17 May 1998 - 16 May 1999.

Future or more recent retirees will be afforded the option to dis-enroll from SBP between the second and third year anniversaries of their retirement.

Interested members should consult the points of contact listed in their periodic retirement newsletters or DFAS earnings statements. (Excerpted from U.S. Navy Message)

From the Junior Vice Commander:

We will schedule a VA hospital visit for Saturday, 18 July. We will muster at the Post no later than 1230 before "convoying" over to the hospital. Many thanks to all who have donated books and magazines for this endeavor.

Everyone enjoy a happy and safe July 4th!

Mark M. Pando, JVC
Junior Vice Commander
418-3477
email: pando@erols.com

Korean War Veterans Ceremony

The Korean War Veterans Armistice Day Coordinating Committee will hold their annual ceremony at the Korean War Veterans Memorial on Sunday 27 July at 0930 with a musical prelude and formal ceremonies at 1000. VFW Post 3150 anticipates laying a wreath towards the end of the ceremony. The memorial is on the Washington Mall opposite the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and just southeast of the Lincoln Memorial.

The coordinating committee has also scheduled a brief ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery at 1300 and a reunion at the Sheraton Hotel at Tysons Corner.

After the memorial ceremony, continue your celebration with brunch or cookout at the Post 3150..

A Buddy Poppy Thank You!

The annual Memorial Day Buddy Poppy drive took in over \$1200, including donations which members mailed to the Post. We can not offer a final tally yet because more donations continue to arrive by mail. But our many and most sincere thanks to those who have sent in donations to the Relief Fund. Remember: Buddy Poppy donations go to the Relief Fund which is used *only* for relief of veterans, their widows and their orphans.

From the Chairman of the House Committee

The "Home" continues to receive improvements the time and effort of volunteers. Most recently, for those who don't know, we now have exhaust fans in the men's and ladies' rooms, an ice machine which probably makes more ice than the coldest winter day, two new dart boards, and carpet has been installed in the "Lyons Den".

I particularly want to thank Comrades Vince Stevenson and Bob Wasserman, and also Carl Cohen and Al Camacho for their truly unselfish time and donations and most of all for their dedication to the Post.

During the house Committee's last meeting we developed our "Top Ten Hit List" for projects to accomplish: Replace the east wall, finish singling the roof, replace the floor in front of the kitchen, install another exhaust fan in the kitchen, install outside security lighting, install inside emergency lighting, install a privacy fence on the west side of the property, resurface the floor area behind and around the canteen area, finish the kitchen ceiling, and level the stairs leading to the "Lyon's Den". As you can see, these projects will take time and be of some expense, but while we move in the direction of getting them done, we will continue to pick away at the many smaller projects that need to get done.

Discussed at the meeting was what we can do to generate some more funds for the post. We have some things in mind, but we'd like to hear the membership's ideas before we march on. If you have an idea, let it be heard by getting it into the suggestion box.

In closing, our "Home", the best kept secret in Arlington, continues to grow not only in home improvements but comradeship. We have a membership and a Ladies Auxiliary that just won't quit --- Keep up the good work.

Membership: Comrades Eric Anderson/CHC, James Griswold/ACHC, and Paul Custred, Richard Hoffman, William Wolverton, and William Cowell.

Eric Anderson
Chairman of House Committee

4th of July Cookout

Independence Day will be celebrated Saturday, 4 July, with a steak cookout in the backyard from 12 – 5 pm. There is a sign-up sheet in the post home. Call for reservations: Sign-up is a must due to the nature of the food. As of press time, the cost and menu has not been finalized but will likely include steak, potatoes, and vegetable for around \$7.00.

Welcome to Our New Members

Welcome to new Post members elected at the June meeting: life transfer Eric Skrzypczak ("Scrip-zak"), Claude Conger, Michael T. Kelley, and Catherine Sopher.

Marching Off

Recently deceased: Eugene D. Miller, Jr, life member and father of Past Post Commander, Eugene D. Miller III, and 3150 Ladies Auxiliary members Terry McHale, Loraine Sorley, and Joan Veranauski. Also in the Miller family are 3150 Ladies Auxiliary members Mary Carik and Rita Lynch.

State Convention

Eleven Post and Ladies Auxiliary members represented Post 3150 --- and you --- at the annual Department ("State") Convention in Richmond, Virginia, 18 – 21 June 1998. Five Post members were led by Commander "Doc" Crouch and included Connie Agresti, Eric Anderson, J.Gary Wagner, and Bob Wasserman.

President Cathy Kerns and her delegation of six Ladies Auxiliary members included Marci Claussen, Jeanne Gibadlo, Cathy Graham, Joy Neher, and Ceil Wasserman. The Ladies Auxiliary received the banner for the year 1997 - 1998. Their entry in the Promotional Division of the Buddy Poppy Contest earned a second place ribbon.

In contested VFW races, Larry Mattera of Post 5500, Hampton VA, was to Office of State Surgeon, and Robert Gordon of Post 7726, Independence VA, was elected to Office of State Chaplain.

Life Members

Life Members: when did you last communicate with the Post? Many Life members visit the Post periodically, another bunch are geographically distant but send Christmas cards, Buddy Poppy donations, or just an occasional "Hello". These allow us to check the currency of your address. If you have not communicated with us lately, please send a note to the Post and tell us what you are doing. And help us keep the address file up to date. You will continue to receive the Post newsletter uninterrupted and avoid being found in the "Lost Members" list. Of course, we welcome notes *without* enclosed check at any time from *all* of our members, both Post and Ladies Auxiliary.

Renew Now: Good till Year 2000!

Don't wait for your renewal slip to arrive in the mail: Send a check to the Post for \$20 now. Your 1999 membership card will take you all the way to 31 Dec 1999: to the Eve of the Year 2000! Just write "1999 dues" on the check and make it out to the Post and send to address on the front page. Once the new cards are received from National, your card will be in the mail as soon as we receive your dues payment.

From the Department Convention

Some of the speeches and presentations provided some memorable thoughts. These include:

- 70% of *all* U.S. veterans are still alive... Kenneth A. Steadman, Executive Director, Washington Office (of the VFW), Saturday Evening Banquet Guest Speaker
- Of 500 organizations with a presence in Washington, *Fortune Magazine* (8 Dec 97) rated the top 25 most effective. The VFW placed 16th. Obviously your membership *does* count! (Speaker not noted.)
- There are 37,033 members of the VFW in the state of Virginia. This is only about one-third of the veterans in the state. (Speaker not noted.) There are plenty of our neighbors who are eligible and who are not members. We have a job to do.

Thanks to the Post and Auxiliary

John Lyon Post was host to a number of veterans and their families from around the country over Memorial Day weekend. This group, who "met" on America On-Line, was both well-behaved and most appreciative. We have received several cards, letters, and web page email saying "Thanks!" to all for the fine John Lyon hospitality.

For example, Dee Branch of Amarillo, TX wrote to our Web Page: "We really enjoyed our visit with you over memorial day weekend ..You did a great job of putting up with over 60 of us from *namvets* and *namvets and proud*, and *vva friends*, and *namvet partners* rooms on AOL. It was great. These rooms are all in members category in life. Come see us anytime. Thanks again"

John Lyon Web Page

The John Lyon web page is being reconstructed. Your patience is appreciated your and comments are welcome.



Thoughts on Freedom on Independence Day

This month brings several military and patriotic anniversaries to mind. First and foremost is Independence Day, July 4. Two hundred twenty two years ago, our forefathers pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honor so that we may live as a self-determining democratic republic. Nearly one hundred twenty two years later, on July 3, 1898, the United States Navy succeeded in defeating the Spanish fleet in the Battle of Santiago, thereby freeing the Cuban people from oppressive colonial rule.

Another ninety years after that, on July 3, 1988, the United States Navy, while engaged in a quasi-war to wrest freedom of the seas from warring Iran and Iraq, engaged seven Iranian gunboats and multiple air contacts, sinking five of the enemy and defeating three F-4D Phantom II fighter-bombers. On that day, USS Vincennes also fired on a misidentified-as-hostile air contact and shot down an airliner killing all 290 souls onboard. That cataclysmic event precipitated the end of the eight year/one million casualty war, just seventeen days later, but continues to haunt the participants, including the undersigned, to this very day.

As with those earliest patriots, freedom is not now, nor has it ever been free. We must never forget that it is a strong military made up of young men and women willing to sacrifice their lives, fortune and sacred honor which helps keep America free. It is incumbent upon the VFW to support those personnel whether directly (through national programs such as Operation Uplink) or indirectly, through grassroots lobbying support for adequate VA funding to heal the broken bodies and minds of those veterans once they have tucked their uniforms away.

Theodore Roosevelt is credited with saying, "For those who have fought for it, freedom has a flavor that the protected will never know." Those of us in the VFW know how delicious yet ephemeral that flavor can be.

M. C. Agresti

Another July 4th weekend is drawing near and again, as so often, this sacred date will be just another opportunity for millions and millions of our fellow citizens to "hit the beach" and spend big chunks of money on holiday specials. It's unfortunate that gross commercialization of our nation's holidays has become the norm and not the exception.

How can one expect a citizenry to care about the nation's heritage, when many have had the volunteer "option" to volunteer out of service? Beyond the 56,000 plus who were slain in Vietnam, one of the most insidious legacies of the Vietnam conflict was the abolition of the draft. Many of our societal problems today are a result of young people not having to learn to work together, eat together, live together, and not knowing what it means to be a TEAM together. Given that traditional family structures have broken down more and more over the last 30 years, where do we expect our young to learn such values? They won't get it from watching the tube!

Not only did military service instill the aforementioned values, it also gave a young man a chance to learn a trade or skill. That fact in itself is significant when one considers the number of high school graduates who often do not know what to do next with their lives. Military service is not for everyone, but with every right there comes a responsibility --- this is a lesson not well remembered in a society that clamors for rights day after day. Therefore, a national service system, where every high school graduate would be required to serve his/her country for one year in military or civil service, would go a long way in ensuring that future generations would understand a valuable lesson in life: that they are part of a larger whole that serves the whole and not just the aspirations of individual selves. It is in this spirit that those who served their nation on the battlefield would not be forgotten or "commercialized" away, but would be bestowed with the honor and remembrance that they have earned.

Mark Pando

July 1998

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 U.S. ARMY AIR CORPS EST. 1926 	3	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY  COOKOUT NOON - 5:00PM
5	6 HOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING 6:00PM - ??? 	7 VFW MOVIE NIGHT 6:45PM	8	9 POST MEETING 8:00PM 	10	11
12 SUNDAY BRUNCH 9:00AM-1:00PM 	13	14 VFW MOVIE NIGHT 6:45PM	15	16 AUXILIARY MEETING 8:00PM 	17	18
19	20	21 VFW MOVIE NIGHT 6:45PM	22	23	24	25
26 SUNDAY BRUNCH 9:00AM-NOON BARBECUE 1:00PM-5:00PM	27 NATIONAL KOREAN WAR VETERANS' ARMISTICE DAY 	28 VFW MOVIE NIGHT 6:45PM	29 CRIBBAGE TOURNAMENT 7:00PM	30	31	