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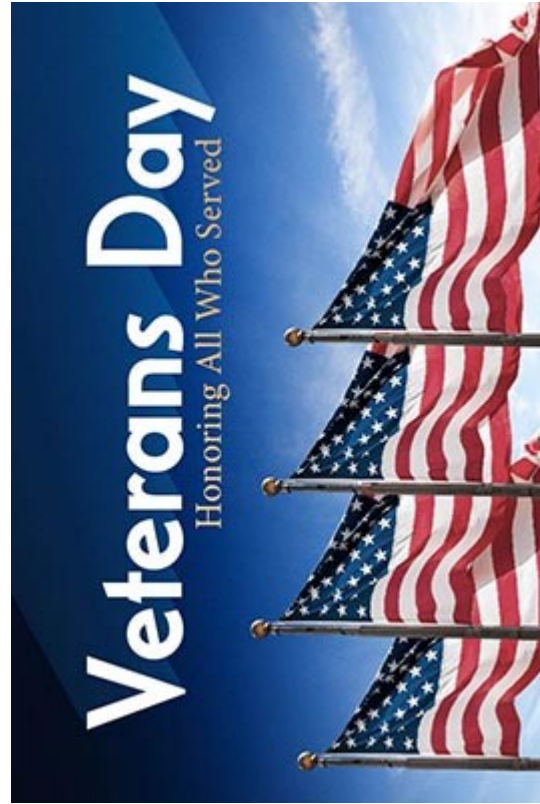
**VFW POST 3349**

**3201 REID ST., PALATKA, FL 32177**

**Phone: 386-328-2863**

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

**VFW Post 3349  
PO Box 218  
Palatka FL 32178-0218**



**November 2019**

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P.O. BOX 218, PALATKA, FL 32178  
PHONE: 386-328-2863**

**Publisher: Mark Retzlaff - Post Adjutant**

FROM THE COMMANDER VFW POST 3349

## November-Newsletter

On October 12 the Honor Guard look real sharp. The ceremony was very nice at the Bassmaster Veteran fishing tournament.

The Honor Guard will be very busy on Nov 11 Veterans Day. We Have the parade to walk in and the ceremony afterward at the River Front. Then at 6 PM the Moose here in Palatka asked us to have an Honor Guard. While on Veteran Day the post will have an open house at 12 o'clock with food. We ask people to bring food in. The post will supply chicken for the day.

On November 7,8, and 9 we will need help at Hitchcock to due Buddy Poppy sales. We try to work two-hour shift from 9 to 5 each day. Bill Jones is in charge of this event. Call the post if you can help. The more people we have the less time you will have to work.

The post is going to donate \$50 to help Club Pack 235. We hope this will help spur the younger veteran population to join the post. This is also a good community outreach opportunity.

On December 14 will have a Christmas breakfast from 9 to 11 AM for the children. We need to know how many children are coming so we can supply a gift for each age group. The age groups are 0 to 12 years old. We need help with the breakfast that morning. Children eat free and parent will be charged \$5. Check the calendar for upcoming events.

Commander  
Gerald Donnelly



### ***FROM THE AUXILIARY PRESIDENT***

On October 25th and 26th Valerie, Joyce, Kathie and myself attended the conference in Orlando and we received a lot of useful information. November will be a busy month for the auxiliary. Lunch will be at Beef O'Brady's on 11/6 at 11:30.

On November 11th the post is having an open house, the post supplies the meat and we ask the auxiliary members to please bring a side dish if possible.

Also on November 11th the blood mobile will have their red bus at the post for blood donations. Even if you can not give blood yourself, family members or even a friend can donate so please come out and show your support. Remember these donations help those in need of blood in Putman County.

November 13th is our monthly meeting at 7:00p.m. please plan on joining us. The sewing committee has been very busy and we are planning on taking the lap quilts to the VA hospital in Gainesville on 11/14. If you would like to join us and spend some time with our hospitalized Vets please meet at the post at 9:00 a.m. We are planning on car pooling. We will also be going to lunch after our visit.

District meeting is 11/16 at Lake City. Hope everyone has a safe and Happy Thanksgiving. Please don't forget to take a moment and remember to say a thank you to all our Vets especially those deployed right now for giving this country our freedoms.

*Respectfully,  
Marian Chialastri, President*



On Friday Oct. 11 the VFW Auxiliary presented a check for \$750 to Dr. Kuruvilla at the Frist Coast Cancer Center. The money was raised by the auxiliary at their annual cancer bingo. I would like to thank everyone who helped to make it a success. Sr. vice Joyce Donnelly



*On the picture is Dr Kuruvilla, Joyce Donnelly , Valerie French and Marion Chialastri.*

This article was submitted by Charles Wellborn. It was read to a group of Viet Nam veterans at a meeting I was attending. I was very impressed with it and thought other veterans might enjoy it. It was written by Ray Starmann who is the founder of US Defense Watch. He is a former U.S. Army Intelligence officer and veteran of the Gulf War. He was a contributing writer for several years at SFTT.org

## ***The Life of A Veteran***

Millions of vets are and have been successful in all endeavors. They are doctors, lawyers, business people, and a thousand other professions. Not all have PTSD; not all are the troubled, brooding, street corner homeless guy, although they exist and need help desperately. No matter how successful a vet might be materially, more often than not, vets are often alone mentally/spiritually each day and for the rest of their lives.

Vets' stories are all different, but some elements of the common experience exist. Many vets experienced and saw and heard and did things unimaginable to the average person. They also lived a daily camaraderie that cannot be repeated in the civilian world. In fact, many vets spend the rest of their lives seeking the same esprit de corps that simply is absent from their civilian lives and jobs. They long to spend just 15 minutes back with the best friends they ever had, friends that are scattered to every corner of the earth, and some to the afterlife itself.

Vets are haunted by visions of horror and death, by guilt of somehow surviving and living the good life when some they knew are gone. They strangely wish sometimes that they were back in those dreadful circumstances, not to experience the dirt and horror and terror and noise and violence again, but to be with the only people a vet really knows, other vets.

Civilians must understand that for a vet nothing is ever the same again. Their senses can be suddenly illuminated by the slightest sound or smell or sight: sights of death all around, a living version of Dante's Inferno; sounds so loud that they can only be described as Saving Private Ryan in surround sound on steroids; smells vast and horrific; rotting death, burning fuel and equipment, rubber, animals and...people. The smoldering ruins of life all around them.

All vets have these thoughts nearly every day. Some may experience them for fractions of seconds, or for minutes at a time. They replay over and over again like an endless 24 hour war movie.

Part of the solitary world of the vet is being able to enjoy complete bliss doing absolutely nothing. This is a trait grating to civilians who must constantly search for endless stimuli. Unbeknownst to them, the greatest thrill of all is just being alive. A lot of vets have an Obi-wan Kenobi calmness. After what they went through, how bad can anything really be? As King said to Chris in Platoon, "Make it outta here, it's all gravy, every day of the rest of your life—gravy..."

So many, if not all vets walk around each day lost in their own special story. They were once great actors on a giant stage with speaking parts and props. Maybe they were heroes and now they aren't anymore. Maybe they helped save the world and now they can't. Maybe they gave orders and now they take them. Maybe they thought that they could accomplish anything and now they know they can't. Perhaps their lives now are smaller and slower and sometimes in the vet's mind, just incidental, even though they're not.

Most civilians are oblivious to the solitary life of the vet. But, it's there. It's the same eternal and universal philosophy, whether you fought in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, Iraq or Afghanistan. The experiences may have been different, but the emotions are the same.

A problem with the solitary world of the vet is that the vet has a hard time explaining what he or she did to those who didn't serve. Some vets want to talk, but they have no outlet. Maybe their only outlet is watching a war movie or reading a book about the conflict they were in.

How often do people say, "Grandpa never talks about Korea." That's because Grandpa knows no one can understand except other vets. That's because Grandpa knows most people don't care.

Part of this taciturn mentality is that vets speak another language, a strange and archaic language of their past. How do you talk to civilians about "fire for effect" or "grid 7310" or "shake and bake" or "frag orders" or "10 days and a wake up" or a thousand and one other terms that are mystifying to the real world? You can't.

All of this adds to the solitary world of the vet. Some are better at handling life afterwards than others. Some don't seem affected at all, but they are. They just hide it. Some never return to normal. But, what is normal to a vet anymore?

So, this Veterans' Day, if you see a vet sitting by themselves at a restaurant or on a train or shopping at the grocery store alone, take a moment to speak with them. Take them out of their solitary world for a moment. You'll be happy you did.

Charlie Wellborn  
Palatka, FL.

VFW Post 3349





*Photo submitted by Marion Chialastri*

# November 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 <i>Pot Luck Dinner 6PM</i>	2 Texas Hold'em 6 PM
3	4  <i>Pizza &amp; Bowling 6 PM</i>	5  <i>Aux Sewing 10am  Bingo 6-10 PM</i>	6  <i>Bowling 6PM</i>	7  <i>House Committee Meeting 7 PM</i>  7 PM	8  <i>Steak Dinner 6PM</i>	9  Post Golf Tournament
10	11 <i>Veterans Day Open House  Color Guard Parade 0900 Moose 1800</i>	12  <i>Aux Sewing 10am  Bingo 6-10 PM</i>	13 <i>Post &amp; Aux Meetings 7PM Auxiliary Lunch 1130 @ Corky Bells Bowling 6PM</i>	14   7 PM	15  <i>Spaghetti Dinner 6PM</i>	16 <i>Lake City District Meeting 1000  In-house Bowl- ing 1300 hrs.</i>
17	18  <i>Pizza &amp; Bowling 6 PM</i>	19  <i>Bingo 6-10 PM</i>	20  <i>Bowling 6PM</i>	21   7 PM	22  <i>Bill's Rib Dinner 6PM</i>	23
24	25  <i>Pizza &amp; Bowling 6 PM</i>	26  <i>Bingo 6-10 PM</i>	27	28  Thanksgiving  Post Closed	29  <i>No Diner</i>	30

# December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 <i>Bingo 6-10 PM</i>	4 Bowling 6 PM	5 House Committee Meeting 7 PM  7 PM	6 <i>Dinner 6PM</i>	7 Texas Hold'em 6 PM
8	9 Pizza & Bowling 6 PM	10 <i>Bingo 6-10 PM</i>	11 Post & Aux Meetings 7 PM Bowling 6PM	12  7 PM	13 <i>Steak Dinner 6PM</i>	14 Inhouse Bowling 1 PM
15	16 Pizza & Bowling 6 PM	17 Aux Sewing 10am <i>Bingo 6-10 PM</i>	18 Bowling 6PM	19  7 PM	20 <i>Spaghetti Dinner 6PM</i>	21
22	23 Pizza & Bowling 6 PM	24 <i>Christmas Party</i> Post open from 12-4PM <i>No Bingo</i>	25 Bowling 6PM	26  7 PM	27 <i>No Diner</i>	28
29	30 Pizza & Bowling 6 PM	31 <i>New Years Eve Party</i> <i>No Bingo</i>				

**POST OFFICERS**

Commander	Gerald Donnelly
Sr Vice Commander	Carl "Bill" Jones
Jr Vice Commander	Bruce Howe
Judge Advocate	Rubin Myers
Adjutant	Mark Retzlaff
Quartermaster	Robert Thropp
Chaplin	Gerald Shuler
Surgeon	Charlie Wellborn
Service Officer	Charles Burkley
Trustees 1 yr	Weldon Taylor
2 yr	William Thompson
3 yr	Ron Sliter
Membership Chairman	Bill Jones
Employment Officer	Weldon Taylor
Legislative Officer	John Dillingham
Disaster Preparedness/Relief	
Historian	John Dillingham
House Committee Chairman	Gene Neiman
National Home for Children	Quartermaster
Communications/Media Relations	Commander

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

Chairman	Bill Jones
Members	Commander and ALL Members

**COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA RELATIONS**

Chairman	Commander
Members	Adjutant and Quartermaster

**HOUSE COMMITTEE**

Chairman	Gene Neiman
Members	Gerald Donnelly
	Gerald Shuler
	Bill Jones
	Mark Retzlaff
	John Dillingham
Canteen Manager	Charlene Dillingham

**AUXILIARY OFFICERS**

President	Marian Chialastri
Sr. Vice	Joyce Donnelly
Jr. Vice	Malinda Taylor
Treasurer	Mary Lou Berry
Secretary	Vickie Dixon
Chaplain	Charlene Dillingham
Conductress	Linda Sliter
Guard	Dorothy Donovan
1Yr. Trustee	Neva Lyons
2Yr. Trustee	Valerie French
3Yr. Trustee	Kathy Thompson
Patriotic Inst.	Charlene Dillingham

**DISTRICT 14 MEETING SCHEDULE**

Qtr	Date	Post	Location	Time
2st	Nov 16	2206	Lake City	10am

**Useful Web Sites**

Get copy of DD Form 214 or other discharge documents: <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>

Request Lost and Replacement Medals: <http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/awards-and-decorations.html>

VFW National Headquarters Web Site: [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org)

VFW National Web Site for Members: [www.jointhelite.org](http://www.jointhelite.org)

VFW eMembership: <http://emem.vfw.org>

VFW Store Online: [www.vfwstore.org](http://www.vfwstore.org)

VFW Department of Florida Web Site: <http://www.myfloridavfw.org>

National Do Not Call Registry [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov)

VFW Post Website <http://vfw3349.org>

From the Publisher:

Please forward any news, pictures, or article submissions to [markretzlaff81@gmail.com](mailto:markretzlaff81@gmail.com) by the 20th of each month.

Thank you

Mark Retzlaff - Adjutant