

# VFW & AUXILIARY 445

1639 Camp Rd., James Island, SC ~ 843-795-9419 ~ [www.vfw445.org](http://www.vfw445.org) ~ FB VFW445

## *NEWSLETTER ~ AUGUST 2017*

We are officially in full swing for the 2017-2018 Membership year – remember the “early bird gets the deal” or something like that. Will you take advantage of the early bird savings this year? I hope so – it helps you and it helps your Post and Auxiliary.

Have you visited your Post this year? Lots of spring cleaning – more to do – but it’s looking better every week – so c’mon down and join your friends, invite a Vet and tell us how we can better serve you. WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

### VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION – NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

The 118th VFW National Convention ended Wednesday in New Orleans with the election of **Keith E. Harman** as the new VFW Commander-in-Chief for the year 2017-2018. During his acceptance speech, the Delphos, Ohio native spoke of the relevance of the nearly 1.7 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary; that “every member of our great organization has walked the talk, and every member of our great Auxiliary has lived the

fear of having a loved one downrange." He said he is proud to be part of an organization that exists to take care of veterans, service members and their families, and that he is honored to lead it.

His theme "Service not Self," and his goals:

- Ending sequestration
- Fully funding the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency
- Better leadership, management, and accountability from the Department of Veterans Affairs
- Help reduce the veteran suicide crisis to zero.

The new Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief - Vincent "B.J." Lawrence / Alamogordo, N.M.,  
Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief - William J. "Doc" Schmitz of Corning, N.Y.

If you have never attended a VFW National Convention, you should – at least once. It is amazing to see not only our sheer numbers, but the dedication with which our members attend to the business-at-hand; not just to elect new officers – but to discuss and change out dated By-laws, and submit proposals that will better our organization. **Everyone has a chance to speak out – democracy at work folks!** There weren't any unruly crowds bent on disrupting whatever they could, no screaming, or threats. Just the coming together of ordinary citizens with the desire and passion to make our VFW better for the people we serve – our Veterans and their families.

### **"CATCH the DREAM"**

This was the 104<sup>th</sup> National Convention for the VFW Auxiliary and the newly elected National President is **Dee Guillory**, whose theme for 2017-2018 is "Catch the Dream" for our Veterans. Assisting her is Sandi Kriebel, Sr. Vice-President and Peggy Haake, Jr. Vice-President. Their goals are to stress the training of individuals down to the Auxiliary level, to enhance the support of our Veterans and their families through the many Programs and Scholarships offered by the VFW and Auxiliary.

One of the improvements will come through the "MALTA" system, an online membership program that allows each individual to enter and/or change their data online. This should eliminate much of the minutia at the Auxiliary level around the collection and mailing of memberships. While our Treasurer will still maintain our Auxiliary financial data, the membership portion will be electronically transmitted with regular updates available to the President and Treasurer.

*It wasn't all work* – pictures posted elsewhere in this Newsletter show some of our Brothers and Sisters at the Celebration – dressed in New Orleans style Mardi Gras.



## COMMANDERS COMMENT

### Comrades and Auxiliary

As we commence the 2017-2018 VFW fiscal year we are again faced with the challenge of fulfilling the commitment upon which our organization was founded, i.e. to aid and assist our Veterans and their families, our community, and our youth. To accomplish this goal, we need the participation of every Comrade and Auxiliary member of our Post Family.

We offer excellent Scholarships in our Patriots Pen and Voice of Democracy, Patriotic Art programs, as well as awards for Scout of the year, First Responder, Teacher of the year. These are all members of our community and part of our everyday lives. All we need is your help in identifying them.

We hold meetings once each month to report on these programs and matters relating to post activities and business. We want your input, recommendations, and comments to aid us in meeting our obligations. The Building Committee meets at 1830 hours on first Tuesday of the month followed by the House Committee at 1900 hours. VFW membership meetings are at 1900 hours on the second Tuesday of the month. Auxiliary membership meetings are held the second Thursday of the month at 1900 hours.

I cannot stress the importance these meetings both from the standpoint of our programs and the conducting of Post business. The absence of organization usually results in less member participation and ultimately failure. This is not an option I care to consider and I certainly hope that you as members don't either!

Let's make this a banner year for Post 445!! God Bless America and the VFW

Jim

### Building & Grounds Committee

Replacement of the ceiling tiles in the canteen has begun.

The new pump for the parking lot will be going in this month and the Commander will be doing a survey for the new layout for parking.

A letter will be submitted regarding the damages to the parking lot caused by heavy equipment used by contractors involved in the road improvement project.

### House Committee

Gerry Miles will be assuming the duties (again) of HC Chairman.



### LEGISLATIVE REPORT:

*We were asked to call our Legislators and many of us did call - LOOK at the results!*

*Your voice counts*

**Funding Agreement Reached for Choice Program and VA:** On Monday, the VFW asked its members and supporters to call their Representatives and demand they vote “NO” on S.114, which called for the gradual privatization of Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) health care. The troubling bill would have sent billions of dollars into the private sector, using veterans’ benefits to pay for it. Plus, it would have put no new resources into VA to address critical infrastructure and staffing shortages. This call to action worked and the House voted down S.114. Congress will soon pass legislation that would fix the funding shortfall of the Choice Program, make urgently needed improvements to VA’s health care system, improve hiring and training for VA doctors and authorize VA to enter into 28 leases for medical facilities. This could not have been accomplished without direct support of VFW members, its supporters and partner veterans’ organizations who also took part in the fight against VA privatization. Stay tuned for future action alerts in our fight for veterans’ rights.

**VFW Lauds Unanimous House Passage of Forever GI Bill:** On Monday, the U.S. House of Representatives showed unquestionable, bipartisan commitment to America’s student veterans by voting 405-0 to pass H.R 3218, known as the Forever GI Bill. It ensures more veterans and their surviving family members have an opportunity to pursue their educational goals, such as Purple Heart recipients who do not have the requisite three years of active service; veterans attending schools that close abruptly through no fault of the veterans; and thousands of involuntarily activated National Guardsmen and Reservists. It also eliminates the 15-year, use-or-lose limitation, which means veterans truly have a lifetime to use their GI Bill.

**The VFW urges** its members and supporters to contact their Senators and ask them to pass this vital legislation. [Contact your Senator](#).

National VFW Commander, Brian Duffy addresses the Auxiliary at the National Convention in New Orleans







The Flags were in full glory at the Mardi Gras march at the National Convention



Can you find Barb? The entertainment at the Mardi Gras celebration was fabulous!



Europe was very enthusiastic at the Mardi Gras march-in Celebration

Barb and I visited the new Post 8973 in New Orleans.

They had just finished restoring and remodeling an old building and were having their grand opening celebration. This is the picture of the “new” Post. This is a young Post and their members were so enthusiastic about the future of their VFW Post.

What a great visit!



### July Post Meeting Minutes Highlights

*Full minutes are posted on the Business Bulletin Board (Blue) in the Canteen hallway*

A membership application for James Morris was unanimously approved. Please welcome our new comrade when you get a chance! CDR Barger requested authorization to hire casual labor to take care of a variety of “fixes” needed around the Post. The request was unanimously approved.

### Service Notes

This month our Post assisted a veteran with rent when she lost her job after needed surgery. Planning continues for providing suitable housing for a James Island veteran. On July 17th, your Post cooked and served baked ziti, green beans, and brownies to homeless Vets at Project Street Outreach’s weekly outreach on Reynolds Avenue. Along with the food, military insignia clothing and ballcaps, donated by our Auxiliary were distributed, putting smiles on many faces.

### Join fellow Veterans to Learn about topics related to Your VA & Mental Health

Every Month on 4th Wednesday 2:00-3:00 PM, (Jul 26, Aug 23, Sep 27, Oct 25, Nov 22)

Ralph H Johnson VA Hospital - Mental Health Research Building, Room 113

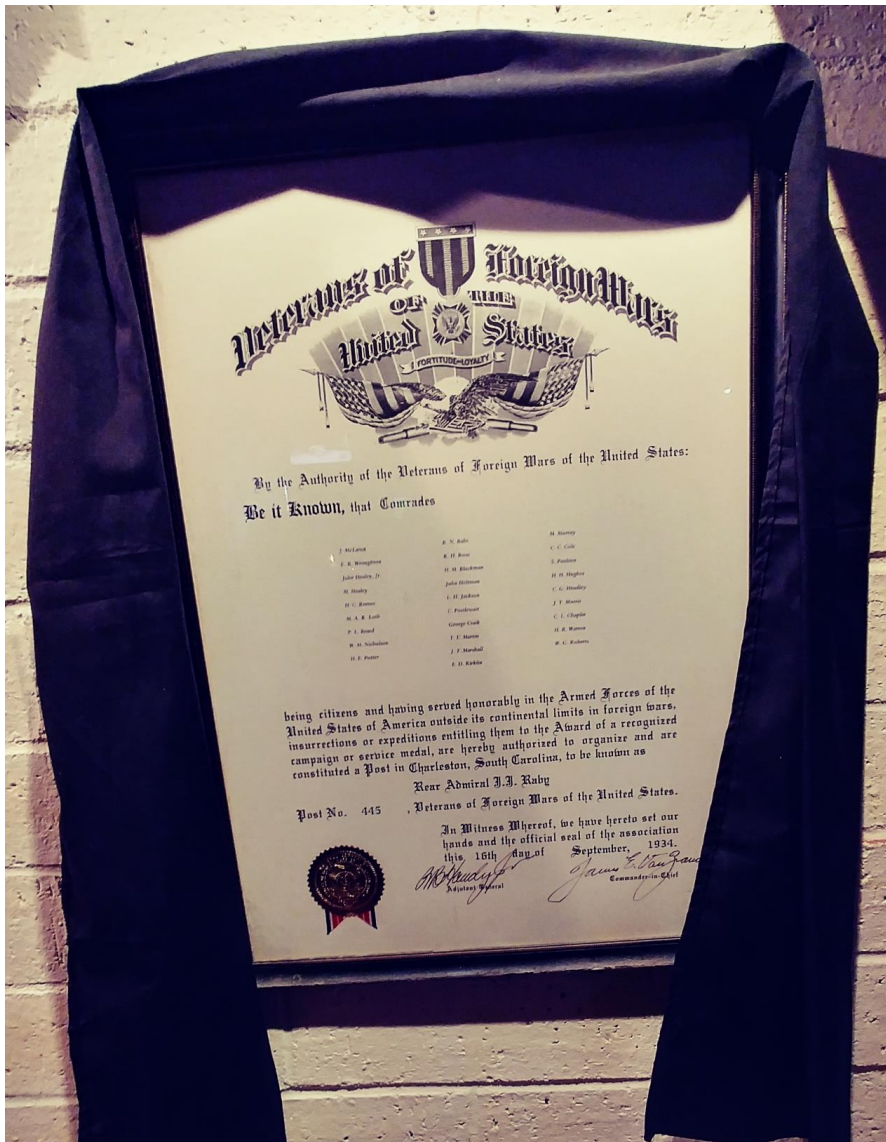
(Behind the hospital near the West Entrance)

Sponsored by the Lowcountry Veterans Mental Health Council

For more information contact: Lester Pittman (843) 452-1241 / lesterpittman@me.com



In Memory of: Eddie Jack Hunt ✦ Chad S. Masi



Robert Greathouse



Brandon Shaw

O Lord Jesus Christ, you have shown us that death is but the gateway to a more glorious life, and that we must not fear its coming; and we know, also, that neither life nor death can separate us from Your love.

Assure us yet again that our comrades Eddie Jack Hunt, Chad Masi, Robert “Robo” Greathouse, and Brandon Shaw departed are not lost to us, but sharing new life with You in the Kingdom of our Father, where we shall in Your time be reunited.

We know them to be with You forever. Amen.

## Post Meetings & Events

Building & Grounds, House Comm. Date and time change. Thursday for this month only.

8/3 @ 1830: Building & Grounds Committee

8/3 @ 1900: House Committee Meeting

8/8 @ 1900: General Membership Meeting

8/10 @ 7:00 p.m: Auxiliary Meeting

## Canteen Events

\*\* Breakfast every Sunday from 9:00 –11:30

\*\* Pool Tournament every Monday @ 7:00. \$10 entry fee; Prizes awarded!

\*\* Wings & Things every Wednesday from 5:30 – 7:30

\*\* Shuffleboard Tournament every Friday @ 7:00. \$5 entry fee; Winner takes all!



## August's Friday Night Dinners – 6:30

8/4 Chef Chuck's Surprise

8/11 Trae's Beef Rib Dinner

Music by Randy

8/18 Italian Night by Richard

8/25 Auxiliary Pork Loin Dinner by Barb

## Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC)

Are you familiar with CRSC - not sure if you qualify or how retired veterans can apply for this benefit?

The Army CRSC office at Fort Knox, Kentucky offers the following helpful tips and information. First, potential applicants should understand that CRSC is a Department of Defense (DOD) program, not a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) program, and is authorized under 10 U.S. Code § 1413a.

CRSC is a form of concurrent receipt paid monthly to eligible military retirees. In other words, CRSC restores military retired pay that is offset when a retiree accepts compensation from the VA for a disability or condition that can be directly linked to a combat related event as defined by the CRSC DOD program guidance. The CRSC benefit



allows eligible retirees to concurrently receive an amount equal to or less than their length of service retirement pay **and** their VA disability compensation.

Retirees must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for CRSC:

- Must be retired and receiving military retired pay.
- VA must have awarded 10 percent or greater service connected disability for a condition that meets the combat related definition as defined by CRSC DOD program guidance.
- Must have a VA waiver (VA Form 21-651, MAR 2005) in place for by-law reduction of military retired pay in the amount of the VA disability payment.

Eligible retiree categories include those who have 20 or more years of service, or a medical retirement under Chapter 61, Temporary Early Retirement Act (TERA), or Temporary Disabled Retirement List (TDRL). A combat-related injury is one that can be attributed to:

- Simulated war training (e.g., combat obstacle course)
- Hazardous duty (e.g., underwater diving, parachute duty)
- Instrumentality of war (e.g., military vehicle rollover during a training mission)
- Presumptive Disabilities (e.g., Agent Orange, mustard gas)
- Armed conflict (e.g., gunshot wounds, shrapnel wounds, punji stick injuries)

Due to the volume of applications received, the Army's CRSC program is experiencing an average 10-month claims processing cycle. CRSC applicants should note that an uncorroborated statement in a record that a disability is combat-related will not be considered determinative for purposes of meeting combat-related program standards - documentation verifying the cause of the disability is required.

The CRSC program validates your submitted information against your personnel records, available military medical and VA records in making eligibility determinations. Therefore, you only need to submit those documents that directly support your claim that are not already found in your official record. Submitting non-related documentation (i.e., your entire medical history) will only slow the process and increase your wait-time.

Finally, electronic submittal is the best, lowest cost, and most efficient way for you to submit your claim. For more information on CRSC, including how and where to submit an application, visit the Human Resources Command website at:

[www.hrc.army.mil/content/CRSC](http://www.hrc.army.mil/content/CRSC), call toll free (866)281-3254 (Mon - Fri / 0800-1800 hours), or email CRSC questions to [askhrc.army@us.army.mil](mailto:askhrc.army@us.army.mil).