

CANNON NEWS

Francis Cannon VFW Post 7589
Manassas, Virginia
May 2024



PHIL SMITH

On April 10 the Post and Auxiliary presented a burial flag to Sarah Hall who's grandfather Troy Garrett is to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery. Troy served on the USS Bebas in the Pacific Campaign in WWII and passed away in 2019. His cremains were transported from Idaho for internment at Arlington.

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CANNON NEWS—Multiple award winner at both the State and National levels, including 2024 National Grand Award.

Commander’s Message



Wayne Moore

In Memoriam

This month we mourn in remembrance of our “Fallen Heroes” who fought for the purported ideal of the country. I want to pay special homage to my comrades of the 6/9 Cav losses in “the Battle for Barqubah II” November 06- October 07.

In the recesses of my mind, the experience lies dormant but recently I was asked to recall names and places of events. I felt my body shift uneasily as

my mind raced to the vivid horrors of battlefield carnage. I interacted with these young men and women daily whether work-related or just amusement to pass the time. Watching engaged conflict or an IED hit was not a movie. The soldiers were not actors who could/would rise when the director yells cut. They were human beings whose lives were cut short leaving only memories. Families were disrupted and left with an emptiness unfilled. They are gone and the only knowledge of their existence resides in our thoughts, and should we ever forget; then they never existed. This list is by no means exhaustive but all remembered and Honored:

1LT Kevin J Gaspers	SSG William C. Moore	SSG Kenneth E. Locker, Jr
SGT Brice A Pearson	SGT Randell T. Marshall	SGT Michael L. Vaughan
SPC Jerry R King	SPC Michael J. Rodriguez	PFC Garrett C Knoll
1Lt Kyle West	SGT Anthony D. Ewing	CPL Zachary D. Baker
CPL James E. Summer	PC Alexander A. Alexeev	CPL Josiah W. Hollopeter
PV2 Michael A. Baloga	PFC Christopher McCloud	CPL. Todd Motley
CPL. Jonathan Rivadeneria	SSGT. Terry Wagoner	SSTGT. Kevin Brown

I had little to no prior knowledge of their lives or circumstances, however, it was evident that we fought for one America. Our differences were irrelevant to the task at hand, and all conducted the mission and its’ purpose.

This month I will reverence their sacrifice as they gave it. One Life, One Country, One People less we hasten the Apocalypse of Humanity.

Auxiliary President



Mary Corkhill



Mother’s Day traditionally involves presenting moms with flowers, cards and other gifts. This year it occurs on Sunday, May 12th.

On May 18th, the Armed Forces Day will celebrate a holiday for people all over the world to come together and thank the men and women of the United States Armed Forces. Another special day is Memorial Day on May 27th honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military.

Don’t forget the events in May: An Italian dinner for the comrades on May 6th at 6:30 PM. The Auxiliary members will be meeting after serving dinner to go over the Buddy Puppy display. On May 27th there will be two wreath laying ceremonies: at the Manassas Veterans Memorial (8:30 AM) and Francis Cannon’s grave (9:00 AM). Flags will be placed throughout the cemetery for the veterans.

Congratulations to Lianna Cruz for her Star-Spangled Banner entry in *Get Excited for the Red, White & Blue* singing competition and Carrie Chiara for her *VFW Auxiliary’s Young American Creative Patriotic Art* contest. Both entries were forwarded to the Department for judging. We wish them both well.

The Auxiliary Officers for 2024-2025 are: President: Mary Corkhill, Sr. Vice: Ellie Smith, Jr. Vice: Cindy McIntyre, Secretary: Lorrie Allen Smith, Treasurer: Elanor Doczi, Chaplain: Cookie Cullen, Conductor: Janet Raskin, Guard: Patsy Gough, Trustee 1: Yvonne Sullivan, Trustee 2: Jan Germain, Trustee 3: Janet Raskin, Patriotic Instructor: Lorrie Allen-Smith, Historians: Patsy Gough, Yvonne Sullivan & Jan Germain.

A reminder that the Department Convention is scheduled for June 12th–16th at the Fort Magruder Hotel and Conference Center. 6945 Pocahontas Trail, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185. There are two candidates running for Department Guard: Jamie Stewart and Bettina Lane. Also, a reminder that the National convention is in Louisville, KY, July 27-Aug 1.

The VFW National Home’s 100th anniversary Birthday Party will be celebrated on January 7, 2025. Events will last throughout the year. There are three ways to support the National Home: purchase a brick, a monetary donation or sign up for a life membership for \$50.00. You can do all three at the following email address: <https://vfnationalhome.org/you-can-help/membership/>. Thank you for your support.

There are several members and/or family members facing medical issues, illness, hospitalization or have gone to their Heavenly Home. Please keep them in your prayers.

Respectfully,
Mary Corkhill
VFW Auxiliary President



Youth Committee



Lou Filippone

The Youth Committee would like to provide the following report of last month's activities. Our meeting was held on Thursday, 18 April at the Post. It was attended by Comrade Lamar Baker and his guest, Alex and Tina Bliem, Auxiliary President Mary Corkhill and myself. Comrade Peter MacLeod participated by teleconference.

The main topic of discussion was our Spring activities agenda. Our Post conducted a very successful Flag Retirement Ceremony on Saturday, 13 April. It was well attended by over 54 VFW Comrades, Auxiliary, Scouts, adult Scout leaders and guests. Scouts from Pack and Troop 1372 Blue and Gold, Troop 670 and Crew 1372 participated. The weather was more than cooperative and all attendees had an enjoyable ceremony. According to Alex and Tina's report, 300-400 flags were retired. I would like to thank everyone from our Post and Auxiliary who volunteered their time, enabling this event to be so successful. We must not forget to thank Mary Corkhill and the Auxiliary who hosted a pizza party for the Scouts and other attendees following the event.

Regarding our JROTC and CAP Award ceremonies, at the time of this publication two of the four events have been completed. Comrade Peter MacLeod and Auxiliary President Mary Corkhill presented the Bronze VFW JROTC Cadet Medal to Cadet Alexandria Delk at Osbourn Park High School Monday, 22 April. In addition, Auxiliary President Mary Corkhill also presented the same medal to Cadet Gabriella Brown from Battlefield High School, Thursday evening, 25 April. We still have two remaining award ceremonies, both in the month of May. They are the Unity Reed High School ceremony scheduled for Thursday, 2 May at 2:30 PM and the Prince William Composite Squadron Civil Air Patrol ceremony being held on Tuesday, 21 May at 7:00 PM at the Manassas National Guard Armory. We still need presenters for these functions. If you have any interest in presenting awards to the winning Cadets please speak to any of us on the Youth Committee and we will ensure that you can attend and participate.

We again had to postpone our meeting and discussion with Kimberly Sparke from the Prince William Human Rights Commission. We have been attempting to coordinate and collaborate our VFW Youth related activities with those from her office. We will give her another opportunity to discuss her programs with us next month. Once the last two award ceremonies are completed this month, and the Memorial Day VFW and Scout activities are finished, the Youth Committee will receive a well-deserved break during the summer season. This will give us an opportunity to recharge and resume activities in the fall when we are heavily involved in our Patriot's Pen, Voice of Democracy and Teacher of the Year programs. We anticipate another successful year thanks to the hard work and perseverance of our volunteers.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 16 May at the Post at 7:00 PM. Please join us and volunteer some of your free time.

There is nothing more rewarding, with the exception of helping veterans, than guiding and mentoring our youth. They may be Scouts or students, but our mission is the same; to instill patriotism, Americanism and an appreciation for public and military service in them. With your help we can accomplish that goal, by inspiring our young people and providing for America's future.

With best regards,

Lou Filippone
Youth Committee Chair



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY CORKHILL

On April 22 Peter MacLeod and Mary Corkhill presented Cadet Alexandria Delk the JROTC award at Osbourn Park High School.

Scouting Report



Alex & Tina Bliem
Post 7589 Scouting
Representatives

With April in the books already, all of our scouts are looking forward to a great summer.

Our younger cubs got together and enjoyed a hike through Blooms Park this month. They are also working very hard to finish up their ranks and “Adventure Loops” before the end of the scouting year, which is also when the school year ends. We have a great group of Cubs this year and they are doing well.

Our Troops attended the weekend “Trout-o-Ree” this month which is a district level camping/fishing event held at Graves Mountain. The scouts and adults have the opportunity to fish in the river, a regular pond which is fed by the river or a stocked pond. If they fish at the stocked pond they must keep and cook whatever they catch. This has always been a very fun trip for the scouts and families. The scouts have also selected their Merit Badges and continue to prep for another great summer camp.

Our G troop welcomed another Eagle Scout after we held her Board of Review at the post this month. She is only our third female scout since the G troop formed. Tina and I have known her personally since she was a little kid and she would always follow her older brother around through his scouting career (he is an Eagle as well). When we had the opportunity to form a Female BSA troop she was ecstatic (one of the first to join) and has always been one of our top scouts.

Our crew continues to prepare for their high adventure trip which is getting really close. Reservations for the trip have been made. Everything is paid for and now they are concentrating on preparing their bodies and getting into shape. They are split into two 8 person groups for the trip and they now have a friendly competition to push each other. Every week they log the amount of physical activity each person has done for the week and tally it all up to see which group has done more. No prizes of course just a friendly competition.

Together all of our units as well as some external scouting units participated in our flag retirement ceremony. We retired roughly 300-400 flags this time. Since the parking lot was repaved and millings were placed in the rear, our scout leaders were able to put down pavers to place the barrels on for the fire. This worked out extremely well for the retirement and the cleanup afterwards. As with prior retirements the scouts did extremely well with the opening ceremony and the subsequent retirement. This was followed up by pizzas that were provided by our Auxiliary. The scouts always enjoy sitting with each other and eating some pizza afterwards.

Be safe,

Alex & Tina Bliem
VFW Post 7589
Pack, Troops, Crew 1372



TINA BLIEM



ALEX BLIEM



ALEX BLIEM

See more photos at:
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/f67jjMpB1uRVR7Fq8>

Scout Leaders continue landscaping project at the post

3 VFW Members and 1 Auxiliary member planted trees, ground cover, shrubs and also spread dirt and grass seed. The expenditure of \$550 was a gift from the scouts.



ALEX BLIEM



TINA BLIEM



ALEX BLIEM



TINA BLIEM



ALEX BLIEM



ALEX BLIEM

Cannon News wins Grand Award in VFW National Competition

Two other Virginia posts also won awards

National Publications Contest Winners Announced for 2023-24

Publications from across eight VFW Departments have been chosen as this year's winners

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (April 23, 2024) — The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) has announced the winners of the 2024 National Publications Contest. More than six years ago, the contest changed significantly to encourage more participation. This created two new categories: Best Magazine and Best Feature Article. This year's competition retained those changes.

Two non-VFW-affiliated journalism professionals served as judges for the competition. This is designed to guarantee impartiality and objectivity in the judging. To reiterate, VFW staffers play no part in judging the entries.

The winning publications in each category are:

Best Magazine

Grand Award:

California Veteran
Rodger Meier, Editor

Silver Award:

N/A

Best Feature Article

Grand Award:

"Mama Bear"
Lt. Col. Brad Leighton, *Illinois VFW News*
Department of Illinois

Silver Award:

"Flag Finds Way Back to Alachua County VFW Post 2811"
Michael P. Mauer, *Alachua County Today*
Department of Florida

Bronze Award:

"Shared Link to The Past"
Sara Jane Ruggles, *The Coeur d'Alene Press*
Department of Idaho

Department Publications

Large Frequency (printed 5+ times per year)

Grand Award:

Illinois VFW News
Barb Wilson, Editor

Small Frequency (printed 1-4 times per year)

Grand Award:

Wisconsin VFW News
Marla J. Morgan, Editor

Silver Award:

Louisiana Combat Veteran
Mitchell Cota, Editor

Bronze Award:

Pennsylvania VFW News
David Gyger, Editor

District/Post Publications

Large Frequency (printed 5+ times per year)

Grand Award:

Cannon News
Rick Raskin, Editor
Department of Virginia

Silver Award:

VFW Post 392 Newsletter and Calendar
Michael T. Marushia Sr., Editor
Department of Virginia

Bronze Award:

The Dispatch
Stephen Blackwell, Editor
Department of Florida

Small Frequency (printed 1-4 times per year)

Grand Award:

VFW SSG Dozier Memorial Post 2894
Dan Eaker, Editor
Department of Virginia

Silver Award:

Fort Atkinson Post Dispatch (VFW Post 1879)
Kelly Stine, Editor
Department of Wisconsin

Bronze Award:

VFW Post 2113 & Auxiliary Newsletter
Randy Hansen, Editor
Department of Wisconsin

Auxiliary Continued from Page 2

Auxiliary 7589 and District 8 winner of the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest



Patriotism can be expressed in many different ways to love one's country. The most popular symbol of American patriotism is the United States flag, which symbolizes freedom and uncovers America's history, which is an essential part of American identity. In this artwork, the storm clouds in the background reflect the nation's hardships from wars and other crises the U.S. has endured throughout history and symbolize the grief of those lives lost from protecting our country. The military dog licking its military owner represents affection and trust, which illustrates the deep bond of unity and provides comfort from the difficulties faced in the military. The dog licking also signifies the acceptance of loving one's country despite its flaws, depicted as the storm clouds, which capture the patriotism spirit by emphasizing the sacrifices made by those in the military, both human and canine. As well as serving as a constant reminder to never forget what you're fighting for.



Carrie Chiara winner of the VFW Auxiliary's Young American Creative Patriotic Art contest

7589 Post & Auxiliary at the AFJROTC Award Ceremony Battlefield High School April 25, 2024



Auxiliary President Mary Corkhill, Cadet Gabriella Brown, Trustee 3 Lamar Baker



Lianna Cruz sang the National Anthem and won the Get Excited for the Red, White & Blue contest



Buddy Poppy Drive
May 18
Mission BBQ, Gainesville
10:30 AM—3:30 PM

Volunteers needed

Please sign up at the May 6 Post meeting
or email

quartermaster@vfw7589.org

Post parking lot repaved

By Rick Raskin

After many years of piece by piece maintenance we did a complete repaving of our parking lot. After receiving four bids the membership chose H & H Paving of Manassas for the project. In addition to giving us a \$1000 veteran's discount, H&H built a pad next to the shed at no additional cost to use for parking the Scout's trailers. The pad was built with millings which were also used to reinforce the area where we retire flags. The lot was then relined in accordance with US requirements for parking spaces. The cost to the post was \$28,995 and was totally covered by rental revenue unlike years ago when we had to take up a collection for the initial paving.



RICK RASKIN

That's not litter on the pavement but seed droppings from a nearby tree.



Comrades of VFW Post 7589

You are cordially invited
to a Spaghetti & meat
sauce/meatball dinner
provided by the Auxiliary
on

May 6, 2024 at 6:30PM



VFW Auxiliary Eligibility Wheel



**Step- and adopted parents, children, siblings (and half-siblings), grandparents and grandchildren are considered the same as biological parents, children, siblings, grandparents and grandchildren and may join the VFW Auxiliary under their VFW-eligible veteran.*

Legislative Update



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 8, 2024

Contact: Maria Salgado
Office of Delegate Paul Krizek
maria@paulkrizek.com

Contact: James Manetz
Office of Senator Bryce Reeves
james@brycereeves.com

Senator Bryce Reeves and Delegate Paul Krizek celebrate charitable gaming changes becoming law

RICHMOND, Va. - Today (April 8), Senator Bryce Reeves (R-Spotsylvania) and Delegate Paul Krizek (D-Mount Vernon) announce that their joint legislative effort to reform Virginia's charitable gaming framework was signed into law. SB 344 and HB 523 build on reforms passed during the last two legislative sessions, allowing organizations qualified to conduct electronic charitable gaming to utilize their gaming proceeds for maintenance and other expenses of their property, as well as lawful religious, charitable, community, or educational purposes.

"This caps a long legislative journey Delegate Krizek and I took to reforming charitable gaming in Virginia into a transparent and fair system, free from conflicts of interests, with clear definitions, penalties, a powerful enforcement arm, and with the goal of raising funds for charity as first and foremost in mind",

Reeves said, and added, "I want to thank Governor Youngkin for recognizing our work and signing these bills."

"This is the final legislative ingredient to meeting Senator Reeves' and my goal, when we first began the charitable gaming reform process three years ago, which was to strengthen and

modernize a charitable gaming system that keeps the emphasis on charity and helps these legitimate non-profits like the Moose,

VFW, and similar fraternal organizations, because what they do for the community is important and beneficial," Krizek said.

"Senate Bill 344 and House Bill 523 make major improvements to Virginia's Charitable Gaming regulatory framework. The bills will help Virginia's Moose Lodges fulfill our promise to care for children and seniors for years to come. Virginia's 82 Moose Lodges and 66,000 members appreciate the leadership and hard work of Delegate Paul Krizek and Senator Bryce Reeves to improve Virginia's charitable gaming laws." said the President of the Virginia Moose Association, Wakefield Foster.

Gary Adams, State Commander of the VFW Department of Virginia said, "Senate Bill 344 and House Bill 523 go a long way towards helping veterans' service organizations and other non-profits keep more of their proceeds from charitable gaming. Virginia VSOs and charitable organizations are on the front line in our communities helping our veterans and Virginians in need. Virginia's regulated charitable gaming system is

what allows us to carry out our chartered and stated missions to Virginia's veterans and our communities. The Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Virginia appreciates the work of the bills' patrons, Senator Bryce Reeves and Delegate Paul Krizek, to improve Virginia's charitable gaming regulations. The VFW thanks Governor Youngkin for signing the bills and appreciates his support for legislation that assists

Virginia's veterans. We look forward to further collaboration with the legislature and the Governor in this process in the coming years."

We made a difference on VMSDEP

Submitted by Monti Zimmerman

The Governor line item vetoed and amended the budget concerning our dependent and survivor education benefit for veterans AND added money to the program!

Governor Youngkin made two VMSDEP related amendments that 1) would delay making any changes to VMSDEP benefits until the 2025 Session in order to permit a stakeholder work group to study the issue and make recommendations to Governor and General Assembly regarding long-term viability of the program and 2) would provide dedicated funding (\$20M for the biennium) to assist our public colleges and universities in offsetting the costs of providing the VMSDEP tuition/required fee waiver.

The two amendments are:

Amendment 230:

Strikes the language in [Item 4.5.01 #2c](#) in the Conference budget, and

Amendment 62:

Adds \$10M in FY25 and \$10M in FY26 in dedicated funding to offset the costs of waiver programs under § 23.1, Chapter 6, Code of Virginia (these programs include VMSDEP and other veteran/Guard programs), and

Creates a stakeholder work group, led by the Secretary of Finance and including members of the General Assembly, that is charged to evaluate and make recommendations on legislative actions and budgetary modifications that could improve the long-term viability of the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program.

The Secretary of Finance is directed to submit the work group's recommendations to the Governor and the Chairs of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health by November 1, 2024.

Commissioner's Corner



Virginia is blessed to be the home to nearly 700,000 military veterans. From the Pentagon, Fort Belvoir and Marine Base Quantico in Northern Virginia to Fort Walker and Fort Gregg-Adams in Central Virginia to Joint Base Langley-Eustis and Naval Station Norfolk in Hampton Roads and more, our Commonwealth is also the home to over 30 active military installations and the active-duty service members and their families who live on or near them.

Each year Virginia joins with the U.S Department of Defense to celebrate April as the month of the military child. It's not easy being the child of a parent or parents who are serving in any of our military branches. On average military families move every two or three years to different bases around the country or even abroad, which means military children must adjust to a new home, new schools and a new support network of friends. It's not easy as my family and I personally understand; during my nearly thirty years of active duty, our son and daughter moved more than eleven times as my assignments changed. Equally or even more stressful are the times of separation, when the service member is serving in support of a conflict, and the spouse and family are left without their deployed parent. The sacrifice is significant.

Here in Virginia, and especially here at the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, we want to do everything possible to make lives better for the spouses and over 80,000 military-connected children when they are stationed here. We not only offer programs through our Virginia Veteran and Family Support program, we also have a full-time military spouse liaison on staff to keep abreast of the needs of military families. Bottom line, we want to assure that even when they leave active duty, our military families decide to make the Commonwealth their permanent home and as Governor Youngkin often says, "the best state for them to live, work and thrive."

Also, each year, DVS partners with the Virginia Department of Education for PurpleUp! Day. For 2024, April 17 was PurpleUp! Day – a day when everyone is encouraged to wear purple to show their support for our military children. Why wear purple? Because the color purple combines the colors of each military branch into one color.

I joined Virginia's First Lady Suzanne Youngkin, Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Craig Crenshaw and many of our DVS team members at the State Capitol on April 17 to celebrate PurpleUp! Day VA. Check out the photos in this edition of *DVS eNews* below.

As Commissioner, I have had the opportunity to meet many of you as I have travelled around Virginia and attended veteran events. I look forward to meeting more of you and as I have noted before, please know that we depend on your honest and candid input on how DVS can better serve you and your family. This is our mission and our team members and I take it seriously.

I will continue to reiterate my call for your feedback. We at DVS are committed to serving you! Let me know where we can do better. Email me at Commissioner@dvs.virginia.gov. I'd welcome hearing from you. Let me know where you are having the biggest challenges: how was your transition experience? Do you know of other veterans who are struggling with their support from our Federal VA offices? We've been successful in helping many with working through that challenge.

Thank you for your service. And thanks to your spouses, partners and children who have been and continue to be such an important part of your life. May God continue to bless this Commonwealth and our Nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Zingler". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light-colored background.

Chuck Zingler, Commissioner
Virginia Department of Veterans Services

Free laptops for veterans: Laurel Ridge, state agency celebrate new partnership

INSIDENOVA March 29, 2024



The Virginia Department of Veterans Services is providing laptops for some veterans at the commonwealth’s community colleges. Pictured at Laurel Ridge Community College in Warrenton, from left, is Jeanmarie Corrado, veterans academic advisor/school certifying official with Laurel Ridge; Sgt. Brian Higgins; Zuri Polk with the Department of Veterans Services; John Hall with the department; and Mark Casper, president of Tech for Troops.

Veterans and their spouses attending Laurel Ridge Community College and other schools across the commonwealth are benefiting from a first-in-the-nation program from the Virginia Department of Veterans Services.

The department is providing 20 laptops for vets at each of the 23 colleges that make up the Virginia Community College System, according to a Laurel Ridge news release.

“This is a brand new project we started this year in partnership with the VCCS and Tech for Troops,” John Hall, military education and workforce initiatives manager at the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, said March 19 as he delivered the Dell computers to Laurel Ridge’s Fauquier Campus.

Hall said the department hopes to be able to provide laptops to dependents of veterans within the next year.

Veterans can receive the laptops regardless of their discharge status, whether they are taking credit or workforce classes and whether they are using G.I. Bill benefits to fund their education, according to the release.

“This is not a loaner program,” Hall said. “It’s theirs. It’s our hope that they will continue to use that to find a job, to attend mental health telemedicine appointments, to write their resumes, to search for jobs. We are very hopeful that this fall we will be able to do another major disbursement.”

Mark Casper, president of Tech for Troops, attended last week’s laptop drop-off. He said his organization is providing a one-year warranty for the computers and will offer remote and mail-in repair services. Richmond-based Tech for Troops provides a variety of technology services for veterans as well as peer support and other programs.

Ongoing partnership

Jeanmarie Corrado, veteran academic advisor and school certifying official with Laurel Ridge, said a Department of Veterans Services official works frequently with Laurel Ridge students to introduce veterans to various services the department offers.

About 110 student veterans are enrolled at Laurel Ridge this semester, according to Corrado.

“DVS comes once a month to this campus,” she said in the release. “We are thankful to the [department] for providing these laptops to veterans. Providing access to this technology will be a launching point for the next phase in their careers. It makes me proud to be working in Virginia where these programs exist for veterans.”

Hall said many people confuse the Department of Veterans Services with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. He said his organization helps veterans in various ways, including suicide prevention, combating homelessness and offering mental health education.

“We have a huge database of resources in your community and statewide and nationally that can step in and make a difference,” he said.

Don't throw away your old laptop or computer.



TECH FOR TROOPS Bring it to the Post and we'll take it to

TECH FOR TROOPS.

Sorry, we cannot take CRT monitors or Printers.

Electronic Health Records: DOD Has Deployed New System but Challenges Remain

GAO-24-106187 Published: Apr 18, 2024. Publicly Released: Apr 18, 2024.

What GAO Found

The Department of Defense (DOD) has deployed its new federal electronic health record (EHR) system, called MHS GENESIS, at military treatment facilities. The final system deployment took place in March 2024 at the Federal Health Care Center, a joint DOD and VA facility.

As of March 2024, DOD and VA reported that they had completed the 35 critical tasks and milestones required to implement the new system at the joint facility, but the departments have opportunities to further integrate their systems. Accordingly, DOD and VA began a process to resolve differences between their respective workflows and EHR configurations to increase integration. However, the process did not result in a fully integrated approach due to reasons such as legal and policy barriers. Until it addresses these barriers, DOD and VA will likely not meet the integration goal established for the Federal Health Care Center.

In 2022, DOD began conducting an annual survey of MHS GENESIS user satisfaction and worked with a contractor to analyze survey data. User satisfaction rates for DOD's new system have improved over the past 2 years. However, the user satisfaction rates for the new system were generally lower than the rates for users of DOD's legacy systems and for private-sector users of the commercial version of MHS GENESIS (see table).

User Satisfaction Results from DOD's 2023 Annual User Satisfaction Survey Compared to Results for DOD's Legacy Systems and Similar Private-Sector Systems

Survey question topic	New electronic health record	Legacy systems	Private-sector systems
Patient-centered care	39%	56%	46%
Efficiency	20	36	32
Downtime	49	45	67
Response time	21	31	40
Quality care	29	46	50

Source: GAO analysis of Department of Defense (DOD) information. | GAO 24 106187

Note: DOD legacy system data come from 2022 survey results. Data for DOD's new electronic health record and for private-sector systems come from 2023 survey results.

Although user satisfaction levels are below those for its other relevant systems, DOD has not yet established satisfaction goals. Without goals for improving user satisfaction, the department will be limited in its ability to measure progress, plan for improvements, and ensure the system meets users' needs.

DOD's Program Executive Office has implemented an issue management plan to address key issues affecting MHS GENESIS. However, it has not been able to resolve problems with its dental module, called Dentrix. These problems, which began in 2018, continued to plague Dentrix through January 2024. This led to DOD elevating the issue to the severe level and deciding to identify Dentrix alternatives. However, DOD does not yet have a plan or schedule for identifying alternatives. Until the office resolves the Dentrix issue, the new federal EHR will not provide critical functionality to dentists who treat DOD beneficiaries.

[Click Here For Full Report](#)

Navy authorizes combat awards and devices for Red Sea operations

By Geoff Ziezulewicz, [Navy Times](#)
April 25

The Navy is now authorizing combat awards for sailors serving in the Red Sea area, according to a message sent to the fleet Wednesday by Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro.

The authorization is a nod to the constant and perilous work of Navy warships and sailors who have battled Iran-backed Houthi rebels off Yemen since the fall.

Since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel, and Israel's subsequent incursion into the Gaza Strip, Navy destroyers and fighter jets stationed aboard the aircraft carrier Dwight D. Eisenhower have intercepted a steady stream of Houthi attack drones and rockets fired at military and commercial vessels in the region.

Del Toro's message Wednesday states that those serving within that area are eligible to be awarded the Combat Action Ribbon, as well as personal military decorations that include the "V" and "C" devices, for valor and combat, respectively, including the Bronze Star Medal without devices.

The Air Medal is now authorized for operations in the region, but only for the "Strike/Flight" designation, which requires participation in sustained aerial operations within the designated airspace.

This new authorization is effective from Oct. 19 onward.

On that date, the men and women of the destroyer Carney shot down a barrage of Houthi drones and missiles that the group fired at Israel, the first of many engagements for Carney that most recently involved helping to shoot down Iran's April 14 attack on Israel.

The then-head of U.S. 5th Fleet, Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, visited the ship in January and presented combat awards to five sailors for their "exceptional performance" when the warship shot down 14 Houthi air drones on Dec. 16.

Carney's commanding officer, Cmdr. Jeremy Robertson, and another unidentified sailor received Navy Commendation medals from Cooper, while three other crew members received Navy and Marine Corps Achievement medals.

The entire crew also received the combat action ribbon in January, an honor rarely bestowed on Navy crews in modern times.

Fellow Navy destroyers Thomas Hudner, Arleigh Burke, Gravelly, Mason and Laboon have also intercepted Houthi and Iranian attacks in recent months.


Sailors aboard fellow destroyers Mason and Nitze, as well as the amphibious transport docks Ponce and San Antonio, received the ribbon in 2017, after they were fired upon by Houthi rebels.

Before that, few crews had received the distinction since the 1991 Gulf War, but those aboard the amphibious assault ship Kearsarge received one for an incident off Jordan in 2005.


Military Times article: <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-navy/2024/04/25/navy-authorizes-combat-awards-and-devices-for-red-sea-operations/>




The salty sailors of the Navy destroyer Carney have spent months shooting down Iran-backed Houthi rebel attacks over the Red Sea. (Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Aaron Lau/Navy)



MAY THE FOURTH BE WITH YOU




SGT Nicholas C. Mason Memorial
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Monti Zimmerman

703-223-2211

Playwright seeks GWOT stories
[Email from the Department of Virginia]

I am planning to write my next play on GWOT. I have had successes with *The Greatest Generation Speaks* which has played in over 100 theatres in the States and Canada and *SHOAH* which has played all over Europe.

My colleague, Major Bruce Norton, USMC (Ret) and I have written a play and book called *Voices From Vietnam* which both will premiere in November at Journey Theatre in Warrenton, VA.

We need stories, letters, reflections from Veterans, Civilians who were there and families to make this happen. I would appreciate it if you could get this to National and throughout Virginia. The stories, etc. can be sent to me at: 911gwot@gmail.com. Thank you.

Cheers,
Harry Kantrovich, EdD
CNOCM, USN(Ret)
profhjk@gmail.com
703-965-2793



**Veterans
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net
or text to 838255

Upcoming Events

May 2	Unity Reed HS Awards — 2:30 PM at Unity Reed HS
May 6	Post Meeting — 7:30 PM — Dinner by the Auxiliary at 6:30 PM
May 13	Auxiliary Meeting — 2:00 PM
May 16	Youth Committee Meeting — 7:00 PM
May 18	Buddy Poppy distribution — Mission BBQ — 10:30 AM to 3:30 PM
May 21	Pr. William Composite Squadron CAP Awards — 7:00 PM at Manassas NG Armory
May 25-26	Memorial Day weekend activities
May 27	Wreath Laying Ceremonies — Manassas Veterans Memorial and Cemetery
June 3	Post Meeting — 7:30 PM
June 10	Auxiliary Meeting — 2:00 PM
June 12—16	State Convention — Fort Magruder Hotel, Williamsburg
June 20	Youth Committee Meeting — 7:00 PM
June 27	JLC Meeting — Virginia War Memorial — 10:00 AM

We need 39 people to renew their annual membership to reach 100% and 50 to make 102%

We can do it. Please renew soon!

Legacy Life membership

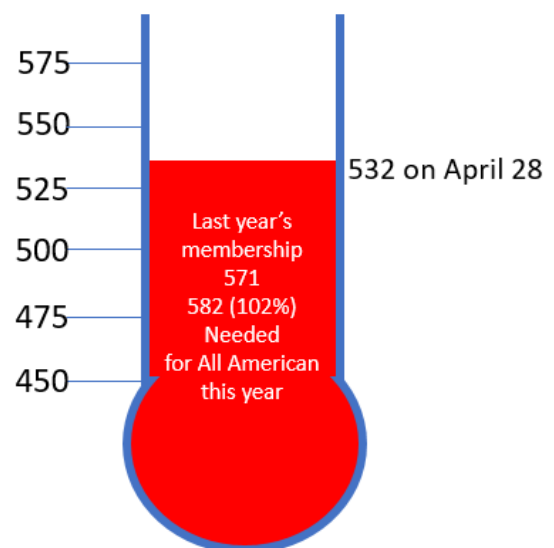
This prestigious program is available to all Life members and is now available in memoriam for past Life members. There are three levels of membership; each offer their own package of exclusive member benefits. Financial contributions to the Legacy Life member program are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

Enrollment Cost:

<u>Levels</u>		<u>Posts</u>	<u>Departments</u>	<u>National</u>
Gold-	\$1,200.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
Silver-	\$800.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Bronze-	\$400.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

Annual Payouts:

ANNUAL MEMBERS PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP



2023-24 Post Officers

Commander	Wayne Moore
Senior Vice Commander	Lou Filippone
Junior Vice Commander	Bobby Knight
Quartermaster	Rick Raskin
Chaplain	Ron Knowles
1 Year Trustee	Tina Bliem
2 Year Trustee	Chris Morgan
3 Year Trustee	Lamar Baker
Adjutant	Ron Link
Service Officer	Monti Zimmerman
Judge Advocate	Bobby Knight
Surgeon	Alex Bliem

2023-24 Auxiliary Officers

President	Mary Corkhill
Senior Vice President	Ellie Smith
Junior Vice President	Cindy McIntyre
Secretary	Ann Mitchell
Treasurer	Elanor Doczi
Chaplain	Cookie Cullen
Conductress	Janet Raskin
Guard	Patsy Gough
Trustee 1	Janet Raskin
Trustee 2	Yvonne Sullivan
Trustee 3	Jan Germain
Historians	Jan Germain
	Patsy Gough
	Yvonne Sullivan
Patriotic Instructor	Lorrie Allen Smith

**Virginia Department
of
Veterans Services**

Manassas Office

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Suite 305
703-479-7437

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Appointments only 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. & 1 – 3 p.m.
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<https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/dvs/locations/manassas-benefits-office>



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Bobby Scott	3rd District	202-225-8351
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Bob Good	5th District	202-225-4711
Ben Cline	6th District	202-225-5431
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Morgan Griffith	9th District	202-225-3861
Jennifer Wexton	10th District	202-225-5136
Gerry Connolly	11th District	202-225-1492



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Editor: Rick Raskin
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Please email articles to quartermaster@vfw7589.org no later than the 28th of the month.
 We reserve the right to edit submitted articles for timeliness, clarity and syntax.



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Manassas Ballet Theatre is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, Prince William County, and the City of Manassas

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Post 7589 supports Manassas Ballet Theatre in memory of LCPL Colin Wolfe.

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