



**Stanley E. Banks, Sr.**  
**Veterans of Foreign Wars**  
**Post 10003**

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 (317) 846-0917

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 Commander: Darin Bibeau  
 Editor/Publisher: Callagher Chaffin



## VFW Newsletter -February 2024

**NEXT Regular Post meeting is on Monday, February 12th at 6:30 PM**

**Post Commander: Darin Bibeau**

Greetings, Fellow Comrades.

I hope everyone has set off on the right foot with their New Year's Resolutions. There is no time like the present! "*A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step*"- Lao Tzu.

January was a busy month! We were able to show our appreciation to all the volunteers that tirelessly work "day in day out" to make this Post what it is. While it is tough to recognize each person since there is so much devotion from this team, we were able to award three individuals with "Volunteer of the Year" award: Bill Whitley, Tom Porteous, and Lauren Weigel. I am so proud to serve this Post and each of you. We continued to serve the best breakfast in town (might be biased), hosted a blood drive, watched NFL playoffs, and simply put- just had a good time. Thank you for all the hard work, dedication, and contributions!

Recruiting: State is at 90.34% membership, with the Post trailing behind at 82.79%. VFW's National Commander in Chief designated a membership objective of 102%! Ken Lange and his team have been very active in working various recruiting events around the State. Even though Ken serves as Certified National Recruiter and State Membership Chairman, we have been blessed with his mentorship and assistance. We need to pick up the pace.

I am happy to announce that we had a Patriot's Pen winner from the Post make 3rd in State: Christina Bergsman. We also had our Teacher of the Year win for the Middle School category for State: Kelsey Renbarger. Congratulations to everyone that participated and thank you for everyone's support. We had the largest turn out at the Post for the awards presentation last meeting. That is a testament as to everyone's involvement.

The Spring Conference and Banquet will be 22-24 March, so make sure you let myself, or Erik Anderson know if you plan to attend. The location will be Indianapolis Marriott East. The Finance Meeting will be Friday, 22 March, 7pm. The Business Meeting will be 9am on Saturday, 23 March. I encourage those interested in holding a position around the Post to attend the Business Meeting. There will be a lot of valuable information and you will have the opportunity to meet a lot of people from around the State.

The month of February brings President's Day- February 19th, as an occasion to celebrate George Washington and Abraham Lincoln's birthdays. Their contributions were not only significant to our country, but our military as well. February also brings Valentines' Day on the 14th. I am sure Seth and his crew has something planned, more to follow.

There are just a few more months until elections. Let's work on closing this year out strong! *Every moment is a fresh beginning.....*

#everydayGSD,  
 Darin Bibeau



## Sr. Vice Commander - Matt McNally

Comrades,

I want to thank you all for your time volunteering and all you do for the Post. In January, the Honor Guard participated in the Mayoral Inauguration as well as Carmel's Martin Luther Jr celebration. As always, they represented our post very well.

As of now, our membership is at 83%. We are exploring more opportunities for membership drives, so please stay tuned for any events.

On February 12th, before our monthly meeting, we will have a guest speaker from Helping Veterans and Families (HVAF), come to discuss their organization. They assist homeless veterans and their families, provide transitional housing, as well as career counseling. It's a great organization and well worth attending.

On a different note, I want to highlight an important piece of veterans' legislation that just unanimously passed Indiana's House: House Bill 1021. House Bill 1021 creates a "Green Alert" which will notify law enforcement if a missing person is an at-risk veteran. This bill will be headed to the state senate. First it will go to committee, where we will all have the opportunity to testify for the bill.

I appreciate all you do for the post and the community.

In Solidarity  
Matt McNally  
Senior Vice

## Quartermaster - Erik Anderson

### **Quartermaster's Report**

Treasure Hunt jackpot is up to \$12,000 with 6 numbers left, with drawings continuing every Thursday until we have a lucky winner.

The Chili Cookoff hosted by the VFW Auxiliary will be taking place on Feb 11th from 1-4pm, so if you or any family members have that secret winter chili recipe hiding away, now's the time to showcase it! Sign-up forms are behind the bar. A total of 20 participant chefs will be allowed to submit a chili, with the judging being conducted by both the Carmel Police Department and populous votes of a \$1 donation per vote.

Lastly, we've been very fortunate to receive private donations this time of year, from both members and non-members alike. I'll keep most those discreet, as most folks do so out of the goodness of their heart without expecting public praise. But I would like to say, we owe a big thank you to Precision Comfort & Air for donating \$500 towards the upkeep of the Veteran's Memorial in Westfield, as Safety Officer Dennis Zavada wanted to let them know it'll go towards the purchasing of US flags on all the gravesites come Memorial Day.

So thank you to all our donors, patrons, & members who keep our Post alive, vibrant, and financially healthy every day. Our Post, is your Post, and we officers can't thank you enough for all who participate.

Respectfully,

Erik Anderson  
Quartermaster





## HONOR GUARD

- Thank you for everyone that participated this month: Military/Flag presentation for Carmel's Mayoral Inauguration and Martin Luther King Jr Ceremony; along with Full Honors for a Fallen Comrade.
- Check with Steve for new duties or uniform supplies if needed. We are boosting our HG uniform inventory. Thank you, Cal! That said, be sure your uniform is squared away. **Do you have everything?**
- We continue to look for new Honor Guard members. If you are interested in being a part of the best Honor Guard in Hamilton County, please see myself, or Cal.



-Steve Wyatt, Honor Guard Commander



## We do more for Veterans!

Do you stop to think why, or how, we are able to make that claim. At the Post level we miss seeing much of the activity that the VFW provides. There is too much to list in one newsletter release, so going forward, we will provide a notable item in each month's newsletter, like this one today.

From the VFW fact sheet, the VFW has testified 19 times to Congress in the last 12 month alone. "\$13 billion is the total amount the VFW helped veterans recoup in VA disability compensation and pension benefits in fiscal year 2023."

**About the VFW:** The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is the nation's largest and oldest major war veterans organization. Founded in 1899, the congressionally chartered VFW is comprised entirely of eligible veterans and military service members from the active, Guard and Reserve forces. With more than 1.4 million VFW and Auxiliary members located in nearly 6,000 Posts worldwide, the nonprofit veterans service organization is proud to proclaim "NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS" than the VFW, which is dedicated to veterans' service, legislative advocacy, and military and community service programs. For more information or to join, visit our website at [vfw.org](http://vfw.org).



## Auxiliary President - Brandon Brooks

Greetings All,

As we embark on a new month, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering dedication and commitment to our veterans and their families. Together, we continue to make a positive impact in our community and beyond.

### Membership

Our membership is only at 92%. Annual dues should have been paid by December 31st, so we have a lot of members considered not in good standing. If you haven't yet paid, you can do so through MALTA or come and stop by the Post; we'd love to see you. I'd rather not start nagging but it looks like we'll have to start calling those who haven't yet paid.

We've had several new members join and I hope to see them for our next meeting.

### Committees

Traditionally our Christmas committee is dissolved in January, but we raised quite a bit of money last minute and couldn't get it allocated in time. So we decided to let the committee to continue for another month and support a family with a special needs after Christmas.

Our *Veterans in the Wild* committee is still looking for members to help support our cause. If you are interested in providing some love and recognition to veterans you meet at the grocery store, at church, school, a gas station, or anywhere in "the wild", reach out to Laura Whitley (our committee chair).

Denise Hannon, our hospital committee chair, had a Valentines Day card signing party last month as a joint venture with our Post Comrades. These will be handed out to veterans in hospitals this month. A huge thank you to everyone who helped sign these cards.

### Upcoming Events

Our annual Chili Cook Off will be on February 11th starting at 3pm I believe. Stay tuned for more information.

### Meetings

Our next meeting will be February 12th at 6:30PM. We hope to have a great turnout

The next District meeting will be March 10th at 11:30am in Rockville. As a reminder, our District Meetings are now available to attend online with Zoom. You must be a member in good standing to attend, so pay your dues and reach out to me for the link.

The Department Spring Conference will be March 22nd through the 24th at the Indianapolis Marriott East. There are always door prizes for first-timers. Come have a look around, learn some new things, and meet new people.

As always, thank you to all of our members and supporters. Together we are able to accomplish great things and improve the lives of those who served and their families. Please reach out to me, or any of our officers if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

### **Brandon Brooks**

President, VFW Auxiliary Indiana District 6

President, VFW Auxiliary 10003

[bwbrooks2031@gmail.com](mailto:bwbrooks2031@gmail.com)

(317) 207-2031

UNWAVERING SUPPORT

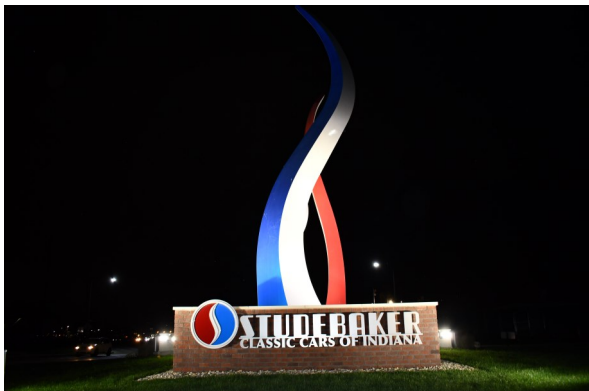


FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®

If you know someone who wants to have a copy of the monthly newsletter sent to them, then pass on their Email and name to Callagher Chaffin and he will include them in the mailings.

## **Post Member Obituaries**

Post Member: Richard (Dick) Tucker



96th St. Round-a-bout



VFW State building



For more information visit the Post website,  
[www.vfw10003.org](http://www.vfw10003.org)

**Post Breakfast**

Standard Breakfast Menu  
 Omelets made to Order  
 Bloody Mary's and Mimosas

**Breakfast Dates**

- February 10, 24
  - March 9, 23
- Hours 8 - 11 AM

**Post Special Events:**

- Annual VFW Post 10003 Chili Cook Off- 11 February
- Super Bowl Party- 11 February

Schedules subject to change. Visit  
[www.facebook.com/carmelVFW/](http://www.facebook.com/carmelVFW/)

**VFW Officers**

Commander	Darin Bibeau
Senior Vice	Matt McNally
Junior Vice	Jon Hensley
Adjutant	Cal Chaffin
Quartermaster	Erik Anderson
Chaplain	Rock Effron
Trustee 1 Year	Tim Hannon
Trustee 2 Year	Don West
Trustee 3 Year	Roger Conn
Judge Advocate	Shawn Ransford
Surgeon	Tim McNally
Service Officer	Shawn Ransford
Guard/OOD	Jonathan Dowell

**Auxiliary Officers**

President	Brandon Brooks
Senior Vice	Eve Smith
Junior Vice	Giovanni Russo
Secretary	Desiree Nelson
Treasurer	Desiree Nelson
Chaplain	Greg Williams
Conductress	Denise Hannon
Guard	Michael Praed
3yr Trustee	Anna Porteous
2yr Trustee	Denise Hannon
1yr Trustee	Eve Smith

## VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

<https://www.va.gov/records/> Access to your VA records and documents.

[https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/vetresources/utm\\_source=header&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=VetResources](https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/vetresources/utm_source=header&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=VetResources) Historical copies of VetResources newsletters including signup.

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Holding both a Post Service Officer position at the time of this posting and being the VFW Department Service Officer is always challenging. I can only imagine how it feels with my ADSO, Mark Carr who is not only the ADSO, but a District Service Officer. So, we are constantly asking ourselves "WHAT HAT AM I WEARING RIGHT NOW?"

Sometimes it is difficult to say, 'this is what we did at our perspective duty titles vs the other titles that we hold'. They just overlap so much.

From Big Picture:

As a Service Officer in general we get a ton of questions and comments over the PACT ACT (10 AUG 2022).

Yes, Hypertension (HTN) is on the Presumptive List for our Viet Nam Veterans.

Yes, it is highly likely that you will be service connected for HTN.

Setting realistic expectations, it is highly likely that it will be service connected at a 0% rating. There is specific requirements for it to be above that rating (10%). Trust me, I am at ZERO! Zero Percent DOES NOT MEAN "DENIED". It is service connected just not at a compensable level at this moment in time. If it gets worse, the hard part of 'service connection' has been done, we file an increase claim.

NO, medical conditions for Burn Pit Exposure is not on the Presumptive List for our Viet Nam Veterans. This only applies to Gulf War Veterans.

I am not saying our Viet Nam veterans did not burn stuff.....but they were not burning things like Lithium Batteries, Toner Cartridges, CARC Paint, ect. that are clearly marked 'do not throw in fire' as they release toxic vapors. We just did not have that technology in 1965-1975. There is just a lot of bad information out there on what the PACT ACT actually says and what it covers.

AND our Gulf War veterans have to have a diagnosis of the condition to apply for these conditions.

Moving on, the NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE (NVS) changed their software effective 24 April 2023. IT is actually a very big change and has a steep learning curve. So, please be patient with our service officers as we self-teach ourselves a completely new system.

VA Claims and Appeals: Keep in mind that appeals take YEARS before you see a judge. The same information you need to win in an appeal is same information that would have gotten you service connection in the original claim or a supplemental claim. Claims are taking about 6 months. Supplemental Claims are taking 6-12 months. SO, if it is the same information, why not do it early as opposed to an appeal that takes years?

ON THE POST NOTE:

Yes we do 'outreaches'. I try to get to the veteran to meet me at a Post or Starbucks. I'm a caffeine addict.... In the last 3 months we conducted 11 outreaches to Posts, Nursing Homes, Assisted Living Locations (and Starbucks). We are finishing up this month by going to an Assisted Living location in Hamilton County. We try to do this after duty hours (or weekends) when we can catch the people who work also.

Shawn Ransford

Note: Several phone numbers and contacts are listed on the next page.

## POST SERVICE OFFICER Shawn Ransford

There are numerous veterans programs available from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. On the web go to <HTTPS://www.va.gov/> or <Https://www.benefits.va.gov>

[Emergency financial situations for Veterans.](#) The IDVA (Indiana Dept. of Veteran Affairs) has money available for emergencies. Contact IDVA at 317-232-3910.

[Veteran Service Officer for Hamilton County:](#) Lisa Charles 317-776-9610 [Lisa.charles@hamiltoncounty.in.gov](mailto:Lisa.charles@hamiltoncounty.in.gov)  
Every county in the country has a VA Certified and trained Service Officer at your county courthouse.

1-800-MyVA411 ([800-698-2411](tel:800-698-2411)) is always the right number

[Veterans Crisis Line:](#) [1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255) and press 1, CHAT ([www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net)), or Text 838255

[VA Family and Caregiver Resources:](#) If you need to talk, call the 24/7 VA Center call line at 877/927-8387, or find a location near you at [https://www.va.gov/find-locations/?facilityType=veteran\\_center](https://www.va.gov/find-locations/?facilityType=veteran_center)

[Homeless Veteran Resources:](#) [1-877-424-3838](tel:1-877-424-3838) or [Chat](#)

[White House VA Hotline:](#) [1-855-948-2311](tel:1-855-948-2311)

[VA News + Jobs & discounts](#) <[veteransaffairs@messages.va.gov](mailto:veteransaffairs@messages.va.gov)>

<https://www.cem.va.gov/find-cemetery/>: National Cemetery locator and veteran burial locator

<https://www.va.gov/health-care/secure-messaging/> VA secure messaging allows you to communicate privately online with your VA health care team and the VA.

<https://www.in.gov/dva/2383.htm>. Indiana Tax deductions for Veterans. See article in April and May's Post 10003 newsletter.

<https://www.va.gov/housing-assistance/> there are programs to help veterans who are homeless or about to be homeless

### Miscellaneous

Reprints from sources outside of our Post

### Letter From the Hamilton County Health Department

Veteran suicides, of all ages, in Hamilton County are higher than they have ever been. It is time to reach out to one another.

Ask questions, listen without judgment, watch for behaviors out of the norm, call for help. It's okay to talk about suicide, talking doesn't make it happen, just ask.

Show care and concern without platitudes, contact a mental health professional.

**Renee Applegate, BS, MSM**

Health Educator

Hamilton County Health Department

[18030 Foundation Dr. Suite A](#)

[Noblesville, IN 46060](#)

317-776-8500 - Phone

317-776-8506 - Fax

From the Editor: There are ongoing PTSD editorials and medical advice publishing's online.

A good place to start is by looking through therapist directories from professional organizations, such as the [Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies \(ABCT https://services.abct.org/i4a/memberDirectory/index.cfm?directory\\_id=3&pageID=3282\)](https://services.abct.org/i4a/memberDirectory/index.cfm?directory_id=3&pageID=3282) or the [Anxiety Disorders Association of America \(ADAA https://members.adaa.org/page/FATMain\)](https://members.adaa.org/page/FATMain).

Presentation of Prolonged Exposure Therapy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyh6BxlalC0>

[https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand\\_tx/prolonged\\_exposure.asp](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand_tx/prolonged_exposure.asp)

<https://www.spreaker.com/show/ptsd-bytes> (and yes, it's misspelled)

<https://www.sawsramps.org/>

SAWs® is a nonprofit, volunteer organization founded in 2003. Originally started in Indianapolis. Our organization serves clients across Indiana, as well as Arizona and Virginia. We specialize in building wooden wheelchair ramps for low-income, permanently disabled individuals. With the support of our donors and volunteers, lives are changed one ramp at a time and in less than six hours we transform a client's life FOREVER.

Sincerely,

Gordon Smith  
Veteran Service Officer  
Office of Mayor Joe Hogsett- City of Indianapolis  
200 East Washington Street, Suite 2500  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-3330  
[gordon.smith2@indy.gov](mailto:gordon.smith2@indy.gov)

Create a free account and get discovered by Veteran employers: [RallyPoint.com/Jobs](https://RallyPoint.com/Jobs)

A **bucket load** of information on Veterans events, Jobs, Scholarships, Retail Discounts, and more is provided in an Email newsletter if you subscribe to #vetResources . [https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/vetresources/?utm\\_source=header&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=VetResources](https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/vetresources/?utm_source=header&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=VetResources)

### **Recruiting/ Membership- Eligibility:**

- 1: Honorable Service – must have served in the Armed Forces of the United States and either received a discharge of Honorable or General (Under Honorable Conditions) or be currently serving.
- 2: Service in a war, campaign, or expedition on foreign soil or in hostile waters\*. This can be proven by any of the following:
  - An authorized campaign medal (see a full list of qualifying medals and badges)
  - Receipt of Hostile Fire Pay or Imminent Danger Pay (verified by a military pay statement)
  - Service in Korea for 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days

\*This information is usually available through a veteran's DD-214. If other information is needed or if a veteran's DD-214 is not complete, they can contact the National Personnel Records Center online or at 314.801.0800 to request more information.



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*Around the Post.....*

