

# No One Does More for Veterans

## Maine VFW Department Service Office



### Changing of the Guard

### Department Service Office

[Edition 1, Volume 1]

Another year has passed and once again we comrades gather to witness the time honored tradition on installing new officers. Welcome new Commander Richard Farris. We wish you all the best in your new role. We bid outgoing Commander Steven SanPedro a fond "Adieu" and good fortune in your future endeavors. To all the newly installed officers, welcome and we look forward to continuing the strong custom of providing the best possible representation of the VFWs's motto of No One Does

*"What we do for ourselves dies with us, What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal." -Albert Pine*

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### Department of Maine

### VFW Service Officers

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Togus VFW Service office

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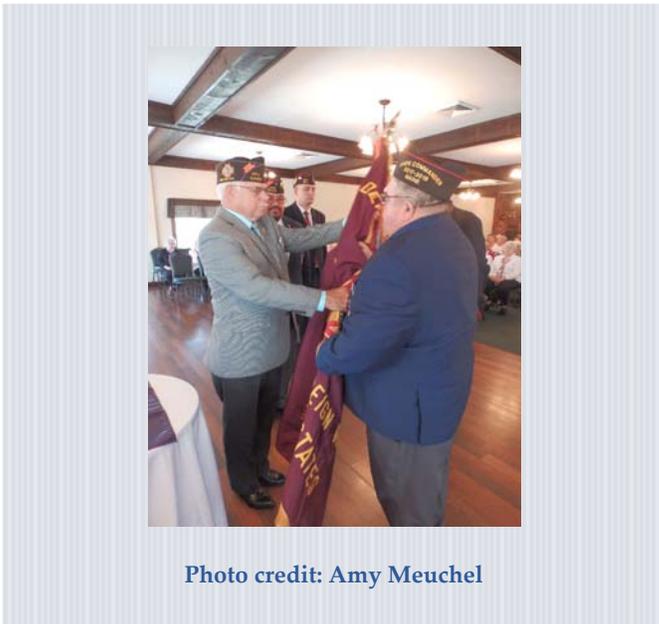


Photo credit: Amy Meuchel

More for Veterans.



## The Banners

Did you know that Maine has the only Memorial dedicated to those who served from Desert Shield to the present? Our own VFW Post 4298 in Jackman became the home of “The Banners” as they are affectionately called. I asked David Iverson, Post Commander for Carter-Dulac Memorial, for the story of this virtually unknown Memorial: “...(W)e hosted the Vietnam Veterans Moving Wall. We (Our Post)actually ‘own’ for lack of a better word The Banners. The Banners were presented to us almost a year ago by the Mass Vigil Society when we hosted them to remember the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of Desert Shield. The Banners were created by four Vietnam Veterans from Massachusetts when a couple of them heard a GoldStar Mother say at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in D.C that she wished there was something like it for her son. After getting nowhere when seeking sponsors, they dug into their own savings and made it happen. The Banners list the men and women who have dies in service to their country. Additionally, The Banners are available for display at appropriate events. Post 4298 will set them up with assistance from the requesting organization.”

Well done Post 4298 and thank you for doing your part to preserve the memory of America’s sons and daughters.



Members of the Mass Vigil Society, Post 4298 and the community set up

The Banners in Dexter Maine (photo credit: Jeffrey Brunner and David Iverson)

## Service Office Special Operating Hours and Announcements

With the changing operations of the VA, come new responsibilities for your service office. In order to afford adequate time to address these duties, we are using Friday afternoons from 12pm to 4 pm as our administrative time. This does not mean the office is closed. If you have a pressing need, please call the office at 207-623-5723 and we will be happy to help you. The following dates the service office will be closed and no service officers will be available.

July 4 Independence Day

September 4: Labor Day

### Events of Interest

July 14: Bangor Vet Center Open House 10-3

July 20: Maine Military and Community Conference Augusta Civic Center

July 22-26: VFW National Convention New Orleans, LA

### Post Service Officer Helpful Hints!

- **It is vital for the Post Service Officer to understand that you must not keep “shadow files” or any personal information related to the veteran/widow you are assisting. It is a huge liability and could result in legal proceedings because the PSO is not accredited by National. Send all necessary paperwork immediately to your State Service Office and give all copies back to the veteran/widow.**
- **The State Service Office is your first stop in obtaining the most current and accurate information regarding the rules and procedures for the VA claims process. Ebenefits is a nice tool to track issues but is often not up to date with information.**
- **Ensure veterans understand the rules of compensation and pension; and what they are being compensated for; disability, spouse, children. Failure to understand the “why” may result in overpayments and financial hardship for the veteran and his/her family. Example: Divorce and failing to remove spouse from compensation/pension.**
- **The Service Office is more than just a “claims processing station”. We also have the ability to direct you to a huge amount of resources. If you have a question: call! You never know what you might find.**

### KNOW YOUR SO:

#### Bryan Noyes 6859

I am Bryan Noyes. 33 yrs. of age and currently live in Biddeford, ME. I am a Life Member of the Veterans Of Foreign Wars and currently on my 5<sup>th</sup> year of membership. I am a Combat Veteran of the Operation Iraqi Freedom ('03-'04) and a proud US Army Veteran that served as a 13Fox-Forward Observer

from 2003-2007. I achieved rank of E5, Sergeant. It has been & continues to be my honor to be an Active member of the VFW with my home Post at the Deering Memorial Post 6859, Portland, where I currently serve in the Leadership & Officers Role's as Post & District 10 Service Officer and VFW Dept. Of Maine District 10 Inspector & State Color Guard. At my VFW Post, I have



served as Trustee, Honor Guard for multiple Parades & on my 4 year in a leadership capacity as Post VSO. I am also 1 of the outstanding (part-time) bartenders at my VFW Post as well. The Portland VFW Post has pretty much saved & supported me and has become my 2nd Home. It is not just an Honor to be called a "Brother" in such a historically, traditionally, and crucial organization and amongst so many other "Heroes" of this Nation but honestly, a devout privilege.

Throughout my experiences as a returning Veteran, the community roles and importance a returning Veteran can uphold was emphasized by prior Jr. Vice Commander, Dana Hardacker. He was the person who not only brought me in to the Portland Post, but also both helped ensured my survival, my intelligence, my strength and belief in my selflessness & leadership capability as my SMCC Professor of Sociology. It was through him, we combined to established the SMCC Veterans Club & started my inadvertent path to all the high offices, seats & advocacy for not just Veterans but for the needs of a community. He

also did not press me for membership but more importantly, pressed my survival, safety & transition by directing and getting me introduced into a system that is easy to lose heart & get lost in if going in alone. Since then, I have held Leadership seats/roles/responsibilities of Collegiate Veterans Clubs, Collegiate Executive Boards, International Student Clubs/Agencies, and International Leadership Agencies & Advocacy of both Veterans but International People's interest such as my work in the United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva-Switzerland. I also assisted in USM's Model UN Program but also Senior NCO & Drill Instructor to Maine's exclusive Joint Military Cadets of America -(JMCA) Army Cadets (Army Explorer-Jr. ROTC) Program. I achieved Collegiate Bachelor of Arts Degrees in: Political Science, International Relations & Sociology both through Southern Maine Community College & University of Southern Maine. I have multiple past work experiences as well as prior Veteran Case Manager thru Easterseals, Maine: Military & Veteran Services where I

exemplified the multiple facets of Veteran work/policies and programs but also enlightened me of the further struggles Veterans battle thru the VA, Veteran agencies/organizations, State & National policies & representatives and influence \$\$\$ interest can all heed & distinguish even the brightest lights of hope over time. However, many of my personal past experiences & connections have emphasized such needs, services, programs and advocacy needs to be continuously fought for, how sadly it is, but so needed. The cost of war and effects of war and service to this nation's sacrifices pertain all not just to Veterans but the human struggles and flaws throughout society. It is the example of Veterans that has become the example of how to "fix" and negotiate a common ground to many of societal issues that is more the reason why this Organization is Vital. Such common ground is and should be united under our flag and Patriotism to fight as 1 Team, 1 Fight for survival and for all of us to live freely in the home of the brave. Comrades, I have seen multiple sides of all the struggles and my passion,

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domestically, will always be in my heart for Veterans. As a leader, a Sergeant, I was always a "Soldiers' Sergeant" in means of always put my soldiers welfare beyond my own & set the example of always fighting for them at all cost. I am not perfect, and never will be and still battle my own demons, flaws and life struggles at a high cost = survival. But, remember our own survival is a lesson that needs to be taught for others survival, and those others are for our brothers & sisters in arms and their families who are often the last line of defense and caregivers. We

need to put aside differences of the ages, combat eras and our own pre-judgments in order to serve each other and survive as an organization and a team. Membership matters but to me, it will always be to care for, about and remember each other as if we were in battle again, because we still are. Reach out and even just listen, respectfully and learn.

Again, it is an Honor to be part of the VFW, and be amongst my comrades. The VFW Post is a "safe-zone" for all of us and we need to remember that without judgment and when we can

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remember that reason of why & how the VFW's or Post, or even the mere comradeship of the military really is, then the longer we will survive. Comradeship is what saved my life in the military, comradeship is what saved my life as a Veteran and we should NEVER forget that and share that with everybody we meet. We may not always be perfect but we will always "Toe the Line" for each other. 1 Team, 1 Fight.

Yours in Comradeship,

*Bryan*

*Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States  
Service Officers by Post*

2599 Benjamin T. Everett	618 Donald A. Pelkey	9389 Andre L. Dumas
9609 Lester J Dubois	9699 Bruce R. Junkins	1605 Brian Smith
2299 James C. Brawn	4154 Eric E. Buckingham	7529 John H. Schmidt
558 Edward K. Browne	9779 Russell W. Leighton	11553 Charles A. Warden
109 Daniel P. Sullivan	1761 Lawrence K. Holland	3381 Corey E. Carr
4527 Shawn A. Jernigan	4633 Raymond R. Lupo	4298 George F. French
5723 James H. Schoenmann	6924 Stephen G. Dostie	7865 Craig L. Jackson
7866 Elwin A. Matthews	10881 Clyde P. Penney	11191 George W. Mathis
3095 Robert T. Wilshire	3108 James A Roberts	4169 Larry M. Hopkins
6131 Jay E. Mason	9437 Eugene R. Kirkpatrick	2197 Stephen A. Wilkins
4525 John S. Blodgett	7738 Robert E. Joyce	9
887 Cornelius J. Ware Jr.	285 Jeremy J. Lockhart	8835 JoAnn Bolduc
9526 Billy Joe Cummins	1603 Jennifer L. Lane	1641 David D. Williams
3335 George B. Wyman	9150 Bertrand A. Dutil	9787 David C. Bradbury
11032 Russell L. Strout	832 Edward H. Cook	6783 Clifford R. Purinton
6859 Bryan E. Noyes	9328 Randall C. Withee	10529 John S. Ames
10643 Dennis Marshall	10879 Alan E. Reed	11362 Catherine R. Merrill
5744 Paul R. La Pierre	6548 Kenneth W. Kingsley	6977 Raymond W. Farnham
7997 Michael A. McInnis	9394 Allen W. Carter	9935 James E.N. Bachelder

*\*\* Please note: The new directory has not been issued as of publication.*

**Spotlight On: Vietnam**  
*(RVN) Gallantry Cross.*



“Vietnam’s Gallantry Cross was the direct equivalent of the French Croix de Guerre and rewarded acts of valor or heroic conduct during the early years of the Vietnam War. Although awarded sparingly during the early years of the Vietnam War, the Gallantry Cross was widely bestowed upon RVN troops as a reward for much heroism and peril. Many American service men received the award as a personal

decoration or as a unit award. As with the French Croix de Guerre, the emblems worn on the ribbon denoted the level at which the medal was achieved. For an Army or Armed Forces Dispatch: a bronze palm; for an Army Corps Dispatch: a gilt star; for a Divisional Dispatch: a silver star; for a Brigade, Regimental or Unit Dispatch: a bronze star. There were no restrictions on the number of devices which could be worn

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on the ribbon. The medal is a bronze, cross patte with the four arms interconnected by engravings representing two dragons with two crossed sabres between the arms, handles down. In the center is a disk showing the map of Vietnam with a laurel branch on either side and the ribbon across the map inscribed, "Re-ward of the State" (in Vietnamese characters). The reverse contains the same design except the disk in the center is plain. The suspension is rectangular in shape and depicts two stylized dragons facing one other. The Gallantry Cross also appeared in a second configuration, that of a unit citation. In this format, the ribbon was worn encased in a typical U.S. gold unit award frame.

When conferred upon a unit, no medal was awarded but personnel of the U.S. Air Force and Naval Services wore a bronze palm on the unit award ribbon. Army recipients were also awarded the unit citation but all four devices described above were utilized to indicate the size of the cited unit. For more detailed information on Republic of Vietnam awards refer to the book *The Decorations and Medals of the Republic of Vietnam and Her Allies, 1950-1975* by Foster/Sylvester."

(From the Medals of America Website:  
[www.medalsofamerica.com](http://www.medalsofamerica.com))

VFW Service Office

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