



# Wharton American Legion William J. Hocking Post 91

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"For God and Country, we associate ourselves together....."



## Commander's Message

**Greetings to our American Legion Post 91 family.** As we approach the new year, let us reflect on the past and focus on our future. I would like to start this quarter's (three months) message with a heartfelt "Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year" to all the Legion family. This time of year means so much to so many. It is a time of year for reflection and hope for the upcoming year. Being Irish I have a traditional wish for our members, their families and friends:

- May you have good health and good times, in your trade and in your home.
- May your hearts be filled with joy and your wallets filled with coin.
- May your dreams come true and fears fade and be forgotten.
- May you always have light in your home and a fire in the hearth.
- May a clean glass be in your hand and be partnered with a never ending bottle of cheer on the table.
- May all this be my wish for you and yours in 2012.

I will challenge our family to reach out and help Veterans in need. Should you know a Veteran in need but you are not able or unsure of how to help, inform the Post service Officer (Past Commander Charlie Miller) about the Vet, so that we can help.

Past Commander Ed Brice and Unit President Carol Bone are moving forward with the traditional holiday baskets for those less fortunate in Wharton. This is just one of the programs we use to give back to our community throughout the year.

Our members are the best people in the world and with that being said, all work and no play is a recipe for disaster. Remember our New Year's Eve Dinner Dance, the tickets are on sale now: \$30 advanced sales and \$35 at the door. Other dates and events are below and on the calendar as well.

In closing I will ask all to remember our Family Friends and Brothers in Arms who are deployed forward in harm's way that will not be home for the holidays. Remember to the families that support them and comfort them even during their absents. These brave souls represent our country's best; our post is their home too. As we move into 2012 we need to insure we keep our service men and women in our thoughts and prayers and insure our Post will be ready to meet their needs in the future. To this end we are raising funds for building repairs and any help will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you all for our help and support.  
For God and Country,  
JB Smith  
Post Commander

[liberator345@hotmail.com](mailto:liberator345@hotmail.com)  
(973)714-6174

## Officers and Executive Board

### OFFICERS

- Commander\*: James B. Smith
- Sr Vice Cmdr\*: William G. Tomphson
- Jr Vice Cmdr\*: Charles Jandik
- Adjutant\*: Dennis W. Miller
- Asst. Adjutant\*: Brian F. Wolfinger
- Finance Officer\*: Walter E. Ward
- Chaplin: Joseph M. Krieg
- Sgt-At-Arms: John M. Ruppell
- Service Officer: Charles J. miller
- Judge Advocate: Albert N. Porphy
- Historian: Daniel Zullo

\* Regular Member of Executive Board

### Executive Board

- Member-At-Large: Edward M. Brice
- Member-At-Large: Paul L. Hartle
- Member-At-Large: Charles J. Miller
- Member-At-Large: Albert N. Porphy
- Member-At-Large: John M. Ruppell

### Newsletter

- Frank Dulfer : [fdulfer@verizon.net](mailto:fdulfer@verizon.net)
- Daniel Zullo: [danzullo@optonline.net](mailto:danzullo@optonline.net)

## Auxiliary Unit 91 Officers

- Carol Bone..... President
- Pat Jafraty.....1st Vice
- Sheila Adams.....2nd Vice
- Juli Jandik.....Secretary
- Ana Craig.....Historian
- Sandra Scarneo.....Treasurer
- Ivette Rivera.....Chaplain
- Dara Vanderhoof.....Sgt at Arms





## Viet Nam Memorial Wall Facts

A little history most people will never know.

- There are 58,267 names now listed on that polished black wall, including those added in 2010.
- The first known casualty was Richard B. Fitzgibbon, of North Weymouth, Mass. Listed by the U.S. Department of Defense as having been killed on June 8, 1956. His name is listed on the Wall with that of his son, Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Richard B. Fitzgibbon III, who was killed on Sept. 7, 1965.
- There are three sets of fathers and sons on the Wall.
- 39,996 on the Wall were just 22 or younger.
- 8,283 were just 19 years old.
- The largest age group, 33,103 were 18 years old.
- 12 soldiers on the Wall were 17 years old.
- 5 soldiers on the Wall were 16 years old.  
One soldier, PFC Dan Bullock was 15 years old.
- 997 soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam.
- 1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam.
- 31 sets of brothers are on the Wall.
- 31 sets of parents lost two of their sons.
- 54 soldiers on the Wall attended Thomas Edison High School in Philadelphia.
- 8 Women are on the Wall.
- 244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor; 153 of them are on the Wall.
- Beallsville, Ohio with a population of 475 lost 6 of her sons.
- West Virginia had the highest casualty rate per capita in the nation. There are 711 West Virginians on the Wall.
- The Marines of Morenci - They led some of the scrappiest high school football and basketball teams that the little Arizona copper town of Morenci (pop. 5,058) had ever known and cheered. And in the patriotic camaraderie typical of Morenci's mining families, the nine graduates of Morenci High enlisted as a group in the Marine Corps. Their service began on Independence Day, 1966. Only 3 returned home.
- The Buddies of Midvale - Leroy Tafoya, Jimmy Martinez, Tom Gonzales were all boyhood friends and lived on three consecutive streets in Midvale, Utah on Fifth, Sixth and Seventh avenues. And they all went to Vietnam. In a span of 16 dark days in late 1967, all three would be killed. Leroy was killed on Wednesday, Nov. 22, the fourth anniversary of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Jimmy died less than 24 hours later on Thanksgiving Day. Tom was shot dead assaulting the enemy on Dec. 7, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.
- The most casualty deaths for a single day was on January 31, 1968; 245 deaths.
- The most casualty deaths for a single month was May 1968 - 2,415.

For most Americans who read this they will only see the numbers that the Vietnam War created. To those of us who survived the war, and to the families of those who did not, we see the faces, we feel the pain that these numbers created. We are, until we too pass away, haunted with these numbers, because they were our friends, fathers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters. There are no noble wars, just noble warriors.

## SAL Squadron 91 Officers

Troy Vanderhoof.....	Commander
Joe Jafraty.....	Sr Vice
Lew Fico.....	Jr Vice
Kevin Scully.....	Adjutant
John Craven.....	Finance
Rick Adams.....	Historian
Bob Dorr.....	Sgt at Arms

## VOWS To Hire Heroes

President Obama signed the VOWS to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 into law on Nov. 21, which will help many of America's unemployed veterans get back into the civilian work force.

Provisions of the new law, including tax credits for businesses that hire veterans, are backed by The American Legion, which has been urging Congress and the White House to take action in helping the country's jobless veterans.

"Last September, we asked Congress to create incentives to promote the hiring of veterans, and they have done exactly that," American Legion National Commander Fang A. Wong said. "Tax credits for businesses, along with other specific programs, will go far in placing more and more of our veterans into the private sector.

"We were also impressed by the provision that makes transitional assistance mandatory for every man and woman who chooses to leave the military. This will make them even more prepared as job-seeking civilians."

During his Sept. 21 testimony on Capitol Hill, Wong said "The American Legion hopes you will collaborate and bring your parties together to get a jobs bill for America's veterans passed."

Wong also testified about the critical need for civilian employers to recognize the value of military professions. "Civilian licensing agencies must recognize military training, education and experience when a veteran transitions to the civilian work force.

"It is our obligation as a nation to ensure that every single member of the military who chooses to leave ... can effectively transfer his or her education, training and experience into a civilian career field."

## USAF Mishandles War Dead

November 08, 2011 Associated Press|by Robert Burns

WASHINGTON - The Air Force is acknowledging that the mortuary that receives America's war dead and prepares them for burial lost portions of human remains. Two cases of missing remains from 2009 were among problems that led the Air Force to discipline three senior officials for "gross mismanagement."

The cases involved deaths in Afghanistan where bodies were dismembered. Portions of the bodies were properly returned to the troops' families, but small pieces went missing at Dover Air Base.

The Associated Press reviewed results of a year-long Air Force investigation prompted by whistleblower workers at the Delaware base where all war dead received from foreign battlefields are flown. The Air Force runs a special morgue at Dover where the bodies are identified, autopsied and prepared for transfer to families of the fallen troops.



# QUARTERLY CALENDAR

JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
1 - Sunday	<b>New Years Day</b>	1 - Wednesday		1 - Thursday	
2 - Monday		2 - Thursday		2 - Friday	
3 - Tuesday		3 - Friday		3 - Saturday	
4 - Wednesday		4 - Saturday		4 - Sunday	
5 - Thursday		5 - Sunday	<b>Super Bowl Party</b>	5 - Monday	
6 - Friday		6 - Monday		6 - Tuesday	
7 - Saturday		7 - Tuesday		7 - Wednesday	
8 - Sunday	<b>All You Can Eat Breakfast</b>	8 - Wednesday	<b>SAL Meeting 7:30 PM</b>	8 - Thursday	
9 - Monday		9 - Thursday		9 - Friday	
10 - Tuesday		10 - Friday		10 - Saturday	
11 - Wednesday	<b>SAL Meeting 7:30 PM</b>	11 - Saturday	<b>Valentine's Day Dance</b>	11 - Sunday	<b>All You Can Eat Breakfast</b>
12 - Thursday		12 - Sunday	<b>All You Can Eat Breakfast</b>	12 - Monday	
13 - Friday		13 - Monday		13 - Tuesday	
14 - Saturday		14 - Tuesday	Valentine's Day	14 - Wednesday	<b>SAL Meeting 7:30 PM</b>
15 - Sunday		15 - Wednesday		15 - Thursday	
16 - Monday		16 - Thursday		16 - Friday	
17 - Tuesday		17 - Friday		17 - Saturday	<b>St Patrick's Day Party</b>
18 - Wednesday		18 - Saturday		18 - Sunday	
19 - Thursday		19 - Sunday		19 - Monday	
20 - Friday		20 - Monday	President's Day	20 - Tuesday	
21 - Saturday		21 - Tuesday		21 - Wednesday	<b>County Aux PPPD Dinner</b>
22 - Sunday		22 - Wednesday	<b>Auxiliary Meeting 7:30 PM</b>	22 - Thursday	<b>Post 91 Meeting 7:00 PM</b>
23 - Monday		23 - Thursday	<b>Post 91 Meeting 7:00 PM</b>	23 - Friday	<b>Lyons Off Station Party</b>
24 - Tuesday		24 - Friday		24 - Saturday	
25 - Wednesday	<b>Auxiliary Meeting 7:30 PM</b>	25 - Saturday		25 - Sunday	<b>SAL Atlantic City Bus Trip</b>
26 - Thursday	<b>Post 91 Meeting 7:00 PM</b>	26 - Sunday		26 - Monday	
27 - Friday		27 - Monday		27 - Tuesday	
28 - Saturday		28 - Tuesday		28 - Wednesday	<b>Auxiliary Meeting 7:30 PM</b>
29 - Sunday		29 - Wednesday		29 - Thursday	
30 - Monday				30 - Friday	
31 - Tuesday				31 - Saturday	

## Traumatic Injury Benefits

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is extending retroactive traumatic injury benefits to Service members who suffered qualifying injuries during the period of 7 October 2001 to 30 November 2005, regardless of the geographic location where the injuries occurred. Effective 1 October, the Service Members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) Traumatic Injury Protection benefit, known as TSGLI, will pay for all qualifying injuries incurred during this period. This retroactive benefit is payable for all qualifying injuries incurred during this period. This retroactive benefit is payable whether or not the Service member had SGLI coverage at the time of the injury. TSGLI provides a payment ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000 to Service members sustaining certain severe traumatic injuries. To read this article in full please go to: <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2169> For more information or to apply for a TSGLI payment, Service members and Veterans should go to: <http://www.insurance.va.gov/sqlSite/TSGLI/TSGLI.htm> or contact their branch of service TSGLI Office.

## Extra Social Security Benefit

**DD FORM 214 -- SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT** Please share this with anyone who had active duty service between January 1957 to December 31, 2001, and planning for retirement. In a nutshell it boils down to this:

You qualify for a higher social security payment because of your Military service, for active duty any time from 1957 through 2001 (the program was done away with 1 January 2002). Up to \$1200 per year of earnings credit credited at time of application - which can make a substantial difference in social security monthly payments upon your retirement. You must bring your DD-214 to the Social Security Office and you must ask for this benefit to receive it!

Soc Sec website: <http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm>  
This is something to put in your files for when you apply for Social Security down the road.. It is NOT just for retirees, BUT anyone who has served on active duty between January 1957 to December 31, 2001.

FYI - this benefit is not automatic, you must ask for it! We've all been on active duty between 1957 and 2001 or know someone who has.

I know this may be too early for some of you to think about social security but, keep living and you will get there.



## Department Service Officers

Veterans are often forced to wage war against the paperwork and bureaucracy of government in order to get medical care or benefits, but they need not be alone in their battles. Here's some good news: American Legion department service officers (DSOs) offer free advice and guidance for veterans who need to deal with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Direct all correspondence to the DSO.

**Documents that may help support a VA disability claim**

*If possible, have the following ready when you make your call:*

- DD Form 214 (Issued at separation) \*\*\*
- Service medical records (outpatient), dental records, entrance and separation examination reports
- Inpatient hospitalization records (private or military)
- Private outpatient medical records (if applicable)
- Personnel file
- Line of Duty (LOD) investigation reports
- Overseas or temporary duty (travel) orders

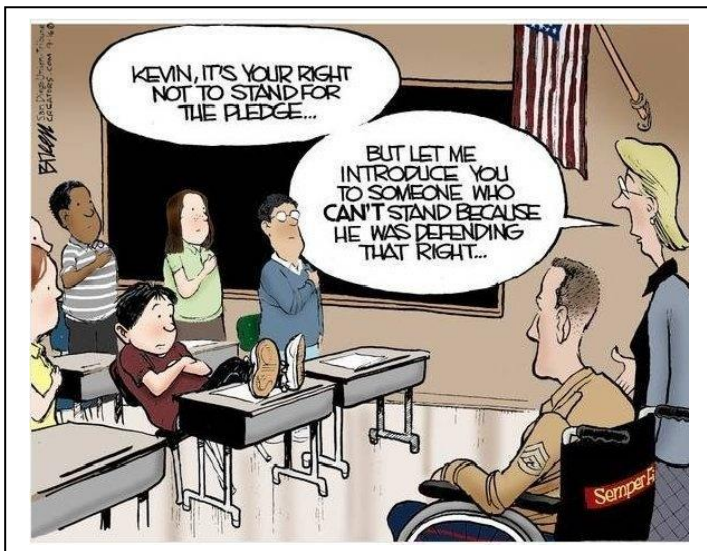
Separating personnel should ensure that all of the information (including awards, overseas time, campaigns, RE code, etc.) on the DD 214 is correct before signing. Uncorrected errors may cause problems in the future when applying for VA and other benefits.

**FOR CLAIMS:**

**KENNETH G CONNORS**  
VARO  
20 WASHINGTON PL  
NEWARK, NJ 07102  
PHONE: 973-623-6298  
FAX: 973-504-8709  
EMAIL: kenneth.connors@va.gov

**FOR POLICY:**

**JOHN D BAKER**  
135 W HANOVER ST  
TRENTON, NJ 08618  
PHONE: 609-695-5418  
FAX: 609-394-1532  
EMAIL: john@njamericanlegion.org



## VA To Be Service Dog Friendly

A House committee has approved legislation that would allow service dogs to be used on any VA property or in any VA facility, including any facility or property receiving VA funding. Under current law and regulation, VA is required only to allow guide dogs for the blind onto its property and into its facilities because those are the only type of assistance animals specifically covered in federal law. Individual facilities directors can be more flexible, if they wish. In addition to opening the buildings and grounds to service dogs, the bill would create a three-year pilot program in which veterans with post-traumatic stress or other post-deployment mental disorders would be involved in training service dogs for other veterans. The idea of the test is to see if being a dog trainer has any rehabilitation benefits for veterans.



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