



*Reverend Joseph
Lamarre Memorial
Post 2197
Topsham, Maine*

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

Post Trumpeter

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Post Officer Nominations

It's time to elect post officers for to 2023 – 2024 year. The first round of nominations were held at the March membership meeting. Additional nominations will be accepted at the April meeting with elections to follow. Nominations thus far:

Elected Positions:

Commander – Roger Stevens
Senior Vice-commander – Lin Stevens
Junior Vice-commander – Ed Harmon
Quartermaster – Jonathan, Dale, Brown
1 Year Trustee – Jim Eldridge
2 Year Trustee – Guy Nowlan
3 Year Trustee – Davielle Hawks

Appointed Positions:

Chaplain – Richard, Archie, Pelley
Judge Advocate – John Kennedy
Surgeon – Bryan Hall
Service Officer – Joe Obrin
Adjutant – Roger Stevens

We do make a difference!

Membership

We're at 105%. That makes us 100% or better 10 years in a row. A proud achievement! We now have 92 members in good standing, with 3 who haven't reached their due date as yet. We are pleased to welcome new members Thomas Ross, Eric Cooper, Larry Hall, Donald McMaster & Philip Chapman.



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Legislative Conference

In early March, 10 members, including me, of Maine VFW & Auxiliary went to Washington to attend VFW's annual Legislative Conference. We attended the National Commander's testimony before Congress, & also met with each of our 4 legislators. CO Borland presented 4 major issues in his testimony; **1** – GUARD VA Benefits Act which is meant to prevent veterans from becoming victims to price gouging legal firms. This problem is increasing rapidly with the passing of the PACT Act. **2** – Change VA responsibilities regarding veteran suicide. Studies show that more effort in dealing with financial & housing issues can reduce the suicide rate. The health side of VA currently handles veteran suicide & focus on mental health. Financial & housing is under the benefits side of VA. VFW is requesting that suicide prevention come under the parent VA with both the health & benefits sides reporting to it. **3** – The Major Richard Starr Act would eliminate the pay offset that combat wounded veterans, discharged short of 20 years, are currently penalized with. **4** – Press the DoD to award the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal to those who have been deployed to NATO countries bordering Ukraine. When we met with our Maine Legislators we re-iterated the 4 priorities above, as well as asking for their support to force the VA to provide funding for the Maine Veterans Homes. The funding was passed by Congress 2 years ago, but VA has been dragging their feet allocating it. Collectively Maine Veterans Homes are in the red by \$600,000 a month. We also asked for their support to bring upgraded refueling planes to the Maine Air National Guard in Bangor. The current planes will be retired soon, & without the upgraded planes the Refueling Wing disappears. Contact our Senators & your Representative, let them know we're out there. We also attended the annual Voice of Democracy Parade of Winners, It was an enjoyable event to attend. Hunter Edson, our Maine champion received \$1500 in scholarships.

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Post Giving

Since the last newsletter, we've only donated \$245 to sponsor a softball team in the Topsham Youth League. Our members remain busy volunteering in the community however. Folks at the V. E. T. S. Inc. mobile shelter program have rolled up 1580hrs & logged 863mi providing & retrieving shelters. Other members have volunteered 100hrs in various community programs. 2 members added 16hrs assisting fellow veterans. Programs include Meals on Wheels, Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program, Mid-Coast Veterans Resource Center, People Plus, Red Cross, & churches.

Veterans Resource Center

The Mid-Coast Veterans Resource Center hasn't been covered recently. It remains active & our post along with with 13 others in the area are members of the council overseeing it's operation. The center is an information hub for veterans & their families. Volunteers can provide phone #s to VA facilities, VFW, American Legion, & DAV Service Officers, state programs such as Veterans Homes, cemeteries, & the state homeless coordinator. It is the contact point for Maine Veterans in Need (MVN) which works to provide emergency support to homeless veterans waiting for other programs to kick in. Post members Nik Hamlin & Dave Patch are active volunteers at MVN. The center is also a contact point for the V. E. T. S. Inc. mobile shelter program for homeless veterans which is operated by our Junior Vice-commander Ed Harmon. A certified Retired Activities Service Officer is at the center daily. A Martin's Point Tri-care Representative conducts appointments at the center on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of each month, & VA Reps hold appointments on the 4th Friday of the month. Also the center has a direct link with the VA where veterans can conduct private medical or benefits consultation appointments online. Contact the Resource Center at 406-4103 for any veteran support information you seek.

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Safety & Well Being

Mud season is around the corner, with black fly season close behind. Black flies are annoying, but deer ticks are downright dangerous. Wear long sleeves, long pants, & socks. If your going to be in thick grass or undergrowth, consider wrapping sleeves & pant cuffs with duct tape. When you come in check yourself out. If you have an attached tick, deer or other type, use the method below.

How to remove a tick:

- Use fine tipped tweezers, grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible. Grasp it firmly, but not tight enough to crush it.
- Pull straight up with even pressure. Don't twist or jerk, as this may break the tick leaving mouth parts behind. If mouth parts do remain, leave them. Your skin will heal over them.
- After removal, clean the area around the bite well with rubbing alcohol and/or soap & water.
- If a rash develops around the bite area, see your doctor.

The above guidelines & diagrams below were taken from the CDC web site.

